

Meeting Management Rules of Order

The most productive meetings are those that provide for an open (but controlled) discussion in a relaxed atmosphere. As you preside over meetings, your leadership style will establish the pace and mood. When deciding on important issues, many leaders conduct meetings using Robert's Rules of Order.

Tips on Using Robert's Rules of order

1. Before an issue can be discussed, you must call a motion.
2. Discussion comes after the motion is seconded and before any vote.
3. Motions are amended by inserting, adding, striking out or substituting.
4. A motion can have only two amendments and the second one must apply to the first.
5. The chair should always restate the motion and any amendments.
6. You may sense when discussion is completed and "Are you ready for the question?"
7. A motion postponed indefinitely is dead, or at least until the next meeting.
8. You can limit debate by general consent: "If no one objects, we will limit debate to 5 more minutes." An objection requires a 2/3 vote to limit.
9. A motion to reconsider a matter can only be rescinded by someone who voted on the prevailing side.
10. A motion to recess for a specific amount of time is not debatable and may be useful to cool debate or to caucus to decide the best course.
11. The chair should announce the results of a vote and the effect of the decision. "The ayes have it and the bill will be paid."
12. Debate always is confined to the pending motion, may be started by the person who made the motion, requires recognition of the speaker by the chair, is directed to the chair, gives all a chance to speak before someone else speaks twice, prohibits the motion maker from speaking against the motion.