

# Meeting Roles Explained

The following are brief descriptions of the duties of each role in our weekly meetings:

## Toastmaster (TM)

- Prepare for and conduct the meeting.
- Decide on a theme for the meeting to use this for everyone's intro. It can be anything -- birthday memories, your first day of school, your views on computers, email, etc.
- Contact all participants several days before the meeting (i.e., Friday or Saturday), listing assigned roles and asking for their answer to your theme question for introductory information. A convenient way to do this is to send an email to the entire membership. You can do this by sending email to the following address: ExParkTM@googlegroups.com
- Ask Evaluators to send their introductory information to the General Evaluator, with a copy to you. Include the General Evaluator's email address.
- Make sure everyone with a role will be there to fulfill their duties or has found a replacement. If you haven't received email confirmation and theme information, phone them.
- Ask speakers to tell you:
  - Which speech they are doing from which manual
  - Purpose of the speech
  - Title
  - Time limits
- Prepare and distribute a written agenda at the meeting, including the above information for all speeches. There is a sample agenda in the "Club Files" section of this website you can use as a template.
- Sit in the front row, where you can get back and forth to the lectern easily.
- Open the meeting, introducing yourself and giving a few brief remarks about today's theme.
- If a guest is present, ask him/her to stand up and introduce himself/herself, as well as how they found the club.
- Introduce everyone with their theme info -- except Evaluators. (Evaluators will be introduced by the General Evaluator.)

- Introduce the GR and TI, using the material from your theme question. Ask each to explain their duties. They will do this from their seats. Lead applause after each explanation.
- Introduce each Speaker, using theme info and reviewing speech info listed above. Lead the applause as each Speaker approaches the lectern.
- After speakers have finished, you will introduce the Table Topics Master. He/she will explain how this works and will call on as many participants as time allows. You help alert the Topics Master when it's time to stop (1:10). Topics Master returns control to you.
- You then introduce the General Evaluator who will do the rest of the introductions and reports before turning control of the meeting back to you.
- If a guest is present, ask him/her for any feedback or comment he/she might have.
- You then introduce the presiding officer (usually the President) for any announcements or club business.

## Grammarian (GR)

- Select a Word of the Day and prepare a visual display of it before the meeting. Ideal is two copies of the word, its definition, and an example of its usage. Tape them together so that one copy hangs from the front of the lectern for the audience to see, the other is on top of the lectern for the speaker to see.
- You can either stand by your seat or go to the front of the room when the Toastmaster calls on you.
- Display or ask the Toastmaster to display the Word of the Day as you explain it. Ask everyone to use the word when speaking.
- Explain that you will be listening for the following:
  - Use of the Word of the Day
  - Creative use of language or words that evoke good mental images
  - Incorrect usage of language (i.e., grammatical errors)
  - "Ahs", "ums", and other fillers such as "like" and "you know" that detract from effectiveness
- Explain the use of the Ah-Bell. Listen carefully and use the Ah-Bell to signal the use of "ah", "um", and other fillers. The Ah-Bell should not be used while guests are speaking. The Ah-Bell should not be used during prepared speeches. Any other time should be considered fair game.

- When called upon by the General Evaluator, stand by your seat and deliver a brief report. Include those who used the Word of the Day, examples of excellent language or incorrect usage, and any excessive fillers. Summarize as much as possible.

## Timer (T1)

- From the briefcase, get the club's stopwatch to track speaking times and colored cards to signal speakers.
- Select a seat at the back center of the room, where speakers can see you, but you won't distract the audience.
- Check the agenda for Speakers' time limits. Standard time limits are as follows:
  - Speeches: generally 5 to 7 minutes, but may vary by manual.
  - Table topics: 1-1.5 minutes
  - Speech evaluations and general meeting evaluation: 2-3 minutes
- Signal speakers by raising each of three cards in the course of a presentation.
  - Green - when the speaker has reached the minimum time. Keep showing until time for Yellow.
  - Yellow - when the speaker is halfway between minimum and maximum. Keep showing until time for Red.
  - Red - raise when time is up and keep up until the speaker finishes.
- The timing cards are marked with instructions. Record each speaker's actual time. The preferred format is: "All the speakers were within their allotted time except: X was \_\_\_\_ seconds over, Y was \_\_\_\_ seconds under, etc."

## Speakers (S1, S2, S3)

- In advance of the meeting, send your speech info and theme info (described above) to the Toastmaster.
- Bring your manual to the meeting and give it to your Evaluator before meeting starts.
- You and your Evaluator should arrive early to give them time to read manual requirements in advance.
- Tell your Evaluator if there is anything you especially want them to look for in addition to manual requirements.

- Deliver a prepared speech under the guidelines, objectives and time limits in the Toastmasters International basic or advanced manual.
- When called by the Toastmaster, walk to the lectern and shake hands.
- Acknowledge the Toastmaster by saying "Mr. (or Madam) Toastmaster, fellow Toastmasters and guests (if any)," then begin speaking.
- Advanced speaker tips:
  - You can begin with a one or two sentence "grabber" which states your main point before saying, "Mr./Madam Toastmaster" etc.
  - If you have not had enough time to prepare for your speech, do not apologize and set low expectations. Just do your speech.
- At the end of your speech, step back from the lectern, look at the Toastmaster and say "Mr. (or Madam) Toastmaster." *Never conclude a speech by saying thank you. (TM believes they should thank you, rather than the reverse.)*
- Wait for the Toastmaster to walk to the lectern and shake hands before returning to your seat.

## Table Topics Master (TT)

- Prepare table topic questions before the meeting. (Questions may relate to the theme of the day, but that's not a requirement.)
- Walk to the lectern when introduced and shake hands with the Toastmaster.
- Make sure the audience understands the format for table topics. This is especially important if there are guests.
- You can use unconventional formats -- e.g., explain these quotations, make up definitions for crazy words. When the format changes, be sure that everyone understands the new format before you announce the first topic/question.
- Assign table topics to participants in this order:
  1. Club members not listed on the agenda. (The goal is that every member should have an opportunity to speak at every meeting, even if not assigned a role.)
  2. Guests who wish to participate. After the above examples from members, ask guests if they wish to participate. They may accept or decline.
  3. Members who have less demanding meeting roles -- e.g., GR, TI, and even GE or TM. (Speakers and Evaluators already have major roles and should not be called on). Lesser roles are called on when you have extra time after calling on #1 and #2 above.

- Watch the time. Table topics must end by 1:10.
- The typical table topics procedure is as follows:
  - Remind audience that Table Topics gives all practice thinking on our feet. Explain format.
  - Table Topics Master briefly states a topic or presents a question and calls upon a speaker. Lead applause as speaker approaches the lectern.
  - Speaker walks to lectern, shakes hands with Topics Master, and speaks on the topic/question for 1 to 1.5 minutes.
  - Speaker then steps back, acknowledges the Table Topics Master, and shakes hands with Table Topics Master before returning to seat.
  - Repeat this for about 4-6 speakers. End no later than 1:15, sooner if there will be 3 evaluations.
  - After the last table topic presentation is delivered, Topics Master briefly summarizes each participant's name and topic, and asks members to vote for the best, using blank papers if provided (otherwise, tear off a corner of the printed agenda), and to pass ballots to you.
  - Return control of the meeting to the Toastmaster.

As meeting proceeds, count ballots and determine the winner. If a tie, use your own judgment as tie breaker.

When called by the General Evaluator, announce winner of Best Table Topics.

## Table Topics Participants

- When called upon, walk to the lectern and shake hands with the Table Topics Master.
- Deliver a 1 to 1.5 minute impromptu speech on the topic/question the Table Topics Master assigns.
- When you have finished speaking, step back from the lectern, look at the Table Topics Master and say "Mr. or Madam Table Topics Master."
- Wait for the Table Topics Master to walk to the lectern and shake hands, and then return to your seat.

## General Evaluator (GE)

- Contact the Evaluators before the meeting to confirm their participation

and get their answers to the Toastmaster's theme question for their introduction. If they don't reply by email, phone them.

- Before and during the meeting, make notes on what was done well and what could be done better -- e.g., well organized in advance, started on time, attendance, enthusiastic participation, success of the theme and Table Topics, etc.
- Sit where you can get back and forth to the lectern easily when called upon.
- When introduced, shake hands with the Toastmaster and take the lectern.
- Explain briefly the purpose of the Evaluation portion of the meeting (in more detail if there are guests) i.e., in Toastmasters we get not only experience in speaking, but constructive feedback on our strong points and how to improve.
- Introduce the Evaluators with info from the theme question. Lead applause as each approaches the lectern.
- Give a 2 to 3 minute evaluation of the meeting from previous notes. Add appropriate comments to supplement the speeches or evaluations, and comment on the quality of the meeting overall
- Ask for reports from the Grammarian and Timekeeper. They will give these from their seats. Lead applause after each report.
- Ask Table Topics Master to announce winner of Best Table Topics. Award ribbon, which should be found under the lectern.
- Return control of the meeting to the Toastmaster. Shake hands with TM and leave the lectern.

## Speech Evaluators (S1, S2, S3)

- Confirm your attendance and send your introductory material on the theme question to the GE with copy to the TM.
- Contact the Speaker before the meeting to confirm your attendance, speech objectives, and ask if there is anything else they especially want you to look for.
- Remind speaker to bring their manual to the meeting.
- Arrange for you and the speaker to arrive early so you can read their manual requirements and objectives before the meeting.
- Read the manual requirements in advance, and complete the written evaluation in the Speaker's manual.
- You might want to sit where you can observe audience reaction.
- When introduced, deliver a 2 to 3 minute oral evaluation.

- Summarize what the Speaker did well and what could be done better. Provide honest reactions and make recommendations for improvement. Frequently used is the "Sandwich" format.
  - Start with what they did well.
  - Add at least one suggestion for improvement, bearing in mind the speaker's level of experience.
- Beginning speakers, maybe just one or two major things to work on.
- Advanced speakers, now you can talk about the fine points.
  - End on a positive note.
- Please avoid the cliché, "I look forward to your next speech." Just end with a summary, "Just work on A and maybe B, but you're doing great in X, Y, and Z."
- Because of the time limitation, you may need to speak to one or two main points and allow the comments written in the manual to supplement your oral presentation.

## Sample Meeting Agenda

Each meeting follows a standard agenda based on the model provided by Toastmasters International.

The approximate times of presentation are noted.

- 12:30 - Toastmaster calls meeting to order, makes introductory remarks and introduces guests.
- Toastmaster introduces Grammarian, who explains duties.
- Toastmaster introduces Timer, who explains duties.
- Toastmaster introduces Speakers.
- Speakers make formal presentations.
- Toastmaster introduces the Table Topics Master, who assigns impromptu topics.
- 1:10 - Table topics end and ballots for best table topics participant are collected.
- Toastmaster introduces the General Evaluator.
- General Evaluator introduces speech evaluators.
- Formal evaluations are given.
- General Evaluator evaluates the meeting.
- General Evaluator asks for the Grammarian and Timer reports.
- General Evaluator asks Table Topics Master to announce winner of Best Table Topics.

- General Evaluator returns control of meeting to Toastmaster.
- Toastmaster concludes and turns control of meeting to the presiding officer, saving a couple of minutes for announcements.
- 1:25 - Presiding officer makes announcements and adjourns meeting.

## Membership Responsibilities

- Pay a one-time \$20 new-member fee, an \$12 club fee, and prorated International dues. Afterwards, renewal fees are \$57 every six months.
- Attend meetings as often as possible, even if you don't have an assigned role. Every speaker needs an audience, and you can gain a lot from being a Table Topics speaker.
- Make every effort to arrive on time. Late arrivals can distract the speaker.
- Turn off or mute electronic devices such as beepers, cell phones, and watch alarms before the meeting.
- Listen attentively to fellow members and provide honest evaluations and suggestions for improvement when called upon
- Fulfill all assigned roles or find a replacement as quickly as possible when you're unable to fulfill them.
- Inform the VP of Education about your availability when asked each month.
- Prepare fully for all assignments and observe prescribed time limits when giving presentations at meetings.
- New members: Ask the VP of Education or the VP of Membership to assign you a mentor who can coach you and help you reach your speaking goals.
- Uphold the club's reputation for hospitality and diversity.
- Invite and welcome guests, and recruit new members.
- Serve as a club officer when possible.
- Have fun and get to know your club members!

## Club Etiquette

- Successful meetings are a result of planning and coordination among the meeting participants.
- Someone should always be in control of the meeting. Don't leave the lectern unattended.
- The individual in control of the meeting is responsible for leading the



applause for the next speaker.

- A Toastmaster never concludes a speech by saying thank you. The audience should thank the speaker!