



Six Steps to Every Motion

Source: Robert's Rules of Order, 10th Edition, p. 31-54

1. A member raises hand, is recognized, and makes a motion.

Common Mistake: Members do not raise hand, do not wait to be recognized, and typically start to discuss their motion before completing steps 2, 3, and 4 below.

2. Another member seconds the motion.

The purpose of requiring a second is to prevent time being wasted by the assembly's having to dispose of a motion that only one person wants to see introduced. Hearing a second to a motion is guidance to the chair that he should state the question on the motion, thereby placing it before the assembly.

Common Mistake: The person seconding the motion dives into the merits of the motion.

3. The presiding officer restates the motion to the assembly.

Common Mistake: Motion is restated differently from the wording of the maker. Beware because the motion that is adopted is the one stated by the presiding officer, not the one stated by the maker of the original motion.

4. The members debate the motion.

Common Mistake: Debate gets out of control in temper, in duration, and in relevance. Members talk at each other across the room rather than through the presiding officer.

5. Presiding officer asks clerk to call the roll.

Common Mistake: The presiding officer states 'All in favor' rather than calling the roll.

6. The presiding officer announces the result of the voting and introduces the next item of business.

Common Mistake: Presiding officer fails to pronounce the result of the voting. Commonly, dead silence follows a vote.

Three Ways to Amend a Motion

During the Debate step of a Pending Motion, one may move to Amend the Pending Motion. All one needs to remember is that there are really only 3 basic processes of amendments:

Let's Amend this Sample Motion: "I move that we buy a new sign."

1. **Move to Amend by *Inserting* words or paragraphs.**
I move to Amend by Inserting the phrase "not to exceed \$50 dollars" at the end of the motion.
2. **Move to Amend by *Striking out* (not deleting) words or paragraphs.**
I move to Amend by striking out the word "new".
3. **Move to Amend by *Striking out and Inserting* words or paragraphs.** One can even Amend by *Substituting* (Striking out and Inserting) entire paragraphs or the complete motion.
I move to Amend by Striking out the word "sign" and Inserting the word "billboard".