



Guide for Research and Effective Public Speaking

General Research and advisory delegate information

As soon as you receive your country and committee assignment, you should begin your research. You may divide your research into the following categories:

1. The Organization as a whole

It is extremely important for each Representative to understand the basics of the organization which they are simulating. A well-prepared delegate should not only know the basics of the Organization's structure and mandate, but should have a good understanding of how the organ that is simulated is correlated to the overall institutional structure of the organization. Having this particular knowledge, representatives will be able to comprehend what their capacities and limitations thereof, are. Therefore, this would be a perfect tool of reasoning with other colleagues on the basis of adjusting their position accordingly.



Guide for Research and Effective Public Speaking for participation to the 7th Rhodes Model Regional Co-operation to be held in Rhodes, October 12-16, 2016.

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Contributors: Emmanouil Kalaintzis, Nikolaos Mertzanidis, Stefanos Katsoulis
Editor: Michael G. Kavuklis

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2. Current statistical information and a general background of the represented nation's history and policies

Having the background of a state checked could be a strong indicator towards the presumptive position it might adopt while discussing a certain topic. Research should include, but certainly not be limited to, such areas as population, government type, natural resources, trade data, current conflicts and diplomatic incidents for the nation being represented. Traditional allies and adversaries should also be noted.

Additionally, a country's history can be crucial to its contemporary actions, including the question of whether that country was previously colonized or was a colonial power, when the country gained statehood, and what means were used in gaining independence (civil war, violent struggle, peaceful movement, etc.), including its relations with the neighbouring states throughout history.

- What are some basic facts about the country (e.g., Head of government? Population? Size? History? Resources? Growth?)
- What are the foreign policy objectives of the country in the long and short term? (e.g., Economic goals?)
- In which organizations is the assigned state a member/observer? (e.g. OECD, WTO, OSCE, NATO etc.)
- Examine thoroughly the positions of the organization on the matters and to what extent certain decisions are legally binding upon the state
- Examine the international legal framework that binds the state and what it consists of (e.g. International Conventions, Protocols, Covenants etc.that have been ratified by the state)
- What is unique about the state compared to all other countries? (e.g., Exports?)
- Given a hypothetical issue, how would delegates expect their country to react to the problem? (e.g., Remain neutral?)
- Examine records of past sessions in organizations to trace patterns of behavior in the foreign policy (e.g. how had the state responded to a presented case)
- Examine speeches given by high ranking officials with the capacity to represent the state abroad (e.g. prime minister, minister of foreign affairs, minister of economy, president etc.)

3. Specific background of the nation's viewpoints on the issues to be discussed at the Conference

This is the centre point of most Modelling Conferences preparation - focused research on the issues being discussed in each committee and on your government's position on those issues. Research can come from a variety of sources, beginning with an Organization's official documents (often found on the internet or in paper form in a library or documents depository) and moving to articles, periodical sources, books, and internet sources.

Concerning the latter, when consulting internet sources make sure that you base your analysis only on verified and well reputed sources. Do not trust anything that is written on the internet unless it is published and reproduced on official governmental websites, scientific journals and think tanks and records of international organizations.

Resolutions, decisions, reports or studies on the issues under discussion from relevant organizations are especially helpful because they provide a quick reference, usually a background view on the matter as to what has already been accomplished, and to what still needs to be done in the future.

For certain states it will be very easy to find specific information to determine a position on most or all topics, and for others this information will be difficult to come by or simply not available. When clear-cut information is not available, it is incumbent on the students preparing to make the best possible assumptions of what the country's policy would be, given the facts available. Those assumptions are not in any case arbitrary but are based on the context of the research and even if the position on that matter is not explicit, if the research is thorough it would be able to allow delegates to accurately earmark the state's position.

This might include knowing the country's background, their traditional allies, the stance of a regional group with whom they tend to agree, or a variety of other factors. Regardless of the facts available, having explicit statements of the on the matter at hand is not always possible. Representatives should strive in their research to know as much as they can about the country and its stance on each topic, and to educate themselves enough to make reasonable policy assumptions on issues which are not totally clear.

- What is the issue or problem?
- What is the history of the issue?
- What countries are involved and/or most affected?
- What is the country's position on the issues?

- How has the country handled relevant issues in other Organizations in the past?
- Under what conditions would the country change its position?
- How should delegates approach these issues at the Modelling Conference?

4. The current world situation as it applies to the nation

This is a subset of the previous two areas of research, but is important enough to be mentioned in its own right. Even more significant is the difference between the policies of the relatively rich, industrialized nations and the relatively poor, developing (and especially least developed) nations on many issues. Additionally, a nation which is currently involved in a civil war, or a nation which is under UN sanctions, may have unique responses on some issues which are very different from those of the remainder of the international community. Knowing where the nation you represent fits in the current world geopolitical context, as a complement to your country specific research, can answer many questions which will come up during the simulation.

5. A specific background of the perspectives of nations with differing viewpoints on the issues

This is one of the more difficult areas in preparation. While it is reasonable to expect that a Representative will know who their general allies and adversaries on a given issue should be (regional partners, long-standing allies, etc.), it is very difficult to have detailed information on what the policies of each country in the simulation will be on a given issue. Limitations in preparation time by definition require that students focus *primarily* on the policies of their own country, often learning about others through references in their own research. This is an area where complete knowledge will serve participants well, but it is much more likely that each Representative will be learning the formal policies of the other countries in the committee when they give speeches from the floor and confer behind the scenes in caucus sessions.

6. Evidence: Checking Your Research

- Did you use a variety of sources?
- Do you have documentation ready to prove the validity of your sources?
- Did you use evidence to support an argument? Evidence by itself is not an argument.

- Does your evidence prove what is claimed?
- Did you listen carefully to your opponent's evidence?
- Did you keep your argument brief?
- Did you emphasize key words and phrases?
- Is your evidence accurate?
- Are your facts and statistics recent?

7. The Burden of Proof

- A variety of sources demonstrate that you are resourceful and have done your homework. This impresses the judges.
- Try to quote from UN sources, resolutions, treaties, conventions, speeches, recognized documents.
- If you do quote from a source such as the UN Charter, quote the exact paragraph.
- Trying to offer always a gist of statistics and facts within your speeches adds an element of authority to it and significantly backs your arguments.
- Basing your speeches on previous speeches by high-ranking officials and try to always cite your source.

Bear in mind that many of your sources may be biased. If possible, try to find independent confirmation of the information you have obtained, from more than one source. Moreover, when gathering information it is important to distinguish between opinions and facts. Facts are used to support opinions. Whenever possible use facts to support your arguments. Eventually, you will be presenting an opinion and must defend it against other opinions, thus it is crucial for you to be familiar with different viewpoints and opinions on your topic. Become familiar with arguments that are different from the one your country is likely to take on your topic. Remember, it is up to you to decide which particular points you want to focus on in your own arguments and this decision needs to be guided by your country's position. Bear in mind that you should speak in the name of the country that you are representing.

Here are some common internet resources to help you get started:

- United Nations Website, www.un.org

- The Central Intelligence Agency Factbook website, contains reports on economic, political and social conditions of all countries in the world,
- Well renowned, highly acclaimed and certified news agencies worldwide (although here you might require to cross check among the agencies)
- The European Union website, europa.eu.int,
- The World Trade Organization website, www.wto.org,
- And of course the website of the organization you are simulating,
- The webpage of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the respective state you have been assigned with,
- The webpage of permanent delegations and representations at international fora of the respective state you are representing

Finally, if you have tried these different resources and still face difficulties finding information, send an email to the RhodesMRC Board and we shall guide you and assist you on your research.

To find the e-mail addresses of the Board members go to rhodesmrc.org under the submenu "About us" you can find the "board members" section.

8. Effective Public Speaking

As a RhodesMRC delegate, you will assume the role of a nation's representative. You will be asked to play that role with as much accuracy as possible on such aspects as political ideology, religious affiliations, demography, economic, social, cultural and geographic realities. In other words this requires "being in character" throughout the sessions.

One very important aspect of participating in a Simulation Conference activity is acquiring effective speaking skills. A good speech is based not only on what you say but also on how you say it:

- Trust yourself that your research and preparation will fill in the gaps.
- Pressure yourself to take the floor in the first session of the conference. This way you'll break the ice and loose the initial stress, therefore you will be more and more confident speaking the following times.
- Almost no one is native speaker of the English language so do worry much about grammar and syntax.

- Pace yourselves, talk slowly, take the time to breath. Don't worry about pausing in your speech.
- Build your argument in a concrete and concise way in order to get your point to the audience.
- Use notes. Writing a lengthy text will make it hard to appear natural. Try to make notes (bullet points) of the points you want to stress out during your speech.
- Try to always keep track of what other delegates say and respond through your speeches to their point. This is the only way to make the debate productive and fruitful.
- Try to always stick to the topic area under discussion (or the subtopic under discussion if you are in an un-/moderated caucus).
- Take very seriously into account the board's and the Secretariat's remarks. Otherwise you can come off as being disrespectful or absentminded.
- Never be in a rush to fit everything that you have thought of in one speech. There will be plenty of time for you to retake the floor at some other moment which can be in your favor as you will be better understood and qualify as an active delegate.
- Pay attention to the timer and the indications of the board (usually the members of the board moderating will tap when you have very little time left)
- Use body language & facial expressions. Keep your hands out of your pockets, your hair or any other body part that might reveal anxiety or stress and use them to accentuate what you are saying.
- Take short pauses between points and breathe.
- Move your body core in order to face the board and your colleagues at times.
- Be confident, relax. You are the expert on your position and topic.
- Finally try to be constantly present and attentive during the sessions.

9. Getting the Attention

You are trying to persuade others so you must attend to their feelings and logic. To convince others however, you must first get their attention. Here are a few tips to get you started:

- Begin with a quotation: a short quotation, proverb, saying, poem, etc. will often sum up the situation.

