

# S.H.E.L.L.S.

## AT THE BEACH

**Successful Higher Education Leadership Learning Skills**



## **ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING MANUAL**

A guide to designing and running successful organizational meetings. Included are resources on designing agendas, taking minutes, and Robert's Rules of Order.

Office of Student Life and Development USU-215  
California State University, Long Beach  
(562) 985-4181  
<http://www.csulb.edu/sld>

# Table of Contents

<b>Your Role as a Secretary</b> .....	1
<b>How to Run an Effective Meeting</b> .....	2
Facilitator's Role .....	3
Types of Meetings .....	4
How to Get People to Participate in Your Meetings .....	5
How to Maintain Your Audience's Attention .....	6
How to Manage Controversy and Conflict .....	7
How to Keep Meetings on Track .....	8
How to Deal with Opposing Views .....	8
How to Deal with Chatting Meeting Participants .....	10
<b>How to Take Minutes</b> .....	10
Tips While You're Taking Minutes .....	12
Suitable Format .....	13
<b>Checklist on How to Run an Effective Meeting</b> .....	14
<b>Sample Minutes</b> .....	15
<b>The A-B-C's of Parliamentary Procedure</b> .....	17



# Your Role as a Secretary

Serving as secretary for an organization or committee is not an easy job or one to be taken lightly. **The following criteria are important when selecting someone who will best fill this role.**

- Is the person reliable; does he or she keep appointments and are they prompt?



- Is the person well organized, completing tasks in a timely way?
- Does this person demonstrate good listening skills such as being objective, hearing both sides of the discussion?



- Is this person a discerning listener, able to weed out trivial information or discussion from the important facts?

**The role of secretary is more than "just taking minutes." This individual is in effect the historian of the meeting and ultimately the organization.** Current members will refer to what is recorded, as a reminder of finished and unfinished business, including what needs follow-up, and what actions were taken. They will also be kept so that future members can reflect and gain an understanding of where the organization has been and why. Many organizations make it the secretary's responsibility to notify the membership about upcoming meetings- times, dates, location - as well as any important items to be discussed.

**The secretary should be present at all meetings. If he or she is unable to attend, a substitute needs to be appointed.** It is also necessary for the secretary to prepare him/herself before each meeting. He or she should review the minutes and agendas of previous meetings, paying close attention to style and format. If the organization has agreed upon a standard format for minutes, use the standardized form and fill in discussions, etc. as they occur.

**If your organization has structure that includes committees, be they ad hoc or standing, there always needs to be a secretary present to accurately record what has transpired.** It is not necessary to take down everything unless someone requests that his or her remarks be entered for the record. It is necessary, however, to take complete notes. Motions and resolutions do need to be taken verbatim and should be read back during the meeting to make sure they have been accurately recorded.



# How to Run an Effective Meeting

Most people don't like meetings. They say they are boring, go on too long, and don't get anything done. And often that's the truth. So to have a good meeting, you need to make it interesting, keep it on track, and make sure something gets done. Here are eight steps toward making your next meeting a success.



1. Make sure you need to have a meeting. Meetings are needed when a group of people must be involved in an action or a decision. Don't schedule a meeting just because it's time to have one.
2. Set a goal for the meeting. Be very clear about why you're having the meeting, and what needs to get done or be decided. Break that task into steps, or divide the discussion into sections—that's the agenda for your meeting. At the start of the meeting say, this is our goal, and if we can get this done, the meeting will be a success. At the end of the meeting remind them that you achieved your goal. This lets everyone leave feeling successful, and they'll be glad to come to your next meeting.
3. Put decisions to the group. The participants own the meeting. Let them set the agenda before the meeting, or at least add to it when you begin. If decisions need to be made about the process (whether to end a discussion that's going too long, for example) then ask that question to the group.
4. Stay on schedule. Remember that every minute a person spends in your meeting; they could be doing other things. They're with you because they've decided your meeting is important, so treat them like their time is important. Start on time and end on time!



5. Pay attention to what's important. Set a certain amount of time for each item on the agenda, based on how important it is. If the group starts spending a lot of time on details, ask them "Is this what we want to spend our time talking about?" A lot of details can be worked out by individuals or committees—meetings are for the decisions that need to involve the whole group.
6. Keep the meeting on track. Your agenda is the tool you use to make sure you're on time and on the right topic. When side issues come up, help the group get back on track. If the issue sounds important, check with the group. "We're talking about a new issue — is this something important that we should take time to discuss?"
7. Make sure people participate. People think a meeting is useful based on one simple thing: whether or not they talked. So everybody should have a chance to share their ideas. It's okay to ask specific people what they think! You should also be prepared to gently remind people when they're talking too much.
8. Have good facilitation. The facilitator is the person who runs the meeting and acts on all the steps listed above. It's a big job, and it usually doesn't fit well with participating in the discussion. So if you need to have your views heard, let someone else run the meeting! Good facilitation doesn't just happen—it's a skill that comes with training and practice.

## Facilitator's Role

Running a successful meeting will help your group operate efficiently, and provide a worthy experience for all members. As facilitator, you are the key to ensuring that success. Here are some tips:

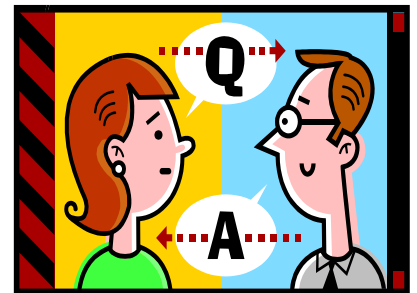
- One of your most important roles is to create a warm and friendly atmosphere so members feel free to express themselves.
- Be interested and enthusiastic--enthusiasm can be contagious. Have a positive attitude!
- Your job as facilitator will take all your attention. You are not a participant as much as you are the "conductor" of the meeting--directing the flow and energy of that meeting. You will be looking at participants' body language, listening carefully to what they say, drawing out those members who are not speaking, and gently moving the meeting along when a member monopolizes conversations. You will not have time to take minutes (and we know how minutes are essential in recording meeting developments and also in reminding you and group members of follow-up actions that are needed). So, be sure to appoint another person to take minutes.



- Set out ground rules for the meeting, including, for example, the expectation that everyone participate, no judgment statements during brainstorming sessions, and that there will be an ending time, and state that time.
- Keep the discussion on track. The agenda will drive these discussions.
- Pace the meeting and observe specified time limits for agenda items--this will allow everyone a chance to speak

and helps insure that all issues on the agenda are covered. However, be sensitive to the need for discussion. Allow the group to talk things through. If they want more time to discuss an issue, adjust the agenda. Recognize when there is consensus and move on. Be gentle but firm with people who speak too long or get off the subject--a simple "let's move on" or "thanks, now let's hear from someone else" can be very effective.

- Call group members by name. This personalizes the discussion and also assists the recorder in accurately noting who shared their opinions.
- Avoid stating that a person is wrong for any idea or opinion that is expressed; rather ask for other comments and ideas on the subject. Remain open-minded and democratic. Allowing the free flow of expression allows for creative thinking.
- Ask open-ended questions--why and how--to stimulate discussion. Ex. "How do you think that will impact the project?" instead of, "do you think that will impact the project?" -which dead ends with a "no" or "yes" response.



