



District 18 Business Meeting Etiquette

The business meeting participants include Toastmasters who are in good standing (i.e. April dues to Toastmasters International have been paid) and who are a member of the District Executive Committee (DEC) and/or are a Club President or Club Vice President of Education(VPE) of a chartered club in good standing (at least 8 members paid and submitted April renewal dues to Toastmasters International) within District 18. Club Presidents and Club VPEs may assign a proxy to another member of their club (also in good standing) to fulfill their role and vote on their behalf at the business meeting. Only voting members of the business meeting may participate in making motions, debating, and voting. ***Guests (and non-voting members) are always welcome but note that they do not have these privileges.***

Key terms that will be used in this business meeting:

- Quorum - the minimum number of members who must be present for business to be transacted legally (1/3 of eligible participants).
- Main Motions – is a formal proposal by a member, during a meeting, that the organization take certain action. Main motions should be very specific in nature and written if lengthy. They should cover the what, when, who and dollar value of the proposal, if money is involved. A main motion brings business before the assembly and can be made only while no other question is pending.
- Presiding Officer - the member who conducts the meeting and sees that the rules are observed.
- District Executive Committee - includes the district director, program quality director, club growth director, public relations manager, district administration manager, district finance manager, area directors, division directors and immediate past district director.
- Voting members – Club Presidents, Club VPEs and DEC members each carry one vote. If a Club President cannot attend but the VPE is present, then the VPE carries two votes and vice versa. If neither club officer is present, then a proxy may be given to another paid club member who can attend and the club members will then carry two votes. DEC members cannot proxy their votes and must attend in person. If a DEC member is also a club officer, then they can carry up to a maximum of three votes. Presidents or VPEs can not proxy their votes to non-club members.

Handling of a Main Motion:

- A member rises and addresses the Presiding officer by stating name, club name, club number and club officer/district position. Once acknowledged by the Presiding Officer, state the motion by saying “Mister/Madame District Director, I move that (or “to”)..... And resumes their seat

- Another member, rises and addresses the Presiding officer by stating name, club name, club number and club officer/district position. Once acknowledged by the Presiding Officer, seconds the motion by saying “Mister/Madame District Director ,I second the motion”
- The Presiding Officer formally places the motion before the group by restating the motion.
- The voting members (guests and non-voting members may not participate in the conversation, this is why it is so important to rise, state your name, club position and club you are representing) debate the motion, alternating between pro and con.
 - *No one is entitled to speak a second time in debate on the same motion.*
 - *Debate must be confined to the merits of the pending motion.*
 - *Comments due debate are addressed to the Presiding Officer – cross debate is not allowed.*
 - *Listen to the other side.*
 - *Focus on issues, not personalities.*
 - *Avoid questioning motives.*
 - *Be polite.*
- The Presiding Officer asks if the assembly is ready to vote. The Presiding Officer then puts the motion to a vote; asking for the affirmative and negative votes in equal fashion.
- The Presiding Officer announces the result of the vote and designates appropriate action.

Other types of motions

Subsidiary: Motions used to modify or dispense of the Main Motion under consideration.

Privileged: Motions that have NO connection with the Main Motion but demand immediate considerations.

Incidental: Miscellaneous motions which cannot be placed in any of the three groups of motions (i.e. Main, Subsidiary or Privileged).

Subsidiary Motions

These motions listed in the table below are in established order of precedence (highest rank to lowest rank). A subsidiary motion is in order only if a main motion is pending OR if another subsidiary motion with a higher rank is not pending. When any one of these motions is pending, you may not introduce another that is listed below, but you may introduce another that is listed above it.

| Table of Subsidiary Motions | | | | | | |
|--|---|-------------------|----------------|-----------|-----------|---------------|
| Purpose of Motion | What to say | Interrupt Speaker | Require Second | Amendable | Debatable | Required Vote |
| Temporarily set aside the pending motion | I move to lay the question on the table | No | Yes | No | No | Majority |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|----|-----|-----|-----|----------|
| Close debate on pending motion | I move the Previous Question (or Close Debate) | No | Yes | No | No | 2/3 |
| Limit or extend debate | I move to postpone Limit Or Extend Limits of Debate to... | No | Yes | Yes | No | 2/3 |
| Postpone to Another specified time | I move to Postpone to a certain time(Postpone definitely) | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Majority |
| Send to committee for further study | I move to refer to Committee to... | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Majority |
| Alter or modify the wording of a motion | I move to Amend the motion by... | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Majority |
| Avoid a direct vote on a motion | I move the motion be Postponed Indefinitely | No | Yes | No | Yes | Majority |

Privileged Motions

These motions do not relate to the pending business before the meeting participants. These motions address matters of immediate importance which, without debate, should be allowed to interrupt the consideration of other motions. Privileged motions take a higher precedence over subsidiary motions. The privileged motions listed in the table below are in an established precedence.

| Table of Privileged Motions | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|-------------------|----------------|-----------|-----------|---------------|
| Purpose of Motion | What to say | Interrupt Speaker | Require Second | Amendable | Debatable | Required Vote |
| Set time for continuation of meeting | I move to Fix the time to which to adjourn... | No | Yes | Yes | No | Majority |

| | | | | | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|----|---------------|
| Close the meeting | I move to Adjourn | No | Yes | No | No | Majority |
| Take break | I move to recess for.. | No | Yes | Yes | No | Majority |
| Register complaint about noise, audio issues in room, etc. | I rise to a question of privilege | Yes | No | No | No | Chair decides |
| Require adherence to the agenda | I call for the orders of the day | Yes | No | No | No | --- |

Remember the Privileged Motions have the highest precedence at the meeting followed by the Subsidiary motions.

Incidental Motions

Incidental motions apply on in special circumstances. These motions do not fit into any order of precedence. The most frequently used incidental motions are listed in a table below.

| Table of Incidental Motions | | | | | | |
|--|--|-------------------|----------------|-----------|-----------|---------------|
| Purpose of Motion | What to say | Interrupt Speaker | Require Second | Amendable | Debatable | Required Vote |
| Enforce rules and orders | Point of Order | Yes | No | No | No | --- |
| Attempt to reverse ruling | I appeal from the decision of the chair | Yes | Yes | No | No | Majority |
| Obtain answers to questions and seek information | Point of information | Yes | No | No | No | --- |
| Set aside rules that interfere with action desired* must be related to priority of business or to business procedure | I motion to suspend the rules that interfere with... | No | Yes | No | No | 2/3 |

| Table of Incidental Motions | | | | | | |
|---|--|--------------------------|-----------------------|------------------|------------------|----------------------|
| Purpose of Motion | What to say | Interrupt Speaker | Require Second | Amendable | Debatable | Required Vote |
| Avoid debate or consideration of a main motion when 2/3 of the members believe the topic should not have come forth | I object to the consideration of... | Yes | No | No | No | 2/3 |
| Pending motion contains two or more parts capable of standing as separate questions | I move to divide the question | No | Yes | Yes | No | Majority |
| Division of assembly - Individual doubts the accuracy of the announced result of a voice vote | "Division" or or "I call for division" or "I doubt the vote" | Yes | No | No | No | --- |

While the parliamentary standard used by Toastmasters International is Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, 10th edition, this document has some modifications to align with the District 18 Business meeting protocol.