- Begin with a startling statement. Make it lead directly to the problem. (if not, "imagine that...")
- Begin with a rhetorical question, something that the audience will know the answer to.
- Begin with a specific example of the problem. Zero in on one concrete aspect and then build from there.
- Be aware of any time limits on your speech, and give yourself time for a strong finish.
- Use the "machine-gun" technique: use rapid-fire examples, piling up the evidence.
- Use punctuation in your voice. Lower or raise your volume when needed and with constraint, otherwise the latter can seem aggressive.
- If there a sentiment that you wish to transcend through your speech, color your tone and voice accordingly.
- Humour is a dangerous technique in debate, particularly when discussing serious topics.

10. Maintaining the Attention

Once you sit down with many other delegates, ask yourself: How will you be remembered? Here are a few tips to maintain this attention:

- Demonstrate the extent of the problem. Use examples, statistics, and expert opinion.
- Demonstrate the effects of the problem. How does it affect the people? Use examples and facts.
- Demonstrate the causes of the problem. This might be difficult.
- Demonstrate how the problem affects the others. Be vivid.
- Present your solution or even better, a joint solution from several delegates.
- Try to use visual images as opposed to dry expressions.
- Try to demonstrate that you are not alone in your effort. Show that you have managed well during lobbying.
- Ask delegates for feedback (comments, thoughts) during your speech, thus making the debate more interactive.
- Demonstrate how your solution will: reduce or eliminate the cause(s) of the problem; reduce or eliminate the symptoms; help people; result in advantages; reduce costs; increase efficiency.

11. Diplomacy

Why is diplomacy so important? Without it, countries are unable to negotiate properly. Using your diplomatic skills can greatly influence the outcome of a discussion. You can use it to convince people rather than alienate them. It is important to develop this skill especially since you will be negotiating with many different countries with a variety of goals. The Secretariat and fellow delegates feel very strongly about respect and it is one of the main principles in all Organizations.

Diplomatic courtesy is a key element of the negotiation and decision making process. You are expected to respect both your colleagues as you are considered equal representatives of sovereign states and your Board and Secretariat members. Along with those you will be assisted in your sessions by members of the administrative staff, journalists and other auxiliary personnel, who you are expected to treat in the same manner.

- Use formal language when making public speeches.
- Never make statements about the individual behind the ambassador.
- Respect your fellow delegates even if you don't agree with them.
- Never use threats or insults.
- Talk to others as you want them to speak to you.
- Be professional.
- Business attire during sessions is considered to be part of the diplomatic courtesy.

12. Key Concepts in Negotiation

Interests

Your interests may be determined by asking why? Their interests - place yourself in their shoes; forget your perception of the facts.

Options

Once you know each side's interests, you can try to develop creative options. These are possible agreements or parts of agreements. Effective diplomats must learn how to expand the pie rather than slice a diminished area.

Standards

A contest of wills degenerates into a conflict of egos. Effective negotiators search for fair and mutually satisfying solutions. Fair standards are useful measuring sticks that will help lead to fair solutions. These include the law, precedent, equal treatment, market value and such.

Alternatives

The purpose of negotiation is not always to reach an agreement. The purpose of negotiation is to explore whether you can satisfy your interests better through an agreement versus pursuit of your own Best Alternative To a Negotiated Agreement. (BATNA) This is a significant issue. The better your BATNA, the more leverage and power you will enjoy.

Proposals

Try to select an option that satisfies your interest, particularly one better than your BATNA.

- Aspirations: countries that begin with realistically high aspirations often enjoy better agreements. Realistic aspirations are bound however, by standards of fairness and the other's BATNA.
- Settlement and compromise is part of the game. You cannot always have it your way.
- Criticism must be constructive. Always make sure you present a well substantiated alternative for what you are opposing or at least a proper line of argumentation.
- Content with: what agreement, far from perfect, would satisfy my basic interests to make me reasonably content?
- Live with: What agreement would satisfy my interests marginally better than my BATNA?

Techniques From Other MUNers

- Dress appropriately, business attire is a requirement.
- Remember that is not your opinion you are echoing but that of the state you are representing.
- Be willing to continuously improve and refine your capabilities.
- Attend as many mock sessions a possible.
- Technique matters - so practice it.

- Know the Rules of Procedure very well! A delegate that is more than familiar with the RoPs is designed to lead!
- Be aware of different political perspectives.
- Compromise is an art, treat it that way. You cannot have the pie and eat it too!
- Get hooked on MUN, this will change your life.
- Learn from your experience. Reflect on your mistakes.
- Mistakes happen - don't worry.
- Hold a debriefing session each evening with your team to discuss things that worked and things that did not. This can also keep the team spirit going after a long day of work, which might seem discouraging at some points.
- The Board is there to guide you, approach them if you need assistance. So do not hesitate to request for their help.
- Keep a record of your feedback and plan for improvement.
- You can never be too prepared.
- Organize beforehand. Keep track of your sources, make folders refining the most useful material to be used during sessions.
- Congratulate your team members (and other delegates!) on their contributions to the team and the conference.