



THE KEY TO SUCCESS

ROTMUN
MMXVIII



ROTMUN2018.COM



11-14 OCTOBER
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What Makes a Successful MUN Diplomat

A Model UN delegate is a student who assumes the role of an ambassador to the United Nations in a Model UN simulation. Prior to a conference or event, a Model UN delegate does not need extensive experience in international relations. A Model UN delegate has the ambition to learn something new and to work with people to try and make a difference in the world. Model UN students tend to go on to become great leaders in politics, law, business, education and medicine.

A Model UN delegate has to be confident and articulate; a delegate does not need to be overly careful, but cannot afford to be excessively confident either. Since English is the formal language of the Conference, a delegate who can speak English proficiently is bound to succeed. A delegate who cannot must learn to speak slowly and enunciate his or her words. While a Director is definitely bound to recognize delegates who are eloquent and who have command over the language of the Conference, that does not rule out the Best Delegate award for those delegates who can get their point across in simpler terms and in a way everyone is able to understand. Some delegates have grasp over history and current affairs, while other delegates are able to use anecdotes and examples to sufficiently explain their stance and viewpoint in any moderated speech.

A good MUN delegate must be approachable and must also have the ability to cordially and diplomatically approach others. The MUN Committee offers delegates something substantive, meaningful and important to communicate over. This is done by passing on notes during the Committee proceedings, as well as during discussion and negotiation in Un-moderated Caucuses.

A good delegate makes sure that he or she is never unaware as to the direction in which the debate is going. At the same time, a delegate's performance becomes measurable – and acquires the eye of the Director – after the delegate is able to prove (through a couple of speeches and points) that the delegate is aware of where the topic is, and where it was. The ability to retain other speaker's points, and to affirm or to refute them, is a task that must be carried out most diplomatically and using credible counter-arguments, so that the proceedings continue to progress, without unnecessary altercations or deadlock. A good delegate recognized that it is not only important to perform, or to get your country's stance agreed on, or to bludgeon through a resolution with one's country name on it, but to realize that a consensus is the most important way to resolve issues, and that a delegate's success is not measured in individual terms, but in terms of how well the committee has performed because of the presence and contribution of that delegate.

A good MUN delegate is also mindful of decorum, which means respect. Decorum is a formal term used to describe respectful discipline, which is an important tool in international diplomacy and negotiation.

It enables delegates to be able to afford each other an equal level of recognition and accord so that even when they disagree, they are able to move forward and decide on other issues. Decorum also means recognizing the primacy and authority of members of the Secretariat, which includes Committee Chairs/Directors, the Secretary-General, the General Assembly President, and other officials hosting and conducting the Conference. Decorum allows every delegate to refer to each other formally and officially, using terms such as "Sir", and sometimes even "His Excellency" when in the third person.

Finally, a delegate at a MUN Conference must interact with fellow delegates and Chairs/Directors during official working times (Committee Sessions) as well as during other events where unofficial camaraderie may lead to breakthroughs in official business matters vis-à-vis the Committee.



Committee Directors/Chairs most usually refer to the following characteristics:

Create a presence – Be among the first recognized and often, with relevant information. Even if the Director does not recognize you, make sure you raise your placard whenever you have something to say – but do not raise the placard before the Director asks for placards to be shown. Persistence to be recognized pays off, and being recognized by the Director means a delegate does not speak before the Director allows the delegate to speak by offering the floor. A good delegate also thanks the Director whenever credit and acknowledgment is due to the Chair.

Be a leader – Don't let others dictate how you perform, have the courage and grounds to challenge the other leaders. However, recognize leadership and potential where it is due, and make sure that your pursuit of the Best Delegate award does not imply problems for the due process and functioning of the Committee and the progress of its Agenda.

Be diplomatic at all times – keep your personal emotions out of debate, and stay professional in all circumstances.

Represent your nation's government – use terms such as "my government", "my country", "my beloved nation", since you are a formal UN ambassador of your allotted country. Also make sure that you do not support a stance or a policy that goes against your country's policies and laws. Make sure you know when to abstain, and when to use voting privileges with rights.

Work cooperatively with other delegates – overcome differences with give-and-take, and introduce "collective" dimensions to decisions and responsibilities. Be approachable and approach others with confidence and due purpose. Do not be rude and do not interfere with other people if they make it clear that they do not want to be disturbed.

Introduce or borrow innovative ideas and incorporate them by giving the originator due recognition into your speeches, resolutions, and amendments. Stating that "I agree with the Honorable Delegate from Armenia that nuclear weapons development in Asia should be under moratorium for 25 years" is bound to overcome divides and create new diplomatic alliances.

Refer to specific rule numbers and parts in the Rules of Procedure to support your points whenever you are able to, otherwise humbly request your Director to refer to the Rules of Procedure if you are unsure (or even sure) as to your point. If a delegate is able to diplomatically and respectfully point out a Chair's committed mistake via the Rules of Procedure, then it represents a degree of diplomatic maturity in the delegate and counts for acknowledgement, not censure or sanction

How to negotiate and be successful at Bloc formation

1. Be a good listener – refer to what other people have said by country name so that you can bring it up as example and evidence when you are supporting your own argument. During unmoderated caucuses, make sure you do not speak more than you listen, and that you are in contact with not only every person in a given group, but with different groups.

2. Remember what people say – during moderated caucuses and speeches, make note of what other people say so that you can bring it up in addition to your point and stance, and during unmoderated caucuses, remind people of their country stance by bringing up news events and policy information.

3. Be casual, not rigid – remember that you do not necessarily have to be the sole sponsor of the passed draft resolution, and that the role of the signatory is also important. A signatory does not necessarily support the resolution, but supports the point that the resolution ought to be tabled for discussion (and if possible, it should be voted upon). A good delegate knows that there is no winning resolution, but there is a right resolution; that resolution is passed by debate and consensus on merit.



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4. Remember what brings you together – a bloc is formed upon similarities, and it must be important that you are able to conglomerate these similarities of the different nations constituting the bloc in order to progress on the topic area, and agree on specific policy guidelines and prescription of measures. Blocs are normally formed on geographical affinity and historical, ethnic and linguistic similarities, but blocs can also be formed on the basis of a specific stance that transcends understandable differences that many countries can have. Global movements and global viewpoints often imply that countries can find unexpected allies as well as unexpected adversaries.

5. Remember what divides you, and offer its resolution – a writing paper presents your (or your bloc's) points and stance on a specific aspect of the topic area, and a resolution must account for all of the blocs' stances and their proposed policy measures. The proposed solutions to the topic (i.e. the resolution) should be reflected in terms that are agreeable to the international community, or at least to the majority of the international community. It is essential to overcome political and socioeconomic enmities on issues as a result of diplomacy, negotiation, and progress towards resolution.

6. Lead, follow, or get out of the way – A good MUN delegate who is armed with history and current affairs is able to create alliances and blocs (whether they actually exist in the real world or not), and is also able to recognize which bloc he or she belongs in. In cases where a disaster is imminent, a good MUN delegate also knows how to get out of the way, or if possible by skill and capability, initiate damage control to salvage whatever consensus is possible.

7. Build on the past – make sure you are aware of which blocs your country is currently (and has historically been) a part of. Also try to look up blocs that your country has formerly been a part of, so that you can use specific instances and references for your arguments as well. Remember that some friendships, alliances and bilateral guarantees are fundamental components of international relations, while others are the focus of international concern and harbingers of international crises. A good MUN diplomat can provide solutions and recommendations that can avert disaster, but must also perform the functions of mediator, arbitrator and consensus-builder on other socioeconomic issues as well.

8. Togetherness is key – if a MUN committee was to be compared to a national legislature, then blocs would most definitely be the political party. In essence, MUN committees recreate alliances between nations on issues of common importance. It takes national issues to the international context, where problems of daily lives become a global concern and can only be alleviated with a global resolution. Blocs can be key to overcoming differences between different nations, and have the capacity to become bridges towards international consensus. In fact, blocs represent national agreement as well as a subset of international agreement, and bloc formation in a committee implies that some sort of consensus is indeed being built upon. However, all blocs must perform not only for their own benefit or recognition, but for committee-wide agreements on policies, rules, guidelines and laws concerning the Agenda item – something which affects all member states.

Here is a SAMPLE* CRITERIA for CRITERIA FOR BEST DELEGATIONS AND BEST DELEGATES

1. Country Statement

Quality: presentation, pertinence and relevance to country

Delivery: elocution skills and making arguments within time limit



2. Resolutions Speaking for

(a) Quality:

- (i) Content relevant to question
- (ii) problems adequately tackled and solutions proposed

(b) Can explain reasons for Resolution convincingly and arguments are valid:

- (i) References if any
- (ii) specific clauses in more elaborate terms
- (iii) shows expert knowledge on subject

(c) Quality of question on Resolution:

(d) Can answer questions very satisfactorily

Speaking against

- (i) Can give valid and convincing reasons to oppose
- (ii) refers to specific clauses
- (iii) shows expert knowledge

3. Parliamentary procedure

Knows how to

- (i) Use the parliamentary procedures
- (ii) yield and request the floor
- (iii) continue with the same aspect of the topic even after procedural break

4. Positive Qualities of a Diplomat

Explain resolutions

Point of order

Right of reply

Speaking for/content

Speaking against/content

Point of information

Point of order

Answer questions

Explain vote

Active during unmoderated caucuses



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5. Negative Qualities of a Diplomat – behavior and conduct

Undiplomatic conduct and misbehavior

Undiplomatic parlance and use of offensive language

Wrong use and/or misuse of procedures (may also include Point of Order)

Being unaware of debate progress on substantive issues

* Please note this is only a sample and the scoring rubric may vary from Committee to Committee as well as from Committee Director to Committee Director. Be sure to ask your Committee Director what they're expecting from the Committee in terms of Delegate contribution.