

# **The Toastmaster**

The Toastmaster of the evening is responsible for the smooth and timely running of the meeting, for introducing all the participants, except in the Topics session, and for setting the tone of the evening.

## **Preparation**

Using the published programme as a checklist, contact all the participants at least 3 days before the meeting - to check they are attending and to prepare a suitable introduction to each.

If appropriate, offer advice and support on handling their role. Ask all speech evaluators to have a chat with the speaker they will be evaluating.

If a participant cannot perform her or his role, arrange a suitable replacement and, if necessary, liaise with the Education Vice President.

Check whether there are any special requirements, e.g. for equipment, and liaise with the Sergeant-at-Arms.

Print out the programme sheet and make enough copies for everyone at the meeting.

## **At the meeting**

Arrive at least 15 minutes before the meeting starts and check on final preparations with all involved (and the President / EVP on any late changes).

Where possible, ensure that any equipment is set up in advance or during a suitable break - be ready to assist with equipment during the meeting.

The Sergeant at Arms will open the meeting and welcome the guests and then introduce you as the Toastmaster/Chairman to run the meeting.

Make a brief introductory address and announce any changes to the published programme. Remind everyone to turn off mobile phones etc.

Then, using the most recently published programme as a checklist, introduce: the Timekeeper, and then the Ah counter / Grammarian each of whom should be asked to explain their roles.

## **The prepared speeches**

Give an explanation of the value of preparing and delivering speeches, how the Manuals work, the use of the Feedback Slips etc.

For each speaker, introduce the speaker and his/her background, the title and objectives of the speech; then repeat the title and give a big welcome to the speaker with her/his name and loud applause!

Let each speaker hand back to you when s/he completes the speech and then ask the audience to complete their feedback – allow at least 60+ seconds.

## **The speech evaluations**

Explain the value of Evaluating and then introduce each evaluator with their name, their background, whose speech they are evaluating and welcome them with their name and applause.

After the speech evaluations, call on the Timekeeper to announce the names and timings of the speakers and the evaluators and the Ah Counter / grammarian to give their report.

## **The table topics**

Briefly explain the purpose of table topics and introduce the Topics Master. After the topics session is over, call for the Timekeeper to report on who spoke, what about and for how long in the Topics session.

Introduce the Table Topics Evaluator(s)

## **At the end of the meeting**

Call on the Time Keeper and Ah Counter / Grammarian to give his/her report.

Explain the purpose of the General Evaluation and introduce the General Evaluator.

Conclude and pass control of the meeting back to the President.

## **Useful tips**

Here a few tips on how to be a great toastmaster:

The meeting is enriched if your introductions are short but interesting, informative and help us “get to know” the officials a little better. Keep the introductions brief!

The Toastmaster has responsibility for checking that all the participants are attending and are well prepared for the meeting. Any changes to the plans and participants should be made in co-operation with the EVP.

DO prepare for the role and plan the steps you will follow. Use the most up to date version of the programme as a checklist - it contains the running order together with all timing information.

DO try to steer the proceedings and participants as briskly as possible to ensure the meeting finishes on time, but do not try to influence timing by publicly issuing instructions unless an item is running badly over time.

DO NOT shorten the break unless you are prepared to restart at the stated time - statements about timing must have credibility.

Check with the EVP / President on when/if any short “education / leadership speeches” are planned and who will introduce them.

If you feel you need to have a “theme” for your introductions, keep it subtle, brief and unobtrusive as well as cheerful.

Always greet each official, as well as the speakers, with a handshake and enthusiastically lead the applause - do the same on completion of the item.

**And finally....**

Straight after the meeting, please find out who the toastmaster will be at the following meeting and talk to them about performing the role.