

The Basics of Parliamentary Law

By Todd and Tim Wynn, PRP

PerfectRules.com



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2022 ANNUAL CONFERENCE & EXPOSITION

ADAMS COUNTY

==== COLORADO =====

2022 ANNUAL CONFERENCE & EXPOSITION

ADAMS COUNTY COLORADO

Robert's Rules of Order

The Art of Running Efficient and Effective Meetings

2:15 P.M. – 3:30 P.M.



2022 ANNUAL CONFERENCE & EXPOSITION

ADAMS COUNTY COLORADO



HON. MATT PROCHASKA

*Clerk of the Circuit Court
Kendall County, Illinois*



HON. JOE BRIGGS

*Commissioner
Cascade County, Montana*



2022 ANNUAL CONFERENCE & EXPOSITION

ADAMS COUNTY COLORADO

Overview of Robert's Rules of Order



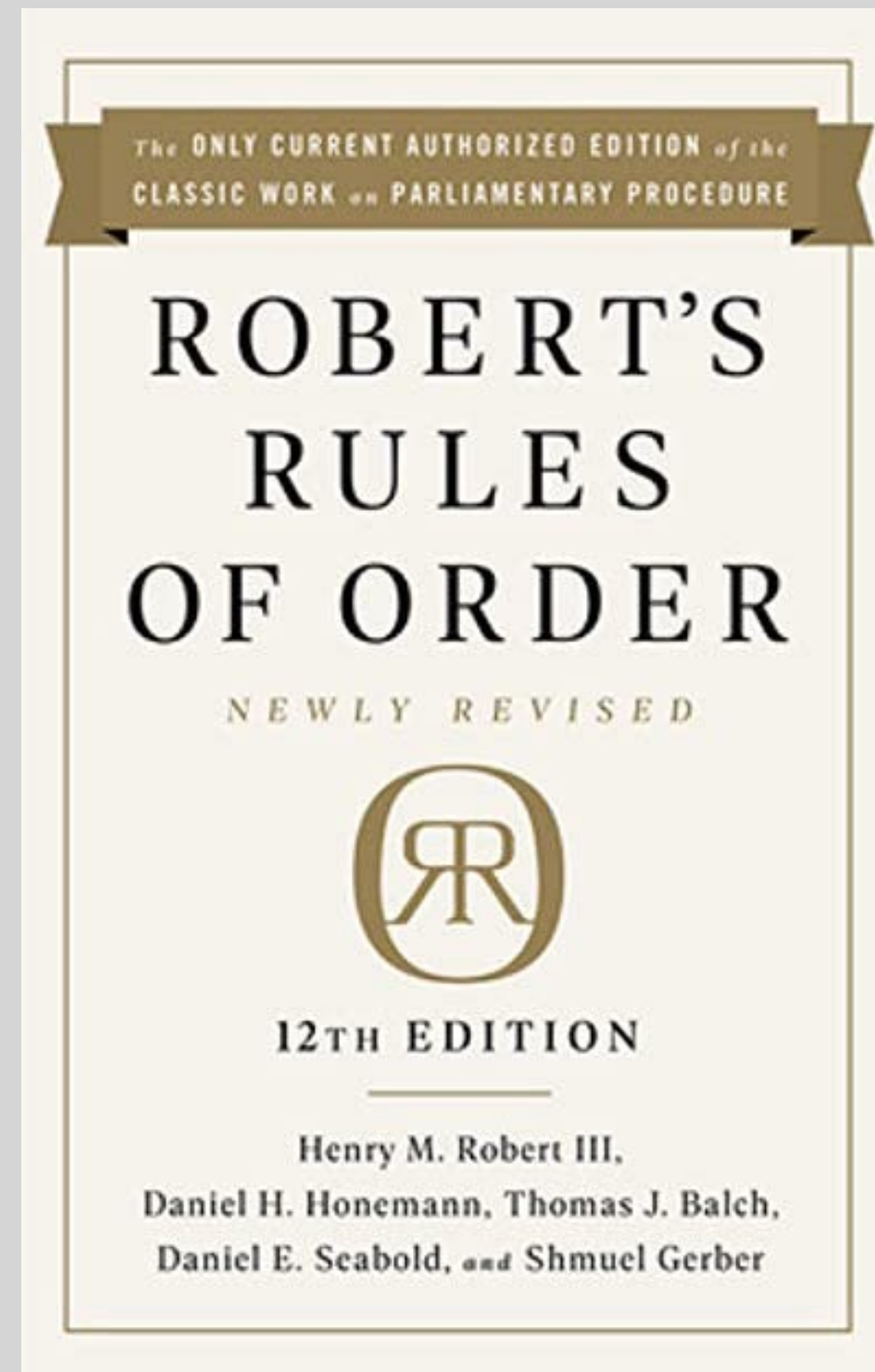
Tim Wynn, PRP

*President
Perfect Rules Inc.*

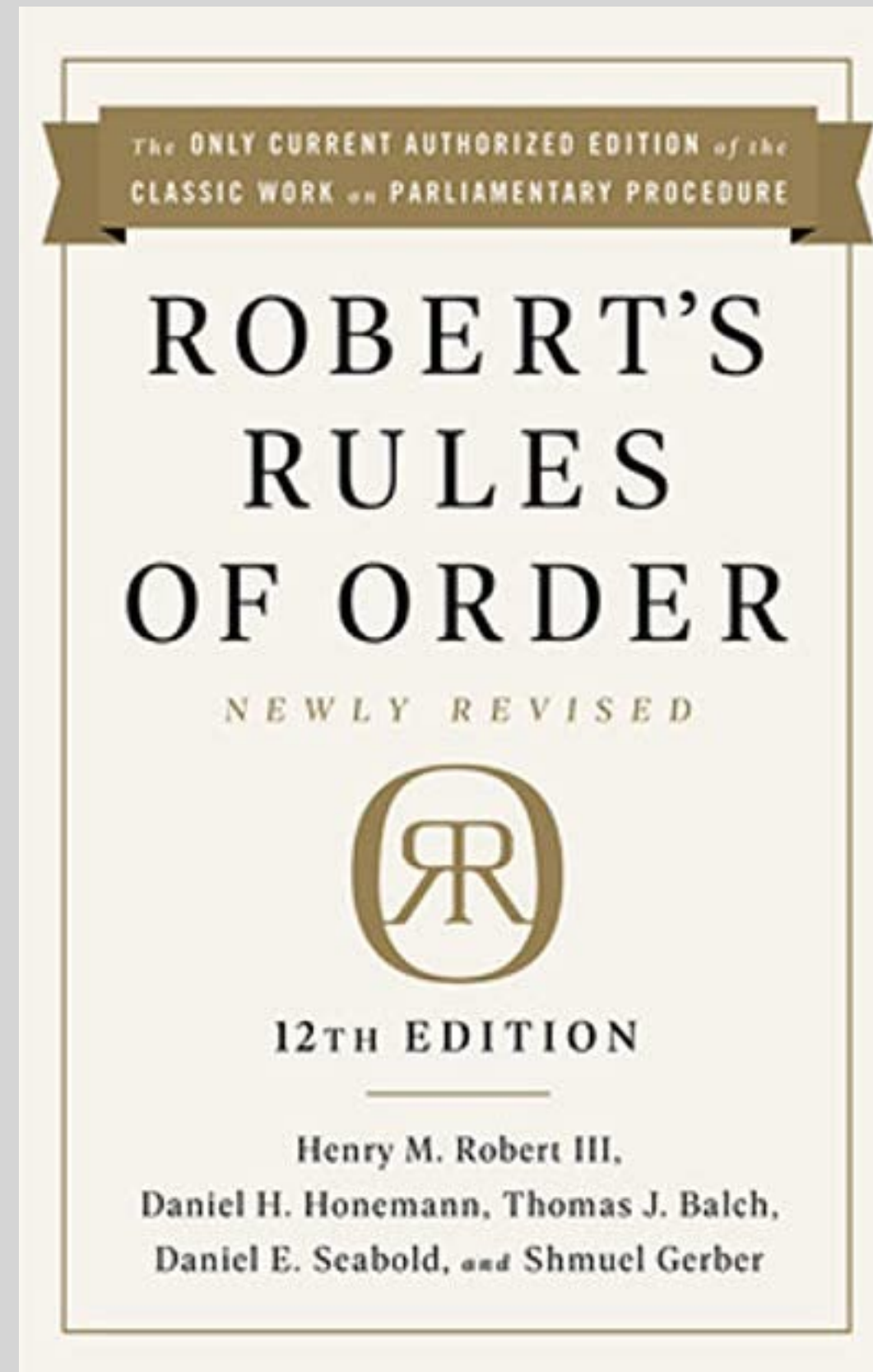


What is a Parliamentary Authority?

