

Table Topics Master

The Table Topics Master conducts the “Impromptu Speaking” part of the evening. If you are the Table Topics Master, you prepare and issue the topics to members during the session. Each Table Topic lasts from 1 - 2 minutes. The objective of Table Topics is to give members as much opportunity to speak as possible. Ideally, every member should have a chance to speak at a meeting. Table Topics also gives members practice in quick thinking and speaking off the cuff.

- Try to be as original as possible – you can find ideas from newspapers, magazines, Toastmaster magazines, the Internet, books etc.
- Do not make the explanation of the evening’s Table Topics too long or complicated as it wastes valuable time.
- Select topics that will encourage speakers to give an opinion or expound on a topic
- Phrase them in such a way that the speaker understands the topic

Prior to the meeting:

1. Read these guidelines! They relate specifically to the Table Topics Master role
2. Prepare at least 8 topics.
3. Rehearse your 30 second introduction.
4. Ask your mentor for help, if necessary.

At the meeting:

1. Arrive early, and let the Toastmaster know you are there.
2. Look at the agenda to check which members do not have speaking roles.
3. Decide on the order of speakers and questions to give them (don’t leave this until you are at the lectern – you will get into a muddle and appear disorganized)
4. Try to tailor the questions to the speaker’s ability or nervousness.
5. If you are using this role as part of the CL manual, ask another member to evaluate you and complete the manual.

During the meeting:

1. Step up to the lectern; shake hands with the Toastmaster to take over the floor.
2. Explain the role of Table Topics Master in up to 30 seconds.
3. Stress that the time allowed is 1-2 minutes but the speaker does not have to fill the 2 minute slot.
4. State that while speakers are encouraged to answer the question or challenge, they are not required to do so. They may dodge the question (gracefully or not) and talk about anything they would like.
5. State the topic first then call upon a member to deliver a response. This approach holds the audience's attention so that everyone begins to formulate a response and enhances their listening/thinking skills.
6. Keep your questions and comments short. Your task is to give others a chance to speak, not make a series of mini speeches yourself.
7. Call upon members in the following order in order to maximize speaking opportunities:
 - a. Members who do not have a role
 - b. Members who have a role (not speakers)
 - c. Members that volunteer
 - d. Guests that volunteer

How this role helps you:

1. This role will help you to enhance your preparation, listening, speaking and time management skills.
2. This role will enhance your creative thinking skills.
3. You can use it to advance your CL manual for the following projects:
 - a. Project 4 – Time Management
 - b. Project 5 – Planning and Implementation
 - c. Project 7 – Developing Your Facilitation Skill