

The Toastmaster

Toastmasters meetings have several parts. The role of the meeting Toastmaster is to link these different parts so that the meeting runs smoothly and has a sense of cohesiveness and purpose.

The primary duty of the meeting Toastmaster is to act as a genial host, introducing the speakers and other presenters in a way that will help them to do their best and encouraging the audience to listen with attention and anticipation. The Toastmaster creates an atmosphere of interest, expectation and receptivity.

When you are the meeting Toastmaster be careful not to upstage the speakers or other presenters at the meeting. Be encouraging without being condescending. Be enthusiastic without being overbearing. Be brief in your introductions without being terse.

Before The Meeting

The Vice President Education should provide you with the agenda at least a week before the meeting, but the forward program is available before this.

A week before the meeting, contact everyone on the programme by phone, primarily to confirm their attendance and also to remind them they have a role to play at the next meeting. In the case of scheduled speakers, check assignment number, purpose of speech, time requirements and, most importantly, speech title. Also check whether they require the lectern and any other special needs, such as overhead projector or whiteboard.

If you find that some people are unable to attend, contact the Vice President Education as soon as possible to arrange suitable replacements.

At The Meeting

Get a seat near the lectern so that when the Chairman invites you to start your assignment, you can assume control of the lectern smoothly and quickly.

One of the roles of the meeting Toastmaster is to ensure the lectern is attended at all times. If there are inexperienced toastmasters on the programme, be sure to brief them about waiting at the lectern for you to return. The Toastmaster should shake hands with, or otherwise recognise everyone coming to or leaving the lectern.

As meeting Toastmaster you will introduce the speakers and also introduce and explain the roles of :

- Table Topics Master
- Table Topics Evaluator
- General Evaluator

When doing your introductions make sure to:
Announce the subject clearly. In the case of manual speeches, identify the manual and speech number and have the evaluator read out the objectives of the speech.
Announce the timing arrangements.
Announce the name of the speaker so clearly that anyone can understand it.
For a manual speech, announce the title of the speech.
Remain standing at the lectern until the speaker has greeted you and shaken your hand, then you can take your seat.

Try to vary your introductions, but avoid starting, *I would like to ...* Also avoid clichés and trite phrases such as *Without further ado*.

At the end of each presentation, the Toastmaster leads the applause and offers a brief word of appreciation. The Toastmaster function is to bridge the gap between presentations, maintaining the interest of the audience.

It is also the responsibility of the Toastmaster to see that the meeting runs on time - as much as that is within his or her control. The Toastmaster should never cause a meeting to run over time by his or her own action. As far as possible the meeting Toastmaster should be adaptable when necessary to cover for the timing sins of other presenters.

The Toastmaster calls for a vote after the last Table Topics and after the last prepared speech. The General Evaluator will call for a vote for the best Evaluator.

It is usual for the Toastmaster to adjourn the meeting for the supper break. After this break the meeting is called to order by the Sergeant at Arms who will return control of the meeting to the Toastmaster.

The Toastmaster's role usually ends after the general evaluation. The Toastmaster should thank all the speakers and briefly return control of the meeting to the Chairman.

Remember: Preparation is the Key to Success.

The Toastmaster's Check List

1. *Take control of the meeting*

- Announce theme (if any)
- Explain segments for the sake of visitors
- Introduce and explain the duties of officials:
 - Timer
 - Grunt Counter
 - Grammarian
 - Harkmaster

2. *Introduce and explain the duties of Business Session Evaluator who:*

- Evaluates business session
- Returns control of the meeting to Toastmaster

3. *Introduce and explain the duties of the Table Topics Master who:*

- Introduces and explains segment
- Explains timing
- Conducts segment
- Returns control to the Toastmaster

4. *Conduct vote for best table topic with help from the Topics Master*

5. *Introduce and explain the duties of the Table Topics Evaluators who:*

- Evaluate table topics
- Return control to the Toastmaster

6. *Introduce the Educational Segment:*

- Announce theme of segment
- Brief background of leader
- Hand over to leader
- Leader returns control to the Toastmaster

7. *Announce Recess*

- Announce time for reconvening of meeting after supper break for Sergeant at Arms.

8. *Introduce Prepared Speeches:*

- Ensure the audience is settled and comfortable
- Remind members of importance of prepared speeches
- Announce time keeping arrangements
- Introduce speaker (and for each speaker):
 - Title of speech
 - Speech number
 - Purpose
 - Timing
 - Evaluator's name
 - Background of speaker
 - Name of speaker
- Call for timer's report
- Conduct vote for best speech

9. *Introduce and explain duties of General Evaluator who:*

- Announces timing for evaluators
- Calls on speech evaluators
- Conducts vote on speech evaluators
- Calls for reports from:
 - Timer (for evaluators)
 - Grunt Counter
 - Grammarian
 - Harkmaster
- Conducts vote for best evaluator
- Evaluates speech evaluators
- Conducts general evaluation of the meeting
- Returns control of the meeting to the Toastmaster

10. *Return control to Chairman*