What is a Parliamentary Authority?



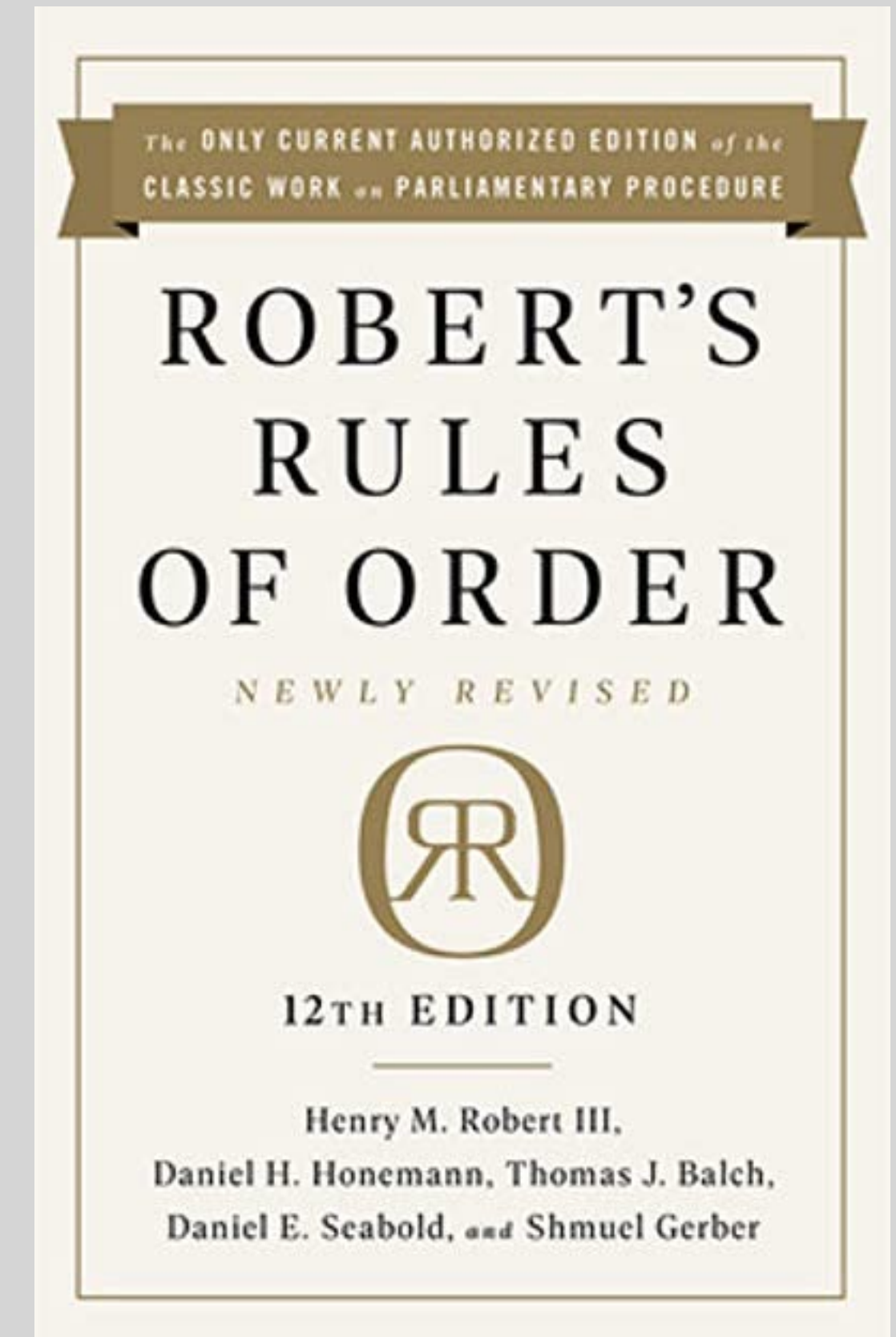
Quick History of Robert's Rules



Quick History of Robert's Rules



General Henry M. Robert



Quick History of Robert's Rules



General Henry M. Robert



New Bedford, MA

Quick History of Robert's Rules



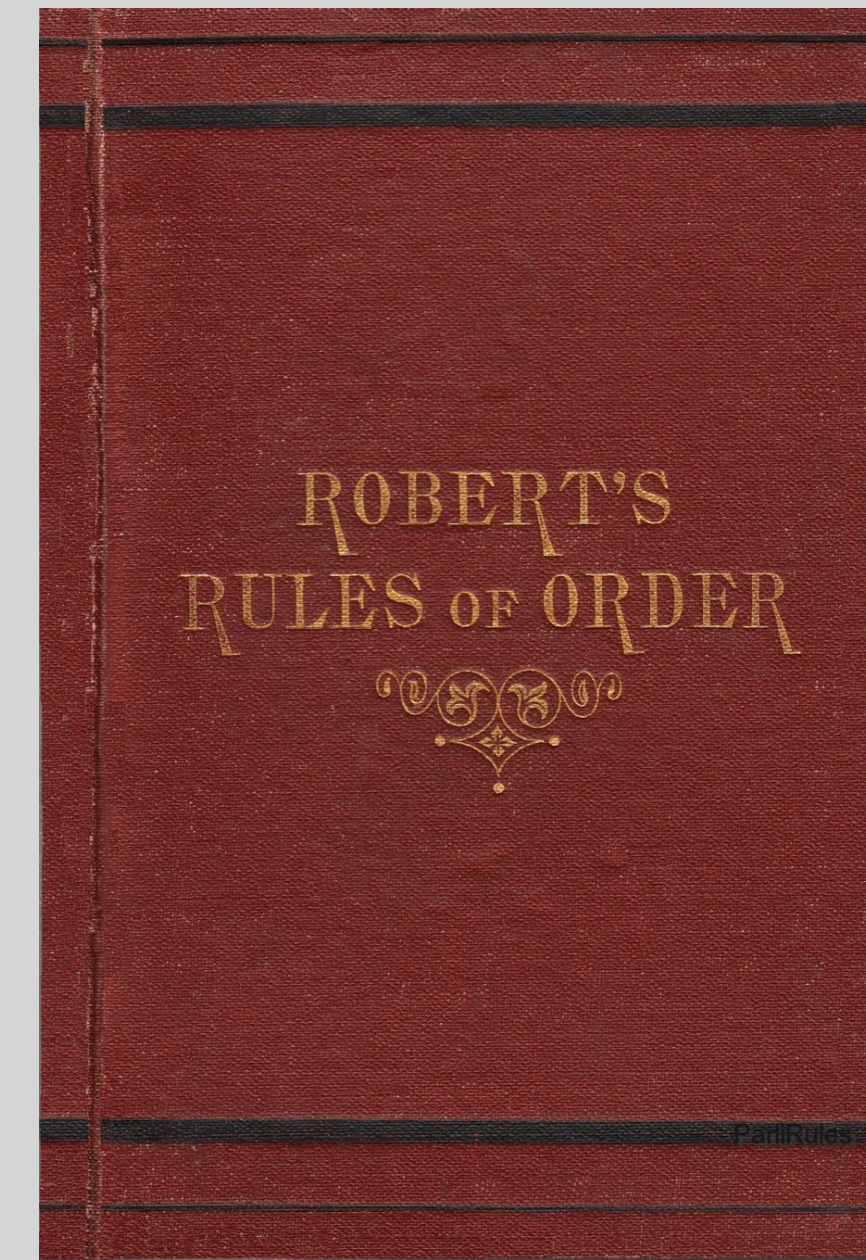
General Henry M. Robert



Quick History of Robert's Rules



1876



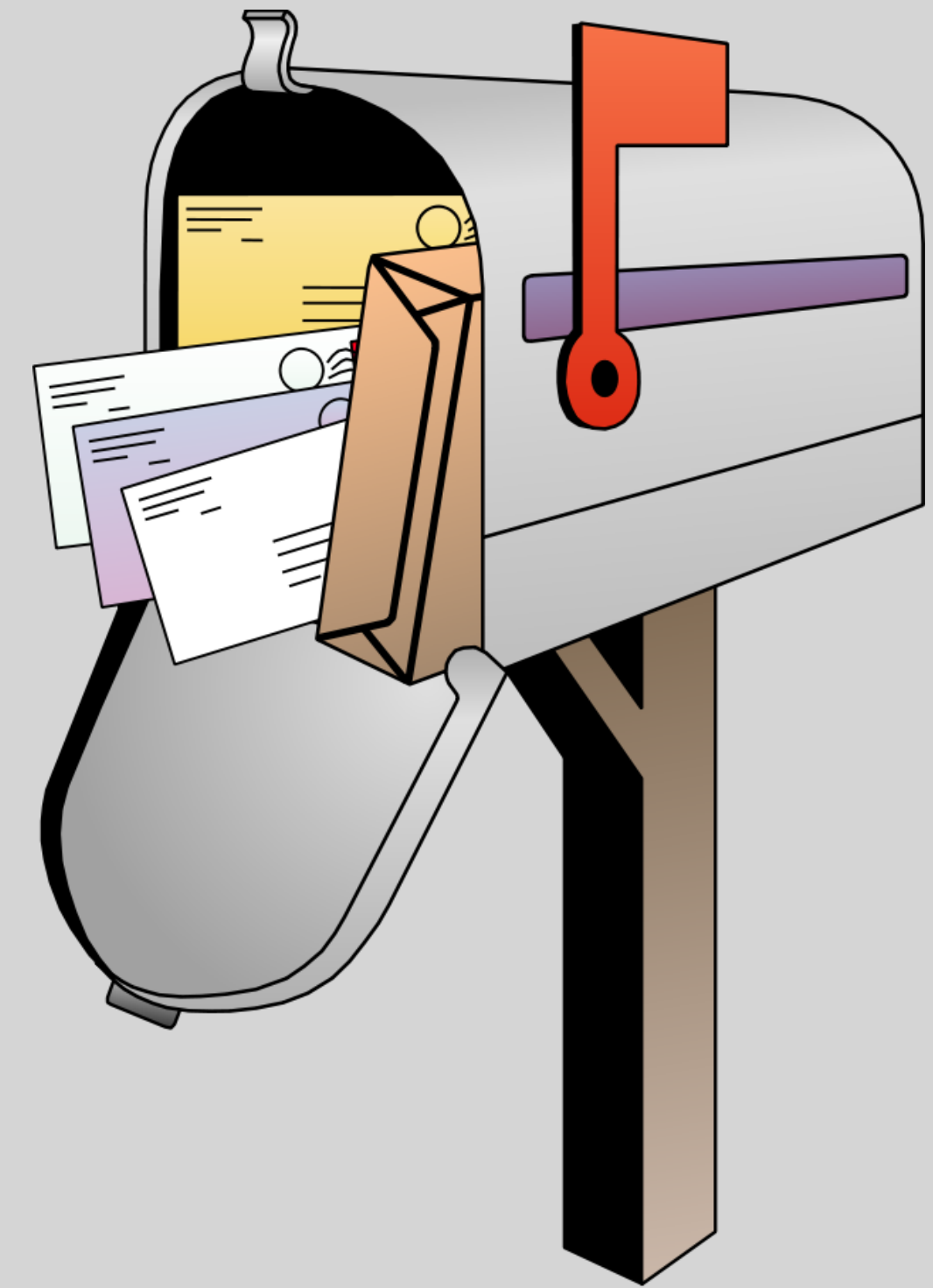
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Quick History of Robert's Rules



General Henry M. Robert

1876

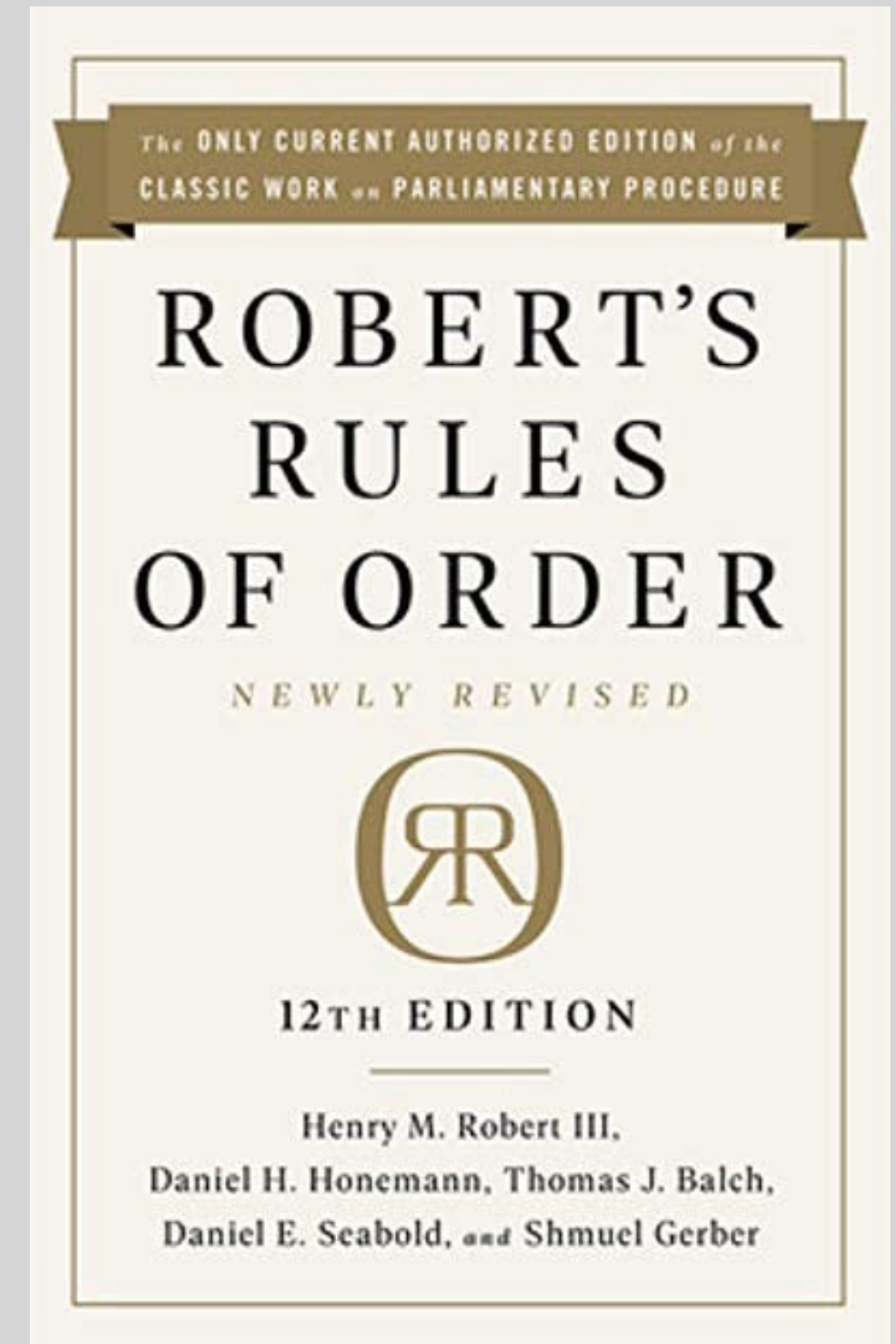


Quick History of Robert's Rules



General Henry M. Robert

Current
Edition



**MEMBERS &
THE PRESIDING
OFFICER**

SYNONYMOUS TERMS

PRESIDENT =

PRESIDING OFFICER =

CHAIR

Patterns of Formality for Members

Patterns of Formality for Members

What is the purpose of patterns of formality in a meeting?

Patterns of Formality for Members

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To Maintain Decorum

Patterns of Formality for Members

What is the purpose of patterns of formality in a meeting?

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To Preserve Members' Rights

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To Facilitate The Smooth And Orderly Transaction Of Business

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To Maintain Decorum

To Preserve Members' Rights

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NOT To Impede Business

Patterns of Formality for Members

What is the purpose of patterns of formality in a meeting?

To Maintain Decorum

To Preserve Members' Rights

To Facilitate The Smooth And Orderly Transaction Of Business

NOT To Impede Business

NOT To Complicate The Proceedings

Patterns of Formality for Members



Patterns of Formality for Members



Hey You!

Refer to the presiding officer as “Mr. or Madam Chairman” or “the chair”; never use the chair’s name or the pronoun “you.” This helps to associate the individual with the position.

