

Parliamentary Procedure

Tips from the Judges

If you are planning to compete in Parliamentary Procedure in 2008-09, the following tips are offered to help guide you in your preparation.

A frequent judge of student competition and a Professional Registered Parliamentarian, Mrs. Rachel Mudge Veitch shares the following suggestions for success in Parliamentary Procedure competition.

- Do not say “All in favor signify by saying Aye.” Wrong! The correct wording is “All in favor say Aye.” (I mark off points every time “signify” is used.)
- Always say “All opposed say no.” (Don’t say “All opposed....” and leave it in the air as to what to say next. Wrong!)
- Always state the “next business in order.” You are talking about business, not orders.
- Remember there is Unfinished Business, never “Old” business.
- There is nothing that will get the attention of the judges quicker than a member calling out “Question.” Wrong! The member must rise and address the chair, receive recognition, and state “I call for the Previous Question.” There must be a second.
- When the motion Lay on the Table is used it MUST be taken from the table by a member by rising and stating “I move to take the motion from the table that we ___ at the last meeting.” It must be seconded and stated by the chair who takes the vote. The motion is now on the floor just as it left. It is now amendable and debatable. Motions that are “Laid on the table” do not appear on the chair’s agenda. A better motion

is to “Postpone” consideration of the motion until the next meeting. That way it will be on the chair’s agenda.

- Using the gavel. In Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised, it states “there is no such thing as gaveling through a motion.” Parliamentarians teach that you open the meeting with one tap of the gavel and close the meeting with one tap of the gavel.
- Adjournment. The preferred wording is “If there is no further business and no objection, the meeting will adjourn. There being no objection, the meeting stands adjourned.”

Judges frequently include comments on event rating sheets at the HOSA National Leadership Conference. Here are some judge comments from NLC 2008.

1. Do not ask for Unfinished Business.
2. Why would you move to refer the Treasurer’s Report?
3. Presiding officer should always stand.
4. Do not vote on the minutes. Minutes are approved as read.
5. A person is not out of order – the “motion” is out of order.
6. Should always determine a quorum.
7. Team members should NOT be chewing gum.

The top five teams scored very well on A. Proper Order of Business, B. Motions and D. Minutes. There were small point deductions in many areas of C. General Parliamentary Procedure, but overall the scores from all top five teams were high. The three lowest scoring teams averaged below 50 points.

