



# 2019 NISPAcee Annual Conference Pre-conference Seminar "How to Write a Good Policy Paper"

Lecture 3, Structure of the Policy Paper  
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# Types of policy paper structures

- ▶ Depends of the type of paper
- ▶ Goal and target
- ▶ Expected communication channel

# Example I

- ▶ *Problem description*: Context and importance
- ▶ *Policy options*
- ▶ *Criteria*: explicitly discuss the criteria and the assumptions used in formulating a recommendation
- ▶ *Recommendation*: ideally results from the application of the criteria to the policy choices

# Example II

- ▶ *Executive Summary/Purpose Statement*
- ▶ *Background:* What is the current situation and why is it conducted this way?
- ▶ *Analysis*  
Why is the policy not working? Why is it necessary to find an alternative?
- ▶ *Policy options:* alternatives and their implications
- ▶ *Recommendation:* Provide your recommendation and how it can be implemented
- ▶ *Conclusion:* Summarize analysis and recommendation
- ▶ *Appendix:* figures, maps, graphics

# Writing style

- ▶ Focus : prescriptive questions
- ▶ Goal: to be persuasive
- ▶ Writing style : efficient: usually accompanied by a policy brief
- ▶ Clear and concise statements
- ▶ BLUF ( Bottom Line up front- begin paragraphs with conclusions)
- ▶ Only essential information → BUT cover all the necessary aspects
- ▶

# Writing style (cont'd)

- ▶ Fact-base arguments → do not argue with ideology but with a proposed course of action
- ▶ Acknowledge potential downsides and ways to address risks
- ▶ What needs to be clear: why the current situation is not acceptable AND what to do about it .

# Recommendations



- ▶ Bear in mind the goal of the paper and the target group
- ▶ Consider the scope of authority of the target group/policy maker
- ▶ Consider external restrictions set by outside actors in formulating the recommendations