

## Meetings: Some Common Words and Phrases

(adapted from "Handbook on meetings, discussions, negotiations" by Emily Pastor ISBN 91-4202579-6B)

Abstain	To refuse to VOTE either for or against a MOTION.
Ad hoc	(Latin) Used to describe a COMMITTEE set up for a particular special purpose only, as opposed to a STANDING or PERMANENT COMMITTEE.
Adjourn	To postpone a meeting to a later time.
Adopt, carry, pass	To accept formally a MOTION as a result of a favourable VOTE.
Agenda	The list of ITEMS of BUSINESS for consideration at a meeting, shown in suggested order of discussion.
Amend	To make changes.
Amendment	A PROPOSAL for a change in the wording or details of a MOTION. Sometimes used as a COUNTER-MOTION in opposition to the original MOTION.
A.O.B.	Any Other Business. The heading used in the AGENDA for the part of the meeting when BUSINESS can be raised without having been listed in advance.
Business	Matters dealt with at a COMMITTEE meeting.
Casting vote	A VOTE which can be used by the CHAIRMAN only, in addition to his ORIGINAL VOTE, in order to decide the matter when there is a tie in the voting.
Chairman	The person elected or nominated to preside and control discussion at meetings. He occupies the "CHAIR". Usually addressed as "MISTER CHAIRMAN". In the case of a woman chairman the form of address is

“MADAM CHAIRMAN”. The term “CHAIRPERSON” is becoming increasingly popular.

Confirmation	Usually used in reference to MINUTES, which are confirmed at the next meeting, i.e. accepted by those present as an accurate record of the meeting.
Close	To end a meeting formally. This is done by the CHAIRMAN, usually with the words “I declare the meeting closed”.
Committee	A group of people which is empowered to make decisions on behalf of a larger body or organisation.  <u>Ad Hoc Committee</u> - A committee set up temporarily for one special purpose. <u>Branch Committee</u> - The local committee of a large decentralised organisation. <u>Executive or Standing Committee</u> - A small committee dealing with the day-to-day BUSINESS of a larger organisation. <u>Sub Committee</u> - A small number of committee MEMBERS, nominated or elected to deal with special BUSINESS on behalf of the main committee.
Constitution	The rules, usually written and adopted at a GENERAL MEETING, under which a COMMITTEE operates.
Co-opt	To invite a person who is not a MEMBER to join a COMMITTEE for a single meeting or a specific period.
Draft	A provisional or tentative PAPER or MOTION put forward for consideration.
The Floor	All present at a meeting except the CHAIRMAN.
General Meeting	A meeting to which all the MEMBERS of the organisation are invited.

“Here! Hear!”	A cry of approval.
Item	A specific piece of BUSINESS on the AGENDA.
Matters Arising	The heading in the AGENDA under which BUSINESS referred to in the MINUTES of the previous meeting may be discussed again.
Members	Any person accepted as belonging with full rights and duties to an organisation or COMMITTEE.
Minutes	The formal, written record of a meeting, usually taken by the SECRETARY.
Motion	A formally expressed point of view on a matter put forward (or <u>moved</u> ) by a PROPOSER and then SECONDED by someone else, which the meeting accepts or rejects by means of a VOTE.
Move	(for something) to suggest a point for agreement.
Oppose	To be against a MOTION.
Order	The accepted procedure of a meeting, which can be acted on by the CHAIRMAN and appealed to by the MEMBERS. <u>Call to order</u> - To get the attention and silence of the MEMBERS in order to return to the correct procedure. This is the privilege of the CHAIRMAN only. <u>Out of order</u> - Not in accordance with correct procedure. A MEMBER can be <u>out of order</u> if he speaks without the permission of the CHAIRMAN. <u>Point of order</u> - An appeal to the correct procedure with which any MEMBER can interrupt the BUSINESS at any time.
Paper	A document, put forward for consideration or discussion.
Pass	to CARRY or ADOPT.

Point of information	A purely factual correction or addition with which any MEMBER can interrupt the BUSINESS at any time.
	To begin the meeting formally, the CHAIRMAN can say, “ <u>I call this meeting to order</u> ”. To ask for silence, he might say, “ <u>Could we have some order, please</u> ”.
Postpone	To put something off until later.
Proposal	A more general word for MOTION.
Propose	To put forward formally a MOTION.
Quorum	The number of MEMBERS who must be present at a COMMITTEE or GENERAL MEETING before any decisions taken can be valid.
Read	The MINUTES are <u>read</u> either before or at the beginning of a meeting. When it is agreed that they are a true record of the last meeting, they are <u>taken as read</u> .
Resolution	Strictly speaking, a MOTION which has been CARRIED. However, RESOLUTION is often used to mean a formal proposal and is sometimes used interchangeably with MOTION.
Second	To support formally the PROPOSER of a MOTION or an AMENDMENT. No MOTION can be VOTED on if the PROPOSER fails to find a <u>seconder</u> .
Secretary	An <u>office</u> i.e. a job the holder of which is responsible for drawing up the AGENDA, preparing for and recording the meeting, and following up any action decided upon.
“Shame!”	A strong cry of disapproval.
Take the floor	To be free to speak at length. The CHAIRMAN can invite MEMBERS to <u>take the floor</u> .

Treasurer	The only other <u>office</u> apart from the CHAIRMAN and the SECRETARY. The holder is responsible for the funds of the organisation that the COMMITTEE represents.
Unanimous	Agreed by everyone.
Vote	To decide formally on a MOTION or AMENDMENT, etc. after it has been PROPOSED and SECONDED. A MOTION, etc. can be <u>put to the vote</u> by: <u>VOICE</u> .usually for large meetings. <u>SHOW OF HANDS</u> .for most situations. <u>BALLOT</u> .where the vote is written on a slip of paper. This will be for elections and other sensitive issues. In each case the CHAIRMAN will ask for, or read out, <u>those in favour</u> (or <u>for</u> ) and <u>those against</u> the MOTION. Then he will ask for <u>any abstentions</u> .