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# Writing Better Resolutions

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## Introduction

The purpose of this guide is to improve the quality of initial resolutions submitted for the OOA House of Delegates in order to expedite the work of OOA Reference Committees. Poorly written resolutions detract from the real task of reference committees--to debate the intent of a resolution, not the way it is worded.

## Title

The title of the resolution should clearly state the topic of the resolution.

Prescription Drug Abuse (Not: Helping to Keep Patients from Abusing Prescription Drugs)

## Whereas Clauses

It is the policy of the OOA Resolutions Committee to review all OOA resolutions (policy statements) every five years and to eliminate all whereas clauses from the original resolution unless they add significantly to the intent. Therefore, each whereas clause should:

- (1) Relate directly to the call for action (resolved clauses)
- (2) Contain one significant reason or statistic which supports the call to action;
- (3) Cite the source of statistics, if facts and figures are used to support the call for action:

WHEREAS, the National Institutes of Health estimates that 25,000 Americans are hospitalized each year due to prescription drug overdoses; and

- (4) Should avoid redundancy and be limited to the number of statements that are clearly essential to make your point; the shorter the resolution, in most cases, the better.

## Resolved Clauses

The most important part of any resolution is obviously the resolved clause(s). Each resolved clause should:

- (1) Be able to stand on its own
- (2) Include only one sentence; and
- (3) Have a clear and concise call to action

RESOLVED that the Ohio Osteopathic Association reaffirm its position that members should prescribe controlled substances only after carefully evaluating the indications and after taking an adequate medical history and a physical examination of the patient; and be it further

- (4) If the resolution envisions more than one related call to action, there should be a separate clause for each; again each separate resolved clause should be able to stand alone:

RESOLVED that the Ohio Osteopathic Association reaffirm its position that members should prescribe controlled substances only after carefully evaluating the indications and after taking an adequate medical history and a physical examination of the patient; and be it further

RESOLVED that the Ohio Osteopathic Association support the crusade to reduce substance abuse by advocating intelligent enforcement of existing state and federal laws which govern handling of all dangerous substances; and be it further

RESOLVED that the Ohio Osteopathic Association pledge its full support of existing and future programs which promote proper use of prescription drugs and other substances among young and old alike in an effort to reduce or eliminate substance abuse.

(5) If the resolution requires action by the AOA and the intent of the writer is to change policy at the national level, the resolved clauses should state:

RESOLVED, that the OOA recommend to the AOA that

(6) If the intent of the resolution is to have an action taken at both the OOA and AOA level, it should be worded as follows:

RESOLVED that the Ohio Osteopathic Association reaffirm its position that members should prescribe controlled substances only after carefully evaluating the indications and after taking an adequate medical history and a physical examination of the patient; and be it further

RESOLVED that the Ohio Osteopathic Association support the crusade to reduce substance abuse by advocating intelligent enforcement of existing state and federal laws which govern handling of all dangerous substances; and be it further

RESOLVED that the Ohio Osteopathic Association pledge its full support of existing and future programs which promote proper use of prescription drugs and other substances among young and old alike in an effort to reduce or eliminate substance abuse.; and be it further

RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be submitted to the American Osteopathic Association for consideration at the 1999 AOA House of Delegates