

Table Topics Master

The ability to "think and speak" on your feet is an essential skill that will help you be successful. This is why the Table Topics portion of the club meeting was developed. Table Topics are designed to provide club members with an opportunity to gain experience and polish in impromptu speaking. This segment gives members the opportunity to learn how to present their thoughts in a clear, organised manner with a minimum of preparation.

As Table Topics Master you should provide between 6 and 8 topics, but liaise with the meeting Toastmaster on timing arrangements (the number of topics would depend on the program for the night). Careful preparation for this assignment is essential. It is important that your questions be stimulating, interesting, provocative and pleasurable. Table Topics should not be turned into an intellectual exercise, nor should topics be personal or embarrassing.

As Table Topics Master the subjects selected, the format and organisation of the session is entirely on your hands and limited only by your imagination (subject to the general comments made above). If possible, aim for variety of form.

At The Meeting:

Select the members and guests to answer your topics during the business session.

Accept control from the Toastmaster.

Give an outline of the purpose of Table Topics for the benefit of guests and new members. (This can help to "break the ice" for your own benefit and members present.)

Call on the Timer to explain the timing arrangements (green light at 60 seconds, orange light at 75 seconds, red light at 90 seconds).

After explaining the format you have adopted for the session, call on a speaker. It is usual to announce the topic first and then the speaker, but this is not essential and the order could be reversed.

After finishing all the topics, thank the participants and return control of the meeting to the Toastmaster.

The Toastmaster usually calls for the vote for "best table topic" and may call on you to run through topics and speakers.

Points To Remember:

Avoid any long introductory explanations. Be concise.

Topics should be given only to club members or visitors from other Toastmasters clubs. After a couple of topics, ask whether any guests would like to be included. Include only guests who respond in the positive.

Priority should be given to those not otherwise scheduled in the program. If possible, any member not having a duty at the meeting should be given a topic.