



# The 7AM Toastmaster's Guide to Assignments

First Edition

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7AM Toastmasters  
Club 3391-58

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This guide is based upon:

“The Ryde District Toastmaster's Guide to Assignments”, Ryde District Toastmasters (6737-70)

“A Toastmaster Wears Many Hats ... Roles of a Member”, Toastmasters International

“A Guide to Meeting Assignments”, Gary Wilson DTM, District 70

“Your Guide to Assignments”, Karingal Toastmasters (1665-70)

“Guide to Meeting Assignments”, Formula One Toastmasters (5029-73)

“Induction Manual”, Quintessance Toastmasters Club

## Preface

Toastmasters is an international organization with over eight thousand clubs in fifty-eight countries. Although all these clubs follow the same basic meeting formula and use the same manuals, there are slight differences in practice. The purpose of this document is to describe how assignments are presented at the 7AM Toastmasters Club.

For the new member this manual will provide you with a step by step guide on how to perform each assignment.

For the experienced member, this manual will still provide a valuable reference and reinforcement tool.

The guidelines presented here are guides and not rules. Therefore, as long as you follow the "spirit" of the assignment you will be OK. As you gain experience feel free to experiment so that you can add variety to the meetings.

The assignments are listed in alphabetical order. In the appendices you will find a sample meeting agenda, an explanation of the Chain of Command and a basic introduction to business sessions and evaluation.

# Your Guide to Assignments

Assignment: **Chairman**

The chairman presides over a meeting during a business session (see Appendix C) using parliamentary procedure. 7AM Toastmasters does not regularly conduct business sessions.

Note: The politically correct term for the person presiding over a meeting is “chairman” and can refer to either a man or woman.

Assignment: **Educational Session**

Alias: **Point of Emphasis**

Time: **10 to 30 minutes**

With education being the reason for our existence, Educational Sessions should be a regular feature of meetings. In the educational session, an experienced Toastmaster delivers a lesson on a particular aspect of public speaking (e.g. evaluation, using humour, using your voice etc.).

Toastmasters International provides scripts and notes for members presenting educational sessions in the form of the Success Leadership Modules and The Better Speaker Series. See the Vice President Education for details.

This assignment can also be used by the president or another member of the executive to encourage certain behavior of the members, such as phoning around before meetings, arriving on time etc. In this case the assignment can be much shorter (i.e. 3-5 minutes).

Assignment: **Film/Book Review**

Time: **3 minutes**

The Film/Book Review is your opportunity to give us your impressions of a piece of artistic work that you have read, seen or heard. Note that the subject does not have to be restricted to a book or film but can be extended to include any other piece of art such as a play, opera, concert or music CD.

After giving a brief introduction to the subject tell us **your** impression - what you liked about it, what you didn't and whether you can recommend it to others. The purpose of the assignment is not to tell us the plot but to give us your review.

Assignment: **Grammarians**

Time: **3 minutes**

As the Grammarian you should listen carefully throughout the meeting and take notes of correct and incorrect usage of the English language. When presenting your report, try not to go through every speech with a big red pen looking for every incorrect conjugation of a verb but spend at least two thirds of your time talking about the effective usage of the language such as word pictures and colorful phrases.

Assignment: **General Evaluator**

Alias: **Master Evaluator**

Time: **3 minutes**

The General Evaluator introduces the speech evaluators and then evaluates all the assignments of the meeting that have not already been evaluated. The amount of time you spend on each assignment should be in proportion to the time allocated to that assignment. Remember to employ the commend-recommend-commend formula.

The General Evaluator can also comment on abstract elements of the meeting such as the overall tone, preparation of members etc.

Good general evaluations are the best tool a club has for improving meeting quality so be honest and be sure to give recommendations.

Assignment: **Invocation & Pledge (of Allegiance)**

Time: **1 minute**

The invocation and pledge sets the tone for the rest of the meeting. The invocation can be a short prayer or a non-religious inspirational thought.

