

# Save a meeting after tempers flare

When an argument breaks out during a meeting, work through it with this advice:

**Take a break.** Ending a meeting because a conflict occurs sends the wrong message. Instead, interject to break up the argument. Say: “This isn’t getting us anywhere. Let’s take a five-minute break, and come back to this.”

**Don’t look for who’s right and who’s wrong.** Picking sides won’t work, and rehashing each side’s argument may lead to more arguing. Instead, refocus the group by saying “What is our main goal? What do we need to happen?”

**Encourage everybody to share ideas.** The two people who argued may once again try to monopolize the conversation.

If they speak up, say “We’ve heard your ideas. Let’s hear from the rest of the group.”

Ask other people to share new ideas, not simply to announce their support for one of the two opposing sides.

And ask them to build on and enhance former ideas, rather than point out flaws.

— Adapted from [“3 Ways to Salvage a Meeting That’s Gone Sour After a Big Conflict,”](#) Jane Burnett, The Ladder, [www.theladders.com](http://www.theladders.com).