

*Caucus2.7*<sup>™</sup>  
**User's Guide**

*by Screen Porch, Inc.*

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## Chapter 1

### Introduction

#### 1.1 What is Computer Conferencing?

Computer conferencing, also referred to as electronic or computer-moderated conferencing, enhances group communication. A computer conference is like a meeting except that participants need not be in the same place nor meet at the same time. Everything that everyone "says" is entered into Caucus and stored in the memory of the host computer. Later participants review what others have entered and may add further comments. This process can continue indefinitely. The computer, using Caucus, keeps track of all the meeting details, such as who has read which discussions and what new material has been added.

Conferencing is used to supplement live meetings, to replace meetings where timing is not critical, or to bring together people who ordinarily would have a difficult time getting together due to location or cost constraints.

Conferences are valuable sources of information. For example, a conference dedicated to discussing microcomputers is an excellent place to ask basic questions about what microcomputers are available and which are recommended. A conference can include people who otherwise might never have met, yet who can, via conferencing, share information and expertise.

A major advantage of conferencing is that members can participate at their convenience. Rather than arranging their schedules to fit meetings, users join whenever they wish. Conferencing also saves a lot of time. Participants can read much faster than they can listen and can skip over irrelevant discussions.

Compared to people at a face-to-face meeting, participants in a computer conference have a better chance to say what they want. No one can interrupt another, and there is no pressure to respond immediately. Users can think about their response before entering it. If they change their mind or learn that their statement was incorrect, they can update their comment.

A computer conference can be used to conduct a discussion among groups that would be impossibly large for face-to-face meetings. Everyone can be heard without shouting. There is no background noise from people commenting quietly on what the speaker is saying. If a

smaller group wants to discuss another aspect of the topic at hand or an entirely different subject, they can start a separate discussion without interfering with the original exchange.

Computer conferencing is useful for decision making among groups of all sizes. By contrast, ordinary channels of communication often break down when more than two or three people are involved. Phone calls or messages (written or electronic) can quickly get out of hand as everyone tries to contact everyone else. Soon there are more messages than can be managed. A conference handles this explosion of information much more efficiently by organizing and documenting the entire group's input.

Conferencing can be remarkably bias-free. Participants are identified only by name and whatever identifying information they choose to give. Participants may not know each other at the beginning, and, in fact, may never meet face to face. As a result, many personal characteristics, such as race, gender, religion, age, or handicaps, are invisible in a conference.

## 1.2 What is Caucus?

Caucus is a software package which hosts computer conferences on your computer system. Caucus is not a service that you pay for by the hour; you buy a license to use Caucus on your computer the same way you buy a license to use a word processing or data base program. Caucus supports multiple conferences, and each can be open or restricted depending on the preference of the organizer of that conference.

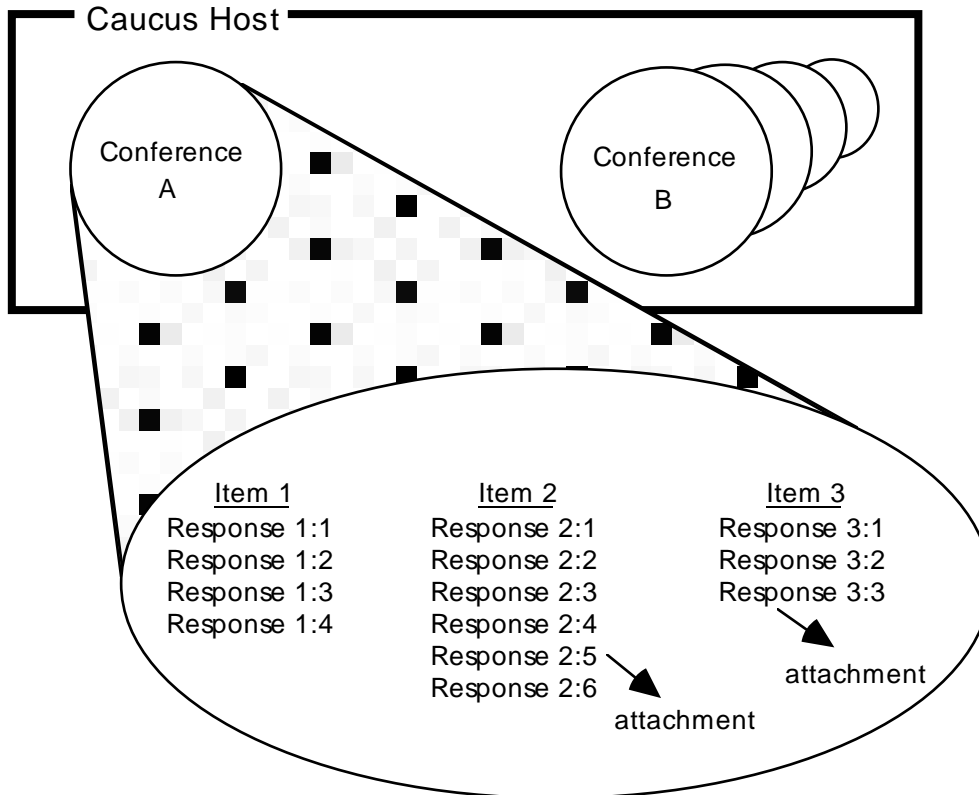
Caucus is unique among conferencing software. Only Caucus runs on virtually any computer in the world, under any operating system. You can use Caucus on a personal computer, local area network, mini, super-mini, or large mainframe system. If your conferencing needs outgrow your current computer, you can move your conferences lock, stock, and barrel to a larger machine at your convenience.

Caucus was carefully designed so that novice users quickly master the basics. This means new users spend their time interacting with their group as opposed to trying to figure out how Caucus works.

This [Caucus 2.7 User's Guide](#) and the [Caucus Menu User's Guide](#), in conjunction with each host system's [Caucus Installation and System Manager's Guide](#), documents the extensive features of the text-only version of Caucus. These include sophisticated capabilities and system interfaces for managers and more experienced users who wish to extend their conferencing mastery. For information about the World-Wide-Web version of Caucus, see the Caucus 3.0 manuals.

### 1.3 Structure of Caucus Conferences

The following diagram provides an overview of how Caucus conferences are structured. Referencing this figure while reading the text will help you quickly grasp how Caucus conferences work.



Each computer system hosting the Caucus software can support an unlimited number of conferences. These conferences can be open (anyone who can access Caucus can access them) or private (restricted access). Each conference typically deals with an issue or focus of interest to its members.

Within each individual conference, input is organized into discussions consisting of Items, which are more specific topics, and Responses. Each conference can have up to ten thousand Items of varying lengths, with each Item identified by a title, number, author and date entered. Caucus automatically indexes Items by title and author. Items also may be grouped into subject categories.

Responses are the comments made by participants within each Item. Responses to an Item form linear chains which are added to the Items, one after another, as they are entered. The Responses can be compared to a discussion period — and it is this input that is key to creating a successful conferencing and communication environment. Each Item can have up to ten thousand Responses of any length.

Each Response also may have one "attachment". An attachment is a file of any size or type. A response in a discussion about finances, for example, could have an attached spreadsheet which the participants could view or copy.

Caucus also has a message facility (electronic mail). This may be used by participants who need to share private information which may not be appropriate to post within the group conferencing environment.

## 1.4 Conventions Used in This Guide

A word in *italics* means that you should replace it with a specific word or words of that type. For example, when you see the word *conference*, it should be replaced with the name of a particular conference.

In the examples in this guide, words typed by the user are shown in **boldface**. Output from the computer is shown indented and in different type style. For example:

```
This line is displayed by the computer.
```

When you are directed to press a specific key, the name of the key is contained between the symbols "<" and ">". For example, <RETURN> means "the key labeled RETURN on a standard typing keyboard".

All Caucus commands are shown in capital letters. You can use either capital or lower-case letters when you type a command. Abbreviations can also be used (Caucus prompts you for more letters if the abbreviation is not unique).

You must press <RETURN> at the end of every line that you type when you are using Caucus.

## Chapter 2

### Caucus for Beginners

#### 2.1 Using Caucus the First Time

This section provides an example of a new user accessing Caucus for the first time. It goes through the new user's registration with Caucus and shows how to join a conference, how to access HELP, and how to use some basic commands to participate in the conference.

Words shown in boldface are typed by the user. Assume that the user pressed <return> at the end of each line. The text displayed by Caucus is shown indented. The text in parentheses provides additional information. Feel free to try this example yourself on your own computer.

The example assumes that the user has already logged onto a Caucus host computer by typing an account name or a userid and password. How to log on varies from computer to computer.

```
caucus
```

(On most computers, you type "caucus" to start the program. Details may vary from computer to computer.)

```
Caucus (TM) Version 2.3/SX. Copyright (C) 1988-1993 Camber-Roth.
```

```
Welcome to Caucus!
```

Since this is your first time using Caucus, you will be asked a few short questions. Please answer them as well as you can. (You can change the answers later if you need to.) Caucus will use your answers to register you as a new user.

```
If this is your first time on Caucus, type NEWUSER and press RETURN.  
This will let you register a new userid for yourself.
```

```
Otherwise, type your userid now: newuser
```

```
Please enter your last name: Doe
```

Caucus will ask you for a password each time you login. Here Caucus asks you to pick your password. The word you type will not show up on the screen.

Next time you log in, I'll ask you for a secret password so that I'll know it's really you.

What would you like that password to be? **PASSWORD**  
Please enter it again, just to make sure: **PASSWORD**

(The first time you use Caucus, it asks you to register. The next time it will remember who you are.)

Please follow the instructions below to register as a Caucus user.  
Type HELP or ? at ANY prompt if you need assistance.

Please enter your full name, in mixed case (capital and small letters):  
>**Joan Doe**

When your name appears in an alphabetized list, under which word in your name are you listed? (For example, 'John Doe' is listed under 'Doe'.)

(The use of parentheses around (doe) indicates that this is Caucus' default selection. If you press <RETURN> you are listed alphabetically as "doe.")

List me under: (doe) **doe**

Please enter your telephone number:  
>**518-273-0983**

Please describe yourself briefly in a few lines. Your description could include why you are using Caucus, what your role is in your organization, or even a few words about your personal interests.

Please describe yourself briefly in a few lines. When you are done, type a period (dot) at the beginning of the next line.  
>**Camber-Roth employee.**  
>**I also enjoy science fiction and white-water rafting!**  
>.

Please wait while Caucus completes your registration...

JOIN which conference? **demonstration**

(If you see a menu instead of this prompt, your Caucus system has been configured to use a menu interface. In that case, please see the [Caucus Menu User's Guide](#).)

(Your computer may host many different conferences. Each conference has a different name. In this case, the user is joining the DEMONSTRATION conference, which is distributed free with Caucus.)

This is the Caucus DEMONSTRATION conference. It briefly describes the format and features of Caucus, and then lets you try them out on excerpts taken from a variety of licensee applications.

Please answer YES when Caucus asks...

Do you wish to join this conference? **yes**

Welcome to the Caucus DEMONSTRATION conference.  
(Charles Roth, organizer.)

The <CANCEL> key is Control-C.

New items are: 1-2

No new responses

(Each time you join a conference, Caucus shows the name of the conference, identifies the organizer, indicates the system "cancel" key, and lists any unread items, responses, and mail messages.)

AND NOW? (? for help) **help**

("AND NOW?" is the basic Caucus prompt. This is where you tell Caucus what you want to do. In this case, the user asks for help.)

HELP is available on all aspects of CAUCUS operation. Any time Caucus is waiting for you to type something, you can type ?or HELP to find out what your choices are.

To learn how to use Caucus, try typing:

HELP NOVICE	if you are using Caucus for the first time
HELP COMMANDS	to see what a Caucus command looks like
HELP VERBS	to see the list of Caucus command verbs
HELP OBJECTS	to see the list of objects Caucus can act on
HELP INSTANCES	to learn how to specify instances of objects
HELP MODIFIERS	to see the list of command modifiers
HELP EXAMPLES	to see examples of commonly used Caucus commands
HELP QUICK	to see a quick list of Caucus verbs and objects
HELP SHORTCUTS	to see some shortcuts for common tasks
HELP TOPICS	to see what other help is available

AND NOW? (? for help) **help quick**

Verbs: SHOW, LIST, ADD, DELETE, CHANGE, STOP, JOIN

Objects: ITEM, RESPONSE, MESSAGE, PERSON, OSUBJECT, PSUBJECTS

AND NOW? (? for help) **show item 1**

(A conference consists of multiple discussions called items. Each item has a number. The user is reading the first item.)

```
Item 1    22-SEP-89    2:41    Charles Roth (Roth)
Introduction to this demonstration conference.
Text entered as Item 1 shows here.

0 Discussion responses
ITEM 1...RESPOND, PASS, or ? for options: (pass)  pass
```

(In this illustration, the choices are to pass, respond, or ask for help. PASS is the default option: to pass, just press <RETURN>. RESPOND allows you to enter text. HELP or ? will display on-line help with more information on your options at this point. In this example, the user passes.)

```
AND NOW? (? for help) stop

You are now leaving 'DEMONSTRATION'.
```

(Typing "stop" exits the user from both the demonstration conference and Caucus.)

## 2.2 Getting Help

The single most important part of Caucus is the on-line help. Use it! You can type HELP (or "?") at *any* Caucus prompt. When you type HELP, Caucus tells you:

- \_ What it thinks you are doing
- \_ What your choices are
- \_ How to get more detailed help (accessible from the "AND NOW?" prompt only)

Caucus then repeats the previous prompt. This means you can *never* go wrong by typing HELP, even if you are in the middle of entering text for an item or response.

The Caucus on-line help also contains a built-in reference manual for using Caucus. When you see the "AND NOW?" prompt, you can type HELP followed by another word. For example, typing HELP COMMAND tells you about the structure of Caucus commands. HELP SHOW tells you about the SHOW command, and so on.

Each piece of HELP text is less than two screenfuls (40 lines) long. When more detailed help is available, Caucus will tell you what to type for more information. For example, typing HELP COMMAND tells you that a Caucus command is made up of a verb, an object, and an instance, and that you can get more HELP on each of these words. Typing HELP VERB tells you about



the Caucus command verbs: SHOW, LIST, ADD, DELETE, and so on. Typing HELP SHOW tells you about the SHOW command.

By using HELP in this manner, you can always find the information you need to use Caucus. Many people have learned how to use Caucus without ever opening the Caucus User Guide.

Remember, you can't use HELP too much!



## Chapter 3

### Caucus Command Syntax

#### 3.1 Introduction

To use Caucus you type a series of directions or *commands*. This chapter describes the form (or "syntax") of Caucus commands and how they are used. It also provides a reference list of most Caucus commands. (The following chapters explain these commands in greater detail.)

Do not be concerned if you do not understand all of the commands described in the following sections. Think of this chapter as a road map and summary of the Caucus commands. Then, read the chapters related to the commands which interest you.

#### 3.2 "AND NOW?" Prompt

Once you register with Caucus and join a conference (as shown in Chapter 2), you will see the Caucus prompt "AND NOW?". (If you see a menu prompt, such as "Enter your choice", your Caucus manager has enabled Caucus menus. In most cases, you may select menu choices *or* type Caucus commands as described in this chapter. If you prefer to use just Caucus commands, you may turn off the menus entirely. See the Caucus Menu User's Guide for more information.)

At "AND NOW?" you tell Caucus what you want to do.

When you type a command at "AND NOW?", Caucus interprets and performs your command. When it is finished, it prompts you again with "AND NOW?". While performing your command, Caucus may display text, prompt you to enter text, or ask you other questions. When the process is complete, however, Caucus always comes back to "AND NOW?".

The only exception to the "AND NOW?" cycle is STOP. When you type STOP, the Caucus program exits and returns you to the operating system prompt.

You can cancel or interrupt what Caucus is doing at any time by pressing <CANCEL>. If you press <CANCEL> several times, you always end up back at the "AND NOW?" prompt.

On most computers, the <CANCEL> key is Control-C. Caucus always tells you what the <CANCEL> key is when you join a conference. (See the novice user example in Chapter 2.)

### 3.3 Command Syntax

A Caucus command looks like a short English sentence. It has the form:

*verb*   *object*   *instance*   *modifier*

The *verb* must always come first and tells Caucus what action to take. The rest of the sentence may follow in any order, with the *modifier* being optional.

The *object* indicates what is being acted upon. The *instance* further identifies which object. For example, consider the command "SHOW ITEM 1" used in Chapter 2. SHOW is the verb. ITEM is the object. "1" is the instance. The command means "display the text of Item 1".

The *modifier* is like an adverb. It focuses the action of the verb. Modifiers are always optional. Examples are shown in the following chapters.

### 3.4 Objects

If you have ever learned a foreign language, you probably started by memorizing the names of some basic objects or nouns. In Caucus there are seven key objects:

ITEMS are the discussions in a conference. An item consists of introductory text, entered by the person starting the discussion, and comments added by members. Each item is about a specific topic, and is identified by a title and a number. A conference may have up to one thousand items simultaneously under discussion.

RESPONSES are the comments that participants make about each item. Responses to an item follow in a linear chain, one after another, as they are entered. Participants respond to an item's discussion as often as they choose. Responses are like question and answer or discussion periods.

ATTACHMENTS are files which are "attached" to some Caucus items or responses. These files may be of any type. When you are viewing an item or response that has an attachment, Caucus will ask if you wish to see the attachment.

PERSONS are participants in the Caucus conferences. Each participant enters a name, telephone number, and a brief introduction when joining Caucus (shown in Chapter 2).

MESSAGES are person-to-person electronic mail. Unlike items and responses, messages are private communications. Only you can read messages sent to you.

SUBJECTS are lists of items with common themes indexed by the conference organizer. If you compare a conference to a library, items are like books and SUBJECTS are like the subject part of the card catalog (OSUBJECTS is another name for SUBJECTS). Caucus also has author and title catalogs.

PSUBJECTS are personalized lists of items. PSUBJECTS are just like SUBJECTS, but *you* do the indexing.

### 3.5 Verbs

Now that you know the basic Caucus objects, you are ready to learn what you can *do* with them. The five most important Caucus verbs are: SHOW, LIST, ADD, DELETE, and CHANGE. These verbs generally can be used with all Caucus objects.

SHOW displays everything that is known about the specified object. For example, SHOW ITEM 1 tells Caucus to display the text of Item 1 with all of its responses.

LIST displays a summary of the specified objects. For example, LIST ITEMS 1-5 tells Caucus to display the number, author, and title of Items 1 through 5.

ADD creates a new object. ADD ITEM tells Caucus to create a new item for discussion.

DELETE is just the reverse of ADD. DELETE ITEM 2 tells Caucus to completely remove Item 2 and all of its responses. (An object can be deleted only by its author or the conference organizer.)

CHANGE modifies objects created by the user. Use CHANGE RESPONSE to edit the text of a response you added to an item. Use CHANGE PSUBJECT to change the list of items in a personal subject category. (Only the author of an object or the organizer can change it.)

### 3.6 Sample Commands

Here are examples of Caucus commands using all of the verbs and objects introduced above. Do not be concerned with learning all of these. They are here for reference and as examples.