For maximum impact, do not use notes.

Assignment: **Inspiration**

Time: **2-3 minutes**

The objective of the Inspiration is to inspire and motivate the audience, in a short period of time, by giving them a better understanding or insight into a particular aspect of success. The subject can be the theme of the meeting or any other aspect of success such as persistence or work.

For maximum impact, do not use notes.

Assignment: **Joke**

Alias: **Laughmaster, Table Tonic**

Time: **2 minutes**

The Laughmaster assignment gives you the chance to tell a joke or funny story. The material should be relatively clean so as not to offend anyone. Remember, if in doubt, leave it out.

If your joke is fairly long, test it out before the meeting to be sure that you will get a laugh. As an alternative you could tell a series of small jokes or one-liners on the same theme.

Assignment: **Listening Post**  
Alias: **Harkmaster, Listen and Learn, Big Ears**  
Time: **3 minutes**

The purpose of Listening Post is to test the listening skills of the audience. Listen intently throughout the meeting and record 10-15 unusual comments by a variety of speakers, at a variety of times.

When called on by the Chairman, go to the front and ask questions of the rest of the club such as:

"Who said....?"

"Where was John born ?" etc.

You can even reward the people who give correct answers with a small treat like candy.

Assignment: **Point of View**  
Alias: **Current Affair, Soap Box**  
Time: **2-3 minutes**

The Point of View gives you the chance to present your opinion on a topical subject or something that concerns you. In some ways, it is like a miniature version of the second speech from the Communication and Leadership manual, Be in Earnest. Thus, it should be delivered with plenty of enthusiasm and conviction.

Like the inspiration, for maximum impact it should be delivered without notes, as you will be speaking 'from the heart'.

Assignment: **Quotemaster**  
Time: **1 minute**

An important skill of speech writing is the ability to research suitable quotations. In this assignment you can present one long quotation or several smaller quotations on the one subject.

Assignment: **Show and Tell**  
Time: **3 minutes**

This assignment gives you an opportunity to tell the audience about an unusual object they may not have seen before or are not familiar with. The object could be a souvenir from a holiday; something used in your hobby or even a tool from your work.

Assignment: **Read and Recite**  
Time: **3-4 minutes**

The assignment of Read and Recite gives the Toastmaster a chance to recite either prose or verse during an allocated time of 3 to 4 minutes.

It is recommended that the introduction is kept short and the main emphasis is on presentation. If possible, choose a dramatic piece to enable you to experiment with more vocal variety and body language than in normal assignments.

Assignment: **Smiletime Competition**

Time: **2 minutes maximum each**

The Smiletime Competition is similar to the Laughmaster except that other members are given the opportunity to challenge the contending champion (from the previous meeting). When there are no more contenders the Toastmaster/Chairman asks for a show of hands to determine the new Smiletime Champion.

Like the Laughmaster, the material should be clean. The Toastmaster/Chairman has the option to disqualify a contestant if they think the material was unsuitable.

Assignment: **Speech**

Time: **According to Manual**

The prepared speeches are at the core of the Toastmasters program and are where you will learn the most.

If you are assigned to give a speech and you know that you will not be available for that particular meeting then let the Vice President of Education know **as soon as you receive the forward agenda**. Failure to do so shows lack of respect for your fellow members as someone else could have been preparing to take your place, had they been given sufficient notice.

Most speeches from the basic and advanced manuals give you the objectives but leave the subject up to you. Start thinking about a suitable subject as soon you learn that you are assigned to give a speech. As a general guideline, you should try and finish writing your speech before the weekend prior to the meeting. Then use the weekend to practice, finetune and memorise your speech. Try and have at least five practice runs of your speech where you deliver the whole speech from beginning to end, without stopping, even if you make a mistake. This is where you adjust your speech to satisfy the time requirements. A tape recorder is also a helpful tool to get some immediate feedback on how your speech sounds.

For more help, phone your assigned mentor Vice President of Education.



