



A BEST DELEGATE GUIDE

HOW TO WIN AWARDS IN MODEL UNITED NATIONS

WRITTEN BY

Ryan Villanueva and Kevin Felix Chan

EDITED BY

Sarah Lambino and Parsa Sobhani

FIRST EDITION

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Written by Ryan Villanueva and Kevin Felix Chan

Edited by Sarah Lambino and Parsa Sobhani

Design by Samuel Chua

How to Win Awards in Model United Nations.

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HONORABLE. OUTSTANDING. BEST.

These words are more than just nicknames for awards given at MUN conferences.

They recognize delegates worth **mentioning** –
delegates who **stand out** –
delegates who **define** the meaning of their role.

Awards are given to delegates who distinguish themselves at a conference.

You win awards by making a difference in your committee.

And making a difference means looking at things differently.

This guide will change your perspective on Model UN.

We wrote this guide for delegates who want to take their skills to the next level.

One of our most popular articles on Best Delegate is “The 5 Skills Every Delegate Should Learn.” Those skills are: Research, Speak, Caucus, Write, and Debate.

These are **fundamental** skills that every delegate should learn, particularly new delegates. You need the fundamentals in order to participate fully in committee and do your job as a delegate.

But award-winning delegates go beyond the fundamentals. They develop a **distinguishing** skillset — skills that help them make a difference in committee.

Each chapter in this guide is about turning a fundamental skill into an award-winning skill:

Chapter 1: Don’t research — prepare before the conference in a way that helps you walk into committee with confidence,

Chapter 2: Don’t speak — inspire others with speeches and comments that make them think, “I wish I said that,”

Chapter 3: Don’t caucus — connect delegates and ideas together in order to build a team,

Chapter 4: Don’t write — empower teammates to draft a properly-written and well-organized resolution,

Chapter 5: Don’t debate — negotiate agreements that push the committee towards its goal of passing a resolution.

We assume that you’ve been to a few conferences.

We’re not going to recite the rules of procedure — we’re going to show you how to **hack** parli pro to your advantage.

We’re not going to explain what terms like “caucus” mean — we’re going to **invent** a new language for Model UN.

We’re not going to teach you how to make speeches or write resolutions — we’re going to **share** the principles of strong speeches and resolutions.

And we’re not going to address crisis simulations or pre-written resolutions — we assume that you’re going to represent a country and write resolutions during the conference.

We are professional MUNers.

The members of the Best Delegate team have attended and staffed over 200 conferences combined. Each one has over a decade of Model UN experience. We were gavel-winning delegates, Secretaries-General, and professional conference organizers. And we use the skills we developed through Model UN on the job and in our daily lives.

We know what it takes to win awards from both the delegate’s and the Chair’s perspective. And we want to share that knowledge with you.

Ready to make a difference? Let’s begin.

Ryan Villanueva,
Kevin Felix Chan,
Sarah Lambino,
Parsa Sobhani.

BEST DELEGATE

DON'T RESEARCH. **PREPARE.**

Research is not enough.

Research is about gathering facts on your topics and the country you represent. Your advisor has probably told you, “Do your research!” more than a few times since your first Model UN conference.

The problem with just gathering information is that it doesn’t prepare you to succeed — you need to know what purpose each piece of information serves and when to use it.

If want to win awards, you have to do more than research — you have to prepare.

Preparation is about developing a strategy – setting goals and figuring out the best way to reach them.

You want to brainstorm possible solutions and think critically about your topics.

You have to anticipate how the committee will respond to your country, your ideas, and even your personality.

And if you want to win awards, you should know how your Chair decides them.

You know how it feels to be prepared for something.

Whether it's a test, a game, or a performance — you feel confident despite the uncertainty of whatever you're about to face. Winning awards requires confidence in the face of uncertainty.

Good leaders are confident in themselves and inspire those around them with their confidence. If you are confident in your research, your preparation, and yourself before the conference, your confidence will shine through in your speeches, your resolutions, and your interactions with delegates and dais staff during the conference.

Confidence is contagious and preparation makes you feel confident going into a conference.

At the end of this chapter, you will be able to:

- Frame your topic
- Craft country policy
- Uncover hidden rules
- Develop your strategy
- Bring your toolkit

PREPARE | STEP 1:

Frame your topics.

Framing is an essential Model UN skill. It's about breaking down a complicated concept into smaller parts. This helps you identify the key ideas that everyone else will work toward later on.

Start with easy-to-find sources to understand the current situation.

The background guide is your starting point — use it to gain an overview of your topics, then check out the works cited section for your next stops.

Search Wikipedia for relevant pages. Go to the websites of newspapers with international coverage, especially non-US-based sources like BBC and Al Jazeera. You can also use online news aggregators such Google News, Yahoo! News Full Coverage, and even Twitter.

Find reports to gain a deeper understanding of your topic history.

Take note of past actions taken by the international community.

Try to find papers and reports written by the UN, think tanks, and NGOs (e.g. Reports of the Secretary-General, RAND, Global Policy Forum, Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch).

Read the abstract instead of the entire academic paper if the writing is too dense to read.

Know the names of important players, events, and documents.

Every committee has its own language and names are its vocabulary. Delegates often throw out these names during speeches and unmoderated caucus.

Try to find profiles and timelines from the BBC and other news sources online. Also, note that major players can include both governments and non-state actors — NGOs, rebel groups, and powerful individuals.

Look at past resolutions, treaties, and agreements.

You need to know what previous agreements exist on the topics. You're basically going to write one of these documents yourself — along with your committee — at the conference. You can model what you write after older documents.

Break your topics down into smaller issues.

Think categorically: security, political, economic, human rights, social, economic, environmental, etc. An issue represents a different perspective on the topic — the smaller problems that make up a larger problem.

This is framing, and having a framework makes it easier for you to understand the topic and describe it in your speeches and resolutions.