Patterns of Formality for Members



Hey You!

Refer to the presiding officer as “Mr. or Madam Chairman” or “the chair”; never use the chair’s name or the pronoun “you.” This helps to associate the individual with the position.



Bob, speak up will you?

Patterns of Formality for Members



Hey You!

Refer to the presiding officer as “Mr. or Madam Chairman” or “the chair”; never use the chair’s name or the pronoun “you.” This helps to associate the individual with the position.




Mr. Chairman, we’re unable to hear the chair from way back here.

Patterns of Formality for Members



Hey You!

Refer to the presiding officer as “Mr. or Madam Chairman” or “the chair”; never use the chair’s name or the pronoun “you.” This helps to associate the individual with the position.



Barbara, are you saying I can't make my motion?

Patterns of Formality for Members



Hey You!

Refer to the presiding officer as “Mr. or Madam Chairman” or “the chair”; never use the chair’s name or the pronoun “you.” This helps to associate the individual with the position.



Madam Chairman, is the chair ruling the motion out of order?

Patterns of Formality for Members

Patterns of Formality for Members



Never speak directly to another member; always speak through the chair.

Patterns of Formality for Members



Never speak directly to another member; always speak through the chair.



Lucy, how's this different than last time?

Patterns of Formality for Members



Never speak directly to another member; always speak through the chair.



Mr. Chairman, I'd like to know how this project differs from the one we did four years ago.

Patterns of Formality for Members

Patterns of Formality for Members



Avoid using other members' names, when they can be described in another way.

Patterns of Formality for Members



Avoid using other members' names, when they can be described in another way.



I've been doing this longer than Glenn, Linda, and Phyllis.

Patterns of Formality for Members



Avoid using other members' names, when they can be described in another way.



I have more experience with these matters than the members who have already spoken.

Patterns of Formality for Members

Patterns of Formality for Members



Never attack a member's motives in debate, and never use words like "lie," "liar," or "fraud" in reference to a member.

Patterns of Formality for Members



Never attack a member's motives in debate, and never use words like "lie," "liar," or "fraud" in reference to a member.



The member's last statement was a lie.

Patterns of Formality for Members



Never attack a member's motives in debate, and never use words like "lie," "liar," or "fraud" in reference to a member.



I believe there is strong evidence that the member is mistaken.

Patterns of Formality for The Chair



Patterns of Formality for The Chair

1. The Chair always speaks in the third person.



Patterns of Formality for The Chair

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I told everyone at the start of the meeting not to talk over each other.

Patterns of Formality for The Chair

1. The Chair always speaks in the third person.



The chair will remind members that only one member may speak at a time.

Patterns of Formality for The Chair

1. The Chair always speaks in the third person.
2. The Chair never refers to a member as “you.”



The chair will remind members that only one member may speak at a time.

Patterns of Formality for The Chair

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2. The Chair never refers to a member as “you.”



You have the floor.

Patterns of Formality for The Chair

1. The Chair always speaks in the third person.
2. The Chair never refers to a member as “you.”



The chair recognizes
the member.

What Does It Mean For A Member To Be “Recognized” And To “Have The Floor”?

- a. The member’s name is added to a list of those who wish to speak**
- b. The member has the exclusive right to be heard at that time**
- c. The chair acknowledges the request and will decide when to grant it**
- d. The member may share the floor with others in orderly debate**

What Does It Mean For A Member To Be “Recognized” And To “Have The Floor”?

b. The member has the exclusive right to be heard at that time

Seeking Recognition

Seeking Recognition

Madam President



Seeking Recognition

Mr. Chairman



Seeking Recognition



The chair recognizes the member.



Seeking Recognition

Once recognized by the chair, the member has the exclusive right to be heard at that time.



Seeking Recognition

The chair must recognize any member who seeks the floor while entitled to it.





**MEMBERS &
THE PRESIDING
OFFICER**

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QUORUM

What is the Definition of “Quorum”?

ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER

“ . . . a quorum in an assembly is the number of members who must be present in order that business can be validly transacted.”

RONR (12th ed.) 40:1

Can You Call A Meeting To Order Without A Quorum?

a. Yes

b. No

Can You Call A Meeting To Order Without A Quorum?

a. Yes

Can You Take Minutes Of A Meeting Without A Quorum?

a. Yes

b. No

Can You Take Minutes Of A Meeting Without A Quorum?

a. Yes

Without A Quorum, Can You Approve Minutes Of A Previous Meeting?

a. Yes

b. No

**Without A Quorum, Can You
Approve Minutes Of A Previous
Meeting?**

b. No

**Without A Quorum, Can You
Receive Reports From Officers,
Boards, or Committees?**

a. Yes

b. No

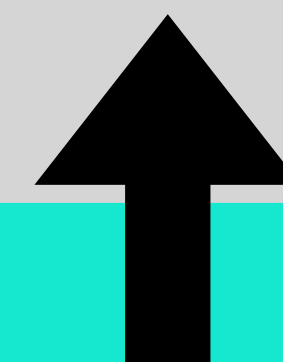
**Without A Quorum, Can You
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b. No

**Without A Quorum, Can You
Receive Reports From Officers,
Boards, or Committees?**

**Without A Quorum, Can ~~You~~
Receive Reports From Officers,
Boards, or Committees?**

The Assembly



**Without A Quorum, Can ~~You~~
Receive Reports From Officers,
Boards, or Committees?**

What Four Actions Can Be Taken In A Meeting Without A Quorum?

What Four Actions Can Be Taken In A Meeting Without A Quorum?

1. Fix The Time To Which To Adjourn

Fix The Time To Which To Adjourn

Fix The Time To Which To Adjourn



Fix The Time To Which To Adjourn

I move That When This Meeting
Adjourns, It Adjourn To Meet Next
Tuesday At 8:00 P.M.



Fix The Time To Which To Adjourn

I move That When This Meeting
Adjourns, It Adjourn To Meet
Tomorrow At 5:00 P.M.



What Four Actions Can Be Taken In A Meeting Without A Quorum?

- 1. Fix The Time To Which To Adjourn**

What Four Actions Can Be Taken In A Meeting Without A Quorum?

- 1. Fix The Time To Which To Adjourn**
- 2. Adjourn**

What Four Actions Can Be Taken In A Meeting Without A Quorum?

- 1. Fix The Time To Which To Adjourn**
- 2. Adjourn**
- 3. Recess**

What Four Actions Can Be Taken In A Meeting Without A Quorum?

- 1. Fix The Time To Which To Adjourn**
- 2. Adjourn**
- 3. Recess**
- 4. Take Measures To Obtain A Quorum**



QUORUM

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MAKING MOTIONS

**What Is
A Motion?**

**A Motion Is A Formal Proposal That
The Assembly Take Certain Action**

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**A Motion Presents A Yes-Or-No
Question For The Assembly To Decide**

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The Assembly Take Certain Action**

**A Motion Presents A Yes-Or-No
Question For The Assembly To Decide**

A Motion Is Also Referred To As A Question

**A Motion Is Out Of Order If The Same Effect
Would Be Obtained By Not Adopting The Motion**

That the fundraising committee shall not be instructed to organize a car wash.



That the fundraising committee shall not be instructed to organize a car wash.



That the fundraising committee shall not be instructed to organize a car wash.

That the fundraising committee shall be instructed to not organize a car wash.



That the fundraising committee shall not be instructed to organize a car wash.



That the fundraising committee shall be instructed to not organize a car wash.

3 Steps To Bringing A Motion Before The Assembly

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1. A Member Makes A Motion

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1. A Member Makes A Motion

2. Another Member Seconds The Motion

3 Steps To Bringing A Motion Before The Assembly

1. A Member Makes A Motion

2. Another Member Seconds The Motion

**3. The Chair States The Question on The Motion
(states what happened in steps 1 & 2)**

Step 1: Making A Motion

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I move that . . .



Step 1: Making A Motion

After saying “I move that,” the member gives the exact wording of the motion.



I move that . . .

Step 1: Making A Motion

After saying “I move that,” the member gives the exact wording of the motion.

I move that \$100 shall be donated to the ABC Foundation.



Step 1: Making A Motion

Sometimes “I move to” is used,
especially with procedural motions.



I move to . . .

Step 1: Making A Motion

Sometimes “I move to” is used, especially with procedural motions.

I move to Recess for fifteen minutes.



Step 2: Seconding A Motion

Step 2: Seconding A Motion



Second!