Assignment: **Speech Evaluator**

Time: **2 to 3 minutes**

A well presented, honest speech evaluation is the primary method by which you can help speakers to improve. A full Introduction to Evaluation is presented in Appendix D, but the basic objective is to present the speaker with tips for improvement in such a way that motivates them to want to speak again.

Before the prepared speeches section of the meeting, you should obtain the speaker's manual so that you can complete the written evaluation and ask them if there are any particular aspects of their speech or their delivery that they want you to take note of.

A good outline for a speech evaluation is:

Open (30 seconds)

P state the objectives

Commend (45 seconds)

P highlight a few points that helped them achieve the objective

P note a few strong minor points (quote from their speech)

Recommend (60 seconds)

P maximum of two suggestions

Commend (30 seconds)

P close by noting some strong major points

When presenting the evaluation keeps in mind the objectives that they were trying to achieve. Remember, though, that you can not "fail" a speaker for not meeting the objectives. You can suggest, in private, that they might benefit from doing the speech again but you cannot prevent them from moving on to the next assignment.

Assignment: **Table Topics Master**

Time: **1 minutes each for introduction and close, 30 seconds per speaker**

Many times throughout your life you may be called upon to speak without notice. For example, you may be asked to present a gift to someone at work or your spouse might be demanding to know why you've arrived home so late.

The purpose of the table topics session is to help you improve your ability to "speak on your feet" and the ability to give a spontaneous response.

If you are assigned to be the Table Topics master, you will first need to choose a theme. It may be the theme of the meeting or something that is topical. Then create eight to ten questions of varying difficulty. Don't be afraid of being creative and moving away from the traditional questions that require yes/no answers.

On the night, give the more difficult questions to the more experienced members. Always chose the members without assignments first and only as a last resort ask a question of someone who is giving a prepared speech. **Always** ask guests before the meeting starts if they are willing to answer a question.

Properly conducted, Table Topics can be a fun part of the Toastmasters Program that will help you in many areas of your life.

Assignment: **Table Topics Evaluator**

Time: **2 to 3 minutes**

The Table Topics Evaluator provides brief evaluations of the table topics speakers. Usually two evaluators are assigned the odd and even numbered speakers. Because of the reduced time provided, your comments need to be precise and straight to the point. Again, remember the Commend-Recommend-Commend formula. Quite often Table Topics evaluators forget the final Commend.

Note: Table Topics evaluators are not used at 7AM Toastmasters.

Assignment: **TimeKeeper**

Time: **1 minute**

Speaking within time limits is an important skill that Toastmasters try to develop. The timekeeper helps speakers develop this skill by turning the colored lights on during the presentation and giving a report at the end of the meeting.

At the beginning of the meeting, make sure that you sit next to the timing lights so that the speakers will be easily able to see them and make sure that you understand how to use the stop-watch. A guide to when you should turn the different lights on is:

Assignment Length	Green	Orange	Red
1m		55s	1m
2m	1m	1m30s	2m
3m	2m	2m30s	3m
5m	3m	4m	5m
4-6m	4m	5m	6m
5-7m	5m	6m	7m
8-10m	8m	9m	10m
12-15m	12m	13m30s	15m

Remember to switch the previous light off when you turn the next one on.

When presenting your report, it is not necessary to give the time of every single assignment. Instead you may wish to concentrate on people who were under or over time by a large amount. Be sure, though, to give the times of all prepared speeches.

Assignment: **Toast**

Time: **1 minute**

Toasts are used in our society to commemorate special events such as weddings, birthdays and retirements. Although we may not get to propose a toast to any of these occasions at a club meeting we can still practice the basics of a toast.

The key components of a toast are:

1. Take a **half-filled** glass and walk to the lectern (a full glass may spill as you walk to the front or rest it on the table/lectern),
2. Present a short (no longer than 1 minute) speech highlighting the significance of the subject of your toast and
3. Ask everyone to stand, lead them in a toast to your subject and take a sip of your drink. Try to make the phrase that you want everyone to repeat as short as possible and avoid using the phrase "please be upstanding".