- Listen carefully to each person. Make sure you understand what the speaker is saying. If you're unsure, try restating it or ask the person to clarify.
- Be certain that the entire group is involved in the discussion. Encourage everyone to speak by simply asking those who haven't spoken for their opinion on the issue at hand.



your meetings will seem like one-sided dialogues.

- Recognize achievements, big and small. We all want to feel valued.

- Be aware of people who look confused or lost, and restate questions or ideas. Summarize key points when necessary.
- If problems arise, remain neutral and calm. Call on members for assistance and resolution--it shouldn't all be on your shoulders.
- Use appropriate humor--it can release tension and get people talking.
- Summarize conclusions or decisions at the end of the meeting.
- Leave time for questions. Otherwise,



#### As the meeting winds down to the end:

- Tie up loose ends. Avoid hasty decisions simply because time has expired.
- Table unresolved issues until the next meeting.
- Plan the next meeting. Set the date, select the place, and develop a preliminary agenda, which should include any unresolved issues from this meeting.
- End the meeting on a positive note. This will also encourage members to follow-up on any actions they've agreed to do.
- An important note: After the meeting ends, review the minutes of the meeting. You are responsible to see that all follow-up plans are put into action--another reason why complete and reliable minutes are so vital.

## Types of Meetings

An informative session, a decision-making meeting and a brainstorming session have very different objectives. When planning a meeting, it is very important to identify the objective of the meeting. Only once the objective is clear will creating an effective agenda become simple. What follows are different objectives for the various types of meetings mentioned and some related tips on how you can make them more effective.



### A. Problem-Solving Meeting

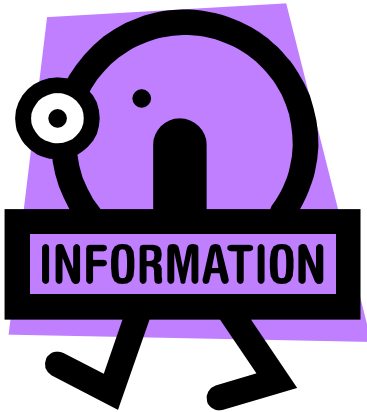
*Objective:* To discuss an issue or conflict and decide how to solve it.

*Tip:* The following problem-solving process will help your group make better decisions the next time you meet.

1. Identify the Problem: The problem should already be clear in the minds of the attendees. In other words, participants will hopefully know why they're attending the meeting!

2. Determine the causes: What’s causing the problem? What are the underlying issues?
3. Generate possible solutions: How could we possibly overcome this issue? What are the options at this time?
4. Evaluate the proposed solution: Is this the best solution for us? Is it feasible? Is it realistic?
5. Choose the best solution.
6. If you’ve narrowed the options down to a few alternatives, vote to determine the best solution for the group. This gives everyone an opportunity to provide input on the final decision. If peer pressure is an issue or if substantial conflict surrounds the topic, consider holding a secret ballot vote.

## B. Informational Meeting



*Objective:* To give or receive information about a specific idea or important matters concerning the attendees.

*Tip:* The majority of meetings today simply exchange facts or information about a specific topic. Given the widespread use of e-mail in today’s workplace, many individuals are opting for quick e-mail updates instead of meeting. To determine if a meeting is worth your time, ask yourself, “Is this meeting really necessary?” If not, consider using e-mail to update or share information with the individuals who would have attended the meeting. If you have decided the meeting is necessary and cannot be replaced with an e-mail, be sure that the meeting objective is clear and an agenda has been created before the meeting begins. Having a proper agenda and objective will help keep the meeting discussion focused and on track.

## C. Brainstorming Meeting

*Objective:* To produce new ideas about a specific topic.

*Tip:* Here are some guidelines to follow for a more effective brainstorming session:

1. Before the meeting, participants should be told the objective of the session as well as their role in the brainstorming session. Background information, if available, should also be distributed to participants prior to the session.
2. The atmosphere of the meeting should be loose and informal.
3. Make sure that no idea is ruled out because it’s too wild. Try to avoid judging ideas.
4. A facilitator should be appointed to control the flow of information and record ideas as they develop.

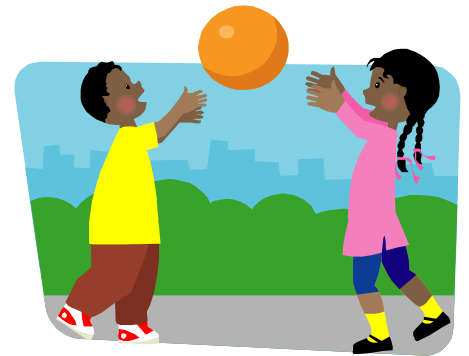


## **How to Get People to Participate in Your Meetings:**

- Try implementing comics, games or toys in your next meeting. Snacks work well too. Basically, the more informal your meetings, the more fun they’ll be to attend. Who decided that meetings have to be serious to be successful anyway?

- For a small dose of humor, show a comic strip related to each agenda item or topic you introduce. Dilbert is great for poking fun at meetings and other aspects of corporate life. If comic strips aren't an option, share humorous quotes from famous people during your meetings. The internet has a plethora of sites dedicated to famous quotes, so finding something that relates directly to your agenda topic will be quick and easy.

- A simple game involving a soft, small ball will not only help your group generate more ideas, but will also emphasize the importance of engaging in active participation during a discussion? Begin by throwing the ball to a participant, that person must comment on the subject at hand and then throws it to another participant. Each time the ball is thrown around the room, another comment or suggestion is made. This encourages every participant to contribute to the meeting discussion and provides a variety of perspectives on the issue at hand. Notice the spontaneity, smiles and overall involvement generated in the room when the entire group participates. This game is particularly effective for brainstorming sessions, since the excitement generated in the room will encourage individuals to think creatively.



- Contests or quizzes are other methods of getting your group excited about its meetings. If your meeting objective is to introduce new information, let them know there will be a quiz on the content you're going to present. At the end of your presentation, ask the group questions about the content you've just presented. Whoever provides the correct answer first, receives a prize. Not only will this generate some excitement, but you can guarantee that fewer people will be daydreaming during your presentation!



- Food is another useful device for generating excitement in your meetings. Before your meeting, tape, for example, individually-wrapped chocolates under the participants' chairs. After welcoming people to the meeting, tell the group they have "surprises" under their chairs. Everyone enjoys surprises, no matter how small! Not only is this a nice way of saying "welcome" to the meeting, but it's also an inexpensive way to create a fun and exciting tone for the meeting ahead.

## How to Maintain Your Audience's Attention?

- Think about the most interesting presentation you've ever witnessed, ask yourself why it was so interesting and then try to implement these elements in your own presentation. An hour presentation is a long time to get and maintain the audience's attention. Try interspersing lecture with Q&A sessions, brainstorming discussions, role-playing, demonstrations, multimedia segments or storytelling. Below, you'll find some other tips for creating an interesting presentation.







- Don't stand behind a podium. This creates a distance between you and the audience and a sense of formality. For a truly interesting presentation, you need to connect with your audience on a personal level. A general rule? The less formal a presentation, the better. Tell related stories. Everyone loves stories, especially when they're related to the discussion topic. Story-telling can also be an effective method of driving your point home. People remember a story and will likely carry it with them once the presentation is over.
- Move. When a speaker doesn't move during his presentation, any well-meaning audience has difficulties paying whole-hearted attention. Simply put, a static speaker produces a listless audience. Having several points from which you present proves you're alive, forces your audience to keep its eyes open and, because you are

moving, actually reduces your own stress.

- Enthusiasm is important. Everyone knows it's contagious so communicate your excitement by smiling, making eye contact and using an enthusiastic tone of voice.
- Get the audience involved. Nine times out of ten, audiences remember a session in which they participated. But make the participation voluntary and easy. Involuntary participation can be disastrous – people don't want to feel threatened and you don't want to be viewed as a tyrant.
- Demonstrate your proposition. Don't just say it! Show the audience what you mean. Lectures are verbal and usually dull, but demonstrations are graphic and add interest. Where lectures state the case, demonstrations prove it. Use visuals to get your point across.



## How to Manage Controversy and Conflict?

Let's say your meeting is deteriorating into little squabbles, people are locking horns and the discussion is going in circles. You need to alter the climate of the meeting... and fast! In a situation like this, try using the ideas outlined below:



1. Tell participants that you have watched the meeting deteriorate in the last several minutes and you want to try something to see whether it will help them.
2. Explain that you would like to have everyone abide by a stringent ground rule for the next ten minutes. Let them know it's designed to change the way meeting participants are interacting with one another, then ask participants if they will agree to do it.

Select one or more of the following rule changes:

- As each person speaks, he must first paraphrase what the previous speaker said. This ground rule will force participants to focus on views other than their own.

- Each speaker must take personal responsibility for what they say. This means the speaker can only voice opinions for them self and must insert "in my opinion" or "here's what I think" before speaking.
- Each participant will be given a quota of turns to speak. Give out a small quantity of objects (tickets, paper clips, coins) to each participant. One item must be relinquished every time a turn is taken. When their supply is exhausted, the person can only listen. This will stop certain participants from dominating the meeting discussion.



- Only questions are allowed. All participants listen to the questions on each others' minds. No responses can be given until every participant has had a chance to express one question.
- Participants must say what they like about another's idea before giving any criticism. Or they must use the phrase "This could work if..." This keeps everyone in the positive and helps avoid unhealthy criticism.

## How to Keep Meetings on Track?

The first piece of advice is to create an agenda for each and every meeting. Be sure to distribute the agenda before the meeting begins. This way, everyone understands the objective of the meeting and the preparation necessary. The agenda also acts as a schedule for the meeting and outlines all of the topics that must be addressed.



When a great idea comes up in your next meeting that isn't directly related to the topic at hand, don't let it go. Instead, jot it down on the nearest whiteboard or flip chart. Select a title for the ideas written on the whiteboard, such as 'The Parking Lot' or 'The Issue Bin.' At the end of the meeting, address the ideas you've written only if you have time. If the ideas are worth addressing but you've run out of time, schedule another meeting to discuss them. Don't discuss these 'parked' ideas during the meeting or even between agenda topics. If you attempt to address them during the meeting, you will run overtime!"

Another idea is to schedule meetings that end either at lunch or at five o'clock. You'll be surprised how few people ramble when they want the meeting to finish on time.

## How to Deal with Opposing Views?

Dealing with opposing views is never easy. If you're leading a meeting that is likely to be confrontational, you'll have to take this into account during the initial planning stage.

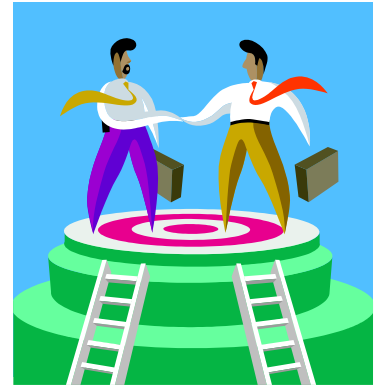
First, be very clear as to the purpose of the meeting. Before your meeting, set goals and decide upon the specific objective. Have a list of agenda items that need to be



discussed, and identify the desired outcome for each. For example, a section of your meeting agenda might look something like this:

1. *Agenda Item:* Discuss the sales budget for the upcoming quarter.  
*Objective:* Define a definite budget and allocate it across sales activities.
2. *Agenda Item:* Discuss company goals and objectives for the upcoming year.  
*Objective:* Define a set of measurable goals for the sales department to have achieved in the next year. Have accounting allocate a budget to achieve each one of those goals.

- If your discussion isn't structured, it's more likely to disintegrate into petty bickering. Attempting to reach a clearly defined objective will create a sense of unity between opposing groups, which is really the underlying purpose of your meeting.
- When you send the invitations to the meeting, ask attendees if they have any agenda item requests. If participants are able to contribute to the meeting agenda, they're less likely to feel resentful coming into the meeting. Once you've compiled the agenda, make sure everyone has access to it before the meeting. If participants come into the meeting with a better understanding of the objectives, it will help everyone understand their colleagues' motivations, before things become confrontational.



- Carefully consider who should be attending the meeting. Only invite those whose attendance is absolutely necessary. The fewer people involved, the easier it is for everyone to have their say, and the easier it is for the facilitator to keep things on track.



- During the meeting, make sure you involve as many people as possible. Ask quiet attendees for their opinions, call on a variety of people, and don't allow nonstop talkers to monopolize the discussion. You might find that it's only a few vocal individuals who are argumentative. If their involvement is limited, things may run a lot smoother.

As the meeting leader, it's also your responsibility to keep things on track. This means steering the meeting discussion in a way that fulfills the meeting objectives. If you have difficult personalities in the room or opposing views, this can be challenging! Try using sentences such as, "That's a valid point, but doesn't directly apply to this discussion. Perhaps we should schedule a separate meeting to address it fully." Or, "It's obvious there are some opposing views surrounding this issue. Perhaps our time would be best spent working towards a compromise. Any suggestions?" If a meeting becomes particularly heated, it's best to address what's possible in the meeting but consider hiring a professional facilitator for the next meeting – a neutral leader who's trained to deal with high-pressure, high-conflict meetings.



- Make sure you develop action items for issues that need follow-up. Assign a particular individual or group to complete each action item. A deadline and priority level should also be assigned for the action items. If attendees see that there is a concrete result to their meeting, they will be more open to further discussion.
- And finally, at the end of the meeting, make sure you review the meeting process. Take a few moments to discuss what the group did well during the meeting and which areas need improving. Letting everyone have their say will go a long way in reducing some of the disharmony between your groups.



## How to Deal with Chatty Meeting Participants?



A participant who is continuously chatting with their neighbor can be extremely disruptive to the entire group. You need to step in and deal with this as soon as possible, otherwise your entire meeting can disintegrate. The quickest and most effective way to deal with someone who is involved in a side conversation is to openly acknowledge their behavior. Ask if they have anything to share with the group. If they don't, ask them to save their discussion to the end of the meeting. If they do, tell them that you appreciate their comments, but next time, could they wait until the previous person has finished

speaking before interjecting. Most people only need to be challenged once, and will be sufficiently embarrassed to change their behavior.

