



What's a Snippet? Glad you asked! A Snippet is short article about meetings or parliamentary procedure. New snippets are released on the first day of every month at www.agreatmeeting.com.



Snippet #108 The Six Steps of a Motion

If you always follow these six steps for each motion, you will stay on track—guaranteed!

Step One:

After being recognized by the chair, the member makes a motion by saying “*I move that...*” Motions are nothing more than a string of words that describe a decision to be made or an action to be taken. If adopted, the motion becomes the official statement of the organization, not just those who were present or who voted in favor.

Step Two:

If a second is required, another member must second the motion before it can be considered.. Recognition is not required – the member just says “*Second!*”

(If no one seconds the motion, the chair states that the motion will not be considered. It does not “die” for lack of a second – it never lived in the first place.)

Step Three:

The chair determines whether or not the motion is in order. The motion might be out of order because it is off topic or out of sequence with the current ranking motion. At this point the chair can also assist with the wording of the motion to make sure it clearly describes the decision to be made. The chair then states the motion for the assembly, transferring ownership by saying, “It is moved and seconded that...” Once the ownership is transferred, the motion cannot be withdrawn by the maker without the assembly’s permission.

Step Four:

The motion is now on the floor, or *pending*. Not all motions are debatable, so the chair will either ask for discussion and recognize speakers in turn or will ask if the assembly is ready to vote. Even if the motion is not debatable, a member may seek recognition to make a motion with a higher rank than the pending motion. It’s the chair’s responsibility to keep the assembly on track.

Step Five:

The chair takes the vote on the motion by first stating the exact text of the motion. Whatever the chair states prior to taking the vote is what must go into the minutes. This step should not be rushed – members must always know exactly what they are voting on. When the vote is taken, the chair uses equal language for both sides and, except for courtesy resolutions, the negative vote is always taken, even if the result is obvious.

Step Six:

The last step is the official declaration of the result. The chair states which side (affirmative or negative) “has it” and the result (motion adopted or failed).

