
Toastmaster Speechcraft Assignment Guides



Contents

<u>Description</u>	<u>Page No</u>
Leadership Roles	
Sergeant-at-Arms	3
Chairman	4
Table Topics Master	5 - 6
Table Topics Evaluator	7
Toastmaster	8 - 9
.....	
Primary Assignments	
Prepared Speech	10
Speaker Evaluator	11
.....	
Additional Meeting Roles	
Toast	12
Point of View	13
Inspirational	14
Read or Recite	15
Book / Movie Review	16
Laughmaster	17

Sergeant-at-Arms

Purpose	To give you experience at bringing a meeting to control.
Before the meeting begins	<p>Just before starting time, use the gavel on the lectern to get attention. Give a 3 minute warning to get people seated for a prompt start.</p> <p>30 seconds prior to start time, use the gavel again to call the meeting to order. Ask everyone to be seated, then call the meeting to order.</p> <p>Once you have control, ask the audience to turn off mobile phones and indicate the location of exits, toilets etc. Add a few friendly words of welcome and conclude by introducing the Chairman and handing the gavel over to him/her.</p>
During the break & re-gaining control of meeting	<p>Time the break and give a 3 minute warning that the meeting is about to resume. Use the gavel on the lectern and call the meeting to order. Remind the audience to turn off mobile phones if they have used them during the break.</p> <p>Hand control of the meeting back to the Chairman.</p> <p>That ends your assignment. You will be evaluated by the General Evaluator.</p>

Chairman

Purpose You are the Master of Ceremonies (MC) for the meeting. You introduce each speaker, up to and including the Table Topics Master. This includes the welcome, toast and any other assignments outside the table topics, prepared speeches and evaluations.

Before the meeting begins Find out what each of your speakers is going to be talking about. You may wish to give a very brief introduction of each presenter as you introduce them.

Suggest to speakers that they move to the front of the room (standing at the left or right side) before you introduce them . This will improve the flow of your section of the meeting, and save time.

During your assignment The Sergeant-at-Arms will hand control of the meeting over to you. You should stand, acknowledge the the Sgt at Arms (Thank You Mr/ Madam Sgt at Arms), and give a brief (1-2 minute) talk on the theme. If there is no theme, cover something topical.

Introduce each speaker, giving the title of their talk, eg "Next we have Tom Sadler with his inspirational entitled 'On the shoulders of Giants' ".

Lead the applause and sit down once the speaker has reached the lectern.

When introducing a toast, remind everyone to have something in their glasses.

When each speaker finishes, thank them, but avoid commenting too much on their content or their performance. That's the job of the General Evaluator.

Always be ready to assume control of the meeting, speakers will not always remember to hand back to you.

At the End It is your job to close the meeting with a short positive comment.

Table Topics Master

Purpose

Table Topics consists of a specified number of questions posed by the Table Topics Master without prior warning to audience participants. The session is aimed at procuring the best of thinking, listening and speaking from the participants. It represents one of the most valuable, enjoyable and interesting aids to that end, and members always anticipate a stimulating session.

The session should be featured by enthusiasm, variety, interest and the presentation of an achievable challenge to each speaker.

When preparing

Prepare questions around a theme (your coordinator will advise you of the number of questions). If there is a meeting theme it is preferable but not a necessity that it be the theme of the night.

Make sure the **questions are brief**, and there is no doubt what the question is at the end. While some of the topics may possess a humorous vein, always have topics that are topical or on which the participant could be expected to voice a considered opinion. Above all, achieve variety and realism, and remember funny topics don't automatically get funny answers.

Print 3 copies of the topic questions. Each of the topic evaluators should receive a copy of at least the questions they will be evaluating.

Decide who is to be asked what question. This is a very important task. Give questions first to the Speechcraft participants, then you may choose the Toastmasters. Guests may be asked, but it is imperative that you get their permission beforehand.

Match the difficulty of the question to the experience and ability of the person. Speechcrafters should be asked questions that can easily be answered from their own personal experience, such as work, hobbies, family etc. Try to keep your questions open ended.

In the early part of the meeting

Note any programme changes so you know who are the topic evaluators.

Provide a copy of the questions to the odd and even numbered evaluators.

Table Topics Master cont.

What to do during your assignment

At the beginning, give a brief explanation of what table topics is all about. State the timing (buzzer at 55 seconds) and mention who are the respective topic evaluators.

Ask the question first, so everyone is forced to listen and think. Then announce the person's name, leading the applause.

Greet the person, then move away and preferably sit down in a chair to the side of the speaking area. You should not upstage the person speaking or be in a position where they feel they must look at you when answering the question.

After the person finishes, thank them and again lead the applause.

At the end of the questions, thank the participants, and introduce each of the topic evaluators in turn.

When the second topic evaluator hands back to you, give a final comment if you wish, and hand back to the Chairman.

That is the end of your assignment. You will be evaluated by the General Evaluator.

Table Topics Evaluator

Purpose	<p>To provide quick feedback on how well each speaker was able to present their table topic.</p> <p>You have to be concise and precise in what you report. Too many Table Topic Evaluators are guilty of exceeding the time imposed.</p> <hr/>
Before the meeting begins	<p>The Table Topic Master should give you a list of questions that will be asked.</p> <hr/>
What to do during your assignment	<p>As with all evaluations, your presentation should be positive, upbeat, instructive and basically congratulatory.</p> <p>2-3 minutes is not long. It gives you enough time for a few general comments, then 20-30 seconds per speaker.</p> <p>Do not comment on or embellish what the speaker said. Rather, evaluate the degree of effectiveness achieved in achieving a sound structure, and in procuring audience reaction, especially to the acceptance of a point of view.</p> <p>A common structure to recommend goes by the acronym P.R.E.P. When the topic is given, the speaker should make a Point, give a Reason for the point, provide an Example or two, then reiterate the Point.</p> <p>Discuss trends amongst the speakers and limit your remarks on individuals to those to whom you can give helpful advice. In order to keep in your time limit, don't discuss the good answers at length. They can be mentioned in passing so that you can devote your remarks to the areas and people where they can do the most good.</p> <p>In essence, try to give one good point and one point for improvement about each speaker.</p> <p>Hand back to the Table Topic Master.</p> <p>That is the end of your assignment. You will be evaluated by the General Evaluator.</p>

Toastmaster

Purpose	The primary duty of the Toastmaster is to act as a friendly, good-natured host. You establish and maintain the atmosphere for the prepared speech component of the meeting and carry the responsibility of making it a success or failure. Enthusiasm, earnestness and good humour are the keynotes of your task.
When preparing	<p>Contact the speakers a few days before, by email or phone, to find out details of their speech, any special requirements they may have such as the lectern, overhead projector, whiteboard and markers or other setup; and if there is any particular way they would like to be introduced.</p> <p>Basic information you need on each speech includes: title, name of the manual they are speaking from, which speech number, the objectives of the speech (eg. Speechcraft Handbook manual speech number 6 - "Work With Words"), and the timing. You will also need to note the name of the evaluator from the program.</p> <p>If any speaker has requirements for special equipment, you should advise them to contact the Sergeant-at-Arms to make arrangements.</p> <p>Prepare a short 2 minute introduction to the night's speeches, as well as the introduction to each speaker. It should be genuinely enthusiastic, giving the speaker a big "build up".</p>
Before the meeting begins	Liaise with each speaker to receive any last minute instructions from them.
In the early part of the meeting	Note any program changes so you know who the evaluators are for each speaker, and if there have been any changes to the speaking program.
Before the meeting and during the break	<p>Make any preparations required by the speakers. Liaise with the Sergeant-at-Arms if assistance is going to be required with the set up for a speaker.</p> <p>Exchange a few encouraging words with each of the speakers.</p>

Toastmaster **cont.**

During your assignment

Provide an enthusiastic introduction to the session, giving an overview of the speeches on offer for the night.

