

Toastmaster Etiquette ~ Opening Remarks ~ Vote Counter ~ Ah Counter ~ Grammarian ~ Timer ~ Word Watcher ~ Closing Remarks

Toastmaster Etiquette

How do I refer to the leaders during a Toastmasters Meeting?

Madame / Mr. Toastmaster
Madame / Mr. Table Topics Master
Madame / Mr. Chief Evaluator
Madame / Mr. President
Madame / Mr. Presiding Officer

When brought to the podium, always:

1. Shake hands with your introducer
2. Acknowledge the person who introduced you and acknowledge the audience:
 “Madame Table Topics Master, Members and Guests...”
 “Mr. Chief Evaluator, Members, Guests and especially Tammy Talker...”
 “Madame Toastmaster, Fellow Members and Honored Guests...”

When you are ready to leave the podium:

The transition is easier if you “hand the meeting back” to the person leading that portion of the meeting.” This lets the leader know that they need to approach you and the podium. Always:

1. Hand the meeting back to your introducer by saying:
 - “Now I will hand the meeting back to our Chief Evaluator”, or simply wave in the direction of the leader and state “Madame Chief Evaluator”
 - “Mr. Table Topics Master”
 - “Madame Toastmaster”
2. Stay at the podium until the leader is standing beside you at the podium. Then shake their hand and walk back to your seat.

Opening Remarks

The opening remarks should be inspirational and related to the Toastmaster meeting theme. Please keep the remarks within the 1-2 minutes range, and no more.

PRIOR TO THE MEETING

1. Look at the grid to learn what the theme of the meeting is. Develop your opening remarks in the same way you would develop a speech. Opening, Body and Closing.
2. Optional: Review your opening remarks with your mentor, or meeting Toastmaster if you have any questions or concerns.
3. Practice as many times as you need in order to ensure you are staying within the time frame and feel confident (by yourself and/or with an audience).

DURING THE MEETING

1. When introduced, go to the lectern and greet the Presiding Officer with a handshake.
2. Acknowledge the Fellow Toastmasters, and guests (if any).
3. Express your opening remarks
4. At the conclusion, turn the meeting over to Mr. / Madame President. Wait for the President to come to the lectern. Shake hands and return to your seat

Vote Counter

Our club votes for the best speaker, evaluator and table topics. We are told when to vote and pass our votes to the vote counter. Only members of the club can vote.

DURING THE MEETING

1. When the vote counter is acknowledged during the meeting, raise hand so everyone knows who to pass his or her votes on to.
 2. Tally votes for best speaker, best evaluator and best table topics
 3. On a slip of paper, write each category and the name of the winner
 4. When asked for the results, give paper to Toastmaster for announcing winners.
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Ah Counter

The purpose of the ah counter is to note words and sounds used as a “crutch” or “pause filler” by anyone who speaks during the meeting. Words may be inappropriate interjections such as “and, well, but, so, you know.” Sounds may be “ah, um, er.” You also should note when a speaker repeats a word or phrase such as “I, I” or “This means, this means.”

PRIOR TO THE MEETING

Prepare a brief (15-20 second) explanation of the duties of the ah counter for the benefit of guests.

DURING THE MEETING

1. Use the agenda if you don’t know the names of the people participating in the meeting.
2. When called on share your 15-20 second explanation of the duties of the ah counter for the benefit of guests.
3. Throughout the meeting, listen (and record) for everyone for “crutch” sounds and long pauses used as fillers and not as a necessary part of sentence structure. Write down how many crutch sounds or words each person used during all portions of the meeting.

When called on by the Toastmaster, stand by your chair and give your report (no more than 1 minute): Madame Toastmaster, Mary Speaker had XX ahs, Tom Talker had XX ums...

Grammarian

You are responsible for commenting on the use of English during the course of the meeting.

PRIOR TO THE MEETING

Prepare a brief (15-20 second) explanation of the duties of the grammarian for the benefit of guests.

DURING THE MEETING

1. Use the agenda if you don’t know the names of the people participating in the meeting.
2. When called on share your 15-20 second explanation of the duties of the grammarian for the benefit of guests.
3. Listen (and record) everyone’s awkward use or misuse of the language (incomplete sentences, sentences that change direction in midstream, incorrect grammar, malapropisms, etc.) with a note of who erred.
4. When called on by the Toastmaster, stand by your chair and give your report: Mr. Toastmaster, Mary Speaker stated “It was then that I seen Jerry take the leap,” Mary, you should have said “It was then that I saw Jerry take the leap.”
5. Try to offer the correct usage in every instance where there was misuse instead of only explaining what was wrong. Report on creative language usage.

Timer

One of the lessons to be practiced in speech training is that of expressing a thought within a specific time. The timer is the member responsible for keeping track of time. Each segment of the meeting is timed. You should explain your duties and report to the Club clearly and precisely. This exercise is an excellent opportunity in practicing communicating instructions – something that we do every day.

PRIOR TO THE MEETING

Write out your explanation in the clearest possible language and rehearse it. For the benefit of guests, be sure to emphasize timing rules and how timing signals will be given.

UPON ARRIVAL AT THE MEETING

1. Review the agenda and confirm scheduled participants and amount of time required for each speech with the Toastmaster.
2. Get timing equipment from the Sergeant at Arms. Be sure you understand how to operate the stopwatch and make certain that it is working properly.
3. Sit where the signal device (green, yellow, red cards) can be seen easily by all.

DURING THE MEETING

1. When introduced, explain the timing rules and demonstrate the signal device (colored cards). For example: “all of our speakers today are speaking from 5-7 minutes. At the 5-minute mark, (hold up the green card) I’ll hold up the green card. At the 6-minute mark, (hold up the yellow card) I’ll hold up the yellow card. At the 7-minute mark, (hold up the red card) I’ll hold up the red card. The speaker will then have 30 seconds to wrap-up.”
2. Throughout the meeting, signal each program participant according to the timing requirements. Always be sure that the speaker has seen the color card you are holding up. If you are in doubt, simply keep holding the card up the entire time, switch cards, continue holding until the speaker is finished.
3. Record each participant’s name and time used.
4. When called to report timing, stand by your chair, announce the speaker’s name and the time taken. State those eligible for awards.

AFTER THE MEETING

Return the stopwatch and timing signal device to the Sergeant at Arms.

Word Watcher

This role accompanies Table Topics. The idea is to make Table Topics a bit more difficult by having the respondent use 1 or both of the words (selected and defined by the word watcher) in their response. The Table Topics Master will explain the purpose of the Word Watcher.

PRIOR TO THE MEETING

1. Select 2 words. These should be words that will help members increase their vocabulary—words that can be incorporated easily into everyday conversation but is different from the way people usually express themselves. An adjective or adverb is suggested since they are more adaptable than a noun or verb, but feel free to select your own words.
2. In letters large enough to be seen from the back of the room, print your word, its part of speech (adjective, adverb, noun, etc.), and a brief definition. Prepare a sentence showing how the word is used.

(Show an example of how it can be done and folded so the words “hang” from the podium. See below)

Dwindle – a verb
To become gradually less until little remains.

Used in a sentence: Mary allowed her savings account to dwindle to nearly nothing.

----- F O L D -----
Dwindle

DURING THE MEETING

1. When called on by the Table Topics Master, walk up to the podium, shake hands with the Table Topics Master
2. Announce the first word, state its part of speech, define it, and use it in a sentence. Fold the paper in half and hang from the podium so the word shows out to the audience.
3. Repeat step 2 for second word.
4. Remind everyone that in order to qualify for voting respondents must use at least 1 of the 2 words.
5. Shake hands with Table Topics Master and walk back to your seat.

While listening to the Table Topic Respondents:

6. Write down who used the “Words of the Day” (or a derivative of it) and note those who used it correctly or incorrectly.
 7. When called on by the Table Topics master to report on usage of words, stand by your chair and give your report. It should take no more than 15 seconds to report.
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Closing Remarks

The closing remarks should be inspirational, related to the Toastmaster meeting theme and give us all something to reflect on as we leave the meeting. Please keep the remarks within the 1-2 minutes range, and no more.

PRIOR TO THE MEETING

1. Look at the grid to learn what the theme of the meeting is. Develop your closing remarks in the same way you would develop a speech. Opening, Body and Closing.
2. Optional: Review your closing remarks with your mentor, or meeting Toastmaster if you have any questions or concerns.
3. Practice as many times as you need in order to ensure you are staying within the time frame and feel confident (by yourself and/or with an audience).

DURING THE MEETING

1. When introduced, go to the lectern and greet the President with a handshake.
2. Acknowledge the Fellow Toastmasters, and guests (if any).
3. Express your closing remarks
4. At the conclusion, turn the meeting over to Mr. / Madame President. Wait for the President to come to the lectern. Shake hands and return to your seat.