Step 2: Seconding A Motion

A member simply calls out “second.”
There is no need to be recognized by
the chair to second a motion.



Second!

Step 3: Chair States The Motion

Step 3: Chair States The Motion

I move that \$100 shall be donated
to the ABC Foundation.



Step 3: Chair States The Motion

Second!



I move that \$100 shall be donated
to the ABC Foundation.



Step 3: Chair States The Motion



It is moved and seconded
that \$100 shall be donated to the
ABC Foundation.

3 Steps To Considering A Motion

3 Steps To Considering A Motion

1. Members Debate The Motion

3 Steps To Considering A Motion

1. Members Debate The Motion

2. The Chair Puts The Question To A Vote

3 Steps To Considering A Motion

1. Members Debate The Motion

2. The Chair Puts The Question To A Vote

3. The Chair Announces The Result Of The Vote

Whose duty is it to make sure a motion is in the proper form?

- a. The maker of the motion**
- b. The maker and seconder**
- c. The secretary**
- d. The chair**

Whose duty is it to make sure a motion is in the proper form?

d. The chair

If a motion is made and seconded, can the chair rule the motion out of order?

a. Yes

b. No

If a motion is made and seconded, can the chair rule the motion out of order?

a. Yes

Can the chair decide by his own preference which motions he will or won't allow?

a. Yes

b. No

Can the chair decide by his own preference which motions he will or won't allow?

b. No

Can the chair decide by his own preference which motions he will or won't allow?

The chair must state the question on a motion immediately after it has been made and seconded, unless he is obliged to rule it out of order or unless, in his opinion, the wording is not clear.

b. No

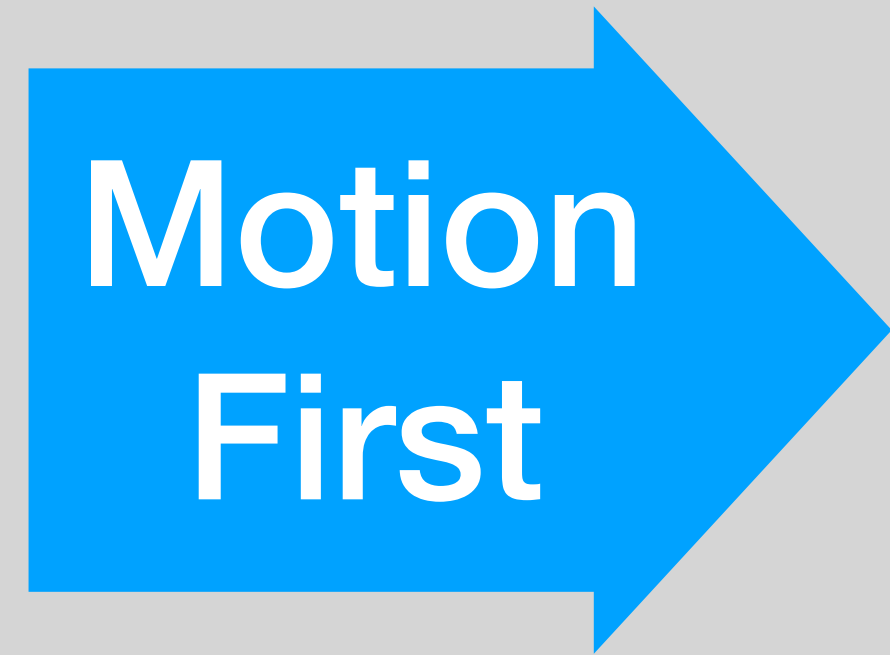
What Makes A Good Motion?

Good Motion

Good Motion

That five dozen doughnuts shall be provided at each weekend picnic.

Good Motion



That five dozen doughnuts shall be provided at each weekend picnic.

Good Motion

**Motion
First**

**That five dozen doughnuts shall be
provided at each weekend picnic.**

**Then
Debate**

Good Motion

**Motion
First**

That five dozen doughnuts shall be provided at each weekend picnic.

**Then
Debate**

Debate must be germane to the pending question.

Unanimous Consent

Unanimous Consent



If there is no objection . . .

Unanimous Consent



If there is no objection, \$50 shall
be donated to the ABC
Foundation.

Unanimous Consent



Is there any objection?

Unanimous Consent



Since there is no objection,
\$50 shall be donated to the ABC
Foundation.

Unanimous Consent



Since there is no objection,
\$50 shall be donated to the ABC
Foundation.

How does a member object?

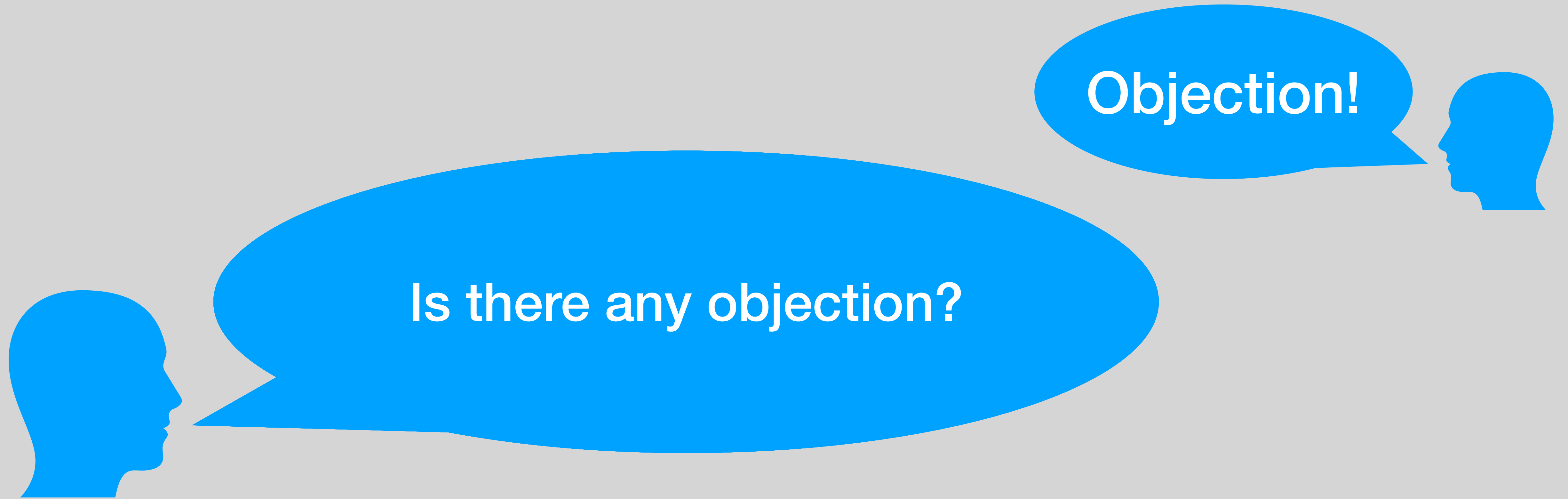
Unanimous Consent



Is there any objection?

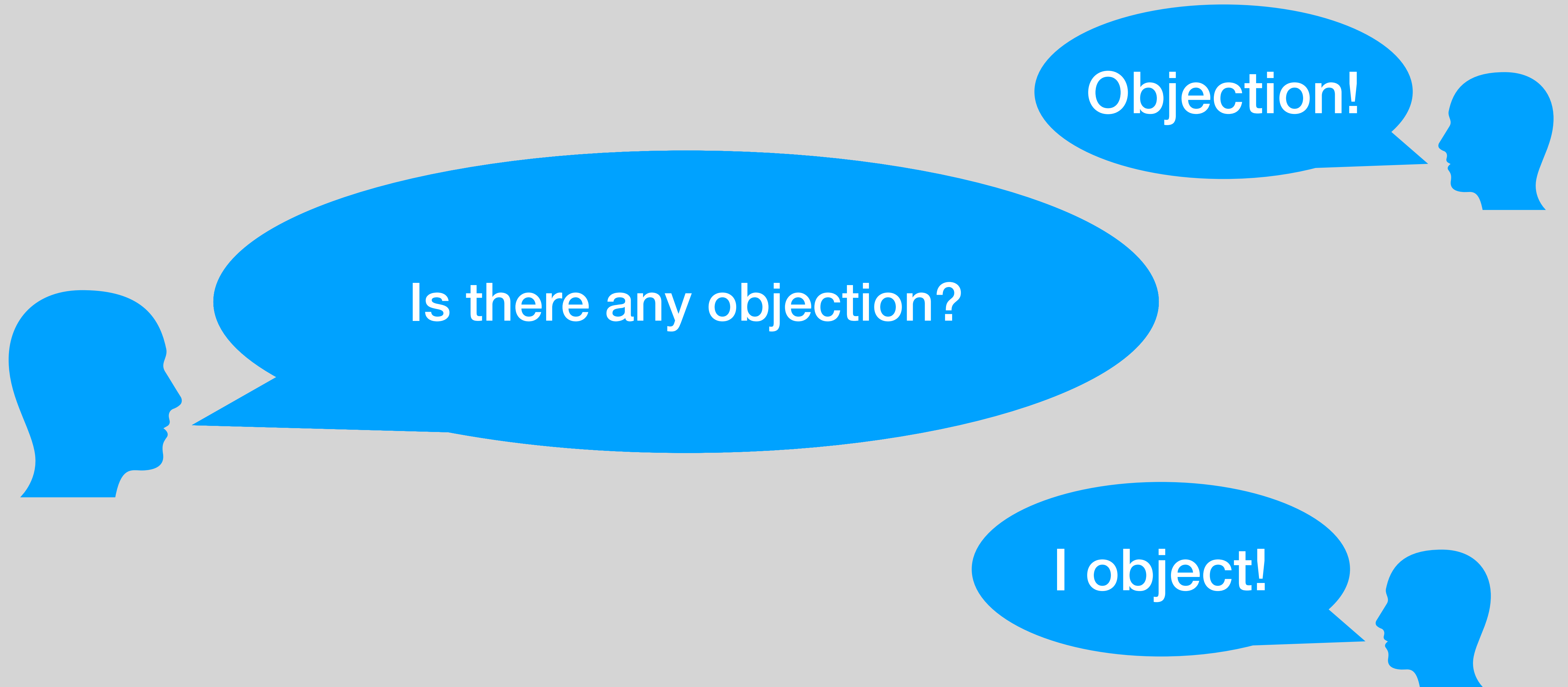
How does a member object?

Unanimous Consent



How does a member object?

Unanimous Consent



How does a member object?



**MAKING
MOTIONS**

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DEBATE

What Is The Purpose Of A Meeting?

A Meeting is for the TRANSACTION OF BUSINESS

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**A Meeting is NOT for Discussing Issues or Talking
About Problems**

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**DEBATE is an essential part of the Transaction
of Business**

A Meeting is for the TRANSACTION OF BUSINESS

A Meeting is NOT for Discussing Issues or Talking About Problems

DEBATE is an essential part of the Transaction of Business

Idle Discussion is a major hinderance to the process

**What Is The Difference
Between Discussion
And Debate?**

**Debate Is Discussion
On The Merits Of
The Pending Motion**

DEBATE

DEBATE

**Must pertain to whether the proposal
under consideration should be **ADOPTED****

DEBATE

**Must pertain to whether the proposal
under consideration should be **ADOPTED****

Must pertain to a matter that is **PENDING**

Cannot Attack a Member or Question a Member's Motives

DEBATE

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In regards to a Member, Cannot contain words such as Lie, Liar, or Fraud, and Cannot impugn a Member's character

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Debate alternates between those In Favor and those Opposed

TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE DEBATE

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1. State Whether You're For or Against the Motion

TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE DEBATE

1. State Whether You're For or Against the Motion

2. Give Your Reasons for Your Position

TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE DEBATE

1. State Whether You're For or Against the Motion

2. Give Your Reasons for Your Position

3. Recognize Counterpoints

TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE DEBATE

1. State Whether You're For or Against the Motion

2. Give Your Reasons for Your Position

3. Recognize Counterpoints

4. Urge Support, if Desired

CAN YOU SAY THIS IN DEBATE?

“This motion is a horrible idea.”

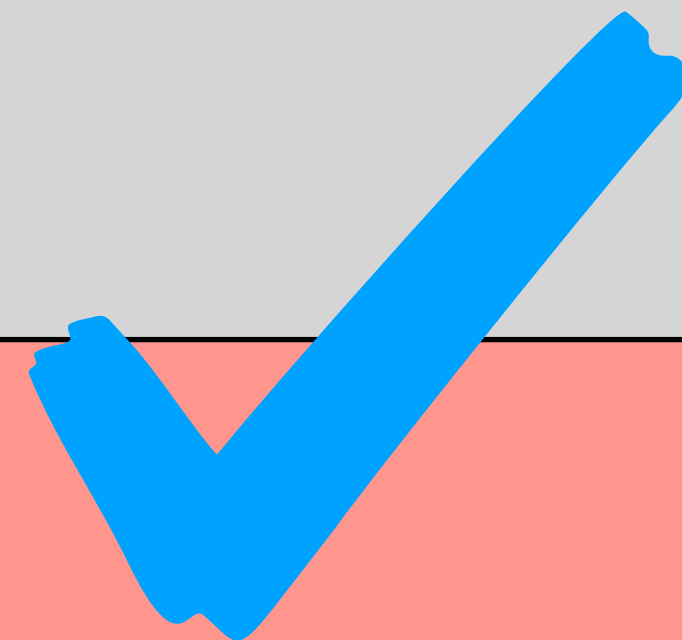
YES

NO

CAN YOU SAY THIS IN DEBATE?

“This motion is a horrible idea.”

YES



CAN YOU SAY THIS IN DEBATE?

“This idea will never work.”

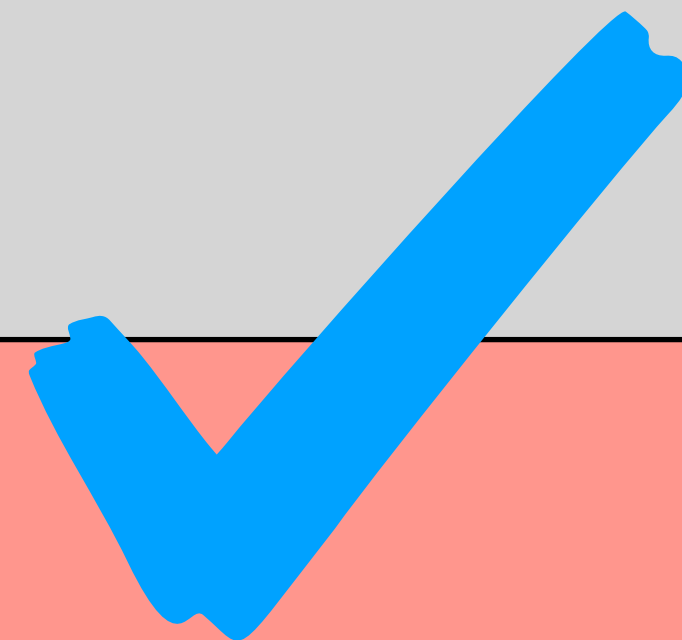
YES

NO

CAN YOU SAY THIS IN DEBATE?

“This idea will never work.”

YES



CAN YOU SAY THIS IN DEBATE?

“While I have the floor, I’d just like to take the opportunity to thank all our volunteers for doing such a wonderful job at the voter-registration drive, last week, and I hope all of you will consider volunteering again, in the drive we’re doing next week.”

YES

NO

CAN YOU SAY THIS IN DEBATE?

“While I have the floor, I’d just like to take the opportunity to thank all our volunteers for doing such a wonderful job at the voter-registration drive, last week, and I hope all of you will consider volunteering again, in the drive we’re doing next week.”

NO



DEBATE

Must pertain to whether the proposal under consideration should be **ADOPTED**

Must pertain to a matter that is **PENDING**

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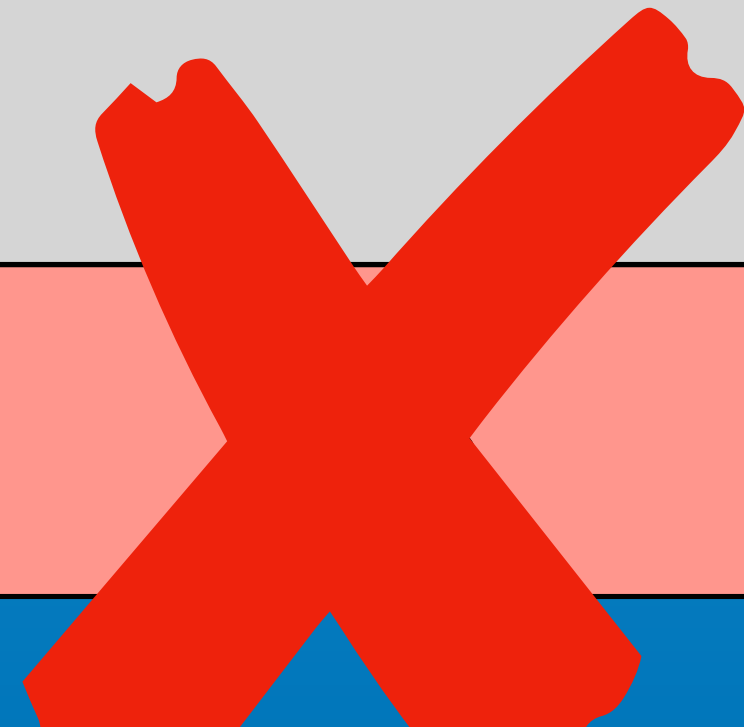
“Before I talk about this motion, I’d like to say that the last motion was truly a great idea, and I’m glad we were able to adopt it.”

YES

NO

CAN YOU SAY THIS IN DEBATE?

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CAN YOU SAY THIS IN DEBATE?

“If this motion is adopted, businesses will move out of the area—not necessarily this month or next month, but eventually, we will lose jobs and residents as a direct result of this motion.”

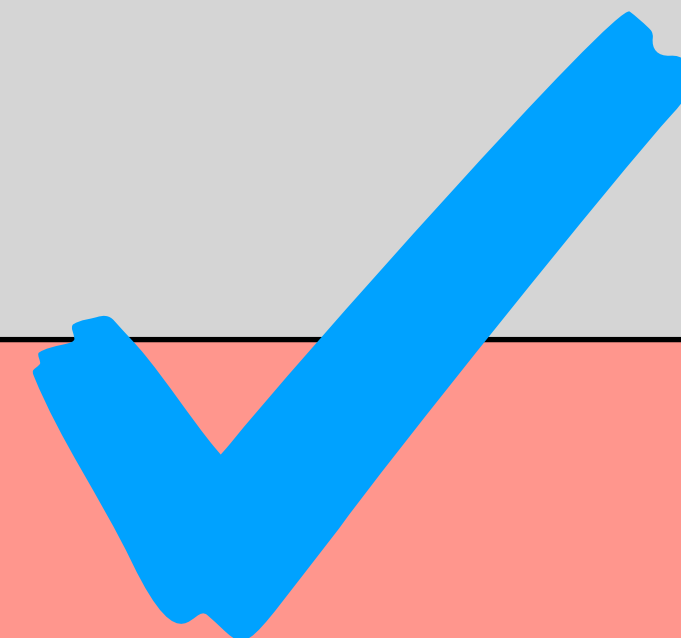
YES

NO

CAN YOU SAY THIS IN DEBATE?

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YES



CAN YOU SAY THIS IN DEBATE?

“I feel that the chairman of the board only wants to have this raffle because he wants to make a good impression before he runs for office in two months.”

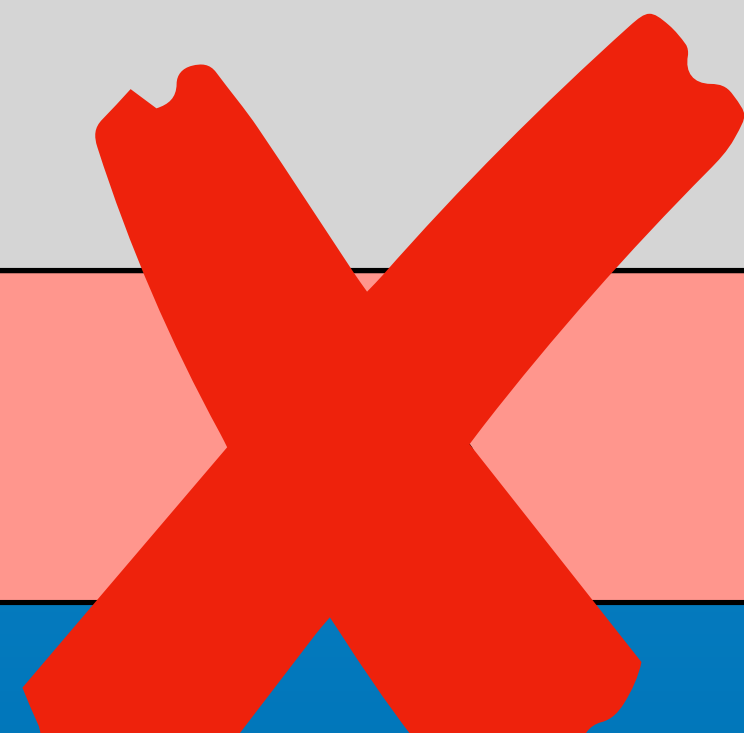
YES

NO

CAN YOU SAY THIS IN DEBATE?

“I feel that the chairman of the board only wants to have this raffle because he wants to make a good impression before he runs for office in two months.”

NO



DEBATE

Must pertain to whether the proposal under consideration should be *ADOPTED*

Must pertain to a matter that is *PENDING*

Cannot Attack a Member or *Question a Member's Motives*

In regards to a Member, Cannot contain words such as *Lie, Liar, or Fraud*, and Cannot impugn a Member's character

CAN YOU SAY THIS IN DEBATE?

“We all heard our fellow member, Mr. Jones, say that last year’s raffle made money. But he knows that’s not true; it lost money.”

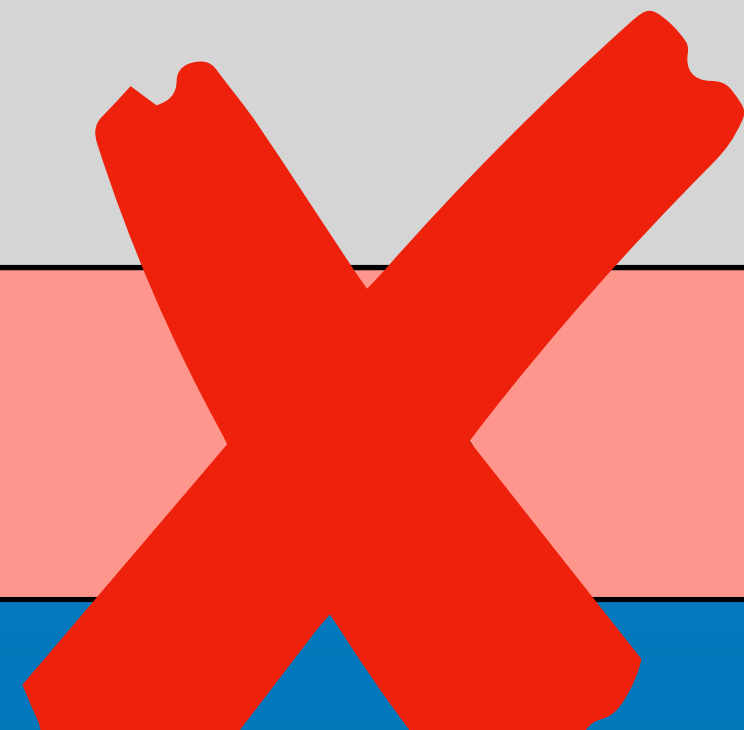
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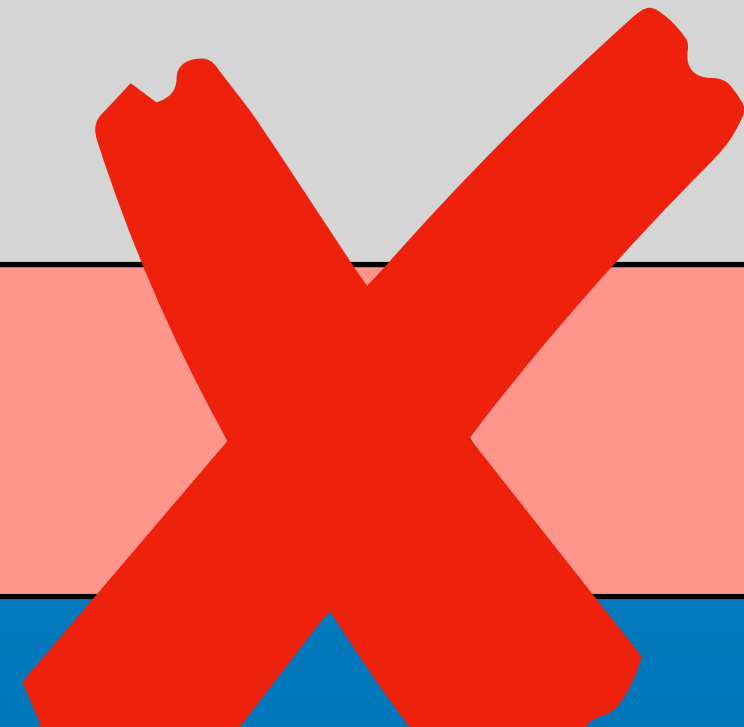
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DEBATE

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Must pertain to a matter that is *PENDING*

Cannot Attack a Member or Question a Member's Motives

In regards to a Member: Cannot contain words such as Lie, Liar, or Fraud, and Cannot impugn a Member's character

What should the chair do when no member responds to his call for debate?

- a. Ask for a motion to close debate
- b. Say “If there is no objection, debate will be closed.”
- c. Announce that debate is now closed
- d. Put the question on the pending motion to a vote

**What should the chair do when
no member responds to his call
for debate?**

d. Put the question on the pending motion to a vote



DEBATE

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SUBSIDIARY MOTIONS

MAIN MOTION

MAIN MOTION

**IMMEDIATELY
PENDING MOTION**

AMEND

MAIN MOTION

**IMMEDIATELY
PENDING MOTION**

AMEND

MAIN MOTION

**IMMEDIATELY
PENDING MOTION**

REFER TO A COMMITTEE

AMEND

MAIN MOTION

**IMMEDIATELY
PENDING MOTION**

REFER TO A COMMITTEE

AMEND

MAIN MOTION

**IMMEDIATELY
PENDING MOTION**

POSTPONE TO A CERTAIN TIME

REFER TO A COMMITTEE

AMEND

MAIN MOTION

**IMMEDIATELY
PENDING MOTION**

POSTPONE TO A CERTAIN TIME

**IMMEDIATELY
PENDING MOTION**

REFER TO A COMMITTEE

AMEND

MAIN MOTION

ADJOURN

POSTPONE TO A CERTAIN TIME

REFER TO A COMMITTEE

AMEND

MAIN MOTION

**IMMEDIATELY
PENDING MOTION**

ADJOURN

**IMMEDIATELY
PENDING MOTION**

POSTPONE TO A CERTAIN TIME

REFER TO A COMMITTEE

AMEND

MAIN MOTION

VOTE

ADJOURN

**IMMEDIATELY
PENDING MOTION**

POSTPONE TO A CERTAIN TIME

REFER TO A COMMITTEE

AMEND

MAIN MOTION



**IMMEDIATELY
PENDING MOTION**



POSTPONE TO A CERTAIN TIME



REFER TO A COMMITTEE



AMEND



MAIN MOTION

POSTPONE TO A CERTAIN TIME

**IMMEDIATELY
PENDING MOTION**

REFER TO A COMMITTEE

AMEND

MAIN MOTION

VOTE

POSTPONE TO A CERTAIN TIME

**IMMEDIATELY
PENDING MOTION**

REFER TO A COMMITTEE

AMEND

MAIN MOTION

**IMMEDIATELY
PENDING MOTION**



REFER TO A COMMITTEE



AMEND



MAIN MOTION



REFER TO A COMMITTEE

AMEND

MAIN MOTION

**IMMEDIATELY
PENDING MOTION**

VOTE

REFER TO A COMMITTEE

**IMMEDIATELY
PENDING MOTION**

AMEND

MAIN MOTION

AMEND

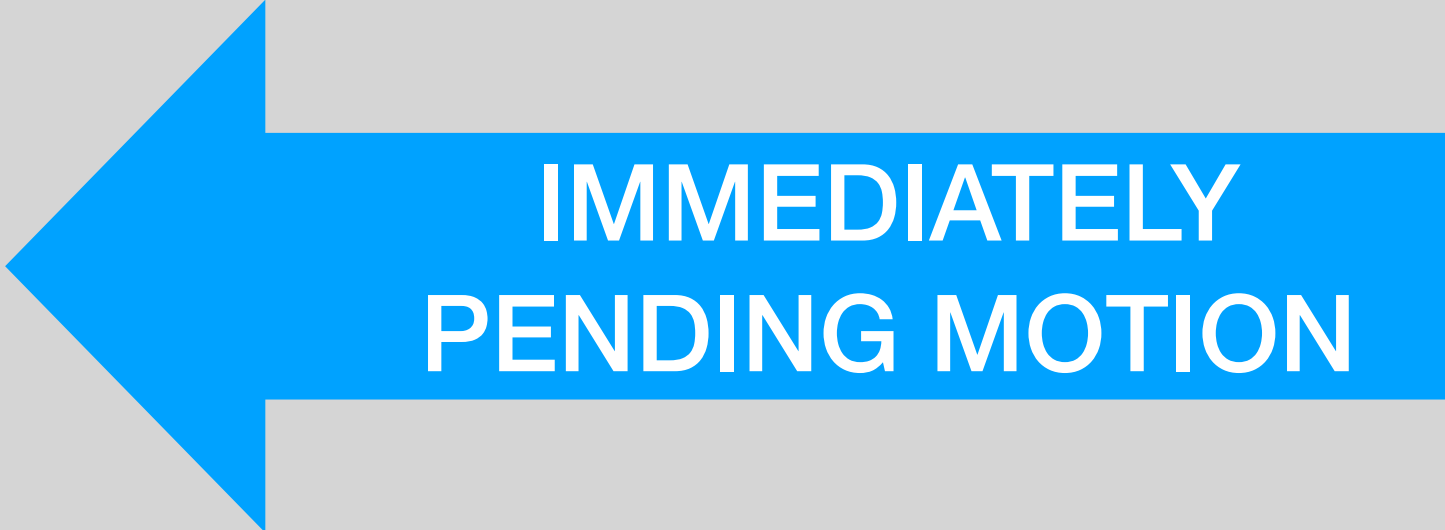
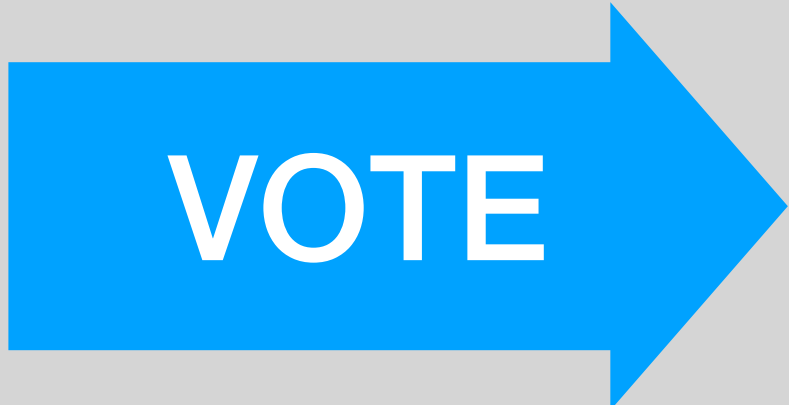
MAIN MOTION

**IMMEDIATELY
PENDING MOTION**

AMEND

MAIN MOTION

**← IMMEDIATELY
PENDING MOTION**



MAIN MOTION

**IMMEDIATELY
PENDING MOTION**

MAIN MOTION

**IMMEDIATELY
PENDING MOTION**

SUBSIDIARY MOTIONS

Postpone Indefinitely

SUBSIDIARY MOTIONS

Amend

Postpone Indefinitely

SUBSIDIARY MOTIONS

Commit (or Refer to a Committee)

Amend

Postpone Indefinitely

SUBSIDIARY MOTIONS

Postpone To A Certain Time

Commit (or Refer to a Committee)

Amend

Postpone Indefinitely

SUBSIDIARY MOTIONS

Limit of Extend Limits of Debate

Postpone To A Certain Time

Commit (or Refer to a Committee)

Amend

Postpone Indefinitely

SUBSIDIARY MOTIONS

Previous Question

Limit of Extend Limits of Debate

Postpone To A Certain Time

Commit (or Refer to a Committee)

Amend

Postpone Indefinitely

SUBSIDIARY MOTIONS

Lay On The Table (Table)

Previous Question

Limit of Extend Limits of Debate

Postpone To A Certain Time

Commit (or Refer to a Committee)

Amend

Postpone Indefinitely