Sample ITEM Commands

SHOW 1	display text of Item 1 with all responses
LIST 1-5	display title and author of Items 1 through 5
ADD	create a new item for discussion
DELETE 2	erases Item 2 with all of its responses
CHANGE 5	edit the text of Item 5

Sample RESPONSE Commands

SHOW 1	display responses to Item 1
LIST NEW	display title and author of items with new responses
ADD 2	add a response to Item 2
DELETE 5	erase a response from Item 5
CHANGE 1	change a response to Item 1

Sample ATTACHMENT Commands

SHOW ATTACH 1	display attachment to Item 1
SHOW ATTACH 3:5	display attachment to response 5 of item 3
ADD ATTACH 2 <file	add an attachment <b>file</b> to Item 2
DELETE ATTACH 5	remove an attachment from Item 5

Sample PERSON Commands

SHOW SMITH	display full descriptions of all users named SMITH
LIST JONES	display full names of all users named JONES
DELETE	lets you resign from this conference

Sample MESSAGE Commands

SHOW 1	display your private message number 1
LIST ALL	display sender and subject of all your messages
ADD	send a private message to someone (same as SEND)
DELETE 1-3	erase your messages numbers 1 through 3

Sample OSUBJECT Commands

SHOW CAUCUS	display item numbers under subject CAUCUS
LIST BUGS	display titles of subjects containing the word BUGS
ADD	create a new subject category
DELETE	erase a subject category
CHANGE	change items listed under a subject

Sample PSUBJECT Commands

SHOW NEAT	display item numbers for personal subject NEAT
LIST PSUBJECT MINE	display titles of personal subjects MINE
ADD	create a new personal subject
DELETE	erase a personal subject
CHANGE	change items listed under a personal subject

### 3.7 Other Commands

Besides the basic verbs described above, Caucus also understands several other verbs. Details about using these commands are in later chapters of this guide:

CHECK	briefly describe new information in all conferences
CUSTOMIZE	change conference characteristics (organizer only)

---

EDIT filename	Invoke your editor defined by SET EDITOR
FORGET	forget about (ignore) an item
FREEZE	stop discussion on an item
HELP	ask Caucus for assistance
JOIN	switch to another conference
SEARCH	search items or responses for a specified word or words
SET	adapt Caucus to your terminal and tastes
STATUS	display your status in the conference
STOP	exit the Caucus program







## Chapter 4

### Participating in a Conference

#### 4.1 Seeing New Material

Items and responses are the heart and soul of computer conferencing. Participating in a conference means reading the new items and responses on a regular basis and adding your own comments when appropriate. And all of this can be done at your own convenience!

Telling Caucus to show you new material is very straightforward. At the "AND NOW?" prompt, type `SHOW NEW`. You also can rearrange (`SHOW NEW RESPONSES`) or abbreviate (`SH NE R`) this command. This command displays all new responses to items you have already read. For each item with new responses Caucus displays:

- The title and number of the item
- The date, time, author, and author's userid for each new response
- The text of each new response
- If the new response has an attachment, Caucus asks if you want to see it

When you have seen all the new responses to an item, Caucus asks if you want to add a response of your own. After you have seen all new responses on all the items, (or if you interrupt Caucus by pressing the <CANCEL> key), Caucus returns to the "AND NOW?" prompt and waits for your next command.

If new items have been added to discuss new topics, you may want to see them as well. At the "AND NOW?" prompt, type `SHOW NEW` (or `SHOW NEW ITEMS` or `SH NE I`). For each new item, Caucus displays:

1. The title and number of the item
2. The date, time, and author of the item
3. The text of the item introduction
4. If the new item has an attachment, Caucus asks if you want to see it
5. Any responses to the item

Caucus then asks if you want to add your own response to the item. After you have seen all the new items (or interrupted the process by pressing the <CANCEL> key), Caucus returns you to the "AND NOW?" prompt.

## 4.2 Your Turn to Speak

Whenever you SHOW items or responses, Caucus asks if you would like to add a response. For example, suppose there are new responses to Item 1, and, at "AND NOW?", you typed SHOW NEW S. Caucus displays all of the new responses to Item 1 followed by the prompt:

```
ITEM 1...RESPOND, PASS, or ? for options: (pass)
```

This is your opportunity to add a response of your own to Item 1. Note what each piece of this prompt tells you:

ITEM 1	You are looking at Item 1 and its responses.
RESPOND	You can type RESPOND (or just R) to add your own response to the item.
PASS	You can PASS on this item and go on. In this example, you would then see the next set of new responses.
? for options	The prompt includes the two most common actions, RESPOND and PASS. You can also type ? or HELP to learn about other options. After showing you what options are available, Caucus returns you to the original prompt.
(pass)	When a prompt has a word at the end in parentheses, it means that this is what Caucus does if you just press <RETURN>. In this example, pressing <RETURN> is the same as typing PASS. Usually, the choice shown in parenthesis is the most common one.

If you know the number of a response which you would like to see, you may type that number at this prompt. Caucus will then display that numbered response to the item you have just seen. The item text is response number "0".

If you do not want to add a response and do not want to PASS and see the rest of the new responses, press the <CANCEL> key. Caucus will return to the "AND NOW?" prompt. (This is true at any time while you are using Caucus. If you press <CANCEL> several times, you will always return to the "AND NOW?" prompt.)

### 4.3 Responding

Continuing the previous example, if you choose to RESPOND to Item 1, Caucus prompts you to enter your comment by displaying a ">" at the beginning of each line. Type as much as you like; a response can be up to 9999 lines long. Be sure to press <RETURN> at the end of each line of text.

If you make a mistake while typing, you can edit your text. To do so, type the word "edit" at the beginning of a line. Caucus starts up your default text editor with the text you have typed so far. To learn more about the default text editor, see the SET EDITOR command in Chapter 9.

If you want to use a particular text editor on your computer system, you can also type the word "edit" followed by the name of the text editor at the beginning of a line.

When you are through entering your response, type a dot (period) at the start of a new line. This is the same as typing a completely blank line and tells Caucus that you are finished with your response. (If you would rather type something else to tell Caucus that you are finished, see the SET EOT command in Chapter 9.) Caucus then adds your response to the end of Item 1 and prompts you again with:

```
ITEM 1...RESPOND, PASS, or ? for options: (pass)
```

If you decide *not* to add a response after typing RESPOND, press the <CANCEL> key at the ">" prompt.

*You now know everything you need to be an active participant in a conference.* SHOW NEW RESPONSES, SHOW NEW ITEMS, and RESPOND are the basic tools you need to keep up with a conference and express your own thoughts and opinions.

### 4.4 Other Ways to SHOW ITEMS

SHOW RESPONSES NEW and SHOW ITEMS NEW keep you up-to-date with what happens in a conference, but a conference is more than just what's new since yesterday. A conference is also a history of all the individual discussions.

To review this history, you use SHOW ITEMS in a different way. The general form of the SHOW ITEMS command is:

SHOW ITEMS *instance*

The instance selects the particular items that you want to see. An instance can specify an item or items in several ways. The following paragraphs and sample commands describe increasingly complex methods for selecting the items you want to read.

#### 4.4.1 Item Numbers

The simplest kind of instance is an item number, or numbers. You can combine the numbers in any way or in any order you like. Caucus shows you the list of items you selected in that order. For example:

SHOW ITEM 5	displays Item 5 with responses
SHOW ITEM 1, 17, 3	displays Item 1, 17, and 3 in that order with their responses
SHOW ITEMS 3-6	displays the Items 3, 4, 5, and 6 in that order with their responses
SHOW ITEMS 17, 4-6, 2, 1	displays Items 17, 4, 5, 6, 2, and 1 in that order with their responses

#### 4.4.2 Item Keywords

Another kind of instance is a keyword that represents a set of items. These keywords are ALL, LAST, THIS, NEW, FRESH, and UNSEEN. ALL selects every item in the conference, LAST refers to the highest numbered item in the conference, and THIS refers to the item you were just looking at.

SHOW ITEMS ALL	displays every item in the conference
SHOW ITEM LAST	displays the last item in the conference
SHOW ITEM THIS	displays the most recent item you saw

The keywords NEW, FRESH, and UNSEEN are more complex and are best explained by example. Suppose you join a conference called ECONOMICS for the first time. ECONOMICS has 10 items. Since you have just become a participant of the conference, all of the items are NEW. At "AND NOW?" you type SHOW ITEM 5 to read Item 5 and its responses. At this point:

- Items 1-4 are UNSEEN
- Item 5 is marked as seen
- Items 6-10 are still NEW
- Items 1-10 are still FRESH

The highest numbered item you have seen is item 5. The NEW items are the items after (higher than) the highest item you have seen. The UNSEEN items are items that you have not seen, but are not new. FRESH items are the items that were NEW when you started this session. If you leave the conference and come back tomorrow, only items 6-10 will be FRESH.

SHOW ITEMS NEW            displays all new items

SHOW ITEMS UNSEEN       displays items that you have not seen

SHOW ITEMS FRESH        displays items that were new when you started your session

#### 4.4.3 Frozen

Another instance is the keyword FROZEN. This instance reduces the list of items you've specified to just those which have been frozen. (See section 9.3.4 for more on the FREEZE command.) To use this modifier, add the word "frozen" to your command line, e.g.:

```
LIST ITEM FROZEN
LIST ITEM 1-9 FROZEN
SHOW ITEM FROZEN
```

#### 4.4.4 Named Ranges (Author, Title, Osubject or Psubject)

A more powerful kind of instance lets you select an item or items by AUTHOR, TITLE, OSUBJECT, or PSUBJECT. If you think of a conference as a library and items as books, then the AUTHOR, TITLE, OSUBJECT and PSUBJECT instances are like a library card catalog. The OSUBJECT listings are maintained by the conference organizer. You maintain your own PSUBJECT (personal subject) listings. (See Chapter 7 for more information on OSUBJECTs and PSUBJECTs.)

All four instances work in a similar fashion. SHOW ITEMS AUTHOR "SMITH" displays all of the items added to the conference by *anyone* with the word "SMITH" in their name. SHOW ITEMS AUTHOR "JOHN SMITH" would show only the items added by John Smith. These "card catalog" instances provide a very powerful way to retrieve information from a conference.

A conference is as much a library or database of information as it is a series of ongoing discussions!

**SHOW ITEMS AUTHOR "SMITH"**

displays items added by participants named SMITH

**SHOW ITEMS TITLE "FEDERAL"**

displays items whose titles include the word FEDERAL

**SHOW ITEMS OSUBJECT "MICROCOMPUTERS"**

displays items which the organizer catalogued under the subject MICROCOMPUTERS

**SHOW ITEMS PSUBJECT "IMPORTANT"**

displays items which you have personally catalogued as IMPORTANT

Any of the keywords shown in the instances can be abbreviated to just the first two letters. For example, "AL" is short for "ALL", and "PS" is short for "PSUBJECT".

Caucus even marks items and responses that you enter as NEW, so that you can see exactly how they look. If you do not wish to see your own text as NEW, see section 9.2.8, SET .

#### 4.4.5 SINCE Date

Another kind of instance selects items by date. You can use the "SINCE" keyword to select items that were added since (after) a particular date. For example:

```
SHOW ITEMS SINCE "5/23/92"
```

displays the items that were added on or after May 23, 1992. You may type the date in several different ways:

mm/dd/yy	("5/23/92")
mm/dd	("5/23", assumes current year)
dd-mmm-yy	("23-MAY-92")
dd-mmm	("23-MAY", assumes current year)
-n	("-5", within the last five days)

#### 4.4.6 Combining Instances

You may combine any or all of the previous instances. For example:



## LIST ITEMS NEW TITLE "XYZ" SINCE -10

lists only the new items that contain "XYZ" in the title, and were entered in the last 10 days.

Combining instances "ands" them. In the above example, for an item to be listed, it must be NEW, *and* have the word "XYZ" in its title, *and* have been added in the last 10 days.

### 4.5 Other Ways to SHOW RESPONSES

When you are reviewing the history of a conference, you may wish to see just the responses. That is what the SHOW S command is for.

SHOW RESPONSES has the same general form and list of instances as SHOW ITEMS:

SHOW RESPONSES *instance*

displays the responses to the items selected by the instance. For example, SHOW RESPONSES 1 displays the responses to Item 1. SHOW RESPONSES AUTHOR "SMITH" displays the responses to any *items* added to the conference by anyone named SMITH.

Some instances have a slightly different meaning with responses. Two very important cases are the NEW and FRESH instances. SHOW RESPONSES NEW displays any new responses to the items you have already seen. It *does not* display the responses to new or unseen items. SHOW RESPONSES FRESH displays the responses that were NEW at the beginning of your Caucus session. When you look at something that is NEW, it ceases to be NEW. FRESH is the memory of what *was* new when you started your session.

The SINCE instance also works differently with responses. For example, SHOW RESPONSES 5 SINCE "-3", displays the responses to item 5 that were entered in the last three days. (It doesn't care when item 5 itself was added.) Similarly, SHOW RESPONSES SINCE "6/1/93", displays *all* responses in the conference that were added on or after June 1, 1993.

#### 4.5.1 Combining Item and Response Instances

You may combine item and response instances to display specific responses. To do this, place a colon (":") between the item instance and the response instance. For example:

SHOW ITEM 1:5                    displays response 5 to item 1

SHOW ITEM 2:6-12                displays responses 6 through 12 to item 2

SHOW 5:17 9:1	displays response 17 to item 5, and response 1 to item 9 (note that "ITEM" is optional).
SHOW 5-6:NEW	displays the new responses on items 5 and 6
SHOW NEW:LAST	displays the last response on all of the new items
SHOW SINCE "5/23/92" : SINCE "-5"	displays the responses entered in the last five days to all of the items that were entered since 23 May 1992.

The use of the colon to combine item and response instances is a powerful and precise way to select or display specific responses. Because this syntax is powerful, it also can be very confusing.

If you wish to use this syntax to write complicated Caucus commands, you should understand the following rules. (*Otherwise, please skip to the next section on SHOW ATTACHMENTS.*)

1. A complete instance is either an item instance, a response instance (with the word RESPONSE), or a combined item:response instance. Examples of complete instances are:

ITEM 1	(all of item 1)
1	(all of item 1)
RESPONSE 5	(all responses to item 5)
RESPONSE NEW	(all new responses to "seen" items)
10:6	(item 10, response 6)
1-5:LAST	(last response to items 1 through 5)
TITLE "xyz" : NEW	(new responses to items with title "xyz")

2. The item part of an "item:response" instance must be one of:
  - a single item
  - a range of items (separated by a single "-")
  - a single phrase (such as TITLE "xyz" or SINCE "5/23/92")
  - one of the keywords ALL, NEW, FRESH, UNSEEN, FROZEN, THIS, or LAST

This means, for example, that the command:

```
SHOW 1 5:7
```

displays two complete instances: all of item 1, and then response 7 to item 5 (rather than response 7 to items 1 and 5).

3. Any modifiers (such as NEW, SINCE, TITLE, and so on) that are not part of a combined item:response instance, apply to *all* of the instances. For example, in the command:

```
SHOW 100:5-12 TITLE "xyz" : LAST NEW
```

TITLE is part of an item:response instance, but NEW is not. So this command displays responses 5 through 12 of item 100 *if* item 100 is NEW, and the last response to all NEW items that contain "xyz" in their title.

## 4.6 Other Ways to SHOW ATTACHMENTS

When you are interested in the attachment to an item or response, you can ask to see just the attachment. For example:

```
SHOW 1 ATTACH           displays just the attachment to item 1
SHOW 5:10 ATTACH       displays just the attachment to item 5, response 10.
```

In both of these examples, Caucus will attempt to display the attachment in the way that makes the most sense for your terminal and the type of the attached file.

Alternately, you can copy an attachment into a file on the host computer, and later do whatever you like with that copy. For example:

```
SHOW 3:8 ATTACH >mycopy
```

puts a copy of the attachment to item 3, response 8 into a file called **mycopy**.

## 4.7 ADD RESPONSE

As noted in section 4.2, whenever you SHOW items or responses Caucus prompts you to add a response of your own. This is the easiest and most common way that people add their responses to an item.

You can add a response directly to an item from the "AND NOW?" prompt without SHOWing anything. The general form of this command is:

```
ADD instance
```

where the instance is any of the instances described in section 4.4. However, you may select only one item. If you specify two or more items, Caucus tells you to select one item and prompts you again with "AND NOW?".

Once you have told Caucus to add a response, it displays the number and title of the item you selected, and prompts you to type the text of your response. Enter your response as described in

section 4.3. Type as much as you like, but remember to press <RETURN> at the end of each line. To finish your response, type a dot (period) at the start of a new line. When you are done, Caucus returns you to the "AND NOW?" prompt.

## 4.8 ADDITEM

The previous sections assume that other conference participants entered items into the conference for you to SHOW and to add responses to. When a conference is started, the organizer typically creates the first few items to introduce and define the purpose of the conference.

To start a new discussion of your own, type:

```
ADD ITEM
```

at the "AND NOW?" prompt. Caucus prompts you for the text of your item just as in section 4.3. After you finish entering your item introduction, Caucus prompts you for a one-line title. Choose a clear and succinct title for your item; this helps the other participants of your conference. Caucus assigns the next available number for your item; you do not have to supply one.

Once you add an item to a conference, it is *yours* and automatically appears under your name in the AUTHOR catalog. You also receive certain powers and rights to this item that are described in later chapters.

## 4.9 ADD ATTACHMENT

Several of the previous sections in this chapter have described what happens when you SHOW an item or response that has an attachment, or how to SHOW just an attachment. But, in order for the attachments to exist, someone must add them.

You can only add an attachment to an existing item or response. For example:

```
ADD ATTACH 1 <alpha adds file alpha as an attachment to item 1
ADD ATTACH 2:4 <beta adds file beta as an attachment to item 2, response 4
```

In this example, files **alpha** and **beta** must already exist on the host computer, and be readable by you.

## 4.10 LIST - Getting an Overview

The previous sections introduced the analogy of a Caucus conference as a library, complete with books (items) and card catalogs (AUTHOR, TITLE, and SUBJECT instances). In this analogy, SHOWing an item is like reading a book.

To extend this analogy, when you are looking for information in a library you do not start by reading every book that *might* be relevant. First, you gather a list of related books. That is what the Caucus LIST command is for. It has exactly the same form as the SHOW ITEMS command:

```
LIST ITEMS instance
```

where the instance can be any of the instances shown in section 4.4. For each item selected by the instance, LIST displays three lines of information:

- the item number, author, and time and date the item was added
- the full title of the item
- the number of responses within the item

When Caucus is finished displaying the list, it prompts you with "AND NOW?".

If your lists are very long, you may wish to see the information in a more condensed form. LIST has a modifier called BRIEF that tells Caucus to display only one line of information per item. For example: LIST NEW ITEMS displays one line for each new item in the conference. Each line contains:

- an item number
- the number of responses within the item
- the title of the item (or as much as fits on one line)

Here is another example. The command LIST ITEMS TITLE "FEDERAL" BRIEF displays one line of information about each item in the conference that contains the word FEDERAL in its title.

## 4.11 STATUS and CHECK — What is New?

### 4.11.1 STATUS

Each time you join a conference, you see a greeting from the organizer followed by a very brief summary of the new items, responses, and messages. You can obtain this summary at any time by typing STATUS at the "AND NOW?" prompt. Here is an example from a typical conference:

```
AND NOW? status
```

```
Caucus (TM) Version 2.2/IM. Copyright (C) 1988 Screen Porch
The Conference is: demonstration
The Organizer is: Charles Roth (roth)
You are: Joan Doe
The time is: 29-OCT-89 14:41
```

```
The <CANCEL> key is Control-C.
```

```
New items are: 3
Unseen items are: 1
New responses on items: 2
```

This tells you that Item 3 is new, Item 2 has new responses, and that you have never seen Item 1. The STATUS command is a good way to find out what conference you are in and how much new material there is in the conference.

### 4.11.2 CHECK

Caucus provides an easy method of checking each of the conferences in which you are a member. For example, if you are a member of six different conferences, you might join each of the conferences in order to see if there was something new on any of them. Instead, type CHECK at either the "AND NOW?" or "Join Which Conference?" prompt. Caucus tells you which of your conferences have new items or responses and whether you have any new messages.

## 4.12 Leaving a Conference

Once you have joined a computer conference, there is one important thing you need to know — how to leave it! Caucus provides two different commands for leaving a conference: STOP and JOIN. You use STOP to exit from Caucus and JOIN to go directly to another conference.

### 4.12.1 STOP

The sample Caucus session in Chapter 2 demonstrated using the STOP command to leave Caucus. When you type STOP at the "AND NOW?" prompt, Caucus exits and returns to your normal operating system prompt.

Some computers may be set up so that you can use only Caucus and nothing else. If you are accessing such a system, typing STOP logs you off. If you are dialing into the conference via modem, STOP also disconnects your modem from the host computer.

