

ROLE OF THE TABLE TOPICS MASTER

The purpose of Table Topics is to practice the skill of impromptu speaking or, speaking “off the cuff”. We are often put in a position where we are asked to speak with little or no preparation both in business situations and social situations. To be able to do this with confidence is important to us all and requires practice.

As Table Topics Master, you are tasked with organizing and administering the Table Topics session, which involves preparing six individual topics which may or may not have a specific theme, and finding six presenters to participate in the session.

When preparing your Table Topics session, you can choose any theme, any topic and any subject you wish, providing of course it does not offend anyone's sensibilities. Each presenter has 2 minutes to speak, so try not to make the topic too difficult or obscure. You may also choose how you want to run your session (e.g. a story telling format where you would start the story and each speaker would build on from the speaker before, a debate format, or simply individual topics for each speaker). Remember that the topic doesn't always have to be something written on a piece of paper – it could also be an image, photograph, tangible item, etc.

When running your session, you may select the speakers before Table Topics starts and hand them each a slip of paper with the topic written on it, but which cannot be seen by the speakers (these slips should be numbered 1 to 6 which would be the order of speaking). Each speaker would open their slip of paper at the time the speaker immediately before them begins to speak. This will give the speakers one to two minutes to prepare their mini-speech.

Alternately you may choose to select pre-confirmed or random speakers from the audience immediately before they are to speak, at which time you would give them the topic verbally. This option gives virtually no preparation time and is truly "impromptu".

At the meeting, before the Call to Order, you should find six participants for your session, who will each speak for two minutes. In order to give everyone an opportunity to speak during the meeting, first ask members who are not

otherwise on the program or are performing minor roles. If there are any guests you may also ask them if they'd like to participate.

When called upon by the Toastmaster, go to the lectern.

At the beginning of Table Topics, explain the purpose of the session and outline any instructions you want the speakers to follow (i.e. is the session built around individual topics, is it to be a story line, debate, etc.) If appropriate, tell participants that they should open their table topic when the speaker immediately preceding them begins to speak. Ask your first presenter to open their Table Topic now to give him/her some time to prepare.

Remind participants to use the word of the week and explain that like any speech the speakers should make sure that their presentation has an "opening", "middle" and "conclusion".

Explain the timing for the session (green at one minute, yellow at 1½, and red at two minutes, with the buzz 30 seconds later. Remind participants that during a contest, presenters must speak for more than one minute and less than 2 ½ minutes to qualify, therefore the same timing is used in the club for practice, and anyone outside of those time limitations will be not be eligible for the vote.

After each person has spoken, ask the Timer to identify any disqualifications.

Remind the members to vote for the best table topics speaker, keeping in mind the level of the speaker, word of the week usage, presentation format, and entertainment "value". To assist with the vote, remind members of the presentations by giving a *brief* summary by simply identifying the speaker and the topic they spoke on.

Name	Topic