

ROBERT'S RULES

1 THE MOTION

You make a motion by raising your hand to get the chair's attention.

After the chair has recognized you, you rise and say to the chair, "I move that we..." and state your motion. You may make a motion when you want the group to take some action:

To send a letter, to instruct a local bargaining committee to seek a wage increase, to accept a report, to spend money to improve the local union hall, to hold a special meeting, to spend money for some special purpose, etc.

It is customary in union meetings, when recognized by the chair, to preface your remarks to the chair with "thank you" and to give the reason you are speaking: "Thank you. I rise to make a motion."

2 THE AMENDMENT

Amendments are offered in the same way as motions and are introduced to assist in changing, modifying, or completing a motion to make it more acceptable to the assembly. You may offer such an amendment when

- › You agree substantially with the motion that has been made but want to make some change before it is adopted.

FOR EXAMPLE

A motion has been made to hold a special local union meeting, but no date has been specified. You want to be sure the meeting will be held at a time when all members can attend.

OR

- › You disagree with the motion, but think it may pass, you may want to amend the motion to make it somewhat acceptable.

FOR EXAMPLE

A motion has been made to purchase union jackets. You may want to amend the motion to limit the amount of the total expenditure.

3 AMENDING THE AMENDMENT

Just as a motion may be amended, an amendment may also be changed in the same way. As with the first amendment, any or all amendments must relate to the motion for it to be in order. The main motion can only have one (1) amendment at a time. Likewise, the amendment can only have one (1) amendment (amendment to the amendment). Once the amendment to the amendment has been voted on, another amendment to the amendment would be in order.

4 SPEAKING ON MOTIONS OR AMENDMENTS

When you want to speak at a meeting, you raise your hand, asking the chair for recognition. As soon as you are recognized by the chair you may proceed to speak whether for or against the motion or amendments that are being considered. Motions or amendments are proper only after they have been offered to and accepted by the chair, and have been supported (seconded) by someone in the group.

5 HOW TO END DEBATE

If you think there has been too much discussion of any issue being considered by your local union meeting, you may try to close the discussion. You do this by getting recognition from the chair after which you say "I call for the previous question" or "I would like to call the question." If seconded, the chair must put this to a vote of the body without debate. Two-thirds of the members present and voting can vote to end debate. If enough votes are cast for the previous question, debate on the issue ends and the chair must call for an immediate vote.

6 HOW TO TABLE

If you feel that the motion before the meeting should be delayed so that more information can be made available, you may move a motion to table. If seconded and the motion to table passes, the main motion is put aside. No action is taken, and the meeting goes on to the other business. If the motion to table is defeated, discussion on the main motion continues. A motion to table is not debatable or amendable; and should be put to an immediate vote by the chair. You could say "I move that we table the motion."

7 REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

If at any time during the meeting you are confused about the business being discussed, or if you want the motion that is being considered more clearly explained, you may rise to ask the chair for a point of information. After you are recognized, ask for the explanation you desire. With only a few limitations, a point of information is in order at almost any time during a meeting. This priority motion is to receive information, not to give information. You can say "I rise for information." A point of information can interrupt a speaker.

8 POINT OF ORDER

If you believe the Chair has not followed Robert's Rules or that the person who is speaking is not talking about the business being considered or is speaking out of turn, you may raise a point of order and state your objection to the Chair. The Chair is required to rule on your point of order. A point of order can interrupt a speaker.

9 APPEAL FOR THE CHAIR

If you disagree with a ruling of the Chair on a point of order, you may appeal the decision of the chair. After you make such an appeal, it must be supported by at least one other member. The chair must be turned over to the next highest-ranking officer. You will then be given an opportunity to state your reasons for believing the chair should be overruled. Then, the chair who made the ruling will also have an opportunity to give their reasons for the ruling. No one else may participate in this discussion. The acting chair will then place your appeal before the group for a vote. The group will then, by majority vote, overrule your appeal and uphold the chair, or support your opinion by overruling the chair. Since appeals of the decision of the chair tend to delay meeting, they are used only when the rulings of the chair are of such very great importance that the member cannot in good conscience allow them to stand.

10 ADJOURNMENT

You cannot interrupt a speaker and you must wait your turn to make a motion to adjourn. A motion to adjourn requires a seconder and is not debatable. It requires a simple majority. If passed, the meeting is adjourned. If not, the meeting continues.

If an agenda is approved that includes an adjournment time, this motion could be ruled out of order.