Because Caucus was designed to run on a variety of computer systems, it understands many synonyms for STOP. The commands DONE, QUIT, BYE, EXIT, and QQ are all equivalent to STOP. You may use whichever one you prefer. You must type the *entire* command, however, as Caucus does not recognize abbreviations for STOP and its synonyms. This keeps you from leaving Caucus accidentally.

### 4.12.2 JOIN

Since you will probably attend more than one conference, Caucus provides the JOIN command to let you switch between conferences. The general form of the JOIN command is:

JOIN *conference*

where *conference* is the name of the conference you want to join. You can type just the first few letters in the name of the conference, and Caucus will figure out which conference you meant. If more than one conference begins with those letters, Caucus will tell you it can not find that conference.

If you type JOIN and do not specify a conference, Caucus prompts you with:

```
JOIN which conference?
```

At this prompt you can:

- \_ type the name of a conference
- \_ type STOP to exit Caucus
- \_ type LIST to see a list of all available conferences
- \_ type CHECK to see a summary of new material in your conferences

You may not have permission to join all of the conferences you can LIST.

If you attempt to join a conference that does not exist or which you are not permitted to join, you are returned to the "JOIN which conference" prompt. Conferences cannot be named LIST or STOP.

### 4.12.3 OK TO PRINT TEXT?

When you leave a conference with STOP or JOIN, Caucus checks whether you told it to print anything. If you told Caucus to print some material by using the PRINT modifier with a Caucus command, that material was saved in a temporary file (see Chapter 9). When you leave the conference, you receive the prompt:

```
OK to print text requested? (yes)
```

Press <RETURN> or type YES or OK to tell Caucus to start printing the material. Type NO if you do not want it printed.

If you see this prompt when you have not told Caucus to print any text, there may be a problem. Type NO, leave the conference, join it again, and type STOP. If you see the prompt again and you still have not told Caucus to print anything, there is a problem with your system's print instructions.

If you have modified your print instructions using the SET command (see Chapter 9), check them over carefully for errors. If you have not done so, contact your system manager and conference organizer to report the problem.



## Chapter 5

### Messages - Your Electronic Mail

#### 5.1 What are Messages?

Items and responses are fine for public discussions, but there will be times when you want more privacy. That is when you should use MESSAGES. Send a message when you want to make a private comment to someone or ask a question ("How was your vacation, George?") that does not belong in the public conference.

Caucus keeps track of the messages that you receive from other people. Each message is numbered when it is received. The first message you receive is Message 1, the second is Message 2, and so forth. The newer the message, the higher the number.

Caucus stores your messages in a "mailbox" that you can access from any conference. Only you can look at your messages. Once a message has been sent to you, it is yours to read, keep, or delete as you prefer.

When you send a message, you can edit it before you send it. Once you have sent it, however, you cannot retrieve it. (Just like the U.S. Mail. Once you drop a letter in a mailbox, it is mailed, and that is that.)

#### 5.2 Sending Messages

To send a private message, type SEND at the "AND NOW?" prompt. (ADD is the same as .) Caucus prompts you to enter a subject heading, the text of your message, and the name(s) of the recipient(s). If you are not sure what the questions mean, you can type ? or HELP at any prompt for more information.

Once you have typed SEND, Caucus responds with:

```
ENTER YOUR MESSAGE
```

and displays a ">" at the beginning of each line. Type as much as you like; your message can be up to 9999 lines long. Remember to press <RETURN> at the end of each line of text.

Typing a message is like typing a response. You can edit the text of your message by typing "edit" at the beginning of a line. (You can also edit your message by responding "yes" to the "Edit Message?" prompt described below). You can cancel your message altogether by pressing the <CANCEL> key. When you finish entering your message, type a dot (period) at the start of a new line. For more details on this process, see section 4.3.

After you complete your message, Caucus asks you to:

```
ENTER THE (short) SUBJECT OF YOUR MESSAGE:
```

You should type one line that briefly summarizes what your message is about. The subject is like the "regarding:" part of a memo or the title of a Caucus item.

Next, Caucus gives you another chance to fix any mistakes in your message. At the prompt:

```
EDIT MESSAGE? (no)
```

type YES if you want to edit your message before it is sent. This starts up your default text editor (see Chapter 9) with the text of your message. Otherwise, type NO (or just press <RETURN>, since NO is the default choice shown in parentheses).

Now that your message is ready to send, Caucus asks you to whom it should send the message. Type the name of the recipient or the recipient's userid in parentheses (e.g. "(roth)").

```
ENTER NAME OF RECIPIENT:  JOE
```

Usually you only need to type the first few letters of the person's name. Caucus figures out who you mean and asks for confirmation to send the message by displaying the recipient's full name:

```
OK TO SEND THIS MESSAGE TO JOE SMITH? (yes)
```

You may also type "SEND TO *recipient* " in which case you will not be prompted for the recipient's name a second time. "Recipient" may be a Unix or Vax mailbox address, or a CaucusLink host address as described in sections 5.10.5 and 9.2.6.

```
Answer YES, RR (send with receipt), or NO: (yes)
```

Type YES, OK, or press <RETURN> (the default) to send the message. Type NO if you do not want to send the message to this person. Type RR if you want a return-receipt for this message.

Asking for a return-receipt means that Caucus automatically sends you a "receipt" message when Joe Smith reads your message. The receipt tells you that Joe Smith read the message, when he read the message, and what the subject of the message was. You also can include a preset number of lines from the original message. (See section 9.2.10, SET , for more information.)

Finally, Caucus asks if you want to send the message to anyone else. At the prompt:

```
ENTER ANOTHER RECIPIENT (or press <RETURN>):
```

you may type the name of another recipient. Caucus continues to prompt you with OK TO SEND MESSAGE and ENTER ANOTHER RECIPIENT until you press <RETURN> at the latter. You can thus send copies of your message to as many people as you like.

### 5.3 Reading Your Mail

Whenever you receive a message, it gets placed in your mailbox and marked as NEW. Seeing your new messages is very straightforward. At the "AND NOW?" prompt, type SHOW S NEW. You can also rearrange ( MESSAGE NEW) or abbreviate (SH M NEW) the command. For each new message, Caucus displays:

- The message number.
- The subject of the message.
- The name of the sender with the time and date sent.
- The text of the message.

After you read each message, Caucus asks if you want to reply to the sender with a message of your own. Following the text of the message, you see the prompt:

```
MESSAGE 1...REPLY, PASS, DELETE, or ? for options (pass)
```

This is your opportunity to reply to the message. Note what each piece of this prompt tells you:

MESSAGE 1 You have just seen message number 1.

REPLY You can type REPLY (or just R) at this prompt to send a reply to your correspondent. Once you have sent a reply, Caucus will repeat this prompt.

PASS You can PASS on this message, and go on to see other new messages. The message will stay in your mailbox.

DELETE You can DELETE (erase) this message. You should delete messages you no longer need.

? for options     The prompt includes the three most common actions, REPLY, PASS, and DELETE. Type ? or HELP to learn about your other options. Caucus shows available options and repeats the original prompt.

(pass)            Pressing <RETURN> in this case is the same as typing PASS.

If you do not want to do anything with this message, and you do not want to PASS on to any other new messages, press the <CANCEL> key. Caucus will return to the "AND NOW?" prompt.

## 5.4    Replying to a Message

Replying to a message is much like sending a message. Caucus prompts you to enter the text of your message, and offers you the opportunity to edit it once you are done. Since this is a reply, Caucus already knows who the message is going to and just asks for confirmation:

```
OK TO SEND MESSAGE TO JOE SMITH? (yes)
```

Again, you have the option of sending the reply to other people. At the prompt:

```
ENTER ANOTHER RECIPIENT (or press <RETURN>):
```

you may type the name of any other person. Caucus continues to prompt you with OK TO SEND MESSAGE and ENTER ANOTHER RECIPIENT until you press <RETURN> at the latter. In this way, you can send a copy of your reply message to as many people as you like.

## 5.5    Replies to Replies

When you reply to a message, Caucus adds the reply to the end of the message you read and mails the whole package back to the sender. The sender gets the text of the original message, plus your reply, as a new message.

Caucus does this to provide context to a reply. Suppose you send someone a message asking a question, and they simply reply "No." Without seeing your original question, you may not know what "No." means!

Of course, this can get out of hand. If you and John Doe are exchanging messages and John replies to your reply to John's reply to your reply to John's original message, the result could be both long and confusing. Caucus can trim such sequences for you. Whenever a message has three or more parts, Caucus asks:

```
CUT EARLIER EXCHANGES? (yes)
```

For example, suppose you send a message to John Doe. Let us call it A. John Doe replies to it with B. You, in turn, reply to B with C. Now the message has three parts (A, B, and C). Caucus prompts you to CUT EARLIER EXCHANGES. If you type YES (or press <RETURN>), Caucus trims off A and sends John Doe a message containing only B and C. If you type NO, Caucus sends A, B, and C together as one message.

## 5.6 Other Ways to SHOW MESSAGES

SHOW MESSAGES NEW keeps you up-to-date on your new messages, but often messages require action on your part before you can reply to or delete them. Seeing your old messages is easy. The general form of the SHOW MESSAGES command is:

SHOW *instance*

where the instance selects the particular messages you want to see. An instance can specify a message or messages in several ways. For example:

MESSAGE 5	displays message 5
SHOW MESSAGE 1, 3, 17	displays messages 1, 3, and 17 in that order
SHOW MESSAGES 3-6	displays messages 3, 4, 5, and 6
SHOW MESSAGES ALL	displays all of your messages
SHOW MESSAGE LAST	displays the last message you received
SHOW MESSAGES NEW	displays all new messages, including return receipts
SHOW MESSAGES NOMARK	leaves NEW messages NEW, whether read or not
SHOW MESSAGES OLD	displays messages you have seen, but have not deleted

After you SHOW a message, Caucus prompts you with:

MESSAGE 1...REPLY, PASS, DELETE, or ? for options (pass)

If you want to read your messages without this prompt, you can tell Caucus to automatically PASS on each message. For example, typing SHOW MESSAGES ALL PASS at the "AND NOW?" prompt displays all of your messages, without stopping to ask you about the disposition of each one. (PASS is a command modifier. Modifiers are described in more detail in chapter 9.)

## 5.7 LIST - Getting an Overview

If you are like most people, you do not read your mail letter by letter. You skim through it first, looking for the most important or interesting letters. You can do the same thing with your Caucus messages by using the Caucus LIST MESSAGES command. It has the same form as the SHOW MESSAGES command:

```
LIST    instance
```

where the instance can be any of the instances shown in section 5.6. For each message selected, MESSAGES displays:

- the message number
- the type of message (REPLY, MESSAGE, or FORWARDED)
- the sender's full name
- the time and date the message was sent
- the subject line describing the message

When Caucus is finished displaying the list, it returns you to the "AND NOW?" prompt.

If your lists are very long, you may wish to see information in a more condensed form. LIST has a modifier called BRIEF that tells Caucus to display only one line of information per message. For example, displays one line of information per message. Each line contains:

- the message number
- the sender's full name
- the date the message was sent
- the first 40 characters of the subject line

Both forms of LIST MESSAGES put an asterisk (\*) in column 1 if the message is NEW. Return receipts also are marked as NEW and automatically note "RETURN RECEIPT" as their subject line.

## 5.8 STATUS - What Is New

Each time you join a conference, you see a greeting from the organizer followed by very brief summary of the new items, responses, and messages. You can obtain this summary at any time by typing STATUS at the "AND NOW?" prompt. Here is an example from a typical conference:

```
AND NOW? status

Caucus (TM) Version 2.2/IM. Copyright (C) 1988 Camber-Roth.

The Conference is:      demonstration
The Organizer is:     Charles Roth (roth)
You are:              Joan Doe
The time is:          29-OCT-89 14:41

The <CANCEL> key is Control-C.

New Messages are 4-5
```

This display says that you have two new messages, numbered 4 and 5.

Caucus also tells you about new messages received while you are conferencing. If you are using Caucus and someone sends you a message, you will see:

```
New message(s) you just received are: 6
```

This means that you just now received a new message, numbered 6. The message appears on your screen just before the next "AND NOW?" prompt.

## 5.9 Cleaning Out Your Mailbox

Messages, like dust under a bed, tend to accumulate. From time to time, you should clean out messages that are no longer useful. You can delete Caucus messages immediately after you read them or at "AND NOW?".

Each time you SHOW a message, after the text you will see the prompt:

```
MESSAGE 1...REPLY, PASS, DELETE, or ? for options (pass)
```

Type DELETE (or just D) to delete that message.

To delete messages at the "AND NOW?" prompt, use the command:

```
DELETE instance
```

This command erases the messages selected by the instance. Caucus asks for confirmation that you really want to delete these messages. The instance can be any of the examples shown in section 5.6.

If you do not want to completely destroy your messages, you have several other options. Suppose messages 5 through 10 contain useful information that you want to keep, but that you do not want cluttering up your mailbox. If you have access to a printer, the Caucus commands:

```
SHOW MESSAGES 5-10 PRINT
DELETE MESSAGES 5-10
```

will print messages 5 through 10 and then delete them. (PRINT is a command modifier that tells Caucus to display the messages, not on your screen, but on your computer's printer. and other modifiers are described in more detail in Chapter 9.)

Here is another approach which adds the messages to a file called "ARCHIVE":

```
SHOW MESSAGES 5-10 >>ARCHIVE
DELETE MESSAGES 5-10
```

The ">>" modifier tells Caucus to put the messages onto the end of the operating system file "ARCHIVE". (">>" is a "redirection" modifier and is described in Chapter 9.)

## 5.10 Advanced Options

### 5.10.1 At the REPLY prompt

Whenever you SHOW a message, you see the prompt:

```
MESSAGE 1...REPLY, PASS, DELETE, or ? for      options (pass)
```

While REPLY, PASS, and DELETE are the most commonly used options, there are four others that you may find useful:

**FORWARD** tells Caucus to forward a copy of the message to another person.

**NEW** marks the message as NEW even though you just read it. (This can be useful for marking messages for later attention if you do not have the time or information needed to deal with them.)



- 5 shows Message 5
- 1 shows again the message you just read

### 5.10.2 SEND AGAIN

The SEND command also has an advanced option. Each time you SEND (or REPLY to) a message, Caucus saves a copy of the message you sent. Typing "SEND " at the "AND NOW?" prompt lets you send that copy to another person. You may only SEND AGAIN the last message you sent.

### 5.10.3 Distribution Lists

Caucus supports mail distribution lists. You can create a distribution list by using the EDIT command described in section 3.7. The file must contain a list of user's names, with one user per line. When Caucus asks you to ENTER NAME OF RECIPIENT, enter

```
<filename
```

where *filename* is the name of the distribution list file. Caucus will send the message to all of the people on the list. These files are permanent and remain from one Caucus session to the next.

### 5.10.4 <CANCEL> key

The <CANCEL> key has a special function when SHOWing messages. Suppose you SHOW a message that has multiple parts (original message, reply, reply to a reply, and so forth). If you press <CANCEL> in the midst of the display, Caucus skips directly to the next part of the message and continues displaying text from there. Each time you press <CANCEL>, Caucus skips to the next part of the message. If there are no more parts to the message, <CANCEL> interrupts the display and Caucus prompts:

```
MESSAGE 1...REPLY, PASS, DELETE, or ? for options (pass)
```

### 5.10.5 Internet mail

You can use the "=" gateway indicator to send mail to people on other computers. For example, if you are using a Unix system which is connected to the Internet, you can send mail to another user on the Internet by entering their e-mail address after the "=", e.g. "=klutz@corp.com".

This also allows you to send mail to users of different mail systems. The following list demonstrates some possibilities:

CompuServe:	=70000.123@compuserve.com
America On-Line	=username@aol.com
MCI:	=0001234567@mcimail.com
AT&TMail:	=lastname@attmail.com
SprintMail:	=first.lastname@orgname.sprint.com

For each of these examples, you must supply the correct information for the field(s) before the “@”. For SprintMail, you must also supply the correct “orgname”.

If you send Internet mail, and the recipients reply to your mail, the reply will appear in your system mailbox. If you want to receive this mail in your Caucus mailbox, you must SET IMPORT ON or SET IMPORT COPY (see Section 9.2.6).

## 5.11 Messages versus Items

When should you use messages and when should you use items? The answer depends on what you are trying to do. Use messages if you want to have a short, private discussion with one other person. Use items if you want to start a public discussion or if you have a question to ask, but do not know *who* to ask.

What about the gray areas in between? Then the question depends on two issues: the importance of privacy and the exponential explosion of mail.

To illustrate the privacy concern, suppose you want to ask ten people about their security clearance levels. You are better off sending the same private message to all ten people. Now suppose that you are asking the same ten people if they are going to attend a party. Using an item would be more appropriate. Their responses will all be in *one place*, and they all can see who is planning to attend.

As another example, suppose you want to have a discussion with four people about the precise wording of a legal contract. If you use messages, you will soon be swamped by everyone's replies to everyone else's messages. This is the exponential explosion of mail. Using an item is much neater. It prevents people from giving overlapping advice *and* gives you a complete record of everyone's comments.

If you need to keep certain group discussions private, the best solution is to create a conference specifically for dealing with those items. The conference should be set up with participants limited to appropriate individuals.

Suppose you wish to set up a conference for discussing staff reviews and raises. If you use a conference open to all employees, your staff members could access both your discussions and other confidential personnel information. By creating a separate conference and limiting

participants to appropriate managers, you gain the privacy needed to discuss these confidential matters *and* to document your decisions. (See Chapter 12 for details on creating a conference.)



## Chapter 6

### Editing and Changing Text

#### 6.1 Introduction

From time to time you will want to change something that you entered into a Caucus conference. You may want to fix a typing error, update your telephone number, add some new information to a response, and so forth. Anything that you put into a conference, you can change. The following sections describe how to use various Caucus commands and prompts to make these changes.

#### 6.2 EDIT

Typing errors are common. If you make a mistake while entering a line of text and have not pressed <RETURN> yet, you can fix the mistake with the <BACKSPACE> key. Press <BACKSPACE> or <DELETE> to back up one character at a time until you get to the mistake, then retype the rest of the line correctly and press <RETURN>. (If your keyboard does not have a backspace key or it does not work, on most computers <BACKSPACE> is Control-H. Hold down the control key and press H.)

When you type an item, response, or message, you may not notice a typing mistake until several lines later. If you are still entering text (that is, if Caucus is prompting you with ">"), you can immediately use a text editor or word processor to fix your mistake. Type EDIT immediately after the ">" prompt, and press <RETURN>. Do *not* type any other words on that line.

The word EDIT does not become part of your text. Instead, it tells Caucus to edit the text you have entered, using the default text editor. If you have not selected a default text editor (see Chapter 9 for a discussion of the `command`), Caucus uses its own built-in text editor. (See Chapter 10 to learn about the Caucus text editor.) When you are finished editing, Caucus shows you the ">" prompt again and lets you continue entering text.

If you want to use a particular text editor, you can tell Caucus to use it instead of the default editor. Suppose you want to use an editor called "VI". At the ">" prompt, type EDIT VI and press <RETURN>. Caucus edits your text with the "VI" editor.

Occasionally Caucus specifically asks you if you want to edit your text. For example, when you SEND a message to someone Caucus asks:

```
EDIT MESSAGE? (no)
```

after you have finished entering the text of the message. If you answer YES or EDIT, Caucus uses the default editor to allow you to edit the text of your message.

### 6.3 CHANGE

You may wish to modify an item or response you already entered into a conference. That is what the CHANGE verb is for. At "AND NOW?", the commands:

```
CHANGE                instance
```

```
CHANGE                instance
```

```
CHANGE                instance
```

tell Caucus that you want to change an item, response, or title of an item, respectively. In all cases, the instance selects a set of items, or an "item:response". The instance can be any of the forms shown in the examples in section 4.4.

### 6.4 CHANGE ITEM

Changing an item means changing the introductory text you created with ADD ITEM. You can only change the introduction for items that you created. (The organizer can change the text of any item in the conference.)

When you change an item, Caucus first displays the title of the item and then offers you several choices about what to do with the item. For example:

```
AND NOW?  change item 3
```

```
Item 3 14-APR-89 16:46 Charles Roth Current Trends in Microcomputer
Marketing
```

```
EDIT, DELETE, REPLACE, or ? for options: (edit)
```

Notice what each piece of this prompt tells you:

```
EDIT          Type EDIT; (or just E) to edit the text of this item with the default text editor.
```

- DELETE      Type DELETE (or just D) to completely erase the entire item including all of its responses.
- REPLACE     Type REPLACE (or just R) to erase your introduction to this item, and replace it with new text. The responses remain unchanged.
- ? for options    Type ? or HELP to learn about your other options.
- (edit)        Press <RETURN> to select the default choice, which is EDIT.

Caucus protects you from accidentally damaging or destroying an item by always asking for confirmation before changing or deleting an item. Whenever you choose to delete an item, Caucus prompts you with:

```
Are you absolutely sure you want to delete this item and all of its responses?
```

```
Delete this item? (no)
```

As a further precaution, the default response (if you press <RETURN>) is "no", that is, do not delete the item. You must type "yes" to delete the item.

If you choose to EDIT or REPLACE an item, Caucus proceeds to edit the text or prompt for the replacement text. When you are finished, Caucus asks:

```
OK to make these changes to the original item? (yes)
```

Typing NO (or pressing the <CANCEL> key) leaves the original item unchanged.

There is one exception to this protection. You may use CHANGE ITEM to immediately replace an item with the contents of a file. For example:

```
CHANGE ITEM 5 <file
```

replaces the text of item 5 with the contents of **file**, without any prompting of or interaction with the user.

## 6.5 CHANGE RESPONSE

Changing a response means changing the text of a response you added to an item. You can change your own responses. (Only the organizer can change anyone's responses.)

If you know exactly where your response is, you can tell Caucus explicitly to change that response. For example:

CHANGE 11:2

tells Caucus that you want to change the 2nd response to item 11.

If you do not know exactly where your response is, but you know the item number, you can tell Caucus to scan the responses to that item. For example:

CHANGE RESPONSE 11

tells Caucus that you want to change one or more of your responses to item 11. Caucus displays your last response to item 11, then the next-to-last, and so on.

In either case, Caucus then prompts you to:

EDIT, DELETE, REPLACE, <RETURN> for previous, or ? for options:

As in the previous section, you can EDIT your response with the default text editor; DELETE the response altogether; or REPLACE the entire response with new text.

If the response shown is not the one you want to change, you have two options.

- Press <RETURN> and Caucus displays your next most recent response. That is what "<RETURN> for previous" means. Caucus prompts you again to EDIT, DELETE, or REPLACE that response. If you continue to press <RETURN>, Caucus will step back through your responses until there are no more in the item.
- If you type a number, Caucus jumps directly to that response and displays it. If that response is not yours, Caucus looks for your most recent response before that number.

Remember, when in doubt, type ? or HELP to see the list of *all* of your options.

When you EDIT, DELETE, or REPLACE a response, Caucus does *not* ask you for confirmation, because the entire response is displayed before you change it.

## 6.6 CHANGE TITLE

Changing a title means changing the title of an item that you created with ADD ITEM. You can change only the titles of items that you created. (The organizer can change the title of any item.)

If you type CHANGE TITLE without an item number, Caucus prompts you for an item number. Once Caucus knows what item you want to change, it displays the old title of the item and



prompts you to enter a new one. The title of an item must fit on one line. You cannot edit a title; you can only replace it.

## 6.7 Changing Personal Information

You can CHANGE more than the text of your items and responses. You can also change any of the personal information you supplied when you first registered with Caucus. People see your name, telephone number and brief introduction when they use the SHOW PERSON command (see Chapter 8). This section describes the commands:

CHANGE NAME

CHANGE PHONE

CHANGE INTRODUCTION

Type CHANGE NAME to change your full name as registered with Caucus. Caucus displays your old name and prompts you to enter your new name. Your old items and responses continue to bear your old name, although they still belong to you.

Type CHANGE to change your telephone number. Caucus displays your old telephone number and prompts you to enter your new number.

Type CHANGE to change the brief self-description you entered when you first registered with Caucus. Caucus displays your old introduction and prompts you to enter a new one. Type as many lines as you like, but remember to press <RETURN> at the end of each line. Type a dot (period) at the start of a new line when you are finished.

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## Chapter 7

### Retrieving Conference Information

#### 7.1 Introduction

Section 4.4 introduced the concept that a Caucus conference is like a library. In this analogy, the items are the books, the organizer is the librarian, and the AUTHOR, TITLE, and SUBJECT instances are the card catalog.

When a person adds an item to a conference, Caucus automatically updates the AUTHOR and TITLE lists. But it is up to the conference organizer and participants to file the item according to SUBJECT. This chapter explains that process.

When you need to retrieve information from a conference, the SUBJECT lists are the best place to start. Sometimes, however, they are not specific enough, and you need to search the conference to find one particular word or phrase. That is the purpose of the Caucus SEARCH command. The latter part of this Chapter explains how to use SEARCH.

#### 7.2 OSUBJECTS and PSUBJECTS

Caucus tracks two kinds of subject categories: OSUBJECTS and PSUBJECTS. OSUBJECTS are created and maintained by the organizer of a conference. The initial O in OSUBJECTS stands for Organizer. OSUBJECTS are visible to and usable by everyone in the conference. (SUBJECTS, without an initial O or P, is a synonym for OSUBJECTS.)

PSUBJECTS are maintained by the individual participants of a conference. The initial P stands for PERSON or personal. Each person in a conference can create his or her own private set of PSUBJECTS which no one else can access. PSUBJECTS are identical in every other way to OSUBJECTS.

You can use PSUBJECTS to organize all or part of a conference according to *your* priorities. You might create PSUBJECTS called "To Do", "Interesting Items", or "Top Priority" to help track discussions particularly relevant to you.

Both OSUBJECTS and PSUBJECTS identify items in a specific conference. You can use them only within that conference. You can have two PSUBJECTS with the same name in different conferences, but they have nothing to do with each other.

The rest of this chapter describes how to manipulate your PSUBJECTS. Everything in it applies as well to organizers who wish to manipulate conference OSUBJECTS. Organizers should simply substitute OSUBJECT for PSUBJECT in the sections that follow.

### 7.3 Names of PSUBJECTS

Each PSUBJECT has a name. The name can contain many words, but the whole name must fit on one line. Some examples of PSUBJECT names are:

Microcomputers: IBM PC and Compatibles

Federal Tax Laws

Interesting Items

When you use a , you type the first few letters of one of the words of its name. For example, the command LIST ITEMS PSUBJECT "FED" would display the list of items filed under the PSUBJECT Federal Tax Laws.

### 7.4 ADD PSUBJECT

You must set up a PSUBJECT before you can use it. At the "AND NOW?" prompt, type:

ADD

Caucus will prompt you to enter a one-line name for the new PSUBJECT. If you prefer, you may type the name of the new PSUBJECT on the command line by enclosing it in quotes, as follows:

ADD PSUBJECT "Micro's: Apple Macintosh"

In either case, Caucus creates a new PSUBJECT that contains no items.

## 7.5 CHANGE PSUBJECT

Of course, an empty PSUBJECT is of very little use. That is why there is a CHANGE command: to change the list of items filed under a category. The general form of the command follows:

```
CHANGE PSUBJECT instance + instance
```

or

```
CHANGE PSUBJECT instance - instance
```

where the first instance identifies a particular PSUBJECT, and the second instance selects a set of items. The selected items are added to (+) or removed from (-) the named PSUBJECT.

If you just type CHANGE PSUBJECT, Caucus prompts you for the instances. Below are two examples of identical changes. In the first, Caucus prompts for each part. In the second, the complete command is typed.

```
AND NOW? change psubject
Change which subject? tax
Federal Tax Laws   1 3
Add which items? 5-6
Delete which items? <RETURN>
```

```
AND NOW? change psubject "tax" + items 5-6
```

The longer example shows that the "Federal Tax Laws" already contains items 1 and 3. The last two Caucus prompts let you add *and* remove items from the PSUBJECT.

## 7.6 LIST and SHOW PSUBJECT

PSUBJECTS are used primarily as a way of selecting a group of items by subject, as in the example LIST ITEMS PSUBJECT "FED". You may also want to see a list of the PSUBJECTS or the numbers of the items filed under a PSUBJECT. That is the purpose of LIST PSUBJECT and SHOW commands. More precisely,

```
LIST "MICRO"
```

displays the full names, one per line, of all of your PSUBJECTS that contain the word MICRO. Caucus ignores upper and lower case distinctions, so "MICRO" is the same as "Micro" or "micro". To get more information, type:

```
SHOW PSUBJECT "MICRO"
```

and Caucus displays the subject names and the list of item numbers filed under all the "MICRO" PSUBJECTS.

Note carefully the difference between:

```
SHOW
```

and

```
SHOW PSUBJECT "MICRO"
```

The first example displays subject names and item numbers. The second example displays all of the *items* filed under your PSUBJECT "MICRO".

There is one special instance recognized by SHOW PSUBJECTS and LIST S. That is the word ALL. The command LIST PSUBJECTS ALL displays the names of *all* of your PSUBJECTS sorted alphabetically by the first word of each name.

## 7.7 DELETE PSUBJECTS

Since PSUBJECTS can be added, they can also be deleted. You should DELETE a PSUBJECT when you no longer use or need it.

The DELETE command is most commonly used to rename a PSUBJECT, because you cannot directly rename a PSUBJECT. You can, however, make a copy of a PSUBJECT under a new name and then delete the old one. For example, the commands below rename PSUBJECT "Apple" to PSUBJECT "Orange":

```
ADD "Orange"
```

```
CHANGE "Orange" + ITEMS PSUBJECT "Apple"
```

```
DELETE "Apple"
```

## 7.8 Using PSUBJECTS and OSUBJECTS

The analogy between a conference and a library strengthens as a conference grows. In a large conference, it is very important for the organizer to use OSUBJECTS to index items. This helps participants identify which specific discussions are relevant to their needs, so that they do not waste time reviewing irrelevant material.

For example, suppose a university has a large conference dedicated to discussing microcomputers. Within the conference you might see OSUBJECTS like:

Word Processors

Business Software

Compilers & Programming

IBM PC and Compatibles

Apple Macintosh

General Questions and Answers

Any one item can appear in several OSUBJECTS. An item discussing the ABC word processor for the IBM PC could appear under both the "Word Processors" and "IBM PC and Compatibles" headings.

PSUBJECTS, while identical in structure to OSUBJECTS, are often used by individuals as reminders. For example, you might create a PSUBJECT called "Interesting Items" to note particularly relevant discussions.

## 7.9 Using SEARCH

Occasionally you may need to search the entire text of a conference in order to find one particular word, or phrase, or response. That is the purpose of the Caucus SEARCH command. The general form of this command is:

```
SEARCH object range [FOR | ANYOF | EACHOF "text"] [SAIDBY "names"]
```

The object must be ITEMS, PERSONS, or RESPONSES. All terms in []'s are optional. If they are not supplied, Caucus will prompt for them (if appropriate). Words shown in quotes must be in quotes unless they are the last object on the command line. You may use the optional modifier "FULL", which causes SEARCH to display the full text of an item or response that matched the search criterion.

[FOR | ANYOF | EACHOF ] means choose one of FOR, ANYOF, or EACHOF.

FOR "text" means search for the words in "text". Caucus will prompt the user to see if they mean to search for all of the words, or any of them.

ANYOF "words" means search for any one of the words in text.

EACHOF "words" means search for all of the words in text. (An item, response, or person must contain all of the words in order to match.)

SAIDBY "names" selects who might have said the words the user is searching for. Caucus will search the text said by anyone whose name matches *names*. SAIDBY "\*" means everyone. For example, the command:

```
SEARCH ITEMS 1-50 FOR "ELECT" SAIDBY smith
```

searches the introductory text and all of the responses in Items 1 through 50 for the word "Elect" said by the person "Smith".

Each time Caucus finds the word, it displays the item and response number plus the three lines of text surrounding the word, unless you have used the modifier "FULL", in which case you will see the whole text. Caucus then prompts you with:

```
CONTINUE SEARCHING, or ? for options (yes)
```

Press <RETURN> or type YES to continue searching. Type NO to stop the search. Other options are NEXT SHOW or ALL. Type NEXT to skip to the next item. Type SHOW to display the entire response or text where the word was found. Type ALL to make Caucus continue searching without prompting after each match.

SEARCH PERSONS searches the introductory text that belongs to a person. Its general format is:

```
SEARCH PERSONS "who" [ FOR | ANYOF | EACHOF "text" ] [BRIEF]
```

This command searches the introduction of all people whose name matches *who*. SEARCH PERSON "\*" searches everyone who is a member of the current conference.

When SEARCH PERSON finds a match, it displays the name, phone number, and brief introduction of that person. If the BRIEF modifier was specified, only the name of the person is displayed.

### 7.9.1 What is a Match?

Caucus uses what's called an "initial substring match" to find words in items, responses, or introductions. This means that you type only the first few letters of the word that you are searching for. In the SEARCH FOR "ELECT" example above, Caucus might find the words "electronics", "election", and "elector" since all three words start with "Elect". It would *not* find "Select" or "President-Elect" as neither word begins with "ELECT". Caucus ignores upper and lower case distinctions, so it does not matter whether you type "Elect", "ELECT", or "elect".

### 7.9.2 Who Said It?

Searching for a word can be a tedious operation, especially if you are searching all of the items in a large conference. Caucus attempts to speed up this process by asking:

```
Who said the words you're looking for? (don't know)
```

If you know who entered the words you are searching for, type the person's name at this prompt. The first few letters of a name is usually enough for Caucus to figure out who you mean. Caucus then searches only the items and responses added by that person. If you do not know who entered the words, press <RETURN> and Caucus searches everyone's text.

If a search takes too long, you can interrupt it at any time by pressing the <CANCEL> key.

### 7.9.3 ANY or ALL?

You can tell Caucus to search for more than one word at a time. For example, the command:

```
SEARCH RESPONSES NEW FOR Electronic Networking
```

searches the new responses for the word "Electronic" and the word "Networking". Whenever you ask Caucus to "SEARCH FOR" more than one word, you see the prompt:

```
Search for text with ALL of these words in it, or ANY of them? (all)
```

In this example, press <RETURN> or type ALL if you want Caucus to find only the responses that contain all (both) of these words. Type ANY if you want Caucus to find a match for any one of these words. In formal logic terms, ALL is an "and" search: find the response that contains "Electronic" *and* "Networking". ANY is an "or" search: find the response that contains either the word "Electronic" *or* the word "Networking".

### 7.9.4 Wildcards

Searching is made easier by the use of wildcards. The inclusion of a wildcard in text that you are searching for allows Caucus to find text with any other character or group of characters in that position. For Caucus the wild card character is "\*." For example:

```
SEARCH ITEMS ALL ANYOF "abc hi*lo *def"
```

searches all the items for any one of:

- (a) the word "abc".
- (b) the word "hi" followed anywhere on the same line by "lo".
- (c) the string "def", anywhere in a line (does not need to start a word).

Only one "\*" may be used per word, i.e. "abc\*xyz\*123" is not allowed.



## Chapter 8

### Conference Participants

#### 8.1 Introduction

The most important part of a conference is not the items, or responses, or messages — it is the participants of the conference. So it is only fair that Caucus understand participants, too! More precisely, Caucus understands the object PERSONS. You can LIST PERSONS, SHOW PERSONS, or even DELETE PERSONS.

#### 8.2 LIST PERSONS

The LIST command displays the full name(s) of a person or group of people, one name per line. LIST PERSONS is a good way to find out the full name of a person if you only know part of it. Each line displayed by LIST PERSONS contains:

- An asterisk ( \* ) if the person is a participant of the conference you are in
- The full name of the person
- The userid of the person (inside parentheses)
- The hostname of the computer where the user enters the information

Remember that Caucus can find a person by a portion or abbreviation of their name. Specifically, Caucus does what is called an "initial substring match". This means that you can find anyone using the first few letters of any word in their full name.

As an example, the command LIST PERSON "RO" might display the names Ronald Reagan, Mr. Roberts and Charles Roth. It would not list Oliver Cromwell (contains RO but does not begin with it) nor Camber-Roth (Camber-Roth is one word)

In the general form of the command,

### LIST PERSONS *instance*

the instance can be more than one word. In such cases, only the participants' names whose name parts match *all* of the words in the instance will be displayed. So the command LIST PERSON "M RO" displays only the one name Mr. Roberts, and none of the other names from the previous example.

## 8.3 SHOW PERSONS

SHOW S is similar to LIST PERSONS except it displays more information about each participant. SHOW PERSONS has a similar syntax:

### SHOW PERSONS *instance modifiers*

For each person selected by the instance, Caucus displays that person's:

- full name
- phone number
- userid (inside parentheses)
- brief introduction
- last time and date on Caucus
- last time and date in the conference you are in now

For example, the command SHOW PERSON "RON REA" might display:

```
Ronald Reagan (nsa001)                202-999-9999
40th President of the United States
Likes jelly beans (but not the Red ones!)
Last on Caucus: 19-APR-88 12:26 (now)
Last in demonstration: 18-APR-88 13:08
```

## 8.4 Special Instances

There are several special instances or keywords that may be used with LIST PERSON or SHOW PERSON, instead of a person's name. These keywords let you LIST or SHOW specific groups of people. The keywords are:

- all (everyone in the conference)
- organizer (only people with organizer powers)
- include (regular users who are included in the conference)
- readonly (people who only can read material in the conference)
- exclude (former members specifically excluded)

For example, LIST PERSON INCLUDE lists all of the members of the conference who have been given full membership through the CUSTOMIZE USERLIST mechanism. SHOW PERSON READONLY would display those people who are only "readonly" members of the conference. LIST PERSON ORGANIZER lists those members who are listed as organizers in the userlist.

SHOW PERSONS ALL displays the full personal information about *everyone* in the current conference, sorted alphabetically by last name. This command can produce a long display if there are a lot of people in the conference. Remember that you can press <CANCEL> to interrupt Caucus and return to "AND NOW?".

The most unusual of these instances is EXCLUDE. The only people who would be listed with the LIST PERSON EXCLUDE command are those users who originally had access to the conference and joined the conference, but later were excluded in the userlist.

## 8.5 What Have Participants Seen?

In many conferencing applications, it is useful to know how much of the conference a participant has seen. For example, suppose you are a teacher using a conference to post assignments and record class discussions. You may want to know if a student has seen a particular assignment. Caucus can give you this information in one of two methods: sorted for one person showing all items that person has seen, or sorted by a single item showing all people who have seen that item.

Caucus records this information for each person in a conference. You can see this information by using the ITEMS modifier on the SHOW PERSONS command. The general form is:

```
SHOW PERSONS instance ITEMS instance
```

where the first instance is a particular person or persons, and the second instance is an item or set of items. The set of items can be any of the instances shown in the table in section 4.4. For example, SHOW PERSON "I STU" ITEMS 1-4 might display:

```

Ima Student (csc123)                                518-111-2222
Last on Caucus: 19-APR-89 13:21
Last in CSC-CLASS: 19-APR-89 11:18
Item Resp Seen
  1  11  11  Introduction to CSC-CLASS conference
  2   4   2  First class assignment
  3   0   0  Second class assignment

```

which tells you that Ima Student is up to date on Item 1, has seen Item 2 and two of its four responses, and has not seen Item 3 at all.

Caucus also records this information for each item. You can find out who has seen a particular item with the following command:

```
SHOW instance PERSONS instance
```

Notice that the only difference between these two commands is the position of the ITEMS and PERSONS keywords and their instances.

For example, the command

```
SHOW ITEMS 1,2 PERSONS ALL
```

might display the following:

```

Item 1 (3) Welcome to Caucus!
Responses  Name          Userid
   3      Mr. Caucus      (caucus)
   1      Ms. Ippi        (ippi)

Item 2 (14) Second Item
Responses  Name          Userid
  14      Mr. Caucus      (caucus)
   5      Mr. Thumb       (thumb)

```

which tells you that Item 1 has three responses, Item 2 has fourteen responses and Mr. Caucus has seen all of the responses to both items. Ms. Ippi has seen one of the three responses in Item 1, and Mr. Thumb has seen five of the fourteen responses to Item 2.

## 8.6 Quotation Marks

All of the examples of commands in this chapter put quotation marks around persons' names. This is good practice, but not always necessary. Quotation marks are only required when something else follows the name or names on the command line.

For example, both LIST PERSON RO and LIST PERSON "RO" work. The command SHOW PERSON RO ITEMS ALL, however, looks for a person named RO ITEMS ALL.

To work properly, the RO in the previous example must be within quotes to separate it from the modifier ITEMS ALL.

## 8.7 DELETE PERSONS

DELETE PERSONS may sound like a blood-thirsty command, but it is actually quite safe. Deleting a person means removing that person from the conference. A deleted person no longer appears in the list of conference participants, nor does Caucus keep track of what that person has seen in the conference. A deleted person's items and responses remain in the conference unless specifically deleted by the organizer.

To resign from a conference, you must delete yourself. (The organizer can delete any participant.) You need not fear deleting yourself accidentally because Caucus will prompt you for confirmation.

If you are not going to be participating in a conference in the future, deleting yourself (resigning) is the polite thing to do. It saves disk space on the host computer and makes it clear to the people in the conference that you are no longer an active participant.

A deleted person can rejoin the conference at a later date unless specifically prohibited by the organizer (see CUSTOMIZE USERS in chapter 12). If you rejoin a conference, it is as though you are joining for the first time. All of the items and responses will be new.



## Chapter 9

### Additional Caucus Capabilities

#### 9.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses a mix of more advanced Caucus commands and modifiers. It begins with a discussion of the SET command. You may use this command to adopt Caucus to your own computer system environment. For example, you can use SET to tell Caucus to always use your favorite system text editor or end-of-text character.

The chapter also introduces the commands FORGET and FREEZE. These allow you to skip items you are not interested in and stop discussions on completed item discussions, respectively. The chapter concludes with a description of the ten Caucus command modifiers. These include timesaving shortcuts (PASS and BRIEF) and directions on how to PRINT Caucus text and move text to and from Caucus by using files on your computer system.

#### 9.2 SET - Customizing Caucus

Caucus works with a wide variety of computers, operating systems, terminals and people. People, in particular, like to do things in different ways. That is what the Caucus SET command is about: adapting Caucus to work the way *you* want it to.

SET lets you choose your favorite editor, control how text appears on your screen, and even select what language Caucus uses. The general form of the SET command is:

SET *object value*

If you do not type a value, Caucus prompts you for it. Objects and examples of their values are described in detail in the following subsections. Your default settings are preset by Caucus until you use the SET command to change them.

Caucus remembers what you have SET. For example, if you SET FORMAT ON today, when you come back tomorrow FORMAT is still ON. If you SET VERBOSE OFF in one conference, it is OFF in all of the conferences that you belong to.

### 9.2.1 SET DICTIONARY

SET controls what language Caucus uses. All of the commands, keywords, prompts, menus and help text in Caucus are located in a master dictionary. Dictionary 0 is the standard English dictionary distributed with Caucus and is your initial default dictionary.

Dictionary 0 includes 3 standard menu interfaces (an "executive" menu and the long and short "training" menus) as well as the command driven interface described in this manual. The default interface is the standard menu, but you can easily change this default by accessing the "MENUS" sub-menu from the Standard Menu. For more information on using the Caucus menu interfaces, see the separate [Caucus Menu User's Guide](#).

The Caucus manager for your system can create new dictionaries ranging from minor prompt and help modifications to translations to other languages. You should contact your Caucus manager or conference organizer to learn which, if any, alternative dictionaries are available on your system. The value used with the SET DICTIONARY command must be a number from 0 to 999.

### 9.2.2 SET EDITOR

SET controls which text editor you use when editing text in Caucus. If you have a favorite text editor on your computer system, type SET EDITOR at the "AND NOW?" prompt. When Caucus asks you for the name of your new default editor, enter the name of your favorite editor.

If your system has no editor, or if you do not wish to use it, Caucus has its own built-in editor. This is your initial default editor and is described in detail in Chapter 10.

### 9.2.3 SET EOT

SET selects the End-Of-Text (EOT) code. You type EOT to tell Caucus that you are finished entering text into an item, response, or message. EOT has the default value "dot" which means you must press dot (period) at the start of a new line to indicate you are through entering text.

You can SET EOT to the special values "2return" or "leof", or to any word or character of your own choice. For example:

SET EOT .           the initial default described above

SET EOT 2RETURN pressing return twice (once at the end of your last line of text and once more at the next ">" prompt) to indicate you are through entering text



- SET EOT 1EOF      typing your system's end-of-file character at the beginning of a line ends text entry. On most computers, this is either Control-D or Control-Z.
- SET EOT .s        typing .s at the beginning of a line ends text entry
- SET EOT STOP     typing STOP at the beginning of a line ends text entry

You must always type your chosen EOT value at the beginning of a line at the ">" prompt. This tells Caucus that you are finished entering text.

#### 9.2.4 SET EXPIRATION *on/off*

Some Caucus licenses expire after a certain length of time and must be renewed. If your site has such a license, you can find out when the license expires. SET EXPIRATION ON will display the expiration date each time you run Caucus. SET EXPIRATION OFF will turn off this display.

#### 9.2.5 SET FORMAT

SET controls whether Caucus reformats the text (item, response, or message) that you enter. Your initial default value (OFF) leaves your text just the way you typed it. You can instruct Caucus to "fill" or "wrap" lines within paragraphs of text by typing SET FORMAT ON at the "AND NOW?" prompt.

#### 9.2.6 SET IMPORT\_MAIL *import/copy*

SET IMPORT\_MAIL IMPORT imports your Vax or Unix mail into your Caucus mailbox, and deletes the mail from your Unix or Vax mailbox. If instead you wish to keep a copy of your mail in your Vax or Unix mailbox, enter SET IMPORT\_MAIL COPY. On some Unix mail systems, the copy will not be saved in your Unix mailbox, but appended to the file "old\_mail" instead.

You may also send Caucus messages as Unix or Vax mail. When the Caucus SEND or REPLY command prompts you for the name of the recipient, type the Unix or Vax mail address prefaced with an "=". For example, the recipient on a Unix system might be "=crtao!jvictor", or the recipient on a Vax system might be "=aulevax::roth".

*(For Caucus managers only:* The "=" prefix character can be changed like any other Caucus string. Its dictionary string name is `ss_cmiesc`. This string must be one character in length. It may be found in the dictionary file "america0".

### 9.2.7 SET EXPORT\_MAIL export

Some users may prefer to read all of their mail with a separate Unix or Vax mail program. You may "export" your Caucus mail to your Unix or Vax mailbox, and read it from there.

To do this, type SET EXPORT\_MAIL EXPORT. Any new Caucus mail that you receive will be automatically exported to your Unix or Vax mailbox.

*Warning:* do not use SET EXPORT\_MAIL EXPORT *and* SET IMPORT\_MAIL IMPORT.

### 9.2.8 SET LINE\_EDIT

SET is for Vax/VMS computers only. It controls the VMS line-editing functions. The value must be the word ON or OFF. SET LINE\_EDIT OFF lets you use Control-H as a backspace key and disables the VMS line-editing functions. The default value is ON with the line-editing functions enabled.

### 9.2.9 SET MYTEXT later/now/never

When you add an item or response to a conference, you will usually see your text as "new" sometime later. SET controls how this works. There are three possible values for MYTEXT:

LATER is the default. When you add an item, it immediately becomes NEW. When you add a response, it becomes NEW only when someone else adds a response after your response.

NOW means that any item or response you add to a conference becomes NEW immediately.

NEVER means that any item or response you add never becomes NEW. Anything that you say in a conference is automatically marked as SEEN. Many people find this convenient, since it means you do not have to re-read your own words.

### 9.2.10 SET PAGE

SET PAGE selects the top-of-page character, which is related to the Caucus PRINT modifier. Each time you print something with the PRINT modifier, Caucus tries to start the printout on a new page. This works only if you select the proper top-of-page character for your printer.

The top-of-page value must be a number between 0 and 255 that represents the top-of-page character code for your printer. The default value is 12 which is the ASCII value for Control-L. If your top-of-page does not appear to be properly set, contact your Caucus system manager or conference organizer to obtain the proper value.

### 9.2.11 SET PRINT

SET controls the way your computer interprets the Caucus PRINT modifier. While installing Caucus, your system manager creates a default set of print instructions that tells your computer what to do when you PRINT text. If this default does not meet your needs, you can change your copy of the print instructions. When you type SET PRINT, Caucus prompts you to either edit the text of those instructions or return to using the instructions set up by your Caucus system manager.

If you edit the instructions, note that the first line of the text is the name of a file. The material to be printed is accumulated in that file. The remaining lines tell your computer's operating system how to print the file. If you are not familiar with files or the operating system, contact your Caucus system manager for assistance.

### 9.2.12 SET RECEIPTSIZE (number)

When you send a message to person X, you can ask Caucus for a return receipt. This means that you automatically get a "receipt" message as soon as person X reads your message. (See section 5.2 for more information.)

Normally, your receipt includes the person's name, date and time they read the message, and the subject of your original message. You also may ask Caucus to include some lines of the text of your original message. This can help you remember what the message was about.

SET determines how many lines from your original message appear in your receipt. The default value is 0. You may set RECEIPTSIZE to any positive number.

### 9.2.13 SET SCREENSIZE

SET controls the number of lines which are displayed on your terminal at any one time. The value must be a number from 0 to 9999. The default value is 23, which is one screenful of text for most terminals.

If there are more than the value of lines of text to be seen, Caucus displays "<RETURN>=more, any key=stop" and waits for you to type something. You can press <RETURN> to see the next screenful or press <CANCEL> (or an 's' followed by <RETURN>) to interrupt the display.

If you do not want Caucus to prompt you after each screenful, type SET SCREENSIZE 0. Caucus will display text without pausing after each screenful.

### 9.2.14 SET

SET SCREENWIDTH tells Caucus the width of your terminal screen in characters. The value must be a number from 10 to 200. The default value is 80, which is the width of most terminals.

### 9.2.15 SET

SET TAB controls what happens when you are entering text and press the <TAB> key. If your keyboard tab key does not work with Caucus, try typing control-I (which is the control sequence used by many systems). Caucus always replaces <TAB>s with enough blanks to take you to the next tab stop. Tab stops are normally 8 characters apart, and this is your initial default value. Use SET TAB with a different value to change the number of characters between tab stops.

### 9.2.16 SET TEXTENTRY terminal/editor/wordwrap

Whenever you enter an item, response, or message, Caucus prompts you, one line at a time, for your text. If you wish to edit your text as you enter it, you must type "EDIT" to get to your selected editor (see SET EDITOR above).

If you prefer, you can tell Caucus to go straight to your favorite text editor whenever you are entering text. That is the function of SET TEXTENTRY.

SET TEXTENTRY TERMINAL means "enter text one line at a time from your terminal". That is the default.

SET TEXTENTRY EDITOR means "use the text editor you selected via SET to enter text" (if you have not chosen a specific editor, it uses the Caucus default built-in editor).

SET TEXTENTRY WORDWRAP means that users may type the text of their items, responses, or messages as though they were using a word processor. The user does not need to press <RETURN> at the end of each line; Caucus automatically "wraps" each line on the screen as the user types.

### 9.2.17 SET

SET VERBOSE controls the length of the Caucus prompts. SET VERBOSE ON tells Caucus to use the longer, more detailed prompts illustrated in this guide. SET VERBOSE OFF tells Caucus to use shorter prompts and is intended for more experienced users. The default value is ON.

### 9.2.18 SET TERMINAL

TERMINAL defines the user's terminal type, and is used to determine how to display file attachments to items and responses. The list of terminal types is in the file **attach\_map** in the **MISC** directory.

### 9.2.19 SET SHOWATTACH `askme/on/off`

SHOWATTACH controls what Caucus should do when displaying an item or response that has an attachment. OFF ignores the attachment, ON always displays the attachment, and ASKME asks the user if they wish to display the attachment.

### 9.2.20 SET TRANSFER `kermit/xmodem/ymodem/zmodem`

When uploading or downloading item and response attachments, Caucus needs to know which file transfer protocol to use. To choose a protocol, use SET TRANSFER. Caucus will automatically use the protocol specified in SET TRANSFER whenever you indicate that you would like to transfer an attachment.

## 9.3 FORGET and FREEZE

The last two commands in the Caucus repertoire are FORGET and FREEZE. FORGET tells Caucus that you are not interested in an item. FREEZE stops all discussion on an item.

### 9.3.1 FORGET

When you attend a live conference, you may find that some discussions do not interest you. The same may be true of parts of a Caucus conference. You can tell Caucus to filter out the items you do not want to see by typing the FORGET command at the "AND NOW?" prompt. The general form of the FORGET command is:

```
FORGET ITEMS instance
```

where the instance can be any of the forms shown in section 4.4.

When you FORGET an item, you forget about all of its responses as well. As far as you are concerned, that item no longer exists. If you type FORGET ITEM 3, and then type SHOW ITEMS 1-4, you see Items 1, 2, and 4. If you type LIST ITEM 3, Caucus tells you that "No items were selected".

You also may FORGET items as you look at them. After you have shown an item, at the prompt

```
ITEM 1...RESPOND, PASS, or ? for options: (pass)
```

type FORGET, and Caucus forgets that item for you.

### 9.3.2 Remembering Forgotten Items

When you FORGET an item, Caucus does not delete the item. It is not gone, just forgotten. You can recall the item at any time.

To see a list of forgotten items, type FORGET (without any object or instances) at the "AND NOW?" prompt. Caucus displays the item numbers of the forgotten items, and then prompts you to:

```
REMEMBER WHICH ITEMS? (none)
```

Type the number or numbers of the items you want to remember. Caucus marks these items as UNSEEN, and you can now access them as usual. If you decide to leave the items as forgotten, just press <RETURN> at the above prompt.

### 9.3.3 FORGOTTEN and NOFORGET

Caucus understands two special instances that relate to forgotten items. FORGOTTEN selects those items that you have forgotten. NOFORGET tells Caucus to temporarily ignore the fact that an item has been forgotten. For example, suppose you told Caucus to FORGET ITEM 2. Then the command LIST ITEMS FORGOTTEN displays the title and author of Item 2, while SHOW ITEMS 1-3 NOFORGET displays the text and responses in Items 1, 2, and 3, even though Item 2 has been forgotten.

### 9.3.4 FREEZE

The FREEZE command stops discussion on an item. When an item is frozen, no one can add any more responses to the item. You may only freeze items that you added to the conference. (The organizer can freeze any item.)

There are many reasons for freezing an item. For example, you may use an item to conduct a survey on a particular topic and need to collect your results by a certain date. After that date, you FREEZE the item since any new responses are unnecessary. For another example, you may use an item to discuss the pros and cons relating to a business decision. Once the final decision has been made, you can publish the conclusion in the item and then freeze it to terminate further discussion.

The FREEZE command works very much like the FORGET command. The general form of the command is:

```
FREEZE ITEMS instance
```

where the instance can be any of the forms shown in section 4.4.

### 9.3.5 Thawing Frozen Items

You also may unfreeze or thaw a frozen item. To see a list of frozen items, type FREEZE (without any objects or instances) at the "AND NOW?" prompt. Caucus displays the item numbers of the frozen items and prompts you to:

```
Thaw (unfreeze) which of these items? (none)
```

Type the number or numbers of the items you want to thaw. If you want to leave them as frozen, just press <RETURN>. You can only thaw items that you added to the conference. (The organizer can thaw any item.)

### 9.3.6 Using FROZEN as a command-line modifier

You can also LIST and SHOW frozen items. The FROZEN modifier reduces the list of items you've specified to just those which have been frozen. To use this modifier, add the word "frozen" to your command line, e.g.:

```
LIST ITEMS FROZEN  
LIST ITEM 1-9 FROZEN  
SHOW ITEMS ALL FROZEN
```

## 9.4 Command Modifiers

The general form of a Caucus command, as described in Chapter 3, looks like:

```
verb object instance modifier
```

This section describes all of the Caucus command modifiers.

A modifier is like an adverb. It focuses the action of the verb. For example, in the command LIST ITEMS ALL BRIEF, the word BRIEF is the modifier. It does not affect *what* is listed (all the items), but *how* it is listed (condensed to one line of information per item).

There are ten different Caucus command modifiers: PASS, BRIEF, LIFO, PRINT, >outfile, >>outfile, <infile, NOATTACH, NOASK, and NOCOMPLAIN. The following paragraphs provide detailed descriptions of each modifier.

#### 9.4.1 PASS

The PASS modifier tells Caucus *not* to prompt you for a response or reply when you SHOW items, responses, or messages. For example, the command SHOW ITEMS NEW PASS shows you all new items without prompting you for responses. When you want to review, not comment on, certain conference material, using the PASS modifier is more convenient than typing PASS at the end of each item.

#### 9.4.2 BRIEF

The BRIEF modifier shortens the display when you LIST items, responses, or messages. When you use BRIEF, Caucus displays only one line of information per selection. The BRIEF modifier is very useful when you want to scan a large number of items or messages.

The BRIEF modifier can also be used with the SHOW RESPONSES command. When used in this way, Caucus only lists the number, author, and date/time of each response of an item or items.

For example, SHOW RESPONSE 1 BRIEF might produce the following:

```
1:1) Jeff Victor (jvictor)           26-JUL-93 17:45
1:2) Charles Roth (roth)            28-JUL-93 16:41
1:3) Michele Richens (richens)      3-AUG-93 13:44
```

#### 9.4.3 LIFO

The LIFO modifier is used with SHOW ITEM or SHOW RESPONSES. It displays responses in reverse order ("last-in, first-out"). For example, SHOW RESPONSE 5 LIFO displays the title line for item 5, followed by the last response to that item, followed by the next to last response, and so forth.

You also may type LIFO at the "RESPOND, PASS, or ?" prompt to display the response to the current item in reverse order.

#### 9.4.4 PRINT

The PRINT modifier prints information from the conference on the printer attached to the host computer system. When you PRINT text, it does not appear on your screen, but is sent directly to the printer. For example, the command SHOW ITEM 1 PRINT prints the contents of Item 1



on the host computer's printer. Item 1 does *not* appear on your screen, nor are you prompted to add a response. You can use the PRINT modifier with any of the SHOW, LIST, or HELP commands.

Check with your system manager or conference organizer if you are uncertain which printer Caucus will use or whether the PRINT command is enabled. (See also the SET PRINTER command in section 9.2.9.)

Note that if you are dialing into a host Caucus system from a remote location, using the PRINT command would result in your information being printed on the host system's printer. To print material on your local printer, you need to send the information to a file on your own computer. You can then print these files when you return to your system's normal operating prompt. (See also the >outfile and >>outfile discussions immediately following and the description of the Caucus Kermit and zmodem macros in Chapter 11.)

#### 9.4.5 >OUTFILE

The >outfile modifier is similar to PRINT. Instead of displaying or printing text, it places the text in your specified outfile. For example, the command SHOW ITEM 1 >SAVE copies the contents of Item 1 into the file called **save**. Any previous contents of **save** are erased and replaced with Item 1. If the file **save** does not exist, it is created. Think of the ">" in >outfile as an arrow pointing to where the text is going. You can use outfile with any of the SHOW, LIST, HELP, or SEARCH commands.

#### 9.4.6 >>OUTFILE

The >>outfile modifier (notice the double ">>") is nearly identical to the single arrow >outfile modifier except that it appends text to the specified outfile. For example, SHOW ITEM 2 >>SAVE appends the text of Item 2 to the end of the information already in the **save** file instead of erasing and replacing the file's contents with Item 2. If the file does not exist, it is created.

#### 9.4.7 <INFILE

The <infile modifier has the arrow pointing in the other direction. This means that text is read *from* the identified infile and entered in the conference. For example, the command ADD ITEM <MEMO creates a new item with the introductory text of the item taken from the file **memo**. You can use the <infile modifier with the ADD command.

You also may use <infile whenever Caucus prompts you to enter text. Type "<infile" at the beginning of a line and Caucus enters the contents of the file as though you had typed it yourself. When Caucus reaches the end of the file, it prompts you to continue entering text from your terminal.

### **9.4.8 NOATTACH**

When you are SHOWing items and responses, you may be prompted to decide whether or not you want to show files attached to those items and responses.

If you do not want to see any of the attachments, you may use the modifier NOATTACH. This will cause Caucus to ignore any attachments.

### **9.4.9 NOASK**

When you type an incomplete command (such as "LIST ITEMS", with no instance), Caucus normally will ask you to supply the specific instance.

You may use the NOASK modifier to tell Caucus not to prompt for a specific instance. (This modifier is mostly of use to macro writers.)

### **9.4.10 NOCOMPLAIN**

When you type a complete Caucus command (such as LIST ITEMS NEW) that does not match any items or responses (if, for example, there are no new items), then Caucus will tell you "No items or responses in this conference matched your request".

You may tell Caucus to not display this "complaint" by using the NOCOMPLAIN modifier on the original command.

### **9.4.11 Trouble-Shooting and Advice**

The print and file transfer modifiers do not work if they are not enabled for your user account. Caucus will tell you if this is the case. You should then contact your Caucus system manager or conference organizer to discuss your alternatives.

You also may wish to check with your Caucus system manager or conference organizer to learn what, if any, Caucus macros have been set up relating to printing, file transfers, and remote access capabilities. Because these are developed specifically for your computer system, they are often more efficient and easier to use than the standard Caucus options.

## **9.5 EDIT filename**

Users may create and edit their own named files (or "scratchpads") from within Caucus. To use this feature, the user must enter

EDIT filename

at the AND NOW or Main Menu prompt. Caucus invokes your favorite editor (defined by SET EDITOR) on file **filename**. After you are finished editing, you may use that file as input to an item, response, message, or mail distribution list. Files created with EDIT are permanent and remain from one Caucus session to the next.

## 9.6 ! Command Escape

Typing "!" at the "AND NOW?" prompt allows you to "escape" to the operating system without leaving Caucus. For example, if you have a PC running MSDOS, typing "!DIR" lists all the directory files as though you typed "DIR" at a system prompt. The Caucus system manager has the option of turning the command option on or off for groups of users. Caucus will warn you if the command escape sequence is not enabled.



## Chapter 10

### The Caucus Editor

#### 10.1 Introduction

Caucus provides a built-in "line-oriented" text editor, called the Caucus editor. This particular editor is not very sophisticated, but it does provide a common editor for *all* computer systems which run Caucus. ("Line-oriented" means that you type commands to insert, edit, or delete individual lines of text.)

The Caucus editor is your default editor unless you select another using the SET command (see Chapter 9). If you already are familiar with another text editor on your system, you may use it instead of the Caucus text editor.

Most versions of Caucus for Unix also include a simple full-screen editor called "CREDIT". If you do not already have a favorite text editor, please try CREDIT ("SET EDITOR CREDIT") in preference to the built-in Caucus editor.

The three most common ways to use a text editor are:

- typing "edit" at a ">" prompt while entering text
- when you use the CHANGE command
- when sending messages

The preceding chapters in this guide provide more detailed explanations of how you can edit your conference and message text. Remember that you may edit only your own text. (Only the conference organizer can edit anyone's items or responses.)

The rest of this chapter describes the built-in Caucus editor. This editor is line-oriented with each line of your text numbered sequentially. To refer to a line of text, you must use its line number. The Caucus editor prompts you with a colon (:) when it is ready for your commands. The following paragraphs describe these commands and their format and assume you are already within the Caucus text editor at the prompt.

## 10.2 SHOW

SHOW lets you look at the text of the response, item, or message which you are editing. The line numbers are displayed in front of the text of each line, so that you can identify each line when you use other editing commands.

The format of the `SHOW` command is:

```
SHOW firstlinenumber lastlinenumber
```

where the *firstlinenumber* is the number of the first line to be displayed and the *lastlinenumber* is the number of the last line to be displayed. For example, typing `SHOW 6 20` displays lines 6 through 20 of the text being edited. The line numbers appear at the beginning of each line.

If you want to display all of the lines in your text, specify the *firstlinenumber* and *lastlinenumber* that includes all of the lines that exist. You can enter an extremely high *lastlinenumber* to ensure you have displayed all of your text. For example

```
SHOW 1 1000
```

displays all of your text if you have fewer than 1000 lines. If you have only six lines, you would see only six lines. You can use this idea with the other commands in this chapter, too.

## 10.3 DELETE

The DELETE command is used to remove one or more lines from the text being edited. The format of the `DELETE` command is:

```
DELETE firstlinenumber lastlinenumber
```

This deletes all of the lines between the *firstlinenumber* and the *lastlinenumber*, inclusive. If you only want to delete one line, do not type a *lastlinenumber*.

Some examples of the DELETE command are:

```
DELETE 5      delete line number 5
```

```
DELETE 1 1000 delete all of the text
```

```
DELETE 9 1000 delete all lines after line 8
```

Note that deleted text *cannot* be recovered. When you delete a line or lines, the remaining text is renumbered automatically. That is, if you have five lines of text, and delete line number 3, you will have four lines of text remaining, numbered 1 through 4.

## 10.4 ADD

To add new lines to the text you are editing, use the ADD command. The format of the ADD command is:

*ADD firstlinenumber*

The Caucus editor prompts you for your new text with a "?" prompt. Enter text just as you normally would. When you are finished, type a dot (period) at the start of a new line. The Caucus editor inserts your new text immediately following the line you indicated as your firstlinenumber.

To add lines at the beginning of your text, use 0 as the firstlinenumber. To append lines at the end of your text, use a firstlinenumber greater than or equal to the line number of the last line in the text. A high number like 1000 works fine.

Note that when you add new lines of text, all of the lines are renumbered. For example, if you have three lines of text and add two more lines after line 1, you then have five lines of text numbered 1 through 5. The old line number 2 has become line number 4.

The Caucus editor can hold a maximum of 5000 lines (about 90 pages) of text. If your text has reached this limit, Caucus does not allow you to ADD more lines until you delete some old lines.

## 10.5 SEARCH

If you want to find a particular word or sequence of letters in your text, you can use the Caucus editor SEARCH command. The SEARCH command format is:

*SEARCH firstlinenumber lastlinenumber*

Caucus looks through the lines firstlinenumber to lastlinenumber, inclusive. If you do not type a lastlinenumber, Caucus looks from firstlinenumber through to the end of the text. If you type SEARCH without any line numbers, Caucus looks from the line you saw most recently through to the end of the text.

When you type the SEARCH command, Caucus prompts you for the word or sequence of letters to search. This is called a string. The prompt is:

Search String:

Type the word or sequence of letters you want to search for and press <RETURN>. Caucus searches the selected lines for the first occurrence of the string, displays the line, and displays the ":" prompt for further commands.

## 10.6 CHANGE

If you want to change a particular word or sequence of letters in your text to something else, use the CHANGE command. The format of the CHANGE command is:

CHANGE *firstlinenumber lastlinenumber*

The CHANGE command is similar to the SEARCH command except that when it finds what it is looking for, it replaces it with whatever new string you specify.

Like SEARCH, if you do not type a lastlinenumber, Caucus searches from firstlinenumber through to the end of your text for the word or letters to be changed. If you just type CHANGE, Caucus searches from the last line you saw through to the end of your text.

When you type the CHANGE command, Caucus prompts you with:

Old String:

You should type the word or sequence of letters to be replaced and press <RETURN>. Caucus then prompts you for the replacement word or letters with:

New String:

Type the word or sequence of letters you want to replace the old word with, and press <RETURN>.

Caucus searches the selected lines for the first occurrence of the old word, replaces it with the new word, displays the changed line, and then returns to the ":" prompt.

## 10.7 HELP and LIST

The HELP command can be issued at any ":" prompt. When you type HELP, Caucus displays a brief description of all the editing commands. You can do this as often as you need to while you are editing. When you are through reviewing, Caucus returns you to the ":" prompt.



The `command` is exactly like the `SHOW` command except line numbers are not shown. Use the `LIST` command to see what your edited text looks like before you leave the editor.

## 10.8 STOP

To finish editing, type the `STOP` command at any `:` prompt. Caucus returns to whatever you were doing just before you used the editor.

If you were in the middle of entering text, when you type `STOP` Caucus prompts you with `>` and continues to let you enter text.

If you chose `EDIT` in response to the prompt

```
EDIT, DELETE, REPLACE, <RETURN> for previous, or ? for options
```

when you type `,` Caucus goes on to the next prompt in your process.

If you were editing an item, when you type `STOP` Caucus asks you to confirm that you really want to make these changes. This is helpful if you want to think further before making any substantial changes to an item.



## Chapter 11

### Suggestions and Shortcuts

#### 11.1 Helpful Hints

There are several shortcuts which can be used with Caucus. Most are easy to remember and use.

Caucus commands can be abbreviated. Caucus recognizes most command keywords by the first few letters of their names. For example, the verb `SHOW` can be shortened to `SH` and the object `ITEMS` can be shortened to `I`. On the other hand, the verb `SET` must always be typed in full since it could be confused with the verb `SEND`.

You can also abbreviate Caucus participant names and `SUBJECT` topics. If Caucus cannot identify your abbreviation, it asks for clarification. The only two keywords which cannot be abbreviated are the `STOP` command and the `PRINT` modifier. This ensures that these words are not used accidentally. Use abbreviations to save time!

The `HELP` command has the special abbreviation `?` (question mark). Remember that `HELP` or `?` can be used at any prompt. When used without an object, the `HELP` command shows you what choices you have at that prompt and then returns you to the prompt.

If you just joined a large conference or have been away from an active conference for a while, you may want to `PRINT` all of the items. You can then read them at your leisure.

Questions about Caucus should be asked at large in the conference as a response or item. This usually ensures you get a fast answer and helps the other conference participants who were hesitant to ask.

Press the `<CANCEL>` key whenever you want to interrupt what Caucus is doing. Caucus will proceed to the next prompt in the sequence. If you are unsure what key is your `<CANCEL>` key, this information is included in the text shown when you join a conference or type `STATUS` at the "AND NOW?" prompt.

To illustrate using the `<CANCEL>` key, suppose you are `SHOWing` the introductory text to an item and decide you do not want to read it all. Press `<CANCEL>` and Caucus will begin

showing you the responses to that item. Press <CANCEL> again and you will be returned to the "AND NOW?" prompt.

Other helpful hints and shortcuts can be found throughout the Caucus User's Guide, in the following sections on Caucus macros and conference etiquette, and in Chapter 13 (Organizer's Guide).

## 11.2 Caucus Macros

Caucus has a very rich set of commands built out of a small number of verbs and objects. But no set of commands, no matter how large or carefully designed, can anticipate everything that you might want to do. That is why Caucus has a "macro" capability.

Using Caucus macros, your system manager can easily create new commands to meet the needs of the local users. Macros can combine Caucus commands with operating system commands and other applications programs to provide almost any capability.

### 11.2.1 Predefined Macro Shortcuts

One of the most common uses of macros is to provide shortcuts for frequently typed Caucus commands. Caucus is distributed with several shortcut macros already defined.

A good example of these predefined shortcuts is the NEW macro. If you type NEW at the "AND NOW?" prompt, Caucus displays all of your new messages, all of the new responses, and all of the new items. Using the NEW macro is the same as typing SHOW NEW MESSAGES, SHOW NEW RESPONSES, and SHOW NEW ITEMS.

NEW may also be used with modifiers: NEW PASS displays all the new messages, responses, and items without stopping to ask if you want to reply or respond. NEW PRINT prints all of the new material, and so forth.

The predefined macros are:

NEW	same as SHOW NEW MESSAGES, SHOW NEW RESPONSES and SHOW NEW ITEMS
LNB	same as LIST RESPONSES NEW BRIEF and LIST ITEMS NEW BRIEF
LAB	same as LIST ITEMS ALL BRIEF
LMB	same as LIST MESSAGES ALL BRIEF

MARKSEEN is like SHOW ITEMS, only nothing appears on your screen. MARKSEEN is a quick way to mark NEW items as seen without actually SHOWing them.

SEND same as ADD MESSAGE

SUBJECTS same as LIST OSUBJECTS ALL

RESIGN same as DELETE PERSON

Macros must always be typed at the "AND NOW?" (or menu) prompts. Those are the only places where Caucus recognizes macros. Macros also may be abbreviated like the regular Caucus commands. For example, the SUB command is recognized as an abbreviation of the SUBJECTS macro.

### 11.2.2 Other Macro Uses

A popular use of macros is to add upload and download commands to Caucus. Many sites have created Caucus macros that move text to and from a conference via the Kermit and zmodem protocols. All that is needed is a copy of the Kermit or zmodem program for the host Caucus system. (A free copy of Kermit is distributed with most Caucus packages, as referenced in your Customizing the Caucus User Interface manual. Zmodem also is included with most versions of Caucus for Unix.)

Graphics is another area of growing interest in computer conferencing. Caucus macros combined with NAPLPS or other graphics interpreters can add a whole new dimension to your group discussions.

If you are interested in creating a new macro or learning about macros which have already been set up on your system, send a message to your Caucus system manager or conference organizer. For more detailed information about Caucus macros, see the separate Customizing the Caucus User Interface manual.

## 11.3 Conference Etiquette

In many respects, using Caucus is like conducting all of your business by letter. You cannot see the faces of the people you are corresponding with. As a result, it is difficult to judge their emotions. You do not know whether a participant answered your last response in haste or took time to think about your comments before replying. Bearing this in mind, the following advice will help you ensure that using Caucus is a pleasant experience.

Conferences proceed faster and are more lively when participants check in every day or two. If you are responding to an item or replying to a message, take the time you need to consider your

answers. If that takes several days, you may want to enter a preliminary response or reply that can be followed up at a later time.

Keep items and responses simple. Complex topics can be expressed simply by keeping your sentences short and using less complex words. Be clear and concise.

Sarcasm does not work well in a conference. Without facial expressions, the meaning and intent may be lost. In general, try to adopt a neutral emotional tone. If the organizer and other participants of your conferences have devised a method to denote humorous or tongue-in-cheek comments, use it. Often phrases in parentheses, such as (grin!), are used.

Be specific. If you are responding to two different thoughts in a discussion within an item, make two responses. Try to answer direct questions in a straightforward fashion.

Leave landmarks. If you are responding to a comment in Response 34, say so. Several other participants may have entered responses while you thought out your reply.

Discussions in a conference have a tendency to wander off the original subject. If a particular discussion sparks a new idea, enter it as a new item.

Do not be afraid to ask questions. If you do not understand someone's item or response, ask for clarification. If you do not understand something about using Caucus, enter an item or response about it. You are probably not alone!

You can emphasize a word or two by using all capital letters or asterisks (for example, "How about THAT?" or "This is really \*useful\*!") Note that more than one or two emphasized words per response, however, can become irritating and hard to read.

While Caucus conferences are for group interaction, do not overlook the private message utility. Send person to person messages if you have information which is irrelevant to the group as a whole or more appropriately handled confidentially.

For further suggestions, see also Chapter 13, the "Organizer's Guide".

## Chapter 12

### The Conference Organizer

#### 12.1 Introduction

The previous chapters describe the daily use of Caucus conferences by regular participants. This chapter describes how an administrator administers a conference.

When the Caucus administrator creates a conference, he or she also assigns someone to be the primary organizer — the person in charge of the conference. Caucus gives this person special abilities.

The primary organizer may in turn give other people these special abilities in order to share the power and responsibility of managing the conference.

[Note: For a more detailed description of the "how's" and "why's" of conference management, see Chapter 13, the "Organizer's Guide".]

#### 12.2 Starting a Conference

To create a new Caucus conference you must use a companion program called **cv2start**. The details of how you run the **cv2start** program vary from computer to computer. For a description, see your system's Caucus Installation and Manager's Guide or talk to your system administrator, the person who installed Caucus on your system, or another conference organizer.

When you run the **cv2start** program, it asks several questions about the new conference. These include:

- what is the name of the conference?
- what is the userid of the primary organizer?
- should this conference be open to everyone?

- permit this conference like another one?
- make this conference LISTED or UNLISTED?
- should this be a CONFERENCE or a LIBRARY?
- who are the other organizers (if any)?
- which groups should be allowed to use this conference (if any)?

Once you have answered all the questions, you also are given the opportunity to edit the conference user list that controls who may join the conference.

Conference names may be up to 20 characters long but cannot contain any blanks. (You may use underscores to link words, as in "MY\_CONFERENCE".) Conferences may not be named CHECK, HELP, STOP, or LIST, because these are key commands for the "JOIN which conference?" prompt.

The "CONFERENCE or LIBRARY" question determines the type of the conference. A CONFERENCE is a traditional discussion conference with items and responses. A LIBRARY is a conference that is organized as a file library. For more information about file libraries, see chapter 14.

If you do not know the userid of the organizer, you must run Caucus and use the SHOW PERSON command in an existing conference. Caucus displays the userid of the person in parentheses on the right-hand side of the screen. Do not type the parentheses when you tell **cv2start** the userid of the organizer.

**Cv2start** creates an empty conference with no items, no participants, and a default INTRODUCTION and GREETING. (These terms are defined below.) The organizer should join the new conference as soon as is convenient to prepare the conference for its participants.

## 12.3 CUSTOMIZE

Caucus gives the organizer of a conference special abilities to assist with setting up and maintaining a conference. Many of these abilities, such as controlling who can join a conference, are provided by the CUSTOMIZE command. Only the organizer can use this command.

The general form of the CUSTOMIZE command is:

`CUSTOMIZE object`



where the object can be ADD, CHANGE, GREETING, INTRODUCTION, ORGANIZER, SUBJECT, USERS, or VISIBILITY.

**CUSTOMIZE** lets the organizer control whether or not participants can ADD new items to the conference. Caucus prompts for a YES or NO answer. YES is the default value and means anyone can ADD an item. NO means only the organizer can ADD new items.

**CUSTOMIZE CHANGE** lets the organizer control whether or not participants can CHANGE the text of their own items or responses. Caucus prompts for a YES or NO answer. YES is the default value and means anyone can CHANGE an item or response that they entered. NO means only the organizer can change items or responses.

**CUSTOMIZE GREETING** lets the organizer edit the text of the greeting that appears each time a person joins the conference. Caucus automatically accesses the organizer's default text editor loaded with a standard greeting text for the organizer to edit.

**CUSTOMIZE INTRODUCTION** lets the organizer edit the text of the introduction to the conference that appears the first time a person tries to join the conference. This introduction should briefly describe the purpose and content of the conference, and who should join it. Caucus automatically starts up the organizer's default text editor loaded with a standard introduction for the organizer to edit.

**CUSTOMIZE ORGANIZER** lets the primary organizer pass on the responsibility of being primary organizer to another person. (The other person already should have agreed to accept this responsibility.) Many people may have organizer "powers", as described under **CUSTOMIZE USERS**, but there may be only one primary organizer at a time.

**CUSTOMIZE OSUBJECTS** lets the organizer control whether or not participants can change the conference OSUBJECTS. Caucus prompts for a YES or NO answer. NO is the default value and means that only organizers can CHANGE OSUBJECTS. YES means any participant can CHANGE OSUBJECTS.

**CUSTOMIZE USERS** lets the organizer control who may join the conference. When a conference is created, it has a user list that allows anyone to join the conference. The organizer can edit this list to specifically include people, exclude people, permit read-only members, or add other organizers to the conference.

The user list has a special format which must be followed precisely. Each line in the list contains only one word, either a userid, a group file name, or a control word. The control words are "", "", "", and ":". The control words affect the userids or group files immediately following them until the next control word or the end of the list is reached. Here is a simple example:

```

:include
harpo
chico_
:readonly
zeppo
:organizer
groucho

```

The userids "harpo", "chico\_", "zeppo", and "groucho" are included in this conference. This means that they may join the conference. No one else is allowed to join the conference unless the organizer adds their name to the list. Zeppo can only read the material in the conference. Harpo and chico\_ can both read the material and add their own items and responses. Groucho can do anything that the primary organizer can do except CUSTOMIZE ORGANIZER.

The user list Caucus displays is numbered in paragraphs and subparagraphs. Caucus numbers this list automatically. The subparagraph number is always 0 for "organizer", 1 for "include", 2 for "readonly", 3 is "exclude". For example if you type in the above user list Caucus will list:

```

:1.1 include
harpo
chico_
:1.2 readonly
zeppo
:2.0 organizer
groucho

```

A userid in the CUSTOMIZE USERS list may contain a terminating asterisk(\*); as a wild card. A wild card can replace entering a long list of individual userids. For example:

```

:include
smith
csc*
:exclude
csc101

```

means that userid "smith" and any userid starting with the letters "csc" may join the conference. The only exception is userid "csc101" who is specifically excluded from joining the conference. The initial default user list contains the ":include" control word followed by "\*" on the next line to open the conference to all userids. The third kind of word that may be placed in a conference user list is a group file name. A group file is just a file that contains a list of userids. (See section 2.4 below.) To use a group file in a user list, preface the name of the group file with the character "<". For example:

```

:include
<faculty
:readonly
<students

```

means that all userids in the group file "faculty" may join this conference, but userids in the group file "students" may only read this conference.

CUSTOMIZE VISIBILITY controls whether your conference is LISTED or UNLISTED. If your conference is LISTED, its name will appear with the other visible conferences when a user types LIST at the "JOIN which conference?" prompt (see section 4.10.2). If your conference is UNLISTED, its name will not appear unless the user is already a member of the conference, or can become a member of the conference.

## 12.4 Group Files

When many people are using Caucus on your computer system, you may find that they fall into distinct groups. For example, at a university you will have students, faculty, administrators, support personnel, and so on. These groups may in turn be divided into sub-groups: engineering faculty, liberal arts faculty, law faculty, etc.

Caucus can help you use these groupings to better control who has access to a conference. That is the purpose of the Caucus "group files". A group file is an ordinary text file that contains a list of userids, one per line. Users listed in a group file are members of that group. The name of the group is the name of the group file.

Group files are useful when a specific group of people need access to several conferences. Without group files, the organizer of each conference would have to edit the user list for that conference and add the userid of each member of the group. With group files, each organizer need add only one line to their user list: a "<" followed by the name of the group. (For details, see the section above on CUSTOMIZE USERS.)

Group files are created and edited by the Caucus administrator (or anyone who can login as the Caucus administrator). All group files must be contained in the directory called **GROUPS** under the main Caucus directory.

Each line of a group file must contain either a single userid, a wildcard match, or a reference to another group file. A wildcard match must end with an asterisk ("\*"). The wildcard match "xyz\*", for example, means "any userid that begins with the letters 'xyz'." The third case, a reference to another group file, consists of a "<" followed immediately by the name of a group file. The contents of that file are included as though they were part of the original group file.

This last feature means that you can mimic the groupings and sub-groupings of your organization with Caucus group files. To continue the university example, the Caucus administrator might create a group file called **faculty**, which contains the lines:

```
<faculty.eng  
<faculty.lib  
<faculty.law
```

The group files **faculty.eng**, **faculty.lib**, and **faculty.law** contain the userids for the faculty members in engineering, liberal arts, and law. Or those groups could be subdivided further. For example, **faculty.eng** might contain:

```
<faculty.mec  
<faculty.ee
```

These in turn would contain the userids for the mechanical and electrical engineering departments.

Group files may reference other group files, "nesting" indefinitely without limit. Be careful to keep your group files arranged in a hierarchy and not allow any loops. That is, if group file **a** contains "<b", then group file **b** must not contain "<a".

## 12.5 Other Functions of the Organizer

The primary responsibility of an organizer is to keep the conference running smoothly. The conference participants expect the organizer to answer questions and messages, plus keep the list of OSUBJECTs up to date (see Chapter 7).

As organizer, you may want to structure the first few items of the conference. For example, Item 1 could explain the intents and purposes of the conference, Item 2 could be a place to discuss questions about Caucus, and Item 3 could be reserved for special bulletins or other timely announcements, such as "Class registration begins tomorrow, June 17, at 8:30 am".

The organizer also has the ability to change the text of any item or response in the conference, regardless of who entered it. This ability, however, should be used sparingly. A typical example would be helping a user make the text of his or her item more readable. If an interpersonal problem occurs in a discussion on the conference, as organizer you can intervene or even censor parts of the discussion. Fortunately, such problems are rare.

To change the text of an item or response, type the CHANGE ITEM or CHANGE RESPONSE command. If you are editing text that you did not enter, Caucus tells you so and asks you confirm that you really want to change this text. When you are changing a response and see the prompt

```
EDIT, DELETE, REPLACE, <RETURN> for previous, or ? for options
```

type the number of the response you want to change. Caucus shows you that response, and prompts you to EDIT, DELETE, or REPLACE it.

If your computer system hosts many different conferences with several organizers, you may want to start a conference specifically for organizers. This is a good way to share information and ideas about how to best set up and maintain a conference.





## Chapter 13

### Organizer's Guide

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*Chapter 13 was written for the Center for the Instructional Computing and University Computing at Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti, Michigan. It has been revised and reprinted with Dr. Karabenick's permission.*

This guide is intended for new organizers of Caucus conferences. Prospective organizers may be familiar with conferencing in general, and Caucus in particular; however, there are certain commands and issues with which organizers need to be familiar and which deserve special emphasis. These are examined in the following sections. It should be noted that the original guide was written for a large time-sharing system in a university setting, and a special section (13.7) is devoted to that context. Most of the topics, however, are generic, and they apply to a wide variety of settings.

Furthermore, the Organizer's Guide was prepared as a stand-alone document, and it has its own set of organizer-relevant commands (13.9). Thus, Chapter 13, or a version specifically tailored to your hardware, system, and support environment, can be an effective supplement to your conferencing environment.

### 13.1 Starting Up

#### 13.1.1 Types of Conferences

Each conferencing application will have a variety of conferences suited to that environment. In general there are two types.

**Open**

In an open conference, membership is available to anybody with access to the Caucus conferencing system. Open conferences cover general topics open to all. These can include anything from restaurant reviews and company picnics to office policies, vacation schedules, music, politics, and literature.

**Restricted**

Restricted conferences impose some limitation on membership. The organizer can specifically designate persons who may become full or read-only members and/or exclude others (see CUSTOMIZE USERS command, sections 12.3 and 13.9.1). Examples of restricted conferences are:

**Course-related**

In an academic setting one of the major uses is in connection with classes. In the typical course conference, membership is restricted to students and their instructor. Additional non-course participants, such as other faculty members or experts, are sometimes included (see Course Conferencing, section 13.7).

**Special purpose**

There are many types of special conferences whose membership may be partially or fully restricted. Examples in an academic setting are: thesis committees, faculty committees, student and faculty organizations and research groups. Business examples are: Boards of Directors, research and development groups, holiday party committees, and sales support groups.

**13.1.2 Obtaining Computer Accounts for Participants**

Using Caucus requires a computer accounts. On time-sharing systems two types of computer access are typical.

**General Accounts**

General accounts give full access to your computer system.

**Captive Caucus Accounts**

Captive Caucus accounts provide access only to the conferencing system. Captive accounts are very important. They make it possible to give conferencing access to users whom you would not wish to use other system resources.

[Note: See your system's specific Caucus Installation and System Manager's Guide for details on creating captive accounts.]



### 13.1.3 Starting a New Conference

In some applications, users are free to start their own conferences. In other settings, a conferencing system coordinator may restrict the number and type of conferences. Restrictions prevent duplication of discussions and conserve system resources. (For information on how to start new conferences, see section 12.2 and the Caucus Installation and System Manager's Guide.)

### 13.1.4 Learning to Use Caucus

It is very important that participants know how to use the system **before** engaging in any "serious" conferencing. Introductory training sessions led by experienced users, practice (fun!) conferences, and provision of quick reference guides to users are suggested.

## 13.2 Principles of Conference Organizing

### 13.2.1 Creating a General Framework

An organizer's first task is to provide a conference structure, or framework. Considerable time and care at this phase is suggested. The information participants first encounter begins to establish this structure.

#### **Pre-conference Communication**

Computer conferencing is often preceded by interaction using non-electronic means. Quite frequently, participants communicate with each other by phone and/or discuss the conference in person prior to any computer communication. These interactions may be augmented by printed material that announces the conference, its goals, topics to be covered, and information about the participants. Such interactions and information are especially important for first-time conference users. The more they know prior to going on-line, the more they can concentrate on mastering the conferencing system and substantive content. Consider the nature and extent of such preliminary communication and how it can help to achieve your conference's objectives.

#### **Conference Interaction**

Conferencing users are required to register the first time they use the system. That registration carries over to all conferences of which they become members. Their first interaction with a specific conference consists of an **introduction**, followed by a **greeting**. The organizer customizes them by editing a text file.

##### **Introduction**

The purpose of the introduction is to describe the conference to prospective participants. It is displayed the first time a participant joins a conference. Its major utility is giving prospective members of open conferences enough information to decide whether they wish to

join. For closed conferences the introduction is typically less important since it is presumed that members of a restricted group would already know why they are joining (see CUSTOMIZE INTRO command, sections 12.3 and 13.9.2).

### **Greeting**

The greeting is text that is displayed **every** time participants join a conference. The greeting can serve several functions. For example, at the outset, it can serve to orient members by elaborating the conference's goals, purposes and etiquette and rules (see section 13.5). Later it can be used as a bulletin board for announcements or to direct participants to important new information, items, or responses. Some organizers prefer to keep greetings brief and use a separate item as a bulletin board (see CUSTOMIZE GREETING command, sections 12.3 and 13.9.2).

## **13.2.2 The First Few Conference Items**

The first conference items (discussion topics) have an important bearing on a conference's success. This is especially true when participants are new to conferencing. The following are recommended:

### **Extended Introductions**

The first item gives participants the opportunity to expand upon the information they provided when they first registered in the conferencing system. Consider asking them to describe their background and/or provide other relevant information. This is especially important in larger and open conferences and even in small conferences in instances where participants are relatively unfamiliar with each other.

### **Purpose(s)**

Even if discussed in other forms (e.g., in pre-conference interactions or hard-copy) an item devoted to the conference's purposes is worth including. This is your opportunity to restate the conference's goals and, importantly, to receive feedback from participants. It provides an opportunity for participants to ask questions and to suggest alternatives after having encountered the original introduction and greeting. The item may also be useful in keeping track of changes in objectives as the conference progresses.

### **Help With the Conferencing System**

This item provides a central place to ask questions and serves to reduce the stigma that participants often attach to seeking help. It is especially important for novice conferencers.

### **Bulletin Board**

Even if the greeting is reserved for fast-breaking news, an item devoted to a bulletin board is quite useful. Unlike the conference greeting, past information remains, and there is a record of prior bulletins.

### **Conference Rules and Norms**

Another useful item is one reserved for the discussion of special conference rules or norms. For example, there may be issues of confidentiality, anonymity, adding items or altering previous responses, and rules of conduct (see Etiquette and Rules, section 13.5) that need to be stated and about which participants may have opinions.

## **13.3 Managing Your Conference**

### **13.3.1 Facilitating Interaction**

#### **Starting Discussions**

Participants, especially novice conferencers, are understandably reluctant to respond to "blank" items. Thus, a useful technique is for organizers to respond to their own items just to get the ball rolling. For example, an organizer might be the first respondent to the item used for extended introductions or the one used to discuss a conference's purposes.

#### **Respond to Initial Responses**

Keep in mind that while you may enjoy discussions and conferencing, some people do not. They may be cautious and embarrassed about stating their own opinions in public, and, quite possibly, intimidated by computers. It helps if organizers respond to participants' contributions either in the conference itself or by sending a private message acknowledging their input.

#### **Developing a Sense of Cohesion**

Although physically and temporally separated, regular conference participants can develop a feeling of cohesiveness. This dynamic varies according to the nature of the conference. It is more evident in longer-lasting working groups than in large open conferences, but it is usually present in all conferences to some degree.

Organizers can play an important function in nurturing cohesion. It helps to greet people when they join. Ask them questions. Encourage people who have not contributed to do so rather than just to read. Give participants feedback! Remember, as in face-to-face discussions, participants who are consistently ignored, who feel they are talking to themselves, will cease to contribute.

#### **Lighten Up!**

Humor can be an important element of discussions. If not spontaneously generated by participants themselves, consider injecting some in otherwise "serious" conferences. It helps relax people if you break the ice first.

#### **Degree of Organizer Participation**

Too many public responses by an organizer can make a conference seem moderator-dominated. Thus, organizers should consider using private messages to make constructive comments, to ask

a participant why they haven't contributed, or to defuse an argument. Private messages do not interfere with conference activity.

### **Summarizing**

Providing summaries is another important organizer function. This helps current participants to quickly understand what has transpired while helping new participants catch up on discussions.

### **Keeping Things Going**

Because computer conferences can extend over long time periods, there are two important maintenance operations. One is to bring in new material to help freshen up conferences. Consider bringing in material from other sources (including from other conferences). The second is to houseclean occasionally by deleting dormant items and keeping subject categories up to date (see Chapter 6 on Editing and Changing Text and Chapter 7 discussion of OSUBJECTS).

## **13.3.2 Managing Discussion Topics**

### **How Many Items, How Structured the Conference?**

Some conferences have a very well-defined and detailed agenda which should be set by the organizer in advance. For example, a group working on a task (e.g., a new marketing strategy), a course conference, or a committee established to discuss a new program might have specific topics they need to discuss. In these instances the items may be known in advance and the conference structure may be rigid. However, in conferences with more general topics (e.g., office morale, micros or music), it may not be possible, or even desirable, to do this. For open conferences, it is suggested that the initial topic structure consist of a few general items. More specific items typically emerge from those general discussions, and there may be hundreds of items in conferences of a long duration.

### **Item Drift**

An important moderator function deals with what is called "item drift." This occurs when people stray from the topic of an item. You might want to gently (sometimes not so gently) remind "drifters" to return to the topic. Conferences with significant item drift turn out to be "muddy" since the same topic may be discussed in many different items. Some drift is inevitable (do not be too heavy-handed), it is a matter of degree. In fact, participants sometimes signal they are drifting to make a digression (by saying "set drift on" and "set drift off"), indicating that others should not follow their lead. If the drift is significant and raises issues or covers topics not addressed in other items, a new item may be warranted.

### **Grouping Items Into Subject Categories**

Caucus provides the capacity for organizers to group items under subjects. This is an extremely important organizer function, especially in large, open conferences and those of long duration. Like items, these might be thought out in advance and grouped under these headings as they are added. In some conferences with no set agenda, they are likely to develop as the conference progresses. It would also be helpful for you to notify participants of the subjects' existence and

explain how to access items by subject categories (see SUBJECT commands, chapter 7 and section 13.9.3).

### **Private Messages vs. Public Responses to Items**

A conferencing system is designed to facilitate group discussions. Private messages would, therefore, seem antithetical to this purpose. Nevertheless, messages can serve many useful functions. As in face-to-face discussions, there are some things better said in private. Some communications are simply more appropriate for another individual or subset of the entire group. It is suggested that as much of the communication as possible be conducted in the conference itself (it would not be much of a conference otherwise), while recognizing the need for private communications. The presence of extensive private communication between some people could suggest the need for another conference for those members. For more information on messages, see chapter 5.

## **13.4 Participant Restrictions**

### **13.4.1 Adding Items**

Typically, conference participants are permitted to add their own items. There are, however, circumstances in which this may be undesirable. This is especially true in newly organized conferences, when it may be beneficial for the organizer to maintain control of the topics and/or the order in which they are discussed. There may even be conferences where the organizer wants to completely control the conference items, such as in computer-mediated business meetings and, in educational settings, course conferences. Once conferences have matured, an organizer may wish to relax this restriction. Note that open conferences would probably not survive this restriction for very long. (see CUSTOMIZE ADD command, sections 12.3 and 13.9.2).

### **13.4.2 Altering Previously Entered Conference Material**

Unless you decide otherwise, participants are permitted to change (i.e., edit, replace, or delete) material they have previously entered (items or responses). This is useful when, in retrospect, they are not content with something they have said. However, there may be circumstances when allowing such changes would be inappropriate. For example, in a group working on a sensitive topic, retrospective changes could significantly alter the context in which subsequent remarks are embedded, changing their meaning entirely. It is suggested that restricting the right to make such changes should be used with caution and only with the consent of the participants. Of course, you can always reverse the restriction. Restricting changes is ordinarily not appropriate for public conferences. (see CUSTOMIZE CHANGE command, sections 12.3 and 13.9.2).

### **13.4.3 Names: Real and Pseudo**

Except for duplications of names already registered, participants can select any name they desire. Thus, pseudonyms are possible and can be used creatively. For example, names can be used for role-playing, or groups of individuals can select similar names for simulations. However, under some circumstances they may be inappropriate, as in business settings or in course conferences where it is necessary to track participation. Furthermore, pseudonyms should be used responsibly and not to harm or impersonate other conference members. Remember, the identity of the author of any item, message, or response can be discovered despite the use of pseudonyms.

## **13.5 Etiquette and Rules**

### **13.5.1 Remedies for Violations**

Organizers of open conferences need to be especially sensitive to objectionable content. After all, participants' comments are available to anyone with access to your Caucus system. The same basic guidelines that apply to free speech using any other medium apply here as well. There are two minimal rules that should be adhered to in all public conferences: no vulgar language and no personal attacks.

There are several ways to handle problems:

- Delete any offensive material (items or responses).
- Ask the person to apologize for offensive remarks.
- Send a private message or speak directly to the participant involved.
- Publicly chastise the participants in the conference.
- Exclude members from the conference and/or system if necessary.

### **13.5.2 Confidentiality**

Confidentiality is frequently an issue any time people communicate. However, since computer conferencing creates an instant transcript, breaches of confidentiality become markedly simplified: it is relatively simple to print material, copy it to another conference, or publish it in some other fashion. Thus, computer conferencing provides a greater potential for abuse.

It is typically assumed that conference material is intended only for other participants. Reproducing that material for wider distribution would violate that assumption. However, if material in a conference is of a particularly sensitive nature, you might wish to:

- Discuss the issue of confidentiality with participants
- Place a notice in the introduction and/or greeting about the confidentiality policy
- Suggest that persons who specifically wish should emphasize confidentiality in their communications

## **13.6 Winding Down**

### **13.6.1 Archiving Your Conferences**

Keeping a permanent record of a conference is highly recommended. This is especially true for course and special purpose conferences that you may wish to review after they have ceased to exist. One option is to print a hard copy. Another is to write the conference to a file (see print and file transfer commands, sections 9.4 and 13.9.4).

### **13.6.2 Terminating Conferences**

Open conferences run continuously but are typically restarted periodically (with much advance notification to participants) to conserve computer resources. Conferences established for specific purposes (e.g., task groups) have a definite life. In educational settings, course conferences normally terminate when the term closes. Other special conferences may be indeterminate. In each case, the organizer should notify the conferencing system coordinator when to terminate the conference.

## **13.7 Course Conferencing In Educational Settings**

### **13.7.1 Why Course Conferences?**

In course conferencing, a class is provided with one or more of its own closed conferences. When used with on-campus classes, add communication possibilities beyond those which normally exists. Course conferencing also can be used to teach complete courses by computer-mediated communications (known as virtual classrooms).

By opening up additional communication channels, conferencing can increase access between instructors and students, and among students. Conferencing also has the potential to significantly increase the amount of writing by students, even in courses where writing is neither an essential nor even a minor component. Parenthetically, using conferencing helps satisfy two goals which colleges and universities typically attempt to foster among their students: familiarity with computers and increased written communication.