Before each speaker is introduced, ensure everything is ready, especially the preferred position of the lectern.

When introducing each speaker, state the speaker's name and title, manual, speech number and purpose, the objectives of the speech, the timing, and the evaluator.

If there are any unusual features of the speech, or any particular way the audience is to listen and understand the speech, these should be stated now. Examples are presentations where the audience is to ask questions at the end, or monodramas where eye contact is deliberately limited.

Conclude your introduction by repeating the speaker's name and title. Lead the applause as the speaker comes to the front, greet the speaker and move away to the side.

Sit somewhere out of the way at the side of the room so as not to distract or upstage the speaker.

At the end of the speech, stand and lead the applause. Thank the speaker, but avoid commenting on the speech itself - that is the job of the evaluator.

It is good to provide some sort of link between the speakers as part of your introduction, as if one speech naturally flows on from the next.

When the last speaker has finished, thank all the speakers and hand back to the Chairman. The evaluators will be introduced by the General Evaluator.

That is the end of your assignment. You will be evaluated by the General Evaluator.

Speech

Purpose Giving prepared speeches is one of the highlights of your contributions at a meeting. It is where you put in the most effort, receive the most detailed feedback, and where you reap the most substantial rewards.

The purpose of each speech is given in the manual that you are working from. Every speech must be a manual speech.

When preparing Consult first the manual, and establish what the objectives are for the speech. This is fundamental.

Do not be overly concerned with content. You do not need to "wow" the audience with learned brilliance or scintillating wit. Concentrate on putting together a well-structured speech that you feel confident in delivering. The emphasis is on delivery, not content.

Source material can come from anywhere, perhaps your own experiences or maybe things you've read, an opinion you have, advice you've been given.

If you need special equipment such as an overhead projector or whiteboard, markers and eraser, advise the Sergeant at Arms and the Toastmaster a few days in advance.

As with all assignments, prepare and rehearse to ensure correct timing. Typically, an un-rehearsed speech will go over time.

Before the meeting begins Discuss with your evaluator any points that you would like him/her to watch out for, over and above the written objectives for the speech.

Advise the Toastmaster of your title, manual/speech number, and any special requirements or introduction you have.

During your assignment Before the speech, take a few deep breaths, and remember to relax! Stand, adjust your clothing and move to the side ready to walk on at the conclusion of your introduction.

Acknowledge the Toastmaster and audience, then deliver your material.

When finished, hand back to the Toastmaster.

That is the end of your assignment. You will be evaluated later in the evening.

Speech Evaluator

Purpose	<p>Many believe this is the most important job in Toastmasters. It is where most value can be gained from participation, for the speaker, the evaluator and the rest of the audience.</p> <p>A good evaluation will be firm, fair and friendly, focusing on HELPING the speaker progress. The main purpose is to make the speaker want to speak again. This is done by showing WHY certain aspects of the speech were good, and HOW other aspects can be improved.</p> <p>Please refer to the Handouts given to you on evaluation and if you have any reservations of require assistance please ask a Toastmaster.</p>
When preparing	<p>Talk with the speaker preferably a few days before the speech. Find out which speech they are giving, their objectives, and any concerns they may have.</p>
Before the meeting begins	<p>Study the evaluator's guide to the speech you are to evaluate. This is found in the Speechcrafters Handbook.</p> <p>Draw up a page to help take notes more efficiently. Assemble headings to guide your thinking. Include space for positives and areas for improvement or use the +/- form supplied.</p> <p>Should the speaker be a last minute apology, then you may find yourself evaluating someone else. Check the program on arrival to see if this has occurred and make necessary changes to your preparation.</p>
During your assignment	<p>Your assignment starts in earnest the moment the speaker's name is called.</p> <p>Make notes during the speech. For positives, state what was good and why. Give examples. For points for improvement, state what could be improved and how to fix it.</p> <p>Assemble your notes into a speech, focusing on the objectives of the assignment and whether or not they were met. Use the formula Commend, Recommend, Commend. Finish with a positive and encouraging summary.</p> <p>Avoid commenting on or adding to the content, unless it is part of the evaluation criteria. Also, avoid negative sounding words like "fault", "problem", "wrong". Remember at all times there are no absolutes - the whole evaluation is your opinion which you are offering.</p> <p>There are three aspects to your evaluation task. The presentation to the whole meeting should focus on helping the speaker and the audience learn from the presentation. The written evaluation in the manual enables you to go into detail on some aspects of the objectives that perhaps are not appropriate for your talk, noting that the manual should never be taken to the lectern or made part of your spoken evaluation. Finally, you should have a one on one discussion with the speaker at the end of the meeting.</p> <p>When finished, hand back to the General Evaluator.</p> <p>Write up your comments in the speaker's manual.</p> <p>That is the end of your assignment. The General Evaluator will comment on your assignment.</p>

The Toast

Purpose	To give you experience proposing a formal toast such as at a wedding or other occasion.
When preparing	<p>Construct a mini speech, with an opening, body and conclusion.</p> <p>Select an appropriate person or cause for your toast, remembering that it is not usual to toast things. Remember to give a concise proposal as to why the cause deserves to be toasted.</p> <p>As with all assignments, prepare and rehearse to ensure correct timing.</p> <p>If possible, try to link your toast to the meeting theme, if there is a theme.</p>
Before the meeting begins	<p>Check that there are sufficient glasses and available water and/or refreshments for all attendees at the meeting.</p> <p>There is no need to inform the Chairman of the object of your toast unless you wish.</p>
During your assignment	<p>If the Chairman has not already done so, ask people to ensure they have something in their glass, avoiding hackneyed clichés like 'charge your glasses'. Pause while people attend to this.</p> <p>Put your glass down on a table nearby. Give your address with your hands free. You will also avoid the risk of dampening the people sitting near you in a moment of enthusiasm.</p> <p>As you near the end of your address, pick up your glass and ask people to rise, avoiding hackneyed clichés like 'be upstanding'. Rather say something like "please take your glasses and stand with me"</p> <p>State the object of your toast in no more than 5 words.</p> <p>Allow people to repeat the toast. This is why it is important to be succinct.</p> <p>Lead the audience in taking a small sip from your glass.</p> <p>Allow time for people to take a drink and then conclude with "Please be seated". Hand back to the Chairman.</p> <p>That is the end of your assignment. You will be evaluated by the General Evaluator</p>

Point of View

Purpose

An opportunity for a short persuasive or emotional speech. It can be on a subject that concerns you or an up-to-date comment on current affairs. It should not be written out and ideally should be presented without notes, more in the style of a 2 minute table topic than a fully prepared speech. It simulates the common situation where you are asked to stand up and give your thoughts about a subject of interest. Sound, logical structure is the key.

When preparing

Choose a topic of current interest. It is okay to introduce controversy if handled with due respect for others' opinions, but avoid religion and politics.

Concentrate on the structure of your speech. Make sure people understand right from the start what your point is.

As with all assignments, prepare and rehearse to ensure correct timing.

Before the meeting begins

Inform the Chairman of your title, and how you would like him/her to introduce you.

During your assignment

Make your point early in the talk

Back up your point with reasons, facts and examples.

End with a repeat of your point, and an appeal for others to follow.

When you are finished, hand back to the Chairman.

That is the end of your assignment. You will be evaluated by the General Evaluator

The Inspirational

Purpose The object is to 'inspire' the audience by leaving everyone with something to think about, to bring the audience to a realisation of a truth or to create within each person a deep-seated acceptance of your thoughts and the desire to live out the principle(s) you place before them.

When preparing Devise a mini-speech that develops an introduction to capture interest, a body that establishes and consolidates your message, and a conclusion that reaffirms this.

Source material can be from anywhere, perhaps your own experiences or maybe things you've read, the life of someone famous or of someone you know, a fable or piece of received wisdom.

As with all assignments, prepare and rehearse to ensure correct timing.

Before the meeting begins Inform the Chairman of your title, and how you would like him/her to introduce you.

During your assignment This assignment creates maximum impact when presented with minimal use of notes. This signals greater internal conviction in what you are saying and implies significant preparation.

Deliver the mini-speech with due regard to pausing for impact, and to give people a chance to dwell on the significance of what you have said.

When you are finished, hand back to the Chairman.

That is the end of your assignment. You will be evaluated by the General Evaluator

Read or Recite

Purpose To provide you with an opportunity to exercise vocal variety and body language in the delivery of a piece written by someone else. Children's stories and excerpts from famous speeches are examples of such material.

When preparing Choose a piece of poetry or prose and decide whether your objective will be to read or recite.

If you are going to read from a book, make a photocopy with enlarged print. This will help you follow the text more easily and enable you to look up and maintain some level of eye contact.

As with all assignments, prepare and rehearse to ensure correct timing. Readings seem to be particularly prone to going over time.

Before the meeting begins Inform the Chairman of your title, and how you would like him/her to introduce you.

During your assignment Keep any introduction short, a maximum of 15-20 seconds.

Allow yourself to concentrate on your delivery: voice, pace, pausing, gestures.... The whole idea is to relieve you of the burden of worrying about *what to say*.

When you are finished, hand back to the Chairman.

That is the end of your assignment. You will be evaluated by the General Evaluator.

Book/Movie Review

Purpose	To provide a commentary on a book you have read or a movie you have seen. Your goal is to persuade or discourage the audience to read the book or view the movie.
When preparing	<p>Select a book or a movie that will be topical or of interest to the audience.</p> <p>Prepare a mini-speech around the item you have selected, remembering to have a proper opening, body and conclusion.</p> <p>As with all assignments, prepare and rehearse to ensure correct timing.</p>
Before the meeting begins	Inform the Chairman of your title, and how you would like him/her to introduce you.
What to do during your assignment	<p>You may wish to show the audience a copy of a book, but don't let such a prop become a distraction or the focus of the speech.</p> <p>Don't summarise the plot. Rather highlight the nature of the book or movie, its intriguing aspects and what you feel were its good and poor aspects.</p> <p>This speech should be delivered with minimal notes in a style which reflects your passion for for what you are presenting. Remember to use pauses for impact and to give people a chance to absorb the significance of your message.</p> <p>When you are finished, hand back to the Chairman.</p> <p>That is the end of your assignment. You will be evaluated by the General Evaluator.</p>

Laughmaster

Purpose The object is to make people LAUGH, with short CLEAN jokes, humorous anecdotes or stories. Do not use material that some people may find offensive.

The idea of telling jokes or stories is to allow you to relax about the content and concentrate on the delivery. The assignment works best when the material is very familiar to you. Then when you're up there, you are speaking casually, rather than reading from notes.

When preparing Prepare the jokes or stories. The best idea is to use material you have used before in other circumstances. You already know it and you can concentrate on delivery.

It is sometimes better to try for 3 quick laughs than to use 1 long story that may not have as big an impact as you would like.

As with all assignments, prepare and rehearse to ensure correct timing.

If you must use notes, ensure that they are brief and in large print.

Before the meeting begins Inform the Chairman who is scheduled to introduce you if there is any special way you would like to be introduced.

During your assignment Deliver the material, remembering people laugh when they are relaxed. This won't happen unless you also are relaxed.

When you are finished, hand back to the Chairman.

That is the end of your assignment. You will be evaluated by the General Evaluator.