

Making Motions

1. Propose the Motion

Member raises hand to address the presiding officer and waits to be recognized.

The presiding officer recognizes the member. Member proposes a motion. When a member of the assembly wishes to discuss a topic or agenda item, he/she must first move that it be approved for discussion. To introduce a motion, say **“I move that ...” followed by a statement of the proposal.** The motion is not discussed until it has been seconded by someone and stated in full by the chair.

2. Seconding the Motion

Once the initial motion has been made, the topic will be discussed only after another Senator has seconded the motion by saying **“I second the motion.”** If no one seconds the motion, the chair may ask, “Did the chair hear a second to the motion?” If there is none, the chair will declare, “The motion is lost for want of a second.” ***The purpose of requiring a seconding of a motion is to confirm that more than one member of the assembly wishes to discuss it. Seconding a motion does not necessarily signify agreement with the motion; a Senator may second a motion only to secure closure on an issue.***

The chair restates the motion in full after it has been properly made and seconded.

3. Discuss the Motion

In the course of discussion or debate of the motion, a Senator may apply to speak by raising his/her hand. If the application is recognized, the President will say “The chair recognizes “name.” Once recognized, the Senator may speak. While another person is speaking, the other members of the assembly will give that speaker their full attention. No one may raise their hand or speak until the speaker has finished other than to ask a question related to the topic under discussion. The motion can be withdrawn by the motioner, amended by any member or voted on. On any given topic, discussion will be limited to 15 minutes unless the assembly decides it requires more and votes to extend the time allowed.

4. Vote on the Motion

The Presiding officer calls for a vote on the motion (“putting the motion to a vote”) when all members have finished discussion or he/she deems the discussion has become redundant. He/she will ask for any further discussion. If none, the discussion is closed. The chair will then take the vote by announcing: **“All in favor of the motion** to (restate the motion) raise their right hand over their head. After that count is taken, the chair will ask **“all those opposed”** followed by **“all abstaining.”** Hands should remain raised until the secretary can count the votes in each category.

5. Announce and record the vote

The chair states, “the ayes have it and the motion is carried” or “the nays have it and the motion is lost.” At that point the Secretary records the motion originator, seconder, the motion, any amendments and the vote count for the minutes. (Unanimous, In favor of, Opposed to, Abstained)

How to Change a Motion:

When you want to change a motion that is on the floor, you must first be recognized. Then you say, “I move to amend the motion by (and state your change precisely).”

There are three ways to change a motion:

- a. By adding –add something to the original motion
- b. By striking out – strike out something from the original motion
- c. By striking out and inserting—striking out something from the original motion and inserting something else in its place

An amendment must have direct bearing on the main motion.

When an original motion has been amended, there is a specific order of voting.

1. Amendments are voted upon in order before the group can consider the main motion.
2. After discussion, if necessary, the vote is taken on the amendment to the motion. If this amendment passes, then the motion is amended.
3. After discussion of the amended motion, the motion is voted on. The vote is taken on the main motion as amended.

For additional information, consult Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised.