

Cheat Sheet for Meeting Participants

If this occurs:	You can say:
Digression	<p>“Point of order. Can we please get back to the agenda? “</p> <p>or</p> <p>“Can we please focus on the core issue, which is _____? “</p>
Interruptions	<p>“Point of order. Can we have one person speaking at a time? “</p> <p>or</p> <p>“Can we speak by raising hands? “</p> <p>or</p> <p>“Can we please hear people out? “</p>
Last minute motion	<p>“I am not comfortable debating a new issue this late and without the benefit of professional analysis. I move that this motion be postponed until the next meeting. “</p> <p>or</p> <p>“Given that it’s late, I suggest that we discuss this motion informally now, and then refer it to the administration for professional analysis. “</p>
Personal criticism	<p>“Point of order. We should be focusing on issues, not people. “</p>
Rambling	<p>“Can we please keep our comments concise and to the point? I’m concerned that we may run out of time for significant issues later on. “</p>
Repetitive debate	<p>“I am not hearing any new information and I’m worried about our time. Are we ready to close debate and vote on this motion? “</p> <p>or</p> <p>“I move to close debate. “</p> <p>or</p> <p>“I move the previous question. “</p>
Side conversations	<p>“Point of order. I’m having trouble concentrating when we have more than one conversation at the same time. “</p>
Unbalanced participation	<p>“Can we please speak by raising hands? “</p> <p>or</p> <p>“I am wondering if we could hear from members who have not spoken. “</p>
Unclear motion	<p>“Can we please have the motion repeated? “</p> <p>or</p> <p>“I move to amend the motion by ____.” (You may propose to replace, add, insert or delete text to enhance clarity.)</p>
A decision is being rushed through	<p>“I am not comfortable with the pace of this discussion. This is an important decision, and rushing it through may be risky. We need to slow down a bit. “</p>
You disagree with a ruling of the Chair	<p>“I appeal the decision of the Chair. “</p> <p>The appeal is put to a vote: “Shall the Chair’s ruling be sustained? “</p> <p>A majority against the Chair’s ruling overrides it.</p>