### **13.7.2 Important Benefits for Classes and Students**

- Students can become more familiar with their classmates and instructors.
- Instructors can post assignments in the conference - using it as a bulletin board.
- Unresolved class discussions can be continued in the course conference.
- Students can communicate with each other and their instructor outside of class without having to coordinate their schedules. Electronic "office hours" are very efficient.
- Unlike class discussions, a written record is maintained and available for later review by both students and instructors.
- Students have time to think before they respond to what others have said.
- Students can enter and edit their remarks without taking up each other's time.
- Instructors and students can engage in many simultaneous discussions and private conversations without interference with each other.
- Students can get rapid response to their ideas.
- Students who might rarely or never speak in class are more likely to contribute in a conference.
- Aggressive students are less likely to dominate discussions as they might during class.

### **13.7.3 Some General Considerations**

It is important to recognize that communicating via computer and conferencing are probably new experiences to many, if not most, students. Therefore, an introduction in class to the general principles of both is important prior to any workshops or other hands on experience. Equally important is that students understand why conferencing is being included in the course. Indicate how much you expect them to participate. Also, clarify for students the use of private messages.



While this information also may be presented and discussed in the conference itself, creating a context for conferencing can go a long way toward allaying anxieties that accompany this experience. As conferencing becomes more common, such introductions will probably cease to be as necessary.

#### **13.7.4 Suggestions for Items and Uses of the Conference**

Here are some specific ways of using a course conference:

- Follow up unfinished or unresolved class discussions by continuing them in the conference.
- Enter items to discuss major issues and concepts in the course. These need not be in place when the course begins but may be added as the course progresses. The more provocative and challenging the better.
- Use the conference to receive feedback on lectures and assignments.
- Make specific assignments in the conference during the course. Post assignments you are contemplating and ask students for input before assignments are finalized.
- Use the conference to post exam keys and answers and to discuss exams. Considerable time and energy is saved when everyone in the course can partake in these discussions -especially students who may be absent when the exam is discussed.
- Consider inviting "outside experts" to your conference to enrich the course. They could be other faculty and staff or off - campus experts. Note that special arrangements would have to be made for the latter - they can be given special Caucus accounts (i.e captive accounts).
- Consider a simulation. Set up a situation in which class members take certain roles. This can be a major use of conferencing. For example, business courses might simulate communications between managers and employees. A course could have an additional conference established for the students for this purpose.
- Written work could be entered in a conference and "critiqued" by other class members. Text can be entered and revised by others, and the class would have a record of successive revisions.
- Divide the class and have an extended "debate" on an issue. The conferencing medium gives the debaters more time to consider their responses and perhaps consult resources.
- Conduct polls on specific issues.

### 13.7.5 Additional Considerations and Suggestions

Here are some further issues to consider when using course conferences:

- As noted earlier, conferences may be set up so that only the organizer can enter items. It is strongly suggested that this be done at the beginning of the term. This restriction can be relaxed once students have more experience with the course and with conferencing.
- Consider whether conferencing should be a required or voluntary activity. Especially if required, consider further the degree of access that students will have to the timesharing system (i.e. computer terminals or microcomputers with communications capability). For example, commuting students, especially those on campus only in the evening, would have less time to conference than on-campus residents.
- Use the conference for small group projects. It is possible to establish additional closed conferences for this purpose. The instructors can be a consultant to several group projects efficiently if s/he is a member of each project's conference.
- Consider storing text material you plan to use frequently in computer files. This material can then be imported into the conference as needed. For example, a newspaper article which might be the stimulus for a discussion could be typed into a file in your area. The article is then available for the class whenever you desire, e.g., by making it an item. Having several files available gives you an on-line course-pack. Computer files could even be shared among colleagues.
- Students should have introductory hardcopy material about conferencing.
- Workshops can be set up and made available at the beginning of each term to teach new students and faculty how to use Caucus computer conferencing - an instructor who plans on using conferencing extensively may want to arrange to have a workshop for the first scheduled class meeting.
- Ask students who are familiar with conferencing to act as tutors to others.
- Perhaps the most general statement about moderating a course conference is: treat it as you would the class itself. That is, guide but do not dominate. Do not think that you have to answer every question that arises. Give students a chance to "talk", or they will just read. Enter items gradually so as not to overwhelm students.
- Finally, students will only use conferencing if there is a reason for doing so. While you can make conferencing mandatory, that could engender some resistance. Instead, suggest guidelines, such as checking in on the conference at least three or four times per week. Voluntary conferencing can be successful if:
  - important information exists on the conference
  - conference discussions are truly interesting
  - there are some purely entertaining or social items as well as "serious" topics

- conferencing is undertaken in a relaxed atmosphere
- students feel free to ask for help with the system

### **13.7.6 Evaluating Conferencing Activity**

An important advantage of course conferencing is the capacity to effectively evaluate students' contributions to discussions. This can be done either by scrolling through the items on your terminal or computer screen, or by printing the conference (see print commands).

The way to evaluate contributions depends on your course objectives and expectations for conference participation. Here are some typical conferencing standards:

#### **Have Students Accessed the Conference and Its Items?**

At the very least, students might be expected to read the material in the conference. Caucus permits checking on the items and responses that students have displayed (see SHOW PERSON and SHOW LIST commands, sections 8.4 and 13.9.5). If this is done once per week, a record could be kept and referred to at the end of the term.

#### **Minimal Responding**

A second level requires that students join the conference and contribute to some or all of the items. This could be checked by examining the conference transcript. By using the information tagged to each response one could determine whether these contributions occurred during a specific time interval, say once per week.

#### **Beyond the Minimum**

Levels of contribution beyond these minima can be gauged only by closer examination of the conference transcript. One criterion is response length. Although as with any other contribution this may not be the best measure, it can be used as a rough index of student participation. One suggestion is to use three levels, something like terse, average, and extensive. A one-line response may indicate the student's participation but not much else. Two or three sentences is usually enough to justify more extensive interaction, while a ten-line response may signify extensive participation.

#### **Content Analysis**

How incisive and meaningful students' contributions to discussions are can be only determined by carefully examining an entire course transcript. How one does this depends, again, on one's course objectives. As with any grading scheme the metric can range from global to fine-grain, from acceptable vs. unacceptable to a specific letter grade (complete with + and -). The advantage of having the complete conference transcript over attempting to do this with in-class participation should be obvious. Instructors who repeat courses have the additional advantage of making between-term comparisons.

## 13.8 Helpful Hints

Here are some additional suggestions that others have found useful:

### End-of-text Indicators

The default setting to signify the end of text input is typing a dot (period) at the start a new line. Each user, however, can set their own end-of-text indicator (see SET command, section 9.2.3).

### Editors

The Caucus line editor is automatically invoked when new users edit their responses or messages. While this editor is simple to use, find out what editors are available to you (see SET EDITOR, section 9.2.2).

### Foreign Language Conferencing

It is possible to conduct conferences in languages other than English by adopting text conventions. The creative use of punctuation marks and symbols can substitute for many accents. The greeting or first conference item should be used to establish the conventions.

### New Caucus Dictionaries

Caucus is a developing and very flexible conferencing system. One feature is the capacity to modify the way certain prompts are shown (e.g., the AND NOW? prompt could be changed to WHAT NEXT?). Another is to write completely new commands (e.g., a command to exit Caucus, run another program and return certain information to the conference). For further information, see the separate manual Customizing the Caucus User Interface.

### Indexing With Creative Item Titles

Items can be selected in database fashion with the judicious use of item titles. Suppose there are several working groups producing several versions of documents in one conference. If each group's document was entered as a separate item that carried the group (e.g.,G1) and version number (e.g.,V1) the command SHOW ITEMS TITLE G1 could be used to show all documents for group 1. Similarly, the command SHOW ITEMS TITLE V1 would display all version 1 documents for all groups. Other standard information contained in item titles would be similarly searchable (see SHOW ITEM TITLE command, section 4.4).

## 13.9 Important Organizer Commands

### 13.9.1 Customizing Conference Membership

Each conference maintains a userlist which controls who has membership privileges. This list resides in a file that can be edited. The command CUSTOMIZE accesses that file and the text editor (see also section 12.3).

### Completely Open Conferences

A completely open conference should have a colon (:) followed by the word "include" as the first line in the file and no other text. The second line should contain an asterisk (\*). Therefore, the file would look like this:

```
*
```

### Restricted Conferences

To specify a list of permitted participants, the asterisk should be replaced by their captive login IDs. The following userlist specifies three faculty members and a student (fox) with a captive Caucus account. Be sure to notice that captive accounts always end with an underscore (i.e., a\_)

```
psy_karabeni  
csc_remmers  
ori_young  
phi_kamler  
fox_
```

### Use of "Wild Cards"

To specify a group of participants with a common account name, such as a set of course accounts, enter the common element, then an asterisk which is called a "wild card". The following userlist would permit a faculty member and all students in his chemistry class. Student accounts would all begin with the course prefix, then their student number (e.g., chm610566475). The common element is chm610.

```
:include  
chm_ramsay  
chm610*
```

### Excluding or Limiting Participants

Participants are excluded by listing their account names following a line which reads ":exclude." In addition, participants can be limited to only being able to read (not contribute to) material by listing their account names following a line which reads ":readonly". The following userlist would permit all faculty members in a department to participate, give an invited guest (gendin) permission to read the discussions, and exclude one department member (orloff) from accessing the conference at all.

```
:include  
psy_*  
  
phi_gendin  
  
psy_orloff
```

## 13.9.2 Customizing Conference Characteristics

### Customize Introduction

The conference introduction resides in a text file which you can edit. The command CUSTOMIZE INTRO entered at the AND NOW? prompt automatically opens that file and the text editor. Text already exists in the file when a conference is created. Show or view this text, then modify it to suit your needs using the text editor (see also section 12.3). An example:

```
Welcome to the Music conference.  Its purpose is to discuss all facets of
the musical scene, both classical and contemporary.  We welcome membership
and participants.
```

### Customize Greeting Command

The greeting is also in a file. The command CUSTOMIZE GREETING at the AND NOW? prompt automatically opens the file and the text editor. As with the introduction, text already exists upon the conference's creation. Modify it as you see fit (see also section 12.3). An example:

```
Note that the items in Music are in subject categories.  To see these
categories and the items under each, give the command show categories.  See
item 26 for a discussion of the next assignment.
```

### Customize Add Command

The CUSTOMIZE ADD command instructs Caucus to permit or deny conference participants the right to add their own items. After giving the command, a prompt will inquire whether you wish to change the current setting. The default is to permit adding items (see also section 12.3).

### Customize Change Command

Caucus gives the organizer the option of not permitting participants to alter, replace, or delete the text of items and responses they have entered. The default setting permits such changes. To restrict this utility, give the CUSTOMIZE CHANGE command and follow the prompts (see also section 12.3).

### Customize Organizer Command

Caucus permits only one organizer at a time. To change organizers, give the command CUSTOMIZE ORGANIZER at the AND NOW? prompt. Please make certain that subsequent organizers are familiar with these organizing guidelines and responsibilities. It is also important that organizers of open conferences notify the Conferencing System Coordinator of any changes in that status (see also section 12.3).

## 13.9.3 Creating and Altering Subject Categories

### Add Subject Command

The command ADD (or just ADD SUBJECT) at the AND NOW? prompt will prompt you to create a new subject category. A one-line command to accomplish the same end (e.g., to add a new subject about microcomputers) would be ADD SUBJECT "MICROS". Note, this

command creates the category but does not specify the items it will contain (see SUBJECT command, chapter 7).

### **Change Subject Command**

The command CHANGE OSUBJECT (or CHANGE SUBJECT) at the AND NOW? prompt is used to add or delete items from subjects. Just follow the prompts. A quicker way is to give a one-line command that indicates the subject and items to add or delete. An example of a one-line command that would place items 1 to 4 and 6 to 10 under the subject "micros" is CHANGE SUBJECT 'MICROS' + ITEMS 1-10 - ITEM 5.

### **Discovering the Items Under a Subject**

The command SHOW SUBJECTS will list the subject categories and the numbers of the items in each category. The command LIST ITEMS SUBJECT MICROS would display a list of the items contained under that subject category.

### **Deleting a Subject**

The command DELETE SUBJECT will result in the elimination of that subject category (e.g., DELETE SUBJECT MICROS).

### **Personal Subject Categories**

Note that participants can establish their own subject categories by using the commands above, replacing the word "subject" with "psubject" (for personal subject).

## **13.9.4 Printing and Computer Storage Archiving Commands**

### **Print Commands**

The command SHOW ALL PRINT at the AND NOW? prompt will cause the entire conference to be printed. Appropriate commands print selected parts of the conferences. E.g., SHOW 1 PRINT would print only item 1 while SHOW NEW PRINT would print out all new conference activity (see PRINT command, section 9.4.).

### **Saving the Conference in a Computer File**

The entire conference or selected parts can be stored in a computer file. Use the file transfer commands for this purpose (see also section . For example, to save the entire conference to a file called "course.txt", give the command `SHOW ALL>COURSE.TXT` at the `AND NOW` prompt. Once again, modification of this command would save selected parts of the conference. E.g., `SHOW NEW>NEW.TXT` would save all new conferencing activity in a file called "new.txt." It also is possible to add new material to a file that already exists. New conference material to a file called "oldfile" that already exists would be given with the command `SHOW NEW>OLDFILE.TXT` (see file transfer commands, section 9.4).

## **13.9.5 What Has a Participant Seen?**

### **Show Person Command**

While it is impossible to know if somebody has actually read conference material, the `SHOW PERSON` command can be used to reveal information about what that individual has displayed. For example, the command `SHOW PERSON SMITH ITEMS ALL` will list all conference items, the total number of responses to each item, and the number of responses that person "smith" has shown. Suitable modifications of this command can restrict the list to specific items (see `SHOW PERSON` command, section 8.4).

### **Show Items Persons Command**

The `SHOW ITEMS PERSONS` command complements the above `SHOW PERSON` command. It can be used to find out which people have displayed specific items. For example, the command `SHOW ITEMS 1,2 PERSONS ALL` will list everyone who has displayed items 1 and 2, the total number of responses to each item, and the number of responses that each person who has shown the item has seen. Again, modifications to this command can restrict the items and/or persons reviewed (see `SHOW ITEMS PERSONS` command, section 8.4).



## Chapter 14

### Caucus File Libraries

#### 14.1 Introduction

Caucus version 2.5 adds a new "kind" of conference, called a "file library conference" or just "file library". A file library is similar to a conference: it has an organizer, it appears in the list of conferences, it has a membership list ("userlist"), and so on. But a file library has a different purpose, a different structure, and a different user interface than the traditional discussion conference.

A file library is an on-line place to store files which may be uploaded and downloaded freely. A file library is sub-divided into categories. You may have a library of sound files, and the categories could include animal noises, musical works, bells, etc. Within the category bells, for instance, there could be the recorded sounds of sleighbells, cowbells, and doorbells, each in its own file.

A Caucus File Library is modeled on the town library concept. You walk into a town library, go to a particular section, and look at a book. In a Caucus File Library, you JOIN the library, choosing the library by name. You then LIST the CATEGORIES of files available, and SELECT one. Then you may list the files in that CATEGORY, and select one to VIEW or COPY.

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In the example above, a user would JOIN the library 'sounds', SELECT the CATEGORY 'bells', and VIEW (or listen to) the file 'sleighbells'.

Another way of thinking of a file library is to liken it to a conference. A file library is like a conference; a category is like an item, and a file is like a response.

## 14.2 Entering a File Library

To enter a file library, type:

*JOIN libraryname*

where *libraryname* is the name of the file library you want to join. You can type just the first few letters in the name of the library, and Caucus will figure out which library you mean. If more than one library or conference begins with those letters, Caucus will ask you to supply more letters.

If you type JOIN and do not specify a library, Caucus prompts you with:

JOIN which conference or file library?

At this prompt you may do any of the following:

- type the name of a conference or file library
- type LIST to see a list of available conferences and file libraries
- type CHECK to see a brief summary of new material in your conferences
- type STOP to exit Caucus

You may not have permission to enter all of the conferences and file libraries you can list. If you attempt to join a conference or file library that does not exist or which you are not permitted to join, you are returned to the "JOIN which conference?" prompt.

Conferences may not be named LIST, STOP, or CHECK.

### 14.3 Inside a File Library

Once you have joined a file library, you will be presented with a short menu of choices. You will always see this menu, even if you are not using menus in your regular discussion conferences. Use this menu (and its sub-menus) to access files in the file library.

There is a menu selection called "Turn off menus". Choose this selection only if you need to use special commands, such as CUSTOMIZE, SET, or EDIT, that are not provided as part of the file library menus. To see the menus again, rejoin the file library.

### 14.4 Categories in File Libraries

After joining a file library, you must choose a Category. To find out what categories exist, choose the selection "List Categories". The list of categories will look something like this:

Category	1	(328)	Fiction
Category	2	(126)	Non-Fiction
Category	3	(274)	Humor
Category	4	( 8)	Technical Documentation

The first number on each line is the category number. The second number is the number of files within that category.

If you wish to start a new category to contain files, choose the "Add Category" option. You will be prompted for a description of the category, which may have many lines and be as long as you like. You also will be prompted for a name for the category, which must be only one line.

To find out more about a category, choose the "Describe Category" selection. You will be prompted for a particular category. Type the category number, or the word "TITLE" followed by a word in the title of the category.

A category description looks like this:

```
1) Fiction (328 Files)
Files in this category are actually entire fictional novels.
```

If you created a category that is no longer in use, you may wish to remove it from the file library. In that case, choose "Delete Category". You will be prompted for a category number or title in the same manner as "Describe Category". Deleting a category permanently removes the category and all of the files that it contains. Only the creator of a category, or an organizer, may delete a category.

Finally, to work with the files within a category, you must "select" that category. Only then can you browse through its files. To enter a category, choose the "Select Category" option. Once again, you will be prompted for a category number or title.



## 14.5 Files within Categories

Once you have selected a category, you will see the "File Menu". Use this menu to work with the files in the selected category.

To see a list of the files in the selected category, choose the "List Files" option. This displays a brief list of the files within this category. If you had selected the "Fiction" category from the example above, the list of files might look like:

```
1) Moby_Disk          (112728 bytes, format ASCII)
2) Alice_in_DisneyLand ( 89000 bytes, format ASCII)
3) Neurodancer       ( 95000 bytes, format ASCII)
```

For more information about a particular file, choose the "Describe File" option. You will be prompted for the name of the file you wish to describe. Type the first few letters of the file name. (If this matches more than one file, you will see a description of all of the files.) A file description looks like this:

```
1) Moby_Disk          (112728 bytes, format ASCII)
```

The classic thriller about a boy and his whale.

## 14.6 Working with Files

Once you have identified a particular file, there are four things you can do with that file. You can choose:

- View File      display the file on your terminal. Caucus will attempt to display the file in the way that makes the most sense given your terminal (see SET TERMINAL in section 9.2.18) and the type of file.
- Copy File      make a personal copy of the file, in your current directory on the Caucus host computer.
- Get File        download the file to your PC. Uses a file transfer protocol, such as Kermit or zmodem, to download the file for you. You should use the "Check and Set File Transfer Protocol" option first, to choose your preferred protocol.
- Delete File    permanently remove the file from the library.

Each of these options will prompt you for a file name. As with "Describe File", you may type just the first few letters of the name. If this matches more than one file, View, Copy, and Get will use the first file that matches. Delete will offer to delete all of the files that match.

## 14.7 Adding new Files to the Library

There are two ways in which you can add a new file to a library. As in the previous section, you must have already selected a category in order to add a file. When you add a file, the file automatically goes in the current category. To add a new file, choose one of the following:

- |          |  |
|----------|--|
| Add File | make a copy of a file on the Caucus host computer, and place the copy in the library.  |
| Put File | upload a file from your PC to the library. Uses a file transfer protocol, such as Kermit or zmodem, to download the file for you. You should use the "Check and Set File Transfer Protocol" option first, to choose your preferred protocol. |

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