The subject of your toast can be anything that is important to you. For example, in a club meeting, you could toast to the meeting theme, mothers, world peace, good health, competition, etc.

Assignment: **Toastmaster**

Time: **1 minutes each for introduction and close, 1 minute per speaker**

As the Toastmaster, you are the host for a large part of the meeting. Hence your performance has a large impact on the tone of the whole meeting. With a little background work and research, though, you will soon be able to lead a meeting that will be a joy to attend.

On the week before the meeting you must call the speakers, table topics master and the general evaluator and confirm their attendance for the meeting (see Appendix B). Ask each speaker for the speech number that they will be delivering (from the manual) and the title of their speech. If any of the speakers or other members cannot complete their assignment then call the Vice President of Education **BEFORE THE MEETING** and advise them of the changes.

The President will hand control over to you after the business session or general announcements. At the beginning you will have a couple of minutes to make a few opening remarks. During the rest of the meeting, it is your job to introduce the members performing the various assignments. Try and vary your introductions to add interest and variety to the meeting. By being the Toastmaster you will learn how to host a meeting and how to introduce speakers.

For each speaker say their name, the speech number and objectives, their time limit, their evaluator and the title of the speech. You can also say a few words about their background, previous speeches etc. Try to link each speech together with comments in between speakers. Remember to lead the applause as the speaker comes to the front and shake their hand.

At the end of the meeting say a few closing remarks, thank your speakers and evaluators again with another round of applause and hand control of the meeting back to the president who will ask for guest feedback and close. See Appendix A for a sample meeting agenda.

Assignment: **Um Counter**  
Alias: **Unseemly Noise Counter**  
Time: **1 minute**

If you listen to people speak, whether it be in a Toastmasters meeting or even at home or in the office, you will find many people use "noise-words" such as um, er and ah to fill in the gaps of their speech.

As the um-counter, it is your job to count these "noise-words" so that you can help the speakers to eliminate them from their speech. When you present your report you may wish to concentrate on the very high and very low scorers.

Note that you can also count phrases such as 'you know' and 'right' as noise-words.

Assignment: **INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS**  
Alias: **Welcome to Guests**  
Time: **1 minute**

To perform the assignment of "Welcome to Visitors", you should arrive early at the meeting and personally welcome all visitors who arrive. You should find out the name of the visitor and a little bit about them, eg. their occupation, their hobbies, where they heard about Toastmasters or what made them decide to come along to the meeting. Make sure that each guest signs the club's visitors' book.

You should introduce each visitor, ask him or her to stand, speak briefly about each one and welcome him or her to the meeting.

Assignment: **Word of the Week**  
Alias: **Wordmaster**  
Time: **1 minute**

The purpose of the Word of the Week assignment is to help members improve and expand their vocabularies.

If you are assigned to perform Word of the Week, you should select an appropriate word and write it in large letters on a piece of paper or card that can be displayed at the meeting. The person should introduce the Word of the Week by holding up the card, reciting the word, explaining the definition and using the word in a sentence. The card should then be taped/blue-tacked to the wall or lectern in full view of the audience.

All members who speak during the meeting are encouraged to use the Word of the Week wherever possible.

## Appendix A - Sample Meeting Agenda

<b>TIME</b>	<b>ITEM</b>	<b>OFFICIAL</b>
7:00AM	Call to order Invocation & Pledge Introduction of Guests	President Designated Sgt at Arms
7:03AM	Business Meeting	President Sgt at Arms
7:08AM	Introduction of Toastmaster  << Breakfast if ready >>	President
7:15AM	Table Topics (8-10 questions) Voting	Topicsmaster
7:30AM	Prepared Speeches Voting	Designated
7:55AM	Introduction of General Evaluator Speech Evaluations General Evaluation Voting	Toastmaster Speech Evaluators General Evaluator
8:05AM	Miscellaneous assignment Joke Awards << Return control to president >>	Designated Designated TVA
8:12AM	Visitor Feedback Closing Remarks	President President
8:15AM	Close	President

## Appendix B - The Chain of Command

To ensure successful Toastmasters meeting, it is essential that all the people on the agenda are called and confirmed as being able to complete their assignment. This allows the Vice President Education to prepare the agenda and minimizes the number of changes on the night.

President calls	Toastmaster, Invocation Master & Joke
Toastmaster calls	All Speakers, Table Topics Master & Grammarian
General Evaluator calls	All Evaluators, TVA Master & Misc Assignment performer
All Evaluators call	Assigned speakers

This chain of command, as it is known, is a vital key in the success of a club and when it is not being performed the club suffers.

## Appendix C - The Basics of a Business Session

Mention the words "business session" to most Toastmasters and you will often see them shudder at the thought of fifteen minutes of total confusion and bedlam. Some even see it as a "necessary evil" of being part of the Toastmasters program. If this sounds like you, then *The Basics of a Business Session*, will teach you enough so that you can effectively participate in and eventually run a business session.

Well, what is a business session?

The business session is that part of the Toastmasters agenda where the club's executive makes reports to the members and gives them an opportunity to participate in the decision making process.

Toastmasters, like many other organization has adopted a set of rules for the conduct of business sessions, known as **meeting procedure** (or **parliamentary procedure** in the United States). These rules, which have evolved over many years, may seem complicated and unnecessary but they actually provide a fair and logical process for reaching agreement on particular issues amongst large groups of people.

The primary vehicle for making decisions in a business session is the **motion**. A motion is defined as 'a proposed resolution'. During the course of a business session members put forward motions and the members vote for or against the motions.

There are two kinds of motions - **substantive** motions and **procedural** motions.

Substantive motions affect the club forever whilst procedural motions only affect the running of the current meeting. An example of a substantive motion is to change the starting time of the meeting. If this motion is carried then the club will be bound to the new starting time forever (or until such time as another motion is passed to change it again). An example of a procedural motion is to extend the business session by five minutes. Note that only financial members may vote on substantive motions while anyone present (including guests) may vote on procedural motions.

The rules for the wording of motions are that it:

1. Must commence with "that"
2. Must be specific
3. Must be unambiguous
4. Must not be worded in the first person
5. Must be in one sentence
6. May be in parts
7. May incorporate an explanation
8. May be in the negative

An example of a motion that conforms to these rules is "that the starting time of the meetings of the 7AM Toastmasters club be changed to 6:45AM".

There are eight steps for handling a motion. They are :

1. **Gain Attention**

The person who wants to move a motion somehow gains the chairman's attention. This is usually done by standing at your seat and waiting for the chairman to recognise you.

2. **Recognition**

The chairman recognises the mover of the motion, by example, by saying their name e.g. "Yes, Mr Osborne." Note that for some procedural motions, for example where you may want to shut the speaker up, you may interrupt the current speaker in mid-sentence.

3. **Move and Explain**

The mover justifies/explains their motion and then moves their motion. If the motion is complex the mover should give it to the chairman in writing. Note that the chairman cannot move motions.

4. **Second and Speak**

The chairman then asks, "is there a seconder for this motion?". This confirms that there is someone else who is interested in debating this subject. If there is no seconder then the motion lapses and the meeting moves onto the next item of business. At this point the seconder can speak on the motion or they can reserve their right to speak later. If the seconder does not reserve their right to speak later then they have lost their chance to speak on the motion. Note that the seconder DOES NOT have to agree or vote for the motion.

5. **Speak Against**

The chairman then calls for someone to speak against the motion.

6. **Speak For**

The chairman then calls for someone else to speak for the motion. The chairman keeps asking for alternating speakers to speak for or against the motion until there is no one left who wants to speak on the motion. No member, except the mover, may speak more than once on the motion.

7. **Right of Reply**

At this point the chairman invites the mover of the motion to sum up his argument and speak again on the motion (the mover is the only person who may speak twice).

8. **Vote**

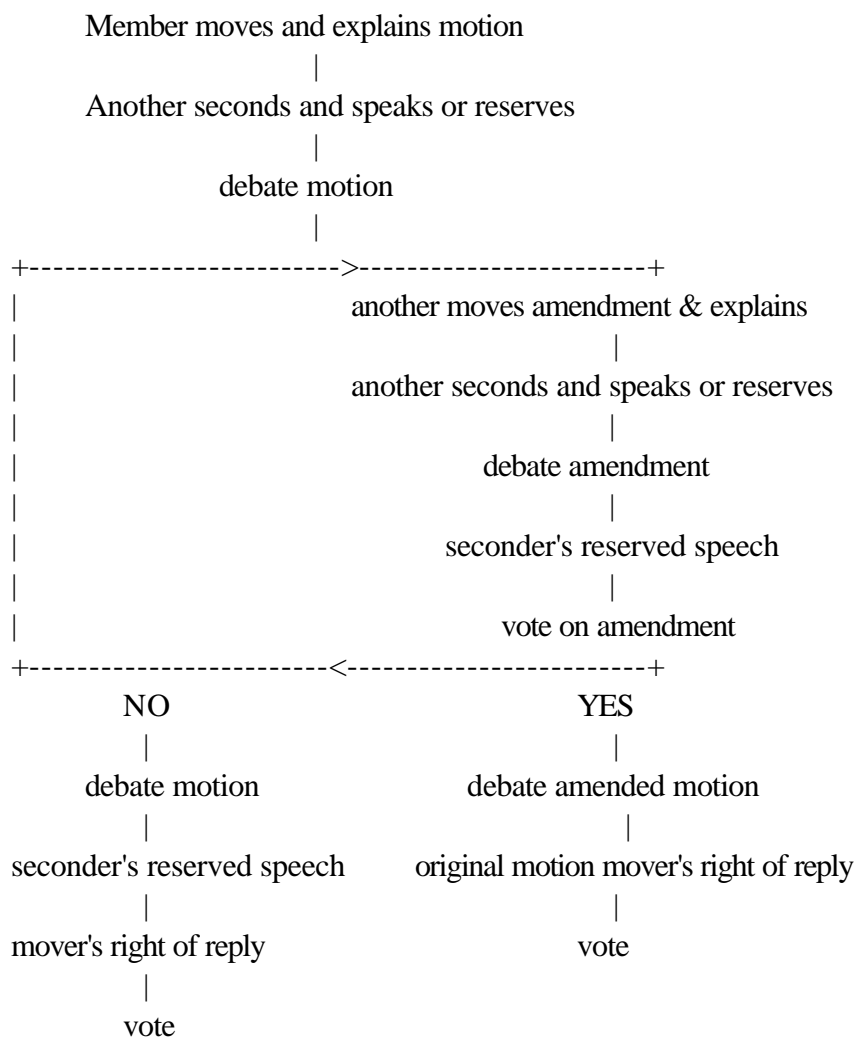
The chairman then reads out the motion "that ...." and then says "all those in favor say aye", waits for a response, and then "all those against say no". The chairman then says "I think that the ayes/nos have it. I declare the motion carried/lost". If there is any confusion about who won the vote then the chairman should ask for a show of hands and get the sergeant at arms to count the votes.

During the debate of a motion some members may come to the conclusion that they do not like the motion as it stands, and want to change it. To do so, they can move an AMENDMENT to the motion. Rules for the wording of amendments are the same as those for motions. One important thing to remember is that the amendment should improve the motion, and never contradict it.



For example, if a motion was before a meeting "that the starting time of the meetings of the 7AM Toastmasters club be changed to 6:45AM" someone might think that 6:45 is still too early and move the amendment that "that the words 6:45AM be replaced with 6:55AM".

The steps for processing a motion with an amendment are :



The chairman should remind the members that when they are voting on the amendment that they are NOT voting on the original motion.

Note that while there can only be one substantive motion before the chair at any time there can be a substantive motion and a procedural motion before the chair at the same time. If a procedural motion is moved, then the meeting moves on to process the procedural motion, in much the same way as you process an amendment. When the debate on the procedural motion is finished then the meeting goes back to the original motion.

There are three categories of procedural motions.

1. Motions disposing of business in a permanent fashion

2. Motions disposing of business in a temporary fashion

3. Other procedural motions

To permanently dispose of the motion before the chair you can use :

"that the question now be put" - stop discussion right now and vote or

"that the meeting proceed to the next business" - drop this motion and move on.

To temporarily dispose of the motion before the chair you can use :

"that this matter be referred to a committee" or

"that the debate be adjourned" - go have a break or

"that the meeting now adjourn" - close the meeting & discuss it at a future meeting

There are many other procedural motions that can be moved to change the running of the meeting.

Some that you may be interested in are :

"that the business session be extended for another x minutes"

"that the speaker be no longer heard"- stop the current speaker now

"that the speaker be heard for another x minutes" - the speaker must stop in x minutes.

Now that you have an understanding of HOW to be a chairman, the following section tells you WHAT you have to do.

The first thing you should do, when you see that you have been assigned to be the chairman, is check whether there will be a business session or not (a business session is held once every third meeting). If there is a business session then follow this guide.

**TWO WEEKS TO GO:** Pull out the five instalments of this series and re-read them. If possible find a copy of the book 'Guide for Meetings', 5th Edition, by N.E. Renton. This book is the official "rule book" for meeting procedure and is available from most book shops or District 70 for about \$23. Read up on the areas that you don't feel comfortable with.

**THREE DAYS TO GO:** Ring everyone on the agenda outside of the manual speeches section and confirm their attendance (you have to do this regardless of whether there is a business session or not). Ring the President and ask which members of the executive will be presenting reports. Ask if there are any motions on notice which you should know about.

**THE DAY BEFORE:** Write out the outline of the stages of the business session and add in any comments / reminders for yourself. Practice the motions which need to be moved at each stage.

**ON THE NIGHT:** Arrive early. Sit at the "head" table. Confirm who will be presenting reports. Follow the outline on the following page. You may wish to photocopy this page and keep with you on the night.

## **Business Session Agenda**

1. **Open**
  - P introduce yourself and welcome everyone,
  - P declare the business session open,
  - P announce how you wish to be addressed (Mr/Madam. Chairman),
  - P explain voting rights,
  - P check if a quorum exists (50% of active members + 1). If a quorum does not exist then you cannot pass any substantive motions.
  
2. **Apologies**
  - P ask for apologies for non-attendance,
  - P have someone move that the apologies be accepted,
  - P ask for apologies for non-attendance at future meetings,
  - P have someone move that the apologies be accepted.
  
3. **Minutes**
  - P give the members a minute or two to read the minutes of the previous business session,
  - P ask if there any amendments. Write the amendments on your copy,
  - P have someone move that the "minutes [as amended] be confirmed",
  - P sign your copy of the previous minutes and pass them to the secretary for filing.
  
4. **Business arising from minutes**
  
5. **Correspondence**
  - P ask the secretary to summarise the incoming correspondence,
  - P have someone move "that the incoming correspondence be received",
  - P ask the secretary to summarize the outgoing correspondence,
  - P have someone move "that the outgoing correspondence be endorsed".
  
6. **Business arising from correspondence**
  
7. **Reports**
  - P ask the members of the executive who have prepared reports to present them. Never say "does the .... have a report". You should already know,
  - P if the report involves action to be taken have the presenter move "that my report be adopted",
  - P if the report is written but only information have the presenter move "that the report be received",
  - P if the report is only verbal then no motion is required.
  
8. **Motions on Notice**
  - P process any motions on notice that you are aware of.
  
9. **General Business**
  - P invite announcements, comments etc. from the members. Do not let anyone speak for too long on a topic where they are trying to persuade people without moving a motion.

10. **Close**

P close the business session and announce the date of the next business meeting.

Remember that when you are the chairman, you should be fair yet firm. Don't be too bossy but don't get eaten by the sharks. If you sense that you are losing control of the meeting hit the gavel to restore order, and try to determine where you are up to. Feel free to consult the President/VPE who should be sitting near you.

Above all, remember that there is no substitute for a thorough understanding of the rules of a business session and plenty of practice.

## Appendix D - An Introduction to Evaluation

The following notes give a point by point explanation of how to evaluate a prepared manual speech. The general principles, however, can be applied to Table Topics Evaluations and the General Evaluator.

For more information on performing an evaluation, refer to the "Effective Speech Evaluation" manual that comes with your New Member Kit.

### 1. What is Evaluation ?

It is a critical appraisal of a speaker and their speech aimed at telling the speaker how "they came across". It is like a mirror - an honest reflection designed to improve the speaker's technique.

### 2. How do we Evaluate ?

First we must understand what the speaker is doing. What is the assignment? What is its purpose?

To answer these questions, we must prepare ourselves:

P contact the speaker

P ask if they want specific advice

P study the speech requirements in the manual

P look back over previous assignments noting comments and progress made

When the speaker commences, look at them, **listen** and be ready for your first reaction:

P what is the story?

P where is it leading to?

P did the opening get your attention?

When you are sure that you can "hear" the speech coming across, jot down notes of important points about the speech. Divide a piece of paper in half. On the left record the main points so that you can review the speech outline at the end. On the right, record your reactions:

poor opening - good word pictures - soft voice - no hands - look up etc.

These notes should be your reaction as the speech progresses. But because you are both **listening** and **writing** and **thinking** you must concentrate. Evaluation is hard work.

Try to analyse the speech:

P what did they say?

P how did they say it?

P did they look as though they meant it?

P did **you** get the message?

### **3. What to Say**

Talk to everyone in the room and not just to the speaker. Start with some praise. No matter how poor the speech was, there must be something which in relation to this speaker was done well and better than last time. Say so. We all need encouragement. Now give the mirror treatment. Briefly tell how they came across. "The opening was good, I became interested immediately. I would suggest though that those few lines should be rehearsed more so that it can be delivered without looking at notes...."

Praise the good points (others want to be aware of them also). Mention up to two suggestions. Finish with a thoughtful piece of encouragement, even just "he was nervous but we all suffer from that complaint. I am sure we all look forward to watching your progress". Never conclude with "Overall a good speech".

Be logical in presenting your evaluation, don't jump about. It is a speaking assignment for the evaluator also, and requires your best performance.

### **4. What to Write**

Now you have more time, so choose your words carefully so that they really express your reactions. It is the written comments which will remain as a record of progress. Relate your comments to the specific requirements in the manual. If the speaker has a special problem, discuss it with them after the meeting.

### **5. Hints for Improving Your Evaluation ?**

Be fair and honest. Don't "whitewash". Nobody gains by not telling the truth.

Adjust the evaluation depending on the speaker's experience level. A new member requires sympathetic understanding and encouragement. An experienced speaker needs hard searching comments.

Everybody learns from listening, both to the speech and to the evaluation of it.

Don't apologise for your inexperience as an evaluator. We all must start somewhere and very frequently a beginner will notice something different.

Don't retell the story in the evaluation.

Don't give your evaluation from the questions in the manual. Use separate notes or speak from memory.

See over for an example of a worksheet that you can use to help you with your evaluations.

## Evaluation Worksheet

Speaker: \_\_\_\_\_  
Speech Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
Manual: \_\_\_\_\_  
Speech Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Objective: \_\_\_\_\_  
Time: \_\_\_\_\_ min

+ve	-ve

Speech Structure: