

Guidelines for Table Topics

Dear Table Topics Master (TTM),

Thank you for signing up for the role. You have a very important role in the meeting. As you probably know, TT is the extemporaneous speaking section of the meeting, i.e., the target speaker has had no time to prepare at all. It is therefore imperative that you read the following guidelines to make sure that it is efficiently managed and that you provide the members with the best possible speaking opportunity.

Ten minutes is allocated for the TT section, from the time you start up to the last TT speaker. Please stay within this time limit.

The TT topic should ideally support the theme of the meeting. **The Toastmaster has the prerogative to pick and choose the theme of the meeting. Please support the theme by preparing questions related to the theme.**

You can also refer to page 65 of the Communication and Leadership Program manual or to page 69 of the Competent Leadership manual for additional information on Table Topics Master.

Lastly, you can be as creative as you can possibly be. You can use props and other paraphernalia to powerfully set up the members for a fun and learning time!

Following are the guidelines:

1. The Table Topics should be about maximizing the speaking opportunities for the members, not the Table Topics Master (TTM). The TTM should, therefore, briefly introduce the topic and leave enough time for members to speak. **The TTM's introduction to his theme should not exceed 2 minutes. Additionally, each question should be as direct as possible, with explanations about the question(s) done in as short time as possible.**
2. The TTM should prepare at least 5 questions.
3. At the start of the meeting, the TTM should take notes on 'available members' (i.e., members without speaking roles). This is best achieved by quickly checking on which members are present and cross-checking against the Meeting Agenda.
4. When choosing the speakers, the TTM should first call on the members with no speaking roles, not the guests. Guests maybe intimidated; and more importantly, **members should get priority to speaking opportunities.** It is even recommended that the TTM even call on members with 'smaller roles' (e.g., Timer, Grammarian, Sgt-at Arms) before guests are called upon.
5. When calling on a target speaker, the TTM **read the question first** before calling the target speaker by name to come to the lectern. The idea is to not to give too much time to prepare and ensure as much extemporaneous speaking.
6. The TTM should ask the speaker to come to the lectern.