The Toastmasters Meeting Guide

The Mission of the Club

The mission of a Toastmaster club is to provide a mutually supportive and positive learning environment in which every member has the opportunity to develop communication and leadership skills, which in turn foster self-confidence and personal growth.

The Mission of Toastmasters International

Toastmasters International is the leading movement devoted to making effective oral communication a worldwide reality.

Through its member clubs, Toastmasters International helps men and women learn the arts of speaking, listening, and thinking - vital skills that promote self-actualization, enhance leadership potential, foster human understanding, and contribute to the betterment of mankind.

It is basic to this mission that Toastmasters International continually expand its worldwide network of clubs, thereby offering ever-greater numbers of people the opportunity to benefit from its programs.

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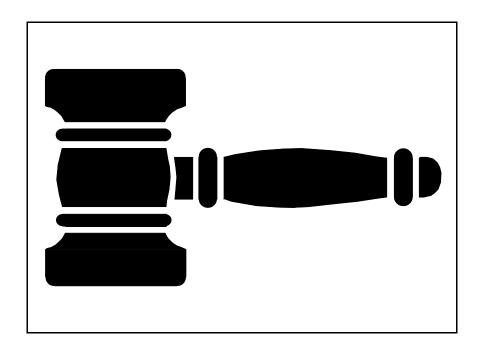
IN THE BEGINNING

We, as Toastmasters, attempt to schedule each of our meetings with the intelligence and thoughtfulness that may demonstrate for average people how to conduct themselves at our meetings. However, I feel we lack success in teaching them the proper way to conduct that meeting while asking them to take a prominent part in the meeting's program. Thus, one experienced Toastmaster has undertaken a labor of love to establish a reasonable procedure which all can use to stimulate better meetings and achieve mastery.

I invite you to share your contributions to this guide or any recommendations you wish to offer for improving it.

It is an update of an earlier version of the *MEETING GUIDE* which I previously distributed within our club and among others over a period of several years. It was originally handed to me at a meeting of Trillium Toastmasters Club 8019 some years ago. It was offered freely without reservation. I offer it to you in the same manner and hope it will guide you on your way to becoming a better and more effective communicator.

M. H. "Herb" Muller, DTM/ATM-S (1928 - 1995) revised and edited by Peter Bunce, DTM/ATM-S; July 15, 1999 Edition



PARLIAMENTARIAN

Prerequisite: Thoughtfulness and contemplation.

Time: One minute or less.

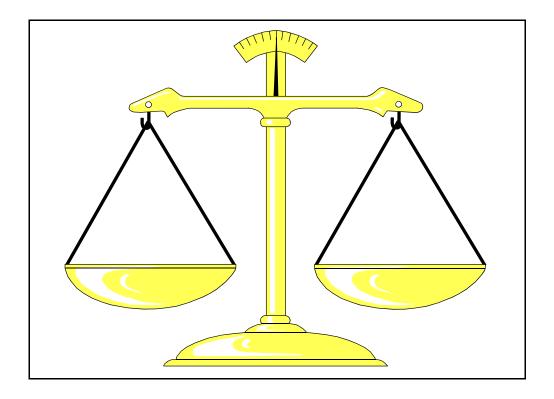
Preparation:

Study *Robert's Rules Of Order*, Newly Revised Edition, 1990. Offer some interesting point that may be useful to our club. Bring this to the attention of the President, then, when called, you may expound that point for the club's edification.

Study our club's business meeting and isolate the problems that impede its smooth completion. Prepare and provide helper sheets on parliamentary procedure for all members and guests.

Attend a district parliamentary training session. Ask the Vice President Education if he or she can get you the dates of the training session.

Prepare to rule on parliamentary procedure whenever the President calls on you.



INVOCATION AND PLEDGE

Prerequisite: Thoughtful contemplation.

Time: One minute or less.

