

Managing Meetings That Are More Structured

Introduction

While most organizations have formally adopted Robert's Rules of Order, most meetings are conducted in a less formal manner. This document was created to assist those individuals who wish to engage in more formal meetings on an ongoing basis or to move to a more formal meeting, as needed, from time to time.

The Role of the Meeting Chairperson

1. Takes note of the names and number of members who are present and determine if there is a quorum. If there is not a quorum, the meeting is cancelled.
2. If an adequate number of members are present, the chairperson calls the meeting to order.
3. Reviews the agenda and modifies it based on input from those attending the meeting. Shares any announcements and completes any housekeeping.
4. Asks if there are any issues regarding the accuracy of the minutes from the last meeting. Once this discussion is complete, the chairperson approves the minutes as presented or approves the minutes as corrected. The chairperson may ask for a motion to adopt the minutes if there were disputes as to accuracy of the minutes.
5. Invites each member who has an item on the agenda to speak to that item when it comes up.
 - 6.1 Accepts one motion at a time during the discussion of an agenda item.
 - 6.2 Asks for another member to second a motion. If the motion is not seconded, it is dropped.
 - 6.3 Ensures the motion is understood by other members.
 - 6.4 Encourages members to discuss the motion
 - 6.5 During discussion, allows a motion to be amended by another member. Ensures the mover and seconder of the original motion consent to the amendment. If the amendment is considered "friendly" by the chairperson, then the amendment will not require a seconder and is not debated. If an amendment is not deemed friendly by the chair, it does require a seconder. An unfriendly motion must be debated and then voted on before discussion returns to the original motion.
 - 6.6 During discussion, allows a member to raise a "Point of order" if the member feels the meeting is not proceeding correctly or if the member does not understand what is going on at the meeting. Points of Order do not require a seconder, nor do they allow debate. The chairperson must either agree or disagree with the member's point of order.
 - 6.7 During discussion, if a member feels a motion needs to be postponed to a future date may "move to table a motion." The chair will ask for a seconder, allow discussion, and then call for a vote.

- 6.8 Following discussion of a motion, the chairperson asks members to vote on it. However, a member may call for a vote on a motion sooner than the chairperson by saying “call the question.” The chairperson may or may not accept this action.
- 6.9 Following the vote, the chairperson announces the results (e.g., motion carried, or motion defeated). Please refer to the chart below to view other types of motions.
7. Chairperson moves on to next agenda item.
8. Prior to the conclusion of the meeting the chair asks, “Is there anything else on a committee member’s mind?”
9. At the conclusion of the meeting, members will agree on the date, time, and place of the next meeting.
10. If it is determined that an agenda item is highly sensitive, the chairperson may have that agenda item discussed in private (commonly referred to as “executive session” or “In camera”). This will require all non-voting individuals to leave the meeting. Specific guests may be asked to remain.
11. The chairperson will adjourn the meeting unless moved by a member in advance.
12. Minutes of the meeting are sent to members for review prior to the next meeting.

Quick Reference					
	Must Be Seconded	Open for Discussion	Can be Amended	Vote Count Required to Pass	May be Reconsidered or Rescinded
Main Motion	✓	✓	✓	Majority	✓
Amend Motion	✓	✓	✓	Majority	✓
Kill a Motion	✓			Majority	✓
Limit Debate	✓		✓	2/3rds.	✓
Close Discussion	✓			2/3rds	✓
Recess	✓		✓	Majority	
Terminate (End meeting)	✓			Majority	
Refer to Committee	✓	✓	✓	Majority	✓
Postpone to a Later Time	✓	✓	✓	Majority	✓
Table	✓			Majority	
Postpone Indefinitely	✓	✓	✓	Majority	✓

Note: This document was adopted from *Roberts Rules of Order*, Newly Revised 10th edition, Perseus Publications. 2000.