If you would prefer to avoid any sort of conflict, you can drop a subtle hint. If someone is being particularly disruptive, ask them a direct question. This should pull their focus back to the matter at hand. Try something like, "John, what's your opinion of Betty's last point?" People hate being caught without an appropriate comment so this may scare them into listening next time!

If neither of these tips work you may have to speak with the offender outside the meeting. Pull them aside and explain that you're finding their whispering distracting. Ask if there's any way they could keep their conversations for outside of the meeting room.



## How to Take Minutes



**There are several ways to take minutes and each organization needs to choose the appropriate method for them.** A reasonable option is to record summary of debates, agreements and disagreements with a succinct explanation of the character for each. The second method is to take action minutes when decisions are reached and responsibilities are assigned. In either of these cases, make note of the following:

- The names of the people proposing any action, stating an option or making a motion
- Take down **word-for-word** any motions, resolutions, amendments, decisions or conclusions
- Who seconded the motion
- Whether the motion is approved, defeated, or withdrawn
- What assignments were made and to whom



It is very helpful for both minute taking and for those attending the meeting if either the chair or the secretary restates a motion prior to a vote and then summarizes the decisions that are reached. The summarizer should be most careful in clarifying any point of controversy.



It is the secretary's responsibility to signal the president or chairperson to ask questions regarding the subject or discussion if he or she becomes lost or unsure. A secretary should not wait until the meeting has been adjourned to get clarification; individuals may lose their perspective, issues may become less important, or one's memory may alter what actually occurred.

Immediately after the meeting, the secretary must go over the notes while everything is still fresh, ensuring they check their notes for the following:

- Type of meeting
- Date, time, and place
- List of attendees and those absent
- Time of call to order
- Approval and/or amendments to previous meeting minutes
- Record of reports from standing and special committees
- General matters
- Record of proposals, resolutions, motions, seconding, any final disposition, and a summary of the discussion; also a record of vote
- Time of adjournment
- Nomination of submission and transcriber's name

Once the minutes have been transcribed into draft form, they should be submitted to the president or chairperson for review and/or correction. Finally, once they are returned, they need to be prepared in a formal draft, preferably agreed upon before hand, for final approval at the next meeting. Minutes should be sent out to all members within 3 to 4 days of the meeting. This allows members time to read the minutes for accuracy before the next meeting and while the previous meeting is still fresh in their minds.

## Tips While You're Taking Minutes

- It is a good idea to sit as close as possible to the chair of the meeting as this will allow you to hear everything and to ask for clarification without having to raise your voice.
- Make note not only of the concerns, but also of any accomplishments discussed in the meeting.
- Write things as they happen. For example, if someone said something about one subject, then you moved on to another issue, but something else happened about the first subject, don't group them together.



- Make sure you have the correct name spellings, contact email addresses and telephone numbers.
- Remember, minutes are very important. They are saved and might be referred to for years and years to come. If it is a legal matter, someone's reputation may depend on it.
- Remember, even though you are taking notes, you may still participate in the debates.
- Have people write down their motions so their ideas are not misinterpreted.

- Read certain parts of Robert's Rules of Order, such as the section on being a secretary.
- Consider learning shorthand or using a laptop to take the minutes.



### Warnings

- Don't give yourself too much work by putting too much detail in the minutes.
- Don't be afraid to interrupt and ask for clarification.
- Try and send out copies of the minutes as soon as possible.
- Type up your draft as soon as possible.

### Check that your minutes

- provide a true, impartial and balanced account of the proceedings;
- are written in clear, concise and unambiguous language;
- are as concise as is compatible with the degree of accuracy required;
- follow a method of presentation which helps the reader assimilate the contents.



### Once the minutes have been drafted

- Ask the chairperson to check them.



- Circulate the minutes to anyone who will be expected to act upon them. It is a good idea to clearly identify these people by putting their names in an “action” column on the right of the page and opposite the appropriate references in the text.
- If someone asks for a correction, try to negotiate an acceptable form of words. However, do not be fooled by people who want you to report what they *should* have said, not what they *actually* said.
- At the following meeting these minutes will be discussed and any arguments over them will be resolved.
- The chairperson will then sign them as correct.
- Keep these minutes filed in a safe place.



## Suitable Format

Headings in the minutes of a meeting should broadly correspond with those which appear in its agenda, as follows:

1. Heading (including where and when the meeting was held)
2. Present (who was there)
3. Apologies for Absence (who should have been there, but was not)
4. Minutes of the Previous Meeting (note: any corrections and state “The minutes were accepted as a true record of the meeting [with the above corrections]”)
5. Simple statements of what actually occurred at the meeting
6. Any Other Business (the “leftovers”)
7. Date of Next Meeting (also give the time and location).



# Checklist on How to Run an Effective Meeting

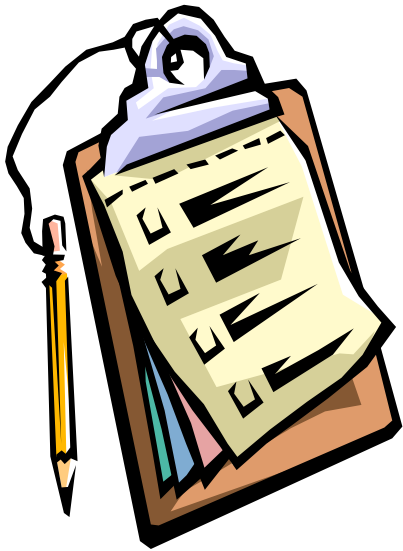
## Top 5 Rules of a Good Meeting

### 1. Set goal(s) for the meeting and prepare an agenda.

- Prepare yourself - prioritize issues to be discussed, issues from previous meetings
- Consult with other members and exec board to finalize agenda
- Research information necessary for making important decisions

### 2. Arrange all logistics.

- Find a comfortable and convenient meeting place
- Arrange in advance for A-V equipment, flip charts, markers, and other supplies
- Arrive early to set up
- Check for adequate lighting, ventilation, heat
- Set up seating arrangements
- Prepare directional signs and post in key spots of building
- Provide nametags
- Greet people as they arrive
- Supply refreshments, if appropriate
- Locate nearest restrooms



### 3. Send out announcements, invitations, and reminders for meeting.

- Invite guest speakers to present on special topics/issues
- Invite all relevant constituents, target audience
- Send general and personal invitations early, send reminders
- Circulate agenda, minutes and background information in advance

### 4. Be courteous, respectful, and inclusive.

- Start and finish meeting on time
- Set a welcoming tone: introductions (ice breaker)
- Engage all participants during meeting

### 5. Bring closure.

- Come to resolutions
- Preparing an action plan
- Summarize main points and what and how follow-up will be accomplished
- Plan next meeting





# Sample Minutes

Name of Committee  
Day & Date  
Time  
Location

## MINUTES

**PRESENT:** A list of first and last names of all those present at the meeting

**REGRETS:** A list of first and last names of Committee members who have contacted the Chairman to let them know that they will be unable to attend the meeting

**ABSENT:** A list of first and last names of Committee members who DID NOT contact the Chairman to let them know that they won't be in attendance

### 1. CALL TO ORDER/OPENING REMARKS

- Time that the Chairperson called the meeting to order.
- Any opening remarks from the Chairperson summarize here

### 2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM (DATE) (You need a motion to approve the minutes of the previous meeting as circulated or a motion to approve the minutes as amended. If any corrections are needed to the minutes.)

**Motion:** To approve the minutes of (DATE) as circulated (or AMENDED)

**Motion By:** Name of person (FIRST & LAST) who made the motion

**Seconded By:** Name of the person (FIRST & LAST) who seconded the motion

**Carried or Defeated**

### 3. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA (If anyone has an item that they would like to be added to the agenda they would bring it up here and ask the Chair if the item maybe added to the agenda or can be added to the next meeting's agenda. See #8 below for added items to current meeting agenda.)

### 4. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

**Motion:** to approve the agenda as circulated (or AMENDED)

**Motion By:** name of person (FIRST & LAST) who made the motion

**Seconded By:** name of person (FIRST & LAST) who made the motion

**Carried or Defeated**

### 5. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

- a. Outstanding Items from the previous meeting that need to be updated or discussed further
- b. Outstanding Items from the previous meeting that need to be updated or discussed further
- c. Outstanding Items from the previous meeting that need to be updated or discussed further

## 6. ITEM # 1 TO BE DISCUSSED

- Put a summary of the discussion around the topic
- If a motion was made put the information in here
- If further information is needed agree on who is to do the follow up and put their name and a timeline that this information will be completed

**Task:** put who is to do it and when it is to be completed by (DATE)

## 7. ITEM #2 TO BE DISCUSSED

- Put a summary of the discussion around the topic
- If a motion was made put the information in here
- If further information is needed agree on who is to do the follow up and put their name and a timeline that this information will be completed

**Task:** put who is to do it and when it is to be completed by (DATE)

## 8. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

### a) Added agenda Item # 1

- Put a summary of the discussion around the topic
- If a motion was made put the information in here
- If further information is needed agree on who is to do the follow up and put their name and a timeline that this information will be completed

**Task:** put who is to do it and when it is to be completed by (DATE)

### b) Added agenda Item # 2

- Put a summary of the discussion around the topic
- If a motion was made put the information in here
- If further information is needed agree on who is to do the follow up and put their name and a timeline that this information will be completed

**Task:** put who is to do it and when it is to be completed by (DATE)

## 9. ADJOURNMENT (Record the time the Chair adjourned the meeting.)

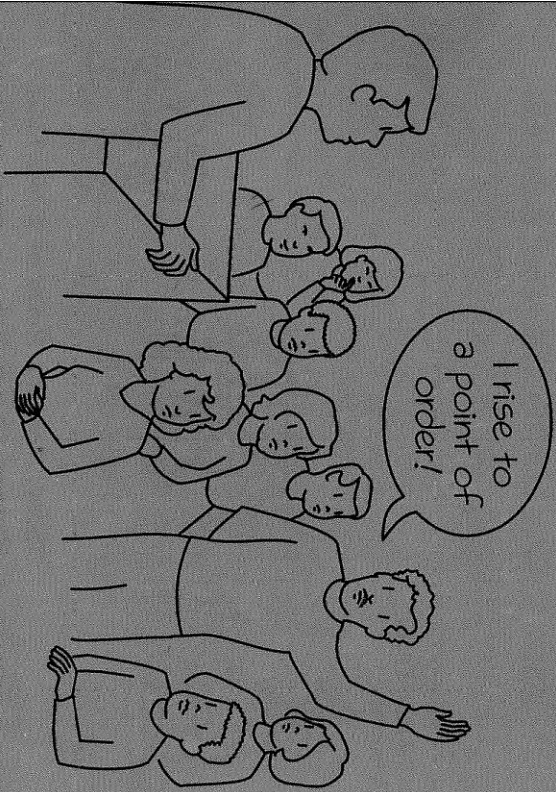
## 10. NEXT MEETING (DATE) (The next meeting date should be decided before everyone leaves the meeting. It is a handy reminder to put it at the bottom of the minutes.)

---

### NOTE:

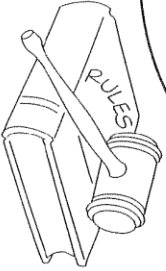
- ✓ The minutes should be completed by the Recording Secretary and forwarded to the Chairperson to review prior to being sent out to the rest of the Committee. The minutes should be distributed no more than 2 weeks after the meeting was held. The minutes are a reminder of the tasks that need to be completed and items to be followed up on.
- ✓ A copy of the minutes should also be saved for future references.

# The a-b-c's of PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE



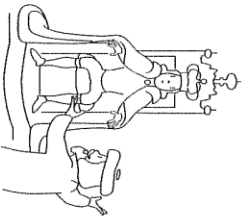
# WHAT IS PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE?

It's a set of rules for conducting business at meetings and public gatherings.

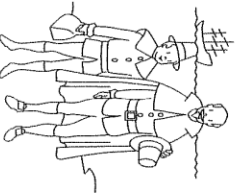


## PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE HAS A LONG HISTORY

**IT ORIGINATED**  
in the early English Parliaments.



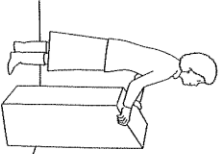
**IT CAME TO AMERICA**  
with the first European settlers.



**IT BECAME UNIFORM**  
in 1876, when Henry M. Robert published his manual on Parliamentary Law.



Today, *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*, 10th Edition, is the basic handbook of operation for many clubs, organizations and other groups.



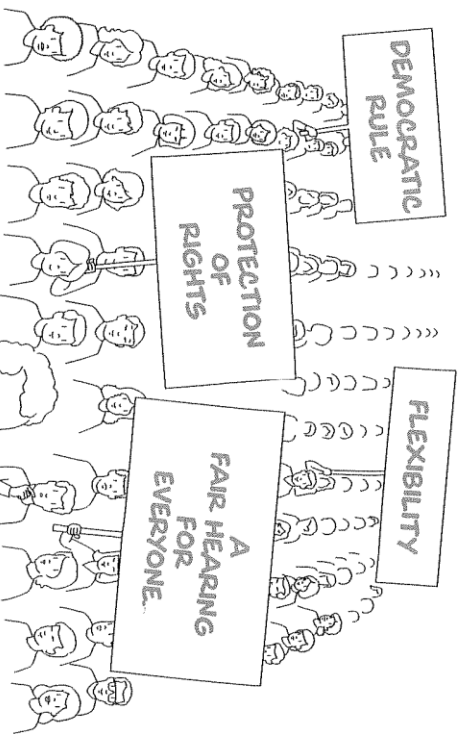
Note: A glossary and index are on page 14.

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Because it allows everyone to be heard and to make decisions without confusion.

# WHY IS PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE IMPORTANT?

## PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE MEANS:

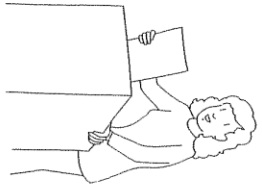


It can be adapted to fit the needs of any organization.

So, it's important for everyone to know these basic rules!

# A FIXED AGENDA,

or order of business, is generally followed by organizations using parliamentary procedure. Here's a typical example:



## 1. CALL TO ORDER

If a quorum\* is present, the chair (the person conducting the meeting) says, "The meeting will come to order."

## 2. MINUTES

The secretary reads a record of the previous meeting.

## 3. OFFICERS' REPORTS

Officers and standing (permanent) committees may report on their activities. Some only report at annual meetings.

## 4. REPORTS OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Special (temporary) committees report on the tasks for which they were created.

## 5. SPECIAL ORDERS

This is important business previously designated for consideration at this meeting.

## 6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

This is business that has come over from the previous meeting.

## 7. NEW BUSINESS

New topics are introduced.

## 8. ANNOUNCEMENTS

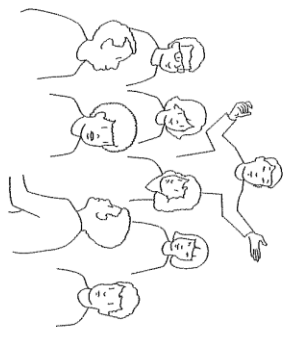
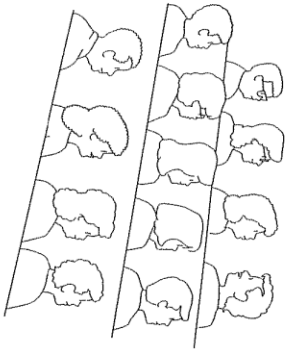
These inform the assembly (the people at the meeting) of other subjects and events.

## 9. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting ends by a vote or by general consent (or by the chair's decision if the time of adjournment was prearranged by vote).

\*A quorum is the number or percentage of members that must be present for business to be conducted legally. The actual number is usually stated in the bylaws.

Note: Some assemblies may hold electronic meetings, such as videoconferences or teleconferences. These assemblies may need to modify some rules for obtaining the floor, but they should still follow the other rules of parliamentary procedure.

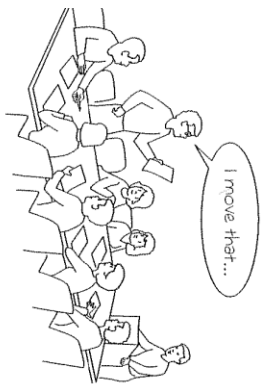


**HOW DO MEMBERS GET THEIR SAY?**

They make motions. A motion is a proposal that the assembly take a stand or take action on some issue. Members have a right to:

### PRESENT MOTIONS

(make a proposal)



### SECOND MOTIONS

(express support for discussion of another member's motion)



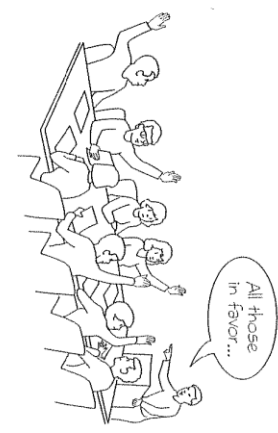
### DEBATE MOTIONS

(give opinions on the motion)



### VOTE ON MOTIONS

(make a decision).

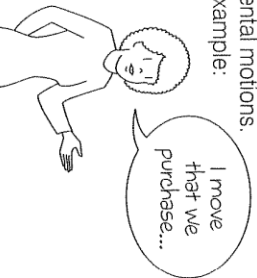


# THERE ARE 5 GENERAL TYPES OF MOTIONS

## 1 MAIN MOTIONS

These introduce subjects for consideration. They cannot be made when another motion is before the assembly. They yield to privileged, subsidiary and incidental motions.

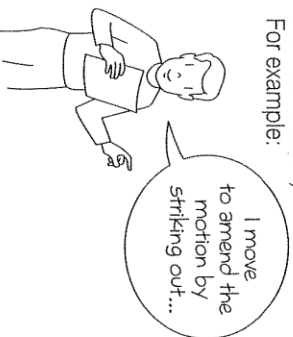
For example:



## 2 SUBSIDIARY MOTIONS

These change or affect how the main motion is handled. (They are voted on before the main motion.)

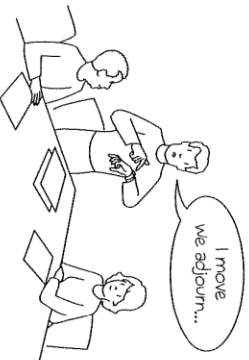
For example:



## 3 PRIVILEGED MOTIONS

These concern special or important matters not related to pending business. In general, they are considered before other types of motions.

For example:



## 4 INCIDENTAL MOTIONS

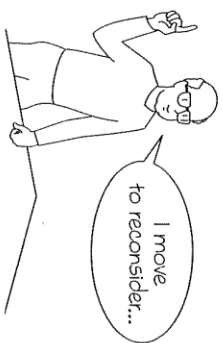
These are questions of procedure that arise out of other motions. They must be considered before the other motion. For example:



## 5 MOTIONS THAT BRING A QUESTION AGAIN BEFORE THE ASSEMBLY

These enable certain items to be reconsidered. In general, they are brought up when no business is pending.

For example:



## SOME QUESTIONS RELATING TO MOTIONS:

### IS IT IN ORDER?

Your motion must relate to the business at hand and be presented at the right time. It must not be obstructive, frivolous or against the bylaws.

### MAY I INTERRUPT THE SPEAKER?

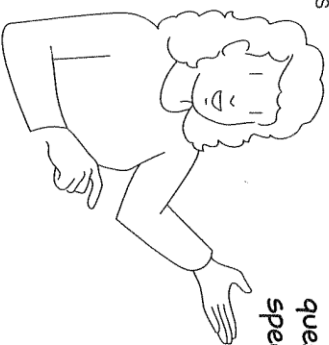
Some motions are so important that the speaker may be interrupted to make them. The original speaker regains the floor after the interruption has been attended to.

### DO I NEED A SECOND?

Usually, yes. A second indicates that another member would like to consider your motion. It prevents spending time on a question that interests only one person.

### IS IT DEBATABLE?

Parliamentary procedure guards the right to free and full debate on most motions. However, some subsidiary, privileged and incidental motions are not debatable.



### CAN IT BE AMENDED?

Some motions can be changed by striking out or inserting wording, or both. Amendments must relate to the subject as presented in the main motion.

### WHAT VOTE IS NEEDED?

Most require only a majority vote (more than half the members present and voting). But, motions concerning the rights of the assembly or its members need a  $\frac{2}{3}$  vote to be adopted.

### CAN IT BE RECONSIDERED?

Some motions can be debated again and revoted to give members a chance to change their minds. The motion to reconsider must come from the winning side.

The table on pages 8 and 9 answers these questions for some specific motions.

# PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE AT A GLANCE

Here are some motions you might make, how to make them, and what to expect of the rules.

TO DO THIS:	YOU SAY THIS:	MAY YOU INTERRUPT THE SPEAKER?	DO YOU NEED A SECOND?	IS IT DEBATABLE?	CAN IT BE AMENDED?	WHAT VOTE IS NEEDED?	CAN IT BE RECONSIDERED?
ADJOURN MEETING	"I move to adjourn."	NO	YES	NO	NO	MAJORITY	NO
CALL AN INTERMISSION	"I move to recess for..."	NO	YES	NO ❶	YES	MAJORITY	NO
COMPLAIN ABOUT HEAT, NOISE, ETC.	"I rise to a question of privilege."	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO VOTE	NO
TEMPORARILY SUSPEND CONSIDERATION OF AN ISSUE	"I move to lay the motion on the table."	NO	YES	NO	NO	MAJORITY	NO ❷
END DEBATE AND AMENDMENTS	"I move the previous question."	NO	YES	NO	NO	½	YES ❸
POSTPONE DISCUSSION FOR A CERTAIN TIME	"I move to postpone the discussion until..."	NO	YES	YES	YES	MAJORITY	YES
GIVE CLOSER STUDY OF SOMETHING	"I move to refer the matter to committee."	NO	YES	YES	YES	MAJORITY	YES ❹
AMEND A MOTION	"I move to amend the motion by..."	NO	YES	YES ❺	YES	MAJORITY	YES
INTRODUCE BUSINESS	"I move that..."	NO	YES	YES	YES	MAJORITY	YES

## THE MOTIONS LISTED ABOVE ARE IN ORDER OF PRECEDENCE... BELOW, THERE IS NO ORDER...

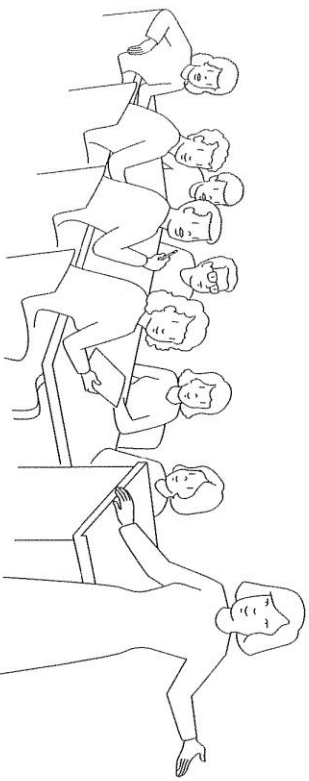
PROTEST BREACH OF RULES OR CONDUCT	"I rise to a point of order."	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO VOTE ❶	NO
VOTE ON A RULING OF THE CHAIR	"I appeal from the chair's decision."	YES	YES	YES	NO	MAJORITY	YES
SUSPEND RULES TEMPORARILY	"I move to suspend the rules so that..."	NO	YES	NO	NO	½	NO
AVOID CONSIDERING AN IMPROPER MATTER	"I object to consideration of this motion."	YES	NO	NO	NO	½ ❷	YES ❸
VERIFY A VOICE VOTE BY HAVING MEMBERS STAND	"I call for a division," or "Division!"	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO VOTE	NO
REQUEST INFORMATION	"Point of information..."	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO VOTE	NO
TAKE UP A MATTER PREVIOUSLY TABLED	"I move to take from the table..."	NO	YES	NO	NO	MAJORITY	NO
RECONSIDER A HASTY ACTION	"I move to reconsider the vote on..."	YES ❹	YES	YES ❺	NO	MAJORITY	NO

NOTES: ❶ Unless moved when no question is pending. ❷ Affirmative votes may not be reconsidered. ❸ Unless the vote on question has begun. ❹ Unless the committee has already taken up the subject. ❺ Unless the motion to be amended is not debatable.

❶ Unless the chair submits to the assembly for decision. ❷ A ½ vote in negative is needed to prevent consideration of the main motion. ❸ Only if the speaker has the floor but has not actually begun to speak. ❹ Unless the motion to be reconsidered is not debatable.

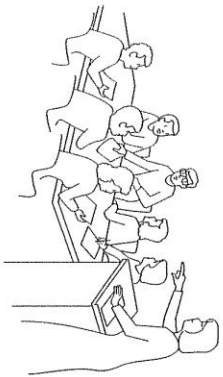
## HOW DO I PRESENT MY MOTION?

Here's what happens when you want a motion considered:



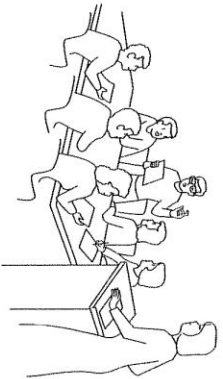
### 1 YOU OBTAIN THE FLOOR

- Wait until the previous speaker is finished.
- Rise and address the chair. Say, "Mr. (or Madam) Chairperson" or "Mr. (or Madam) President."
- Give your name. The chair will recognize you by repeating it.



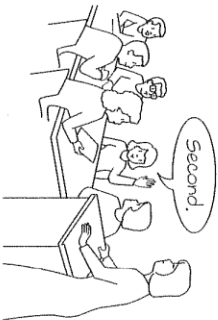
### 2 YOU MAKE YOUR MOTION

- Speak clearly and concisely.
- State your motion affirmatively. Say, "I move that we do..." instead of "I move that we do not..."
- Stay on the subject and avoid personal attacks.



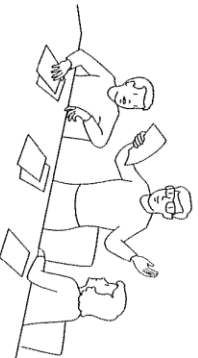
### 3 YOU WAIT FOR A SECOND

- Another member will say, "I second the motion."
  - Or, the chair will call for a second.
  - If there is no second, your motion will not be considered.
- Motions made at the direction of a board or committee (of more than one person) do not require a second.



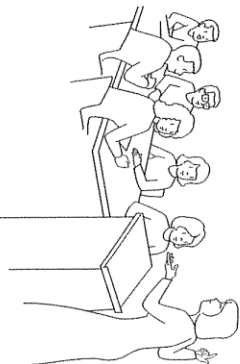
### 4 YOU EXPAND ON YOUR MOTION

- As the person who made the motion, you are allowed to speak first.
- Direct all comments to the chair.
- Keep to the time limit for speaking.
- You may speak again after all other speakers are finished.
- You may speak a third time by a motion to suspend the rules with a 2/3 vote.



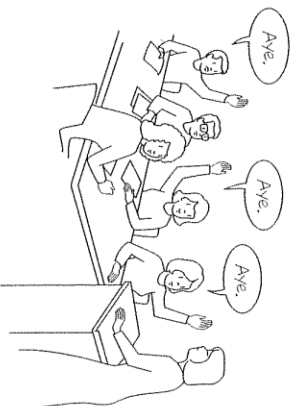
### 5 THE CHAIR STATES YOUR MOTION

- The chair must say, "It is moved and seconded that we..."
- After this happens, debate or voting can occur.
- Your motion is now "assembly property," and you can't change it without consent of the members.



### 6 THE CHAIR PUTS THE QUESTION

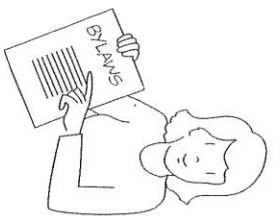
- The chair asks, "Are you ready for the question?"
- If there is no more debate, or if a motion to stop debate is adopted, a vote is taken.
- The chair announces the results.





# THE METHOD OF VOTING ON A MOTION

depends on the situation and on the bylaws of your organization. You may vote by:



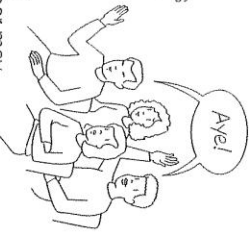
## SHOW OF HANDS

Members raise their hands to verify a voice vote, or as an alternative to it. This does not require a count. A member may move for an exact count.



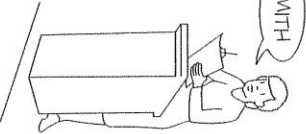
## VOICE

The chair asks those in favor to say "aye" and those opposed to say "no" (for majority votes only). A member may move for an exact count.



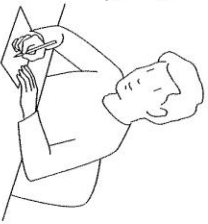
## ROLL CALL

If a record of each person's vote is needed, each member answers "yes," "no" or "present" (indicating the choice not to vote) as his or her name is called.



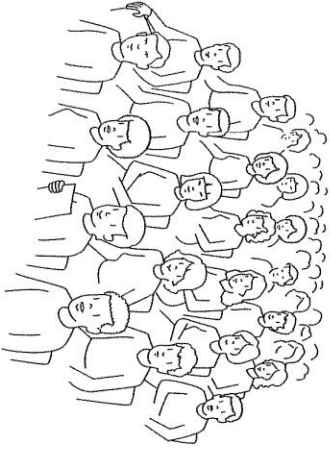
## BALLOT

Members write their vote on a slip of paper. This is done when secrecy is desired.



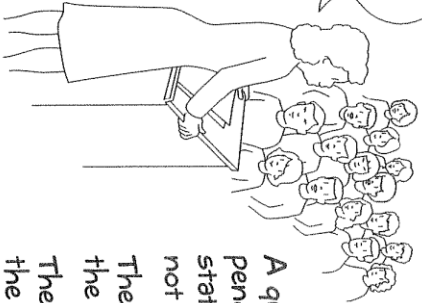
## GENERAL CONSENT

When a motion isn't likely to be opposed, the chair says, "If there is no objection..." Members show consent by their silence. If someone says, "I object," the matter must be put to a vote.



# MORE ABOUT VOTING

Are we ready for the question?



A question (motion) is pending when it has been stated by the chair but not yet voted on. The last motion stated by the chair is the first pending. The main motion is always the last voted on.

## A MOTION TO LAY ON THE TABLE

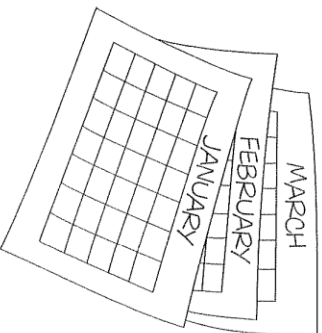
This motion is used to lay something aside temporarily to take care of a more urgent matter. It should not be used to prevent debate or to kill a question.

Members can "take from the table" a motion for reconsideration. This must happen by the end of the current or next session (depending on how soon the next session is scheduled).

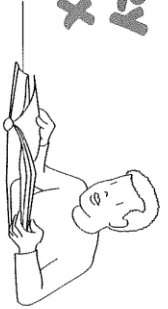


## A MOTION TO POSTPONE INDEFINITELY

This is parliamentary strategy. It allows members to dispose of a motion without making a decision for or against. This is useful in case of a badly chosen main motion for which either a "yes" or "no" vote would have undesirable consequences.



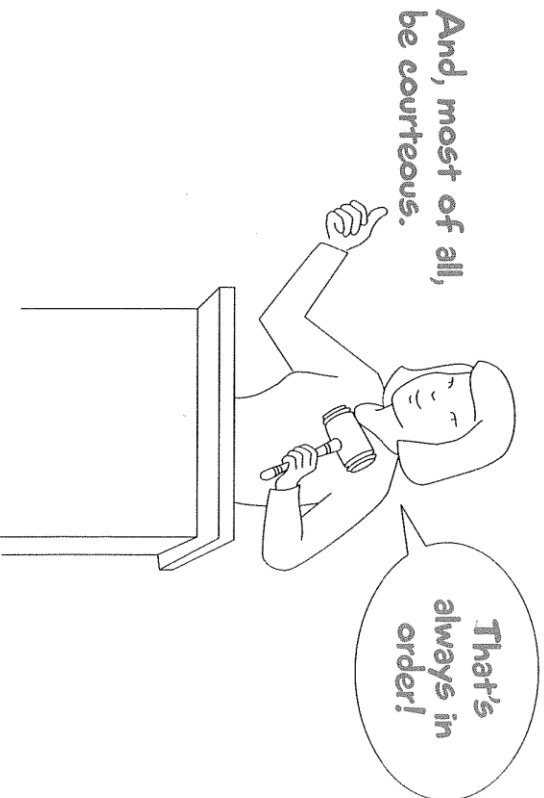
# GLOSSARY AND INDEX



	Page		Page
<b>ADJOURN</b>		<b>MOTION</b>	
To end the meeting		A proposal that the assembly take a stand or take action on some issue	
Ways to adjourn . . . . .	4	Types of motions . . . . .	6, 13
How to move to adjourn . . . . .	8-9	Procedures affecting motions . . . . .	6-7
		Typical motions . . . . .	8-9
<b>AGENDA</b>		How to make a motion . . . . .	10-11
Business to be considered during a meeting . . . . .	4		
<b>AMEND</b>		<b>QUORUM</b>	
To change a motion		Number or percentage of members that must be present to conduct business legally . . . . .	4
Ways to amend . . . . .	7		
How to move to amend . . . . .	8-9	<b>SECOND</b>	
		A verbal signal from a member that he or she wishes to consider a motion just made	
<b>COMMITTEE</b>		Members' right . . . . .	5
A group of members chosen for a certain task . . . . .	4	When required . . . . .	7-9
		How to give a second . . . . .	11
<b>DEBATE</b>			
Discussion about a motion		<b>VOTING</b>	
Members' right . . . . .	5	Means by which motions are accepted or rejected by the assembly	
When to debate . . . . .	7-9	Members' right . . . . .	5
Rules on debate . . . . .	11	What vote is needed . . . . .	7-9
		Method of voting . . . . .	12
<b>GENERAL CONSENT</b>			
Adopting a motion without a vote . . . . .	12		
<b>IN ORDER</b>			
Relevant to the business at hand . . . . .	7		
<b>MAJORITY</b>			
More than half of the members present and voting			
In voting . . . . .	7		
When required . . . . .	8-9		

# So... PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE HELPS GET THINGS DONE

- ✓ **MAKE MOTIONS** that are in order.
- ✓ **OBTAIN THE FLOOR** properly.
- ✓ **SPEAK** clearly and concisely.
- ✓ **OBEY** the rules of debate.



And, most of all, be courteous.