Preparation:

Research a poem, quotation, or inspirational thought with a meaningful content, one you wish to share with our members

Procedure:

- 1. You may stand and start speaking from where you are seated or, at some clubs, it is customary to speak from the lectern. Do not use a religious theme or refer to deity, save those clubs whose members and guests subscribe to the same faith, as at meetings chartered by a church, chapel, temple, synagogue, or mosque. The invocation is intended as a mood setting device, not a sermon. A warm thought will do.
- 2. When you have finished the invocation ask the group to stand, place their right hand over their heart, and join in pledging allegiance to the United States' Flag. Before the pledge, you may wish to note the flag's meaning or some historical anniversary that is approaching.
- 3. When finished, seat yourself; there is no need to return control to the chair.

GRAMMARIAN - WORDMASTER - LEXICOLOGIST

Prerequisite: None.

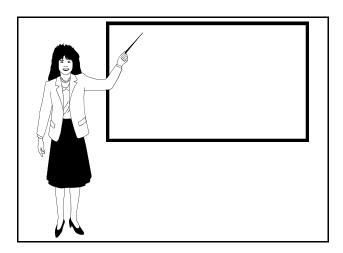
Time: One to two minutes.

Preparation:

Before the meeting, select a word from the dictionary which you feel would extend the average member's vocabulary. Choose a word often used improperly or incorrectly or confused with a similar sounding word. This is a helpful exercise. Try to avoid words that are unusual or have little use in daily speech. Avoid words commonly used in daily conversation.

Procedure:

When called upon to explain your duty, stand and speak to this effect: "Mr./Madam Toastmaster, Fellow Toastmasters, and Welcome Guests, the word for today is '------". Display the word on paper. Write it with a heavy pen. Define the word, spell it, and use it in a sentence. Continue with, "I will report my observations at the end of the meeting."



AH - COUNTER

Prerequisite: None.

Time: One minute.

Procedure: When called upon to explain your duties, stand in your place and say something such as: "Mr./Madam Toastmaster, Fellow Toastmasters, and Welcome Guests, I will be listening carefully at today's/this evening's meeting for any fill-in words such as ah, um, or what we term 'pregnant pauses'. During a public meeting these things can ruin the gist of a speaker's intent. It is a habit that is easy to correct. I wish to call to the speaker's attention the source of the filler. I will remember to mark down all of them. I will report my findings at the end of the meeting." At the end of the meeting when the Master Evaluator calls on you, report all tallied fillers.

RAFFLE MASTER

Prerequisite: None.

Time: One minute.

Preparation:

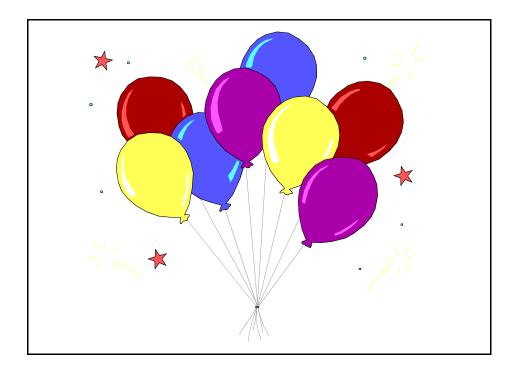
Before the meeting begins, take the roll of raffle tickets with you to your seat or create some raffle tickets with a piece of paper.

Procedure:

When called, stand at your place and say, "Mr./Madam Toastmaster, Fellow Toastmasters, Honored Guests, today I will be selling raffle tickets for the benefit of the club treasury. The proceeds of the raffle will be split between the holder of the winning ticket and the club treasury. Please have your money ready when I come by. The price is one ticket for one dollar, three tickets for two dollars, and five tickets for three dollars."

Note: Tickets are sold only at the break time. The winner is paid half of the proceeds at the time of the draw, the other half given to the club Treasurer or, in the Treasurer's absence, to the club President.

Always have a guest pick the winning number out of a hat or a cup and announce the winner immediately.



TIMER

Prerequisite: None.

Time: One minute.

Preparation:

Before the meeting take the timing device to your seat or get a set of three cards or papers representing the green, amber, and red lights. Check with the speakers and verify their speech time. The *Communication And Leadership Program* prescribes the following times:

The Icebreaker four to six minutes
Project Speeches 2 - 8 five to seven minutes

Project Speech 9 nine minutes plus or minus 30 seconds

Project Speech 10 eight to ten minutes

When called to explain your duty, stand and say, "Mr./Madam Toastmaster, Fellow Toastmasters, and Welcome Guests, I will be timing all of the speaking events of this meeting. Table Topics speakers have from one to two minutes; Evaluators from two to three minutes; prepared speakers are assigned times designated by the manual or by their own request, usually five to seven minutes. When the speaker's time has reached its minimum requirement you will note that our timing signal will be green to notify the speaker that he/she has reached the minimum speech time. After thirty seconds or one minute it will be yellow to notify there is only a short time remaining for the speech. The timing signal will be red to notify the speaker that he/she should stop speaking and be seated within thirty seconds."

Event	Green	Yellow	Red
Table Topics	1:00	1:30	2:00
Evaluations	2:00	2:30	3:00
Ice Breaker	4:00	5:00	6:00
Project Speeches 2 - 9	5:00	6:00	7:00
Project Speech 10	8:00	9:00	10:00

Note: The Timer should not report the exact time of each participant unless specifically requested. The Timer will simply state, "All speakers were on time except XXXXXXX who spoke XXXX over." Start the timing device at the speaker's first utterance. Stop at the last.

JOKEMASTER

Prerequisite: Research or learn a joke.

Time: One minute.

Preparation:

Research an appropriate joke or two for the meeting. Practice telling the joke. Tell it from memory, since reading it does not present a challenge, either to the Jokemaster or the audience. *Do not select any material that may offend anyone, such as blue material, ethnic humor, or belittlement.*

Procedure:

When called, stand at your place and say, "Mr./Madam Toastmaster, Fellow Toastmasters, and Welcome Guests, I have the following joke for your entertainment." Tell the joke or story. After you finish, say, "Mr./Madam Toastmaster," and be seated.

Note: It is better to have two or more jokes ready in case you are requested to tell more than one.

AWARDS MASTER

Time: One minute.

Preparation:

Before the meeting begins, go to the club Sergeant-At-Arms and get the ribbons to be awarded at the close of the meeting. You will find three: Best Table Topics, Best Evaluator, and Best Speaker. There are also ribbons for Best Chairman and Ice Breaker at those clubs where they are honored.

Procedure:

When called to explain your duty, stand at your seat and say, "Mr./Madam Toastmaster, Fellow Toastmasters, and Honored Guests, I will be awarding the ribbons today/this evening for three categories: Best Table Topics Speaker, Best Evaluator, and Best Speaker. The chairman will remind everyone to vote for each category at the appropriate time. The Sergeant-At-Arms will collect the votes and bring them to me for tallying. I will report the winners and award them with their ribbons at the end of the meeting."

Note: If there is a tie, never announce it. The Awards Master must cast the tie breaking vote. Never reveal that there was a close vote.

If a speaker or evaluator exceeds the assigned time limit, the member is disqualified for the award.

Stress the importance of each award. Refrain from evaluating while giving the awards.

Give the awards in this order: 1. Best Table Topics; 2. Best Evaluator; 3. Best Speaker. If the club has a Best Chairman Award or Ice Breaker Award, these are given before the Best Speaker Award.

TOASTMASTER

Prerequisite: Four speeches.

Time: Plan two to three minutes at the beginning to introduce the theme and set the stage for the meeting. You should also be prepared to make short comments between the meeting segments to keep the meeting flowing.

Preparation:

The Toastmaster of the meeting has the key role in the success of the meeting. Only through proper advanced planning can this assignment be carried out effectively. The primary duty of the Toastmaster is to insure a well-run, up-beat meeting and act as a genial host to smooth the transition between program participants.

Several days before the meeting, contact the program participants and remind them of their assignments. If anyone is unable to fulfill an assignment, arrange a substitute. You should handle this in advance and not at the meeting. Obtain the necessary information from the speakers in order to introduce them properly. You should get biographical data, the speech title, the manual project number, and the speaking time. The speaker may give you a Speaker's Information Sheet with this information on the day of the meeting. Contact the Vice President Education before the meeting; he or she needs to prepare the meeting program.

Plan your introductions carefully. Each introduction should last no longer than one minute. Plan the time for each portion of the meeting so that the meeting will finish on time.

Procedure:

Try to arrive about fifteen minutes before the meeting begins. Make sure all the program participants are present. If some participants fail to attend the meeting, appoint new ones prior to the start of the meeting, if possible. Sit near the lectern.

When the President turns control of the meeting over to you, move to the lectern and shake the President's hand. You are now in charge of the meeting.

Keep the meeting running on schedule. You have the authority to stop the participants who go over their time and ask them to conclude their portion of the meeting immediately.

TOASTMASTER

Each time you introduce a speaker, be ready to add a few words and give the background information to characterize the speaker. Always give the name of the person at the end of the introduction. Read "How To Introduce A Speaker" on page 73 of the *Communication And Leadership Program* manual. Remind the Evaluators before the break to consult with their assigned speaker. Remind the Raffle Master to sell raffle tickets. Indicate the length of the break and ask the Timer to alert everyone when the break will end.

Announce each speech by title, manual project number, and speaker. Briefly describe the purpose of the speech without saying what the speech is about -- unless the speaker has asked you to do so. Say something such as, "Help me welcome [the speaker's name] whose speech is titled [speech title]." Note how the speaker's name is the last word. Lead the applause. Remain standing at the lectern and shake hands with the speaker. Take your seat near the lectern.

At the end of each presentation, lead the applause and offer a brief word of praise and appreciation. Your function in this step is to bridge the gap between presentations and maintain the interest of the audience. After each formal speech, ask members and guests to take one minute to write an evaluation of the speaker's presentation. Do not talk during this one minute of silence. Ask them to sign their evaluation.

After all the speech portion of the meeting has ended, comment briefly and thank the speakers. Call for the Timer's Report. Ask the club to vote for the meeting's Best Speaker. Repeat all the speakers' names. Ask the audience to give their ballot to the Sergeant-At-Arms or to pass it to the Awards Master.

Introduce and pass control of the meeting to the Master Evaluator. Lead the applause. Remain at the lectern until the Master Evaluator arrives. Shake hands with the Master Evaluator. After the evaluation portion of the meeting has ended, take control of the meeting from the Master Evaluator. Thank the Master Evaluator. If the club elects a Best Chairman, mention their names and positions: Table Topics Master, Master Evaluator, and Toastmaster. Introduce the Raffle Master. Introduce the Awards Master. Make a closing statement about the meeting and return control of the meeting to the President. Lead the applause and wait for the President to arrive at the lectern before you return to your seat.

TABLE TOPICS MASTER

Prerequisite: Ice Breaker Speech.

Time: Twelve to twenty minutes. Consult the Toastmaster for the time limit based on the number of speakers scheduled to speak during the prepared speech portion of the meeting.

Preparation:

Select a topic designed to warm up the audience and prepare them for the formal speeches. Make a list of ten topics which you can ask the participants to answer extemporaneously. These can be quotes, scenarios, conditions, news events, or hypothetical situations. Plan a format for presenting the topics which may include questions to answer, statements worthy of comment, instructions to follow, or roles to play. At the meeting make a list of people who will answer your Table Topics questions. You may list their names next to your Table Topics questions in order to begin calling on Table Topics speakers quickly and confidently.

Procedure:

Sit close to the lectern. When you are introduced, walk to the lectern, shake hands with the Toastmaster, and take control of the meeting. Explain the Table Topics portion of the meeting. "Table Topics is extemporaneous speaking for up to two minutes on an assigned topic. Guests are encouraged to participate; if called on, they may choose to speak or choose to pass. Guests may address a new question, a previous question, speak about themselves, or decline to speak. Toastmaster members are required to speak if given a Table Topics question. The speakers may speak from their place; it is customary at some clubs for speakers to go to the lectern to speak. Participants are expected to address the given question or topic directly and put their ideas together so that the audience can understand them. When the Table Topics session is over, members and guests are asked to vote for the Best Table Topics Speaker.

Give a brief introduction to your topic, up to one minute, then begin calling on people as planned. If anyone panics, be encouraging and help the participant through it if absolutely necessary. It may be helpful to write the name of the participant next to each question in advance and check it off after it is used. Lead the applause when the participant has finished speaking. Thank each speaker by name.

Do not call on the Toastmaster, Master Evaluator, or Speakers. If there are many members and guests at the meeting and all jobs are filled, direct questions to persons in the following order: 1. Those who have no assignments; 2. Guests; 3. Those with minor assignments and speaking parts (Timer, Grammarian, Ah Counter, et al.); 4. Those with major assignments (President, Master Evaluator, et al.).

TABLE TOPIC MASTER (continued)

Watch the time. Always have more topics planned than you will use in case you have extra time at the meeting. Coordinate a signal for the Toastmaster to indicate there is time for one or two more Table Topic questions. End with some closing remarks about the Table Topics session. Mention the names of all the speakers. Call for the Timer's report. Ask the members and guests to vote for the Best Table Topics Speaker. Return control of the meeting to the Toastmaster. Lead the applause and remain at the lectern until the Toastmaster arrives and shakes your hand.

Note: It is good to keep a list of the questions and of the speakers who answered them; when you ask for votes, you will be able to review briefly all the questions and the participants' names.

MASTER EVALUATOR OR GENERAL EVALUATOR

Prerequisite: Experience as an evaluator.

Time: Two to five minutes plus the Evaluators' time.

Preparation:

Review "The General Evaluator's Responsibilities" on pages 10 and 11 of the *Effective Speech Evaluation* manual

Procedure:

When you are asked to explain your duties, stand at your place and say words to this effect: "Mr./Madam Toastmaster, Fellow Toastmasters, and Welcome Guests, as your Master Evaluator today I will be watching and listening to insure that the meeting is conducted properly. The Timer, Ah Counter, and Grammarian/Word Master/Lexicologist will assist me in doing this. If you need evaluation forms, please see me or the Sergeant-At-Arms during the break. Guests are welcome to write evaluations since all of us are giving our personal reactions to the various speeches."

State the names of the Speakers and the Evaluators who will be evaluating them so there will be no confusion. This assures that all Evaluators are present and are aware of their duty. It is unnecessary to ask them to stand.

Remind the Evaluators to meet with their Speaker during the break to get the manual and to discuss anything specific the Speaker wishes the Evaluator to watch for.

Conclude by stating that after the Evaluators have spoken, you will give an overall evaluation of the meeting.

When the Toastmaster introduces you, move to the lectern and follow this outline for your duties: 1. Explain the evaluation portion of the meeting; 2. Call on each Evaluator in turn to give his or her speech evaluation; 3. Ask members to vote for the meeting's Best Evaluator; 4. Call for reports from the Timer, Ah Counter, and Grammarian/Word Master/Lexicologist; 5. Briefly evaluate the Evaluators and give an overall evaluation of the meeting within about two minutes; as in a speaker's evaluation, address the meeting's positive aspects and areas for improvement; 6. Ask for comments from the floor if there is time and you are so inclined.

It is also the Master Evaluator's responsibility to safeguard the club's professional decorum by addressing inappropriate language, subjects, or disruptiveness.

Return control of the meeting to the Toastmaster by calling him or her back to the lectern. Wait at the lectern and shake the Toastmaster's hand

MAIN SPEAKER

Prerequisite: None.

Time: Usually five to seven minutes; check the *Communication And Leadership Program* manual for your speech's time limit. Staying within your time limit is important because if you fall short of your limit, you will be disqualified at speech contests.

Preparation:

This is your opportunity to express yourself on any subject you wish, provided you heed the note on page 17 of this guide. You are assigned to complete a project from the *Communication And Leadership* manual or one of the Advanced Toastmasters manuals. Select a project. Toastmasters International recommends completing the manual projects in numerical sequence. You are not permitted to attempt Project 7 "Research Your Topic" before having completed Projects 1 to 6; you may not attempt Project 10 "Inspire Your Audience" before having completed Projects 1 to 9.

Write an outline for your speech and uphold the requirements of the Project goals. Practice, practice, practice! It will help to tape yourself while practicing to judge how you sound and what you need to practice. If you prepare properly, you will need no notes other than a brief outline on a small card, and even that may be unnecessary.

Procedure:

Sit close to the lectern. If you have not spoken with the Toastmaster about your speech before the meeting, complete the Speaker's Information Sheet and give it to the Toastmaster before the meeting begins. This should include a brief biography for the Toastmaster to use for your introduction, the project number in your manual, the purpose of your speech, and your speech title.

Meet with your evaluator during the break to discuss your objectives. Notify the timer of your speech's time limit.

When introduced, walk to the lectern, shake the Toastmaster's hand, and stand where you wish to deliver your speech. Address the meeting beginning with the following: "Mr./Madam Toastmaster, Fellow Toastmasters, and Honored Guests." The Timer will start the timing device when you begin speaking.

MAIN SPEAKER (continued)

While delivering your speech, observe the changing of the timing signals. If it appears you will run out of time, shorten your speech; make your closing statement when the red light or card is shown. After your speech, turn to the Toastmaster and simply say, "Mr./Madam Toastmaster." This signals that you are finished speaking. It is unnecessary to say, "Thank you."

Remain at the lectern until the Toastmaster returns to the lectern and shakes your hand. After the meeting, ask the Vice President Education to initial and date your Record Of Assignments near the back of your project manual.

Note: Speakers may choose their own speech topic. However, never select any topic that may embarrass anyone present. No sexual or blue material should ever be introduced at a Toastmaster meeting. No ethnic references, no derogatory remarks about religious or political beliefs, or about nationalities. We must honor the sensibilities of our members who have gathered at our Toastmaster meeting as friends; we may lose a valuable member or prospective member if we fail to respect their feelings.

EVALUATOR

Prerequisite: Completion of Ice Breaker Speech.

Time: Two to three minutes.

Preparation:

Read the *Effective Speech Evaluation* manual. Read the purpose of the speech which you will evaluate in order to understand clearly the goals of the Speaker's assignment.

Procedure:

Prior to the meeting or, if necessary, during the break, confer with the Speaker and review the objectives of the speech. Ask if there is any particularity to which you need to be alerted. During the break, obtain the Speaker's manual and write your comments on the assigned page. Write your name and the date at the top of that page. Review the purpose of the speech and consider the evaluation points. Write your comments as clearly as possible in the Speaker's manual.

Consider the Speaker's level. Do not be critical of the Speaker's vocal variety if the Speaker has not yet completed that project. On the other hand, if the Speaker is more advanced, some criticism may be valid.

When the Master Evaluator introduces you during the evaluation portion of the meeting, walk to the lectern, shake the Master Evaluator's hand, and begin with the following: "Mr./Madam Master Evaluator, Fellow Toastmasters, Honored Guests, and especially [Speaker's name]."

The time of your evaluation should be from two to three minutes and no longer than three minutes thirty seconds. Present positive points of the speech and emphasize how the Speaker excelled in fulfilling the project's requirements. Comment on the delivery, but not on the content of the speech. The Speaker has expressed his or her own personal views, which the Evaluator should respect. You may briefly mention your assessment of the speech's content value or any portions of it that may have been indiscreet. Comment on those points to which the Speaker alerted you. You should word any suggestions for improvements by saying, "It seemed to me," or "I would have liked to have heard you say it this way." Never make a critical comment without offering an illustration of how the speech could have been delivered better. Emphasize that you are reporting what you saw and heard and that it may not necessarily have affected other audience members in the same way.

Thank the speaker and end with an affirmation of sincere support. Return control of the meeting to the Master Evaluator by saying, "Mr./Madam Master Evaluator." Remain at the lectern until the Master Evaluator shakes your hand.