

TOASTMASTER

The Toastmaster has the key role in the success of the meeting. Only through advance planning can this assignment be carried out effectively. The Toastmaster's primary duty is to ensure a well-run meeting and act as the genial host to smooth the transition between program participants. (This role should be assigned to a club member who has completed at least three manual speeches.)

Part I — Getting Ready Ahead of Time

When we see the performance of a really good Toastmaster, we understand that the job is an administrative job more than a show job. It's not about being a personality plus MC or being witty and telling stories. It's about giving everyone the opportunity to look good and do their best in their function, whether they are a speaker or the Ah counter. Here's how that can happen when you're the Toastmaster.

1. Think of a universal theme — one everyone can click with. One good example was a theme used a couple of years ago: "Our Heritage." No one was excluded because everyone has one — a heritage that is. The theme also moved us to a greater knowledge of each other when we spoke about weird relatives, funny family experiences, religious connections run amok and symbolic sayings. It left us feeling good.
2. Write a brief article of 150 -250 words for The Citation describing your theme and motivating people to come to the meeting. E-mail or give your article to our newsletter Editor, by the Tuesday before you are going to be Toastmaster.
3. Write a brief introduction for the President to read as he/she is introducing you and your theme to the members at the beginning of the meeting.
4. The week before your meeting, check with your functionaries, at least the ones that are present at the TM meeting, to avoid last minute surprises. If they hadn't realized that they are functionaries but can't attend the next week, they have an easy opportunity to get a replacement.
5. Call all the functionaries you haven't spoken to previously, except for the evaluators. The General Evaluator will call them and assign them to a speaker after you have let him/her know who is speaking.

6. Check to be sure your functionaries are planning to function! If not, request that they find a replacement and inform you. Particularly if some of your functionaries are new members, run through the basics of their job or suggest they look at the Park Central handbook they received when they joined, to see exactly what each function entails. If all else fails, call the Education chairperson for help in reaching people or finding substitutes. It is important that we have four speakers at each meeting.
7. Be sure that all speakers have a written introduction for you that tells what manual speech they're giving, what their objectives are, and why they are qualified to give this speech at this time to this audience. Ask them to e-mail it ahead of time, or if that's not possible, bring it to the meeting a few minutes early so you have time to look it over. (Guidance on how to use the speaker introduction is included in Appendix A that follows this functionary description.)
8. Prepare an agenda for the meeting. You can find an agenda template on the Park Central Website under the category "forms." This eliminates some of the formatting problems with producing the agenda. While you don't have to use the template, it is important to include all of the activities that take place during the meeting as a guide to the President and the functionaries.

Part II — The Day You're Toastmaster

Arrive early so that you have time to adjust to unexpected changes. Hand out the agenda for the day and spread them out on all the tables. Give your own introduction to the President and gather the introductions from your Speakers of the day. Take a minute or two to read them over and be sure you can read and understand them. One of your most important functions is to introduce the speakers smoothly in the way they have written that they want to be introduced. Your other important responsibilities are to:

1. Take control of the lectern after being introduced by the President. You're the leader for applause, attention, appreciation and laughter. Focus on the events and people.
2. Say a few words about the theme you have chosen.

3. Introduce functionaries — ask them to briefly say a few words about the theme from their perspective and to describe their function.
4. Lead the applause for all functionaries and speakers.
5. Introduce the speakers well and clearly, pronouncing their name and the words in the introduction correctly. Turn control of the lectern over to them with a handshake and pass behind them to return to your seat.
6. Thank each speaker after their speech without evaluative comments. E.g. “Thank you Joe,” rather than “That speech was great Joe. Very funny.”
7. Allow a minute or two between speakers for the audience to write evaluation slips.
8. Keep the meeting running on time and smoothly with enthusiasm.
9. Ask for a Clockwatcher’s report after all speakers are finished, then ask members to vote for the best and most improved speaker.
10. Relinquish control of the lectern to the Table Topic Master.
11. Relax. The Table Topic Master and the General Evaluator will run the rest of the meeting, but as Toastmaster you’re still up front to advise or guide if needed.

Appendix A: Introducing the Speaker

Encourage speakers to email you their introduction before the meeting. Reread each introduction several times so you can provide the appropriate vocal variety when you speak. Hopefully, the speaker has provided you with highlighted words to emphasize, and pauses to make. If not, take the time to do this yourself.

Keep in mind, the introduction is a mini-speech that you are giving on behalf of the speaker. Get the attention of the audience with a moment of silence before you speak. Make the introduction into a ceremony that settles the audience and prepares them mentally for the speaker. Give the audience time to finish writing comments to the previous speaker before starting the introduction.

While performing your introduction, focus on the audience. (Do not glance at the speaker: the audience's attention will shift prematurely.) Then, as you announce the speaker's name, you turn your attention to the speaker (and lead the applause), and the audience's attention will follow the speaker as he begins his/her walk to the stage.

Sample Introduction:

This year has been a **challenge** for Brandon Jones. It all began when he tried a **different** approach to a **common problem** at his workplace! Listen (pause) and decide (pause) what approach **you** would have taken.

Brandon is speaking from the Competent Communication Manual, Speech # 3 - *Get to the Point*. Brandon's objectives are to: (Objectives are found in the blue sidebar for each speech in the manual.)

The **title** of Brandon's 7-9 minute speech is: "**Was it Worth the Risk?**" (say with emotion). Please help me welcome, Brandon, "**Was it Worth the Risk?**"