

Manitoba Morning Toastmasters Club Meeting Roles

Timer

Primary role: To track lengths of speeches, table topics, etc. and keep the meeting on time.

What to do:

Using the Timer's Report Sheet, note:

- ✓ the time the meeting starts (when the Chairperson comes to the lectern);
- ✓ start and end times for the business meeting, table topics, intermission and resumption of the meeting;
- ✓ times for Table Topics speakers and prepared speakers;
- ✓ times for Invocation and Toast, evaluators (including general evaluator) and people giving other reports.

Using the timing lights, indicate the instructed times with lights. For Table Topics, you will also lead the applause when time is up, usually at about 2:05.

At Intermission, track the time and give a one-minute warning to the Sargeant-At-Arms or Toastmaster when we are supposed to resume the meeting. When called upon by the Toastmaster, you provide the Timer's Report (this can be done standing by your chair).

Ballot Counter

Primary role: to collect and tally votes and provide us with the winners. Another reason for presenting awards is that it gives each of us an opportunity to practice presenting and accepting awards. Most of us do not have a chance to practice this in our daily lives!

Using the Ballot Counter's form:

- ✓ record all of the votes;
- ✓ when all votes are tallied, circle the winners. In the case of a tie, the Ballot Counter casts a final and deciding vote. Remember, like awards shows, we should try not to comment on how many votes everyone received;
- ✓ when called upon by the Toastmaster, the Ballot Counter goes to the lectern and announces the winners. With assistance from the Toastmaster, the Ballot Counter hands out trophies and congratulates the winners as they come up to receive their prizes.

Invocation & Toast

Primary role: to get the meeting off to a good start. This practices those skills for when we may be called upon to give a toast at a formal occasion.

We all know what a toast is, but did you know that an invocation is making an appeal to a higher power for assistance (such as a prayer), to appeal to or incite support for one's cause? That said, we generally only do a toast at Manitoba Morning meetings; each club handles this differently.

What to do:

- ✓ The toast should relate to the meeting's theme and should be approximately 1-2 minutes in length. Good preparation is key to a successful toast. Think of it as a mini speech, just like table topics.
- ✓ As you are concluding your toast, ask everyone to rise, take our glasses and tell us what we are toasting. "To _____".

Tip of the Week

Primary role: to give members an opportunity to share gems of information that may be of interest. This provides another time to practice giving a clear but brief set of instructions or description.

What to do:

- ✓ The tip may relate to the meeting's theme, but does not have to, and should be approximately 30 seconds – 1 minute.

Grammarian

Primary role: is to tell us how well we are using language to communicate.

At the beginning of the meeting, explain your role and introduce the word of the day. The grammarian keeps track of:

- ✓ Use of word of the day. We should be counting appropriate use of the word and also note when it is used incorrectly, so that we can learn. Gratuitous use of the word (i.e. when not used as part of a sentence and just thrown in with no context), should not be counted as using the word of the day.
- ✓ Um's and er's. Also included would be other habits that a toastmaster might use that are not words, but become distracting. The Grammarian charges members 5¢ per infraction, to a maximum of 25¢.
- ✓ Double words—an example of this is when a word is repeated while speaking, such as *and and...*
- ✓ Interesting or colourful words and phrases – anything that catches your attention and fancy, as it likely also caught someone else's.
- ✓ Inappropriate language/word use.
- ✓ If a Toastmaster is not wearing their proper badge, then there is a fine of 25¢.
- ✓ Look for bridging by the Chairperson, Toastmaster and Table Topics Master. Bridging means providing smooth transition between speakers, those giving reports, etc., by offering a segue (pronounced *segway*) between activities.

Table Topics Master (TTM)

Primary role: to provide a mini speech program giving members an opportunity to practice their impromptu speaking skills.

The TTM should try to develop questions that fit the theme of the meeting. Challenging questions can be given to experienced Toastmasters, but try to keep the questions easier and less intimidating for newer members. The TTM should:

- ✓ Acknowledge the Chairperson, members and guests.
- ✓ Acknowledge the helpers (Table Topics Evaluator, Grammarian and Timer) and provide timing instructions (typically lights are at 1 minute, 1 minute 30 seconds and 2 minutes).
- ✓ Try to involve members who might not have a role or who might have smaller roles. This gets everyone involved in the meeting. However, no one, including the Table Topics Evaluator, is exempt from being called upon.
- ✓ Connect the topics by use of bridging (transition between speakers)

Some ideas for conducting TT:

- 1) Ask questions related to the theme;
- 2) Have a grab bag and call a participant up to choose their own topic from the bag. These topics can be from newspaper clippings/headlines, items they pull out of a bag (or describe to the audience what is in the bag without anyone else seeing the item until later), etc.
- 3) Give the participants an item and have them describe what they think an item is used for.
- 4) Charades or acting out a role, person, place or thing.
- 5) Any other idea that you may come up with.

Usually there are three questions/participants. However, if there are four speakers or the meeting is running late, you may wish to reduce this to two participants or, conversely, increase the number of participants if it is a short meeting and there are only one or two

speakers. When you have concluded the TT session, rather than calling upon the Chairperson, call up the TTE. When the TTE is finished, please close the first half of the meeting and announce the break.

Table Topics Speaker

Primary role: to practice impromptu speaking.

As the TT speaker, remember to:

- ✓ Address the TTM, fellow Toastmasters and guests.
- ✓ Format your response in the form of a mini speech, consisting of an opening (introduction of the topic), body and conclusion (wrapping up your speech).
- ✓ Attempt to speak for at least one minute and ideally close to two minutes. You should have completed your speech by the time the red light comes on. If you are still speaking at that time, your time is up and you likely did not properly wrap up. Remember that, when the yellow light comes on, you have 30 seconds and should start thinking about your closing thoughts.
- ✓ Shake the TTM's hand at the conclusion.

Some hints:

- ✓ A good way to give yourself time to think is to repeat the question.
- ✓ A pause or a short silence is okay.
- ✓ Try not to rush your words, be calm and have fun.
- ✓ If you are not familiar with the topic you are given, you can seek clarification from the TTM or segue into a different topic that you are more comfortable with. Try to have your segue and changed topic make sense within the context of the question you were given.
- ✓ See other hints under TTE.

Table Topics Evaluator (TTE)

Primary role: to provide feedback to the TTM and the TT speakers.

You want to give everyone comments on what they did well, as well as points for improvement. You are encouraged to sandwich your points of improvement in between positive feedback, like the meat of a sandwich.

Feedback you can provide comment on includes:

- ✓ Eye contact.
- ✓ Gestures and where the speaker has her/his hands.
- ✓ Use of the front area—do they move around or stand like a statue?
- ✓ Did s/he acknowledge the TTM and the audience?
- ✓ Voice volume, rate and variation.
- ✓ Use of humour.
- ✓ Did the speaker have an opening body and conclusion?
- ✓ How did the speakers use the time? Did they sit down too early? Did they wrap up before the red light came on?
- ✓ Note whether or not the speakers used the word of the day (often it is difficult to find a point of improvement for an experienced speaker and this is something you can note).
- ✓ How well did the TTM bridge between speakers?
- ✓ Did the TTM acknowledge the helpers and provide timing instructions?

Make sure that you are speaking to everyone in the room, not just the person to whom you are providing the feedback.

Speaker

Primary role: to present the audience with a well-prepared speech.

Within the Toastmasters setting, you want to try to make every speech count for credit, if possible. This means using your Pathways program to develop a speech around specific objectives. As a speaker, you want to demonstrate to the audience that you came prepared and that you are enthusiastic about being there. Your first speech is meant to introduce you to the club and provide you with some experience. All of your following speeches build upon your previous speeches and focus on specific aspects of speaking/leadership, depending on your chosen Path. Some hints when preparing your speech:

- ✓ Read the objectives and suggestions in Pathways.
- ✓ Present your speech to friends, family and your mentor for feedback. You may also want to discuss your speech ideas with your mentor as you are preparing your speech.
- ✓ Time your speech and try to keep within the identified times. After you give a few speeches you will likely notice that maybe you have a tendency to speak faster when you are presenting your speech at the meeting, or perhaps you tend to ad-lib and your speech ends up being longer. Try to always keep time in mind.
- ✓ Always have an opening, body and conclusion. Your opening should draw your audience's attention and your conclusion should summarize and perhaps leave them something to think about. Some techniques for opening include asking the audience a question, making a statement, using a short quote, etc.
- ✓ Vocal variety can also add impact.
- ✓ Think about how you want to use your hands and your body to add impact.
- ✓ Using a few facts, statistics, etc. can add interest and support your key points, but don't overload the speech or overwhelm the audience with detailed or complex information.
- ✓ Try to work in the word of the day.
- ✓ Be natural.
- ✓ Use humour if appropriate.
- ✓ Minimize your use of notes and, if you are using notes, practice how you can fluidly use them so that they will not be distracting.
- ✓ Take note of what you want to work on from feedback on previous speeches and ask your evaluator to pay specific attention to those points.
- ✓ Ask the Vice President Education to confirm in Base Camp that you did the project. This is critical so you get credit for the speech and also can continue to progress in Pathways.

Use the evaluation as a tool. Remember that we are all here to learn and are given feedback so that we can grow as communicators. Also, an evaluator's comments are their personal impression, so you may not always agree with the feedback and you can use the comments as you see fit.

Speaker Evaluator

Primary role: To evaluate a prepared speech, providing written and verbal feedback.

Performing this role can help us be better at providing feedback to co-workers, supervisors and employees or your students if you are a teacher. Before the speech, the Toastmaster will call upon you to read the objectives of the speech and the timing instructions. Leave the speech title for the Toastmaster as part of the introduction.

Some hints:

- ✓ Provide concrete examples of points of improvement, so that the speaker understands what you mean. This also ensures that you are clear on what you think could be done better.
- ✓ Don't regurgitate the written evaluation. Pick out key points to discuss as part of your verbal assessment.

- ✓ Use the sandwich method (praise, point of improvement and end with praise). Always end your evaluation on a positive note. You need to make sure that the speaker will want to speak again and will not be discouraged.
- ✓ Always offer a point of improvement, even if you have to stretch to find one. We cannot develop as speakers if we never hear what we can work on to become even better.
- ✓ Try to stick to your allotted time of 2-3 minutes (timer should use lights)

General Evaluator (GE)

Primary role: To evaluate the entