

## Organizing Your Club's Open House

1. **Set a date.** Choose a specific date for the event to take place. Allow at least 3-4 weeks of planning before your event so you have time for PR and planning.
2. **Select an Open House Chair and committee.** It could be co-led by your VP Membership and your VP Public Relations. Or perhaps someone wants to lead this team for CL credit under “Team Building.”
3. **Select a Keynote Speaker.** Ideally, someone from the club who is a polished speaker can speak to the benefits of Toastmasters. You want to feature your club, so utilizing as many of your members in the program is best to show your club in a good light. Another option is to bring in an outside speaker such as a District officer.
4. **Design a special Open House flyer for this event.** This will go out to the community to get the word out about your Open House. Send a copy of your flyer to the [District PR Manager](#) for inclusion on the District calendar. Post flyers in local businesses and libraries (Starbucks is a welcoming spot to place a flyer on their Public Notices board). Company clubs: post flyers on company bulletin boards, in the break room, on the company intranet. Try your local newspapers. Consider online sources such as Meetup, Eventbrite, Facebook, and your own club website. Ask members to invite co-workers and friends to the event.
5. **Select a Refreshment Chair and committee.** People feel especially welcomed when snacks are available. The food doesn't have to be fancy or costly. Your refreshment committee could organize a pot luck that would help lower costs and give a more personal touch.
6. **Create a special meeting agenda.** You want to have time to show what your meeting is like and still allow guests to have refreshments and ask questions. You may only have time for one speech, a brief round of Table Topics, and one evaluation. That's fine! Be sure to still incorporate all the functionary roles as these are key aspects of the Toastmasters meeting. If time allows for two speakers, consider having the second speaker be a newer member who could speak about how the Toastmasters program has helped them up to this point. Consider using Table Topics as a way to elicit testimonials from your members.
7. **Have plenty of guest packets, brochures and APPLICATIONS.** Be ready to take on new members that very day. Make sure all your club officers know how to fill out the application so no guest is left unattended.
8. **Have name tags for guests and members.** Remind all members to wear their Toastmasters name badge (to help guests learn names). Consider setting up a Registration table to ensure guests sign your guest or visitor book, get a name badge and a guest packet. Make sure guests are led to a club officer or experienced Toastmaster who will make them feel welcome by explaining the guest packet contents and the program in general.
9. **Ask for guest comments.** At the end of the meeting, ask the guests to comment on what they thought of the meeting (as you do at every meeting when you have guests). Let them know

members will be available to answer any other questions they have. Be sure to **ask them to join** or invite them back to visit your club.

**10. Write thank you notes to guests who attended.** A hand-written thank you note still has a great impact on a guest. Email has become an accepted means of communication. If you do email your thank you note, send each one individually and personalize the note so it isn't just a group thank you.

The above information will get your Club Open House well organized, involve your members in a variety of roles, and show your club in a good light.