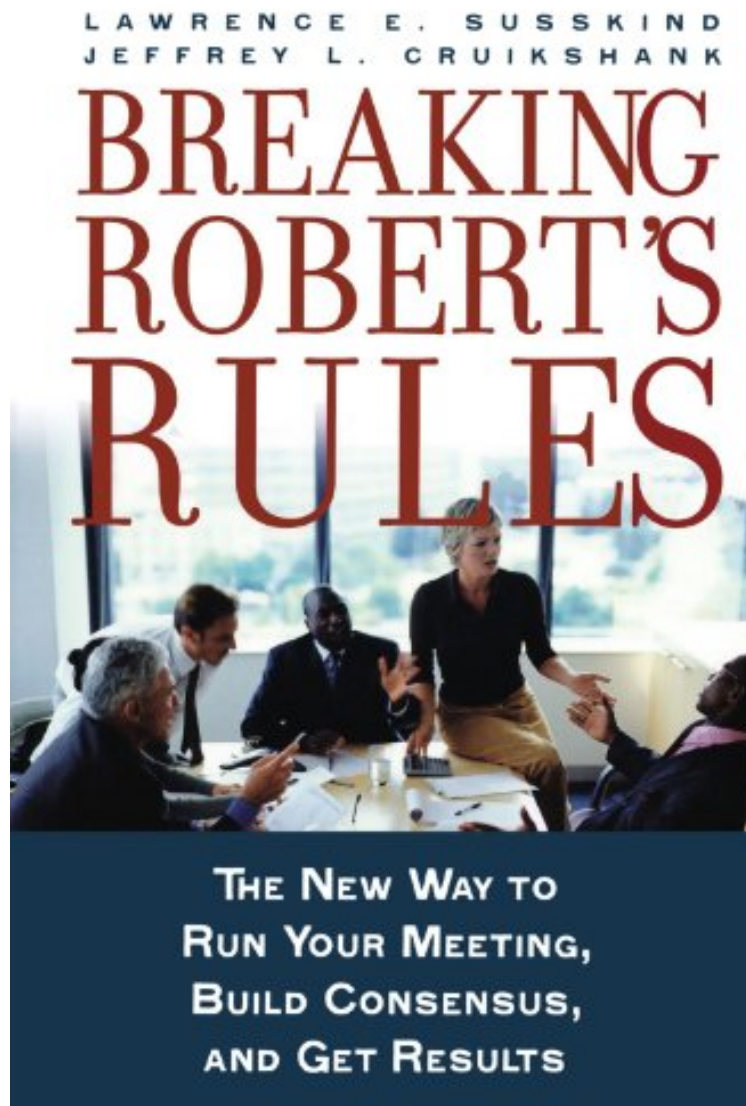


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Breaking Robert's Rules: The New Way to Run Your Meeting, Build Consensus, and Get Results

Lawrence E. Susskind, Jeffrey L. Cruikshank
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Every day in communities across America hundreds of committees, boards, church groups, and social clubs hold meetings where they spend their time engaged in shouting matches and acrimonious debate. Whether they are aware of it or not, the procedures that most such groups rely on to reach decisions were first laid out as Robert's Rules more than 150 years ago by an officer in the U.S. Army's Corps of Engineers. Its arcane rituals of parliamentary procedure and majority rule usually produce a victorious majority and a very dissatisfied minority that expects to raise its concerns, again, at the next possible meeting. Breaking Robert's Rules clearly spells out how any group can work together effectively. After briefly explaining the problems created by Robert's Rules, the guide outlines the five key steps toward consensus building, and addresses the specific problems that often get in the way of a group's progress. Appendices include a basic one page "Handy Guide" that can be distributed at meetings and a case study demonstrating how the ideas presented in the book can also be applied in a corporate context. Written in a non-technical and engaging style, and containing clear ideas and instructions that anyone can understand and use, this one-of-a-kind guide will prove an essential tool for any group desperate to find ways of making their meetings more effective. In addition, neighborhood associations, ad hoc committees, social clubs, and other informal groups lacking a clear hierarchy will find solid advice on how to move forward without resorting to "majority rules" or bickering over who will take leadership positions. Bound to become a classic, Breaking Robert's Rules will change the way you hold meetings forever, paving the way for efficiency, efficacy, and peaceful decision making.

"Lawrence E. Susskind and Jeffrey L. Cruikshank go to great lengths to show us the shortcomings of Robert's Rules and how its rituals of procedure and majority rule often produce a righteous majority and a highly dissatisfied minority...The writing is clear and jargon-free...you'll learn more than you'll ever need to know about assigning roles and responsibilities, group problem solving and holding people to commitments...It's the kind of book that has multiple markets, from executive groups to committees to neighborhood associations. Use this book to change the way you operate meetings and you'll see greater efficiency, effectiveness and sound decision making."--Training Magazine
About the Author Lawrence E. Susskind is the Ford Professor of Urban and Environmental Planning at MIT and head of the Public Disputes Program at Harvard Law School. An experience mediator, he is Founder of the Consensus Building Institute and author of Dealing with an Angry Public: The Mutual Gains Approach to Resolving Disputes (with Patrick T. Field) and The Consensus Building Handbook (with Sarah McKearnan and Jennifer Thomas-Larmer). Jeffrey L. Cruikshank is an experienced editor, the author of numerous of interest to managers, and published novelist. His first book collaboration with co-author Susskind was Breaking the Impasse, published in 1987.