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## How to Write a Winning Position Paper

by CLAIRE WYSZYNSKI on MARCH 5, 2018

Most Model UN conferences require delegates to submit a position paper, an essay covering a country's perspective on the assigned topics of a conference. Crafting a thorough position paper not only allows you to gain a better understanding of your country and the intricacies of its foreign policy but also to position you to earn awards, be it a best position paper recognition or by supplementing your knowledge to become best delegate. This video showcases the five things you should know

about your country when writing a position paper:

An effective position paper can be broken into five simple parts:

### **1. Topic Background**

Here, you need to establish that you are aware of what your topic is. The topic background typically defines any key terms and buzz words related to the issue at hand and provides a brief summary of the history of the issue and potential consequences of ignoring the issue.

For example, a topic background on the issue of human trafficking might provide the official definition of human trafficking ("the illegal abuse of individuals through coercion, deception, and other recruitment and harboring for sexual and labor exploitation"), general statistics from reliable sources that broadly encompass the issue ("According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), since 2012, 20.9 million victims presently suffer from this modern-day slavery"), and explore broader implications ("This crime not only impedes human rights but also poses global health risks and influences development").

### **2. Past International Actions**

This portion of the essay addresses efforts the UN has previously made and endeavors your country specifically has taken on to combat the issue at hand. Consider what UN programs, events, resolutions, and agreements your country has participated in. Take note of the other participants in these efforts, too—they could serve as important allies in committee.

As you write about these previous actions, start brainstorming your own ideas. How effective were these endeavors? What went right, and what could you improve upon?

### **3. Country Policy**

And now, the moment we've all been waiting for: your country's own policy. This section ought to summarize your country's own unique stance on the issue and what they believe the international community should do to resolve the issue. Here, delegates must remember that this area consists of their country's policy, rather than their own opinion on an issue. If your country does not completely condemn human trafficking, for example, because of their own stakes in the practice, then your policy must reflect that, in spite of your disagreement. Finding speeches from your country's leaders, scoping out their government's website, and evaluating their actions in the UN are some ways to develop an understanding of your country's policy.

### **4. Possible Solutions**

Using the information you've gathered in previous sections of the paper, brainstorm your own solutions to the issue based on your country's perspective. Could you create a new program, or further develop another one? Could you provide aid to an area, and at what cost? Will you involve NGOs or peacekeepers? How can you collaborate with other countries?

### **5. Sources**

Throughout your research, ensuring that your information comes from reliable sources is paramount. Having solid, UN-based sources increases your credibility and again can help develop a thorough understanding of your issue. Consider using credible websites like [un.org](http://un.org) and seeking university studies. Government and NGO websites can be credible but possess bias, and similarly, news websites and blogs can provide information not as credible as [un.org](http://un.org). Need some help? Best Delegate actually [has a helpful research map](#) that links you to different, reliable sources about your country.

Tackle your writing in these five sections to create a position paper that packs a punch!