A TOASTMASTER WEARS MANY HATS

WHERE LEADERS ARE MADE

The Roles of a Member
WHEN YOU ARE THE SPEAKER

A major portion of each meeting is centered around three or more speakers. Their speeches are prepared based on project objectives in the Competent Communication and Advanced Communication manuals.

Serving as a speaker is also an excellent opportunity to practice leadership skills. Planning, preparation, organization and time management are essential to success as a speaker. You use all of these skills as you select a speech topic, do the research and organize the presentation so you can make your point within the allotted time.

Because you want to present the best speech possible, you should allow plenty of time for the preparation process.

Prior to the meeting

› Check the meeting schedule to find out when you are to speak. Begin working on the speech at least a week in advance so you have enough time to devote to research, organization and rehearsal.
› If you don’t write your own speech introduction, make certain that the Toastmaster of the meeting prepares a good one for you.
› Ask the general evaluator for your evaluator’s name. Speak to your evaluator and talk about the manual speech you’ll be giving. Discuss with the evaluator your speech goals and personal concerns. Emphasize where you feel your speech ability needs strengthening. Remember to bring your manual to the meeting.

At the meeting

› Arrive early. Check the microphone, lighting, etc. before everyone arrives. Protect yourself from all of the problems that can ruin your talk.
› Sit near the front of the room for quick and easy access to the lectern.
› Carefully plan your approach to the lectern and speech opening.
› Be sure that you give your manual to your evaluator before the meeting starts.

During the meeting

› Give your full attention to the speakers at the lectern. Avoid studying your speech notes while someone else is talking.
› When introduced, smoothly and confidently leave your chair and walk to the lectern.
› When finishing your speech, wait for the Toastmaster to return to the lectern, then return to your seat.
› During the evaluation of your speech, listen intently for helpful hints that will assist in building better future talks. Pay attention to suggestions from other members.

After the meeting

› Get your manual from your evaluator. At this time discuss any questions you may have concerning your evaluation to clarify and avoid any misinterpretations.
› Have the vice president education initial the Project Completion Record in the back of your manual.

WHEN YOU ARE AN EVALUATOR

People join a Toastmasters club to improve their speaking and leadership skills, and these skills are improved through evaluations. Members prepare and present speeches based on projects in the Competent Communication manual, or they serve in leadership roles to complete projects in the Competent Leadership manual. You may be asked to serve as an evaluator and evaluate a speaker or leader. In addition to your verbal evaluation, you will give a written evaluation using the guide in the manual.

Your evaluation is an opportunity to practice such leadership skills as listening, critical thinking, feedback and motivation. When evaluating a speaker, your purpose is to help the speaker become less self-conscious and a better speaker. When evaluating a leader, your purpose is to help the leader become confident and more effective and able to lead a team to achieve goals. You should be aware of the member’s skill level, habits and mannerisms, as well as his or her progress to date. Your overall evaluation should be encouraging and motivate the speaker or leader to improve.
Prior to the meeting

- Review carefully the *Effective Evaluation* manual.
- Talk with the speaker or leader to find out which manual project he or she will present. Review the project goals and what the speaker or leader hopes to achieve.
- Evaluation requires careful preparation if the speaker or leader is to benefit. Study the project objectives as well as the evaluation guide in the manual. Remember, the purpose of evaluation is to help people develop their speaking or leadership skills in various situations. By actively listening and gently offering useful advice, you motivate members to work hard and improve. When you show the way to improvement, you’ve opened the door to strengthening their ability.

At the meeting

- When you enter the meeting room, look for the speaker or leader and get his or her manual.
- Meet briefly with the general evaluator to confirm the evaluation session format. Then confer with the speaker or leader one last time to see if he or she has any specific things for you to watch for.

During the meeting

- Record your impressions in the manual, along with your answers to the evaluation questions. Be as objective as possible. Remember that good evaluations may give new life to discouraged members and poor evaluations may dishearten members who tried their best. Always leave the speaker or leader with specific methods for improving.
- If giving a verbal evaluation, when introduced, stand and give your evaluation. Begin and end your evaluation with a note of encouragement or praise. Though you may have written lengthy responses to manual evaluation questions, don’t read the questions or your responses. Your verbal evaluation time is limited. Don’t try to cover too much in your talk.
- Praise a successful speech or leadership assignment and specifically tell why it was successful. Don’t allow the speaker or leader to remain unaware of a valuable asset such as a smile or a sense of humor. Don’t allow the speaker or leader to remain ignorant of a serious fault: if it is personal, write it but don’t mention it aloud. Give the speaker or leader the deserved praise and tactful suggestions in the manner you would like to receive them.

After the meeting

- Return the manual to the speaker or leader. Add a verbal word of encouragement that wasn’t mentioned in the verbal evaluation.

Resource
*Effective Evaluation* (Item 202)

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**WHEN YOU ARE THE TIMER**

The Toastmaster of the meeting will call on you to explain the timing rules. One of the lessons to be practiced is that of expressing a thought within a specific time. The timer is the member responsible for keeping track of time. Each segment of the meeting is timed. You should explain your duties and report to the club clearly and precisely. This exercise is an excellent opportunity to practice giving instructions and time management – something that we do every day.

Prior to the meeting

- Confirm scheduled program participants with the Toastmaster and general evaluator.
- Confirm time required for each prepared speech with the speakers.
- Write out your explanation in the clearest possible language and rehearse it. For the benefit of guests, be sure to emphasize timing rules and how timing signals will be given.

At the meeting

- Get timing equipment from the sergeant at arms. Be sure you understand how to operate the stopwatch and signal device, and make certain the timing equipment works.
- Sit where the signal device can be seen easily by all.
During the meeting

- When introduced, explain the timing rules and demonstrate the signal device.
- Throughout the meeting, listen carefully to each program participant and signal them as indicated below. In addition, signal the chairman, Toastmaster and Topicsmaster with red when they have reached their allotted or agreed upon time.
- Record each participant’s name and time used.
- When called to report by the Topicsmaster, Toastmaster and/or general evaluator, stand by your chair, announce the speaker’s name and the time taken. State those eligible for awards if your club issues awards. Generally topic speakers should be +/- 15 seconds of allowed time; prepared speakers must be +/- 30 seconds. However, these times may vary from club to club.

After the meeting

- Return the stopwatch and timing signal device to the sergeant at arms.
- Give the completed timer’s report to the secretary for recording speech times in the minutes (if this is done in your club).

WHEN YOU ARE THE TOPICSMASTER

The Toastmasters program has a tradition – every member speaks at a meeting. The Table Topics™ session is the portion of the meeting that ensures this tradition. The purpose of this activity is to have members speak extemporaneously for a minute or so. The Topicsmaster prepares and issues the topics; originality is desirable as much as possible. Each speaker may be given an individual subject, or a choice of subjects may be presented from which the members can draw at random.

The Topicsmaster provides good practice in such leadership skills as planning, preparation, organization, time management and facilitation. Work to balance the amount of time available for Table Topics™ with the number of respondents and the amount of time each uses to answer the questions.

Prior to the meeting

- Check with the Toastmaster to find out if a theme meeting is scheduled. If so, prepare topics to carry out that theme. If no theme is scheduled, choose a wide selection of topics. Review the Toastmaster magazine and other publications for ideas. Do not repeat the previous week’s Table Topics™ ideas or items.
- Find out who the prepared speakers, evaluators, general evaluator and Toastmaster are so you can call on the other members first. Only if time permits at the end of the topics session should you call on program participants (speakers last).
- When choosing your specific questions: Select ones that will inspire the speakers to expound on them and give their opinions. Don’t make the questions too long or complicated. Phrase them in such a way that the speaker clearly will know what you want them to talk about.
- Keep your comments short. Your job is to give others a chance to speak, not to give a series of mini-talks.
- Remember, Table Topics™ has a twofold purpose: First, to give everyone in the room an opportunity to speak – especially those who are not on the program – and, second, to get people to learn to think and speak extemporaneously.

During the meeting

- When introduced, briefly state the purpose of the Table Topics™ session.
- Set the stage for your topics program. Keep your remarks brief but enthusiastic. If the club has a word of the day, encourage speakers to use that word in their response.
- Keep the program rolling; be certain everyone understands the maximum time they have for their response and how the timing lights/device works (if the timer hasn’t already done so).
- State the question briefly – then call on a respondent. This serves two purposes: First, it holds everyone’s attention – each one is thinking of a response, should he or she be called on to speak. Second, it adds to the value of the impromptu element by giving everyone an opportunity to improve his or her listening and thinking skills.
- Call on speakers at random. Avoid going around the room in the order in which people are sitting. Give each participant a different question. Don’t ask two people the same thing unless you ask each specifically to give the “pro” or “con” side.
- Watch your total time! Check the printed agenda for the total time allotted to Table Topics™ and adjust the number of questions to end your segment on time. Even if your portion started late, try to end on time to avoid the total meeting running overtime.
If your club presents a Best Table Topics™ Speaker award, ask the timer at the end of the Table Topics™ session to report those eligible for the award. Then ask members to vote for Best Table Topics™ Speaker and pass their votes to the sergeant at arms or vote counter. If the club has a Table Topics™ evaluator, ask for his or her report and then return control of the meeting to the Toastmaster.

Resources
Think Fast! Table Topics™ Handbook (Item 1315)  Tabletalk (Item 1318)
Stand Up and Speak! Table Topics™ Game (Item 1316)  Master Your Meetings (Item 1312)

WHEN YOU ARE THE GENERAL EVALUATOR

The general evaluator is just what the name implies—an evaluator of anything and everything that takes place throughout the meeting. The responsibilities are large, but so are the rewards. The general evaluator position provides excellent practice in such leadership skills as critical thinking, planning, preparation and organization, time management, motivation and team building.

The general evaluator is responsible to the Toastmaster who will introduce you; at the conclusion of the evaluation segment of the meeting, you will return control to him or her. You are responsible for the evaluation team, which consists of the timer, grammarian, Ah-Counter, speech evaluators and Table Topics™ evaluator, if your club has one. The usual procedure is to have one evaluator for each major speaker, but this is not necessary. You are free to set up any procedure you wish, but each evaluation should be brief, yet complete. Methods for conducting the evaluation sessions are limitless. Review Effective Evaluation for ideas.

Prior to the meeting

- Check with the Toastmaster to find out how the program will be conducted and if there are any planned deviations from the usual meeting format. Remember, always be ready when the meeting starts.
- Telephone all of the evaluators to brief them on their job and to tell them whom they will be evaluating and what evaluation format you will be using. Encourage them to prepare thoroughly for their role and to call the speakers to talk over any special evaluation requirements suggested in the manual for the speech.
- During the briefing, emphasize that evaluation is a positive, helping act. As conscientious Toastmasters, their goal must be to help fellow Toastmasters develop their skills. Emphasize that evaluations should enhance or at least preserve the speaker’s self-esteem.
- Call the remaining members of the evaluation team to remind them of their assignments.
- Prepare a brief but thorough talk on the purpose, techniques and benefits of evaluation (for the benefit of the guests). Evaluation is a positive experience designed to help people overcome weak habits and add power to good ones.

At the meeting

- Ensure that the individual evaluators have the speakers’ or leaders’ manuals, that they understand the project objectives and how to evaluate them.
- Greet all evaluators. If an evaluator is absent, consult with the vice president education and arrange for a substitute.
- Verify each speaker’s time and notify the timer.
- Sit near the back of the room to allow yourself full view of the meeting and its participants.

During the meeting

- Take notes on everything that happens (or doesn’t but should). For example: Is the club’s property (e.g. trophies, banner and educational material) properly displayed? If not, why? Were there unnecessary distractions that could have been avoided? Create a checklist from which you can follow the meeting. Did the meeting, and each segment of it, begin and end on time?
- Cover each participant on the program. Look for good and less than desirable examples of preparation, organization, delivery, enthusiasm, observation and general performance of duties. Remember, you are not to reevaluate the speakers, though you may wish to add something that the evaluator may have missed.
- Before Table Topics™, you will be asked to stand and brief the audience on your team’s means and methods of evaluation. Describe what way and how your team will handle evaluations.
- Identify the grammarian, Ah-Counter and timer. Have these members briefly state the purpose of their jobs.
- Request the word of the day, if your club has one, from the grammarian.
When introduced to conduct the evaluation phase of the meeting, go to the lectern and introduce each speech evaluator. After each recitation, thank the evaluator for his or her efforts.

Give your general evaluation of the meeting, using the notes you took as suggested above. Phrase your evaluation so it is helpful and encouraging, yet motivates club members to implement the suggestions so the next meeting can be improved. You may wish to comment on the quality of evaluations. Were they positive, upbeat, helpful? Did they point the way to improvement? Then introduce each leader evaluator. After each recitation, thank the evaluator for his or her efforts.

WHEN YOU ARE THE TOASTMASTER

The main duties of the Toastmaster are to coordinate and conduct the entire meeting and act as a genial host, including introducing participants. The Toastmaster sets the tone for the entire meeting. For obvious reasons this task is not usually assigned to a member until he or she is quite familiar with the club and its procedures. Program participants should be introduced in a way that excites the audience and motivates them to listen. The Toastmaster creates an atmosphere of interest, expectation and receptivity.

Serving as Toastmaster is an excellent way to practice planning, preparation and organization skills, time management, facilitation, motivation and team-building skills as you strive to make the meeting one of the club’s best.

Prior to the meeting

Speak with the vice president education to find out who is scheduled for various meeting roles, if a special theme has been set for the meeting and if there are any program changes.

Call the Topicsmaster to discuss his or her duties. Also provide the Topicsmaster with a list of program participants so he or she will know who already has a speaking role at the meeting.

Call all speakers in advance to remind them that they are speaking. Interview them to find out their speech title, manual project number, purpose to be achieved, time requested and something interesting for you to use when introducing them (job, family, hobbies, education, why this topic for this audience).

Call the general evaluator to confirm the assignment. Ask the general evaluator to call the other members of the evaluation team (speech evaluators, leader evaluators, Topicsmaster, timer, grammarian, Ah-Counter) and remind them of their responsibilities.

Prepare introductions for each speaker. A proper introduction is important to the success of the speaker’s presentation.

Prepare remarks that can be used to bridge the gaps between program segments. You may never use them, but you should be prepared to avoid possibly awkward periods of silence.

Remember that performing as Toastmaster is one of the most valuable experiences in your club work. The assignment requires careful preparation in order to have a smoothly run meeting.

At the meeting

Arrive early in order to finish any last-minute details.

Check with the speakers for any last-minute changes.

Sit near the front of the room and have your speakers do likewise for quick and easy access to the lectern.

During the meeting

Preside with sincerity, energy, enthusiasm and decisiveness. Take your audience on a pleasant journey and make them feel that all is going well.

Pay attention to the time. Strive to begin and end the meeting on time. You may have to make adjustments to the schedule during the meeting to accomplish this. Make sure each meeting segment adheres to the schedule.

Always lead the applause before and after the Table Topics™ session, each prepared speaker and the general evaluator.

Remain standing near the lectern after your introduction until the speaker has acknowledged you and assumed control of the meeting, then be seated.

Introduce the general evaluator as you would any speaker; the general evaluator will then introduce the other members of the evaluation team.

Introduce the Topicsmaster as you would any speaker.

Introduce each speaker in turn.
At the conclusion of the speaking program, request the timer’s report and vote for Best Speaker, if your club has this award.
Briefly reintroduce the general evaluator.
While votes are being tallied, invite comments from guests and announcements (such as verification of next week’s program).
Award trophies if your club does so.
Request the thought for the day if your club has one.
Adjourn the meeting, or if appropriate, return control to the chair.

Resources
- When You’re the Introducer (1167E)
- Chairman (Item 200)

Mastering Your Meetings (Item 1312)

**WHEN YOU ARE THE GRAMMARIAN**

Being grammarian is truly an exercise in expanding your listening skills. You have several responsibilities: To introduce new words to members, to comment on the use of English during the course of the meeting, and to provide examples of good grammar and word usage.

**Prior to the meeting**
- Select a word of the day if this is done in your club. It should be a word that will help members increase their vocabulary—a word that can be incorporated easily into everyday conversation but is different from the way people usually express themselves. An adjective or adverb is suggested, since they are more adaptable than a noun or verb, but feel free to select your own special word.
- In letters large enough to be seen from the back of the room, print your word, its part of speech (adjective, adverb, noun, verb) and a brief definition. Prepare a sentence showing how the word is used.
- Prepare a brief explanation of the duties of the grammarian for the benefit of the guests.

**At the meeting**
- Place your visual aid at the front of the room where it can be seen by all.
- Get a blank piece of paper and pen ready to make notes, or get a copy of the grammarian’s log, if your club has one, from the sergeant at arms.

**During the meeting**
- When introduced prior to Table Topics™, announce the word of the day, state its part of speech, define it, use it in a sentence and ask that anyone speaking during any part of the meeting use it.
- Briefly explain the role of the grammarian.
- Throughout the meeting, listen to everyone’s word usage. Write down any awkward use or misuse of the language (incomplete sentences, sentences that change direction in midstream, incorrect grammar or malapropisms) with a note of who erred. For example, point out if someone used a singular verb with a plural subject. “One in five children wear glasses” should be “One in five children wears glasses.” Note when a pronoun is misused. “No one in the choir sings better than her” should be “No one in the choir sings better than she.”
- Write down who used the word of the day (or a derivative of it) and note those who used it correctly or incorrectly.
- When called on by the general evaluator during the evaluation segment, stand by your chair and give your report. Try to offer the correct usage in every instance where there was misuse instead of only explaining what was wrong. Report on creative language usage and announce who used the word of the day (or a derivative of it) correctly or incorrectly.

**After the meeting**
- Give your completed report to the treasurer for collection of fines if your club does this.

Resources
- Word of the Day (Item 1415)
- Word of the Day II (Item 1416)
WHEN YOU ARE THE AH-COUNTER

The purpose of the Ah-Counter is to note words and sounds used as a crutch or pause filler by anyone who speaks during the meeting. Words may be inappropriate interjections, such as and, well, but, so, you know. Sounds may be ah, um, er. You should also note when a speaker repeats a word or phrase such as "I, I" or "This means, this means." The Ah-Counter role is an excellent opportunity to practice your listening skills.

Prior to the meeting

› Prepare a brief explanation of the duties of the Ah-Counter for the benefit of guests.

At the meeting

› Get a pen and blank piece of paper for notes, or get a blank copy of the Ah-Counter’s log, if your club has one, from the sergeant at arms.

During the meeting

› When introduced, explain the role of the Ah-Counter. Some clubs levy small fines on members who do or do not do certain things. For example, members are fined who use crutch words or are not wearing their Toastmasters pin to the meeting. If your club levies fines, explain the fine schedule.

› Throughout the meeting, listen to everyone for crutch sounds and long pauses used as fillers and not as a necessary part of sentence structure. Write down how many crutch sounds or words each person used during all portions of the meeting.

› When called on by the general evaluator during the evaluation segment, stand by your chair and give your report.

After the meeting

› Give your completed report to the treasurer for collection of fines if your club does this.

OPTIONAL MEETING PARTICIPANTS

Your club may have other meeting participants, such as joke master, parliamentarian and word master. Check with your club officers for guidelines for any additional positions the club may have.