

Debating Resolutions

Here are some basic tips for talking about your resolution:

1. State whether you are in favor or against the resolution.
2. In 1 sentence or 1 word, explain why you do or do not favor the resolution.
3. Pick 3 operative clauses to support your argument.
4. Encourage the committee to vote in favor or against the resolution.

For example: “The Republic of Costa Rica favors this resolution because it is comprehensive. Look at clauses x, y, and z. [Explain what x, y, and z does] The resolution addresses all of the major points that were brought up in debate. We encourage the committee to vote in favor of the resolution.”

Another example: “The Republic of Costa Rica is against this resolution because it is vague. Look at clauses x, y, and z. [Explain what x, y, and z fail to do] The resolution does nothing. We urge the committee to vote against the resolution.”

Assuming that you don’t have a lot of time to talk about the resolution, you will need to focus your speech. Using 1 sentence and 3 operative clauses to describe the resolution makes it easier for the audience to remember what you’re saying.

If you have time remaining, I think it is a good idea to yield to points of information unless you have a very good reason not to; for example, you said something unpopular so delegates will use their questions to attack you. But if you wrote the resolution or are one of its primary sponsors, then you need to answer questions from the delegates. If you won’t defend your resolution, no one else will.

Regardless of who is asking the question, answer completely and politely; do not get defensive because that makes you look bad. And keep your responses short. You want to answer questions completely, but you also want to answer as many as possible.

Be the Opposition: the Secret Weapon for Becoming a Best Delegate

The key technique is what I have now dubbed as my MUN motto: **Be the Opposition**. The way this strategy works is that you must detach from the monotonous agreeing that often occurs in committee and instead directly *oppose* the general consensus. Instantly, people will pay attention to you for taking a stance on a topic of discussion that the committee had previously believed to be in total unanimous agreement. This strategy will cause a mixture of the following three effects, with each effect's intensity changing depending on the atmosphere of your committee:

1. *Delegates will begin altering their opinions, realizing your points of opposition were correct, eventually causing them to rally to your cause and speak in support of you (strengthening your bloc and reputability in committee).*
2. *Other delegates (especially the power delegates who may have had a hand in creating the unanimous agreement on a topic based on their policies) will vehemently speak against your brave rejection of the general consensus and attempt to try and take advantage of the situation to make you seem like you are working against the committee's cooperative efforts or that your own ideas are worse and lack research and validity.*
3. *Your Chair will vigorously nod their head, thankful to hear you break the slow pace of committee by introducing a new and valid, yet previously ignored, viewpoint on the topic.*

Now some may disagree, but I believe any attention, whether its good or bad, will only help you. Nonetheless, in committee it is your goal to get delegates to mention your name in speeches, care about your views, and view you as a leader that they want to follow (this is greatly enhanced when option #1 above occurs). One strong and passionate speech can truly change the committee's entire perception of you as the three effects above occur, but when option #2 happens you must respond in speeches and continue to back up your minority viewpoint with research, logic, and counter-attacks by exposing the flaws in other delegates solutions. Spearheading this new movement of opposition can also really help your relationship with the dias when option #3 occurs because anyone who has staffed a conference knows that lulls in committee caused by the lack of opposing blocs can create an undesirable atmosphere of boredom in the room. Therefore your dais will appreciate your introduction of a new perspective on the topic as it might revive the energy in the room as well as show your intelligence as a delegate to form a different opinion than the previous several speakers.

SPECIFIC WAYS TO USE THIS STRATEGY

Bloc Creation: This strategy works well in situations where you find yourself without a bloc as other power delegates take over the main working paper/resolution groups. You can effectively create your own bloc late in the conference by passionately opposing the main core ideas of certain large blocs, causing many delegates to question their support for them.

The Rate at Which You Are Chosen To Speak: With option #3, your chair will recognize your ability to awaken the committee which can often help you transform from being the delegate who complains at never being called on to speak to the country everyone accuses of being favored by the chair for speaking multiple times per moderated caucus. This occurs not only because the chair values the unique and unrepresented perspective you bring to debate, but also because you will become the voice of the opposition minority, forcing the chair to have to select

you to speak often as several delegates in a row might speak against your removal from the consensus, often singling your country out, demanding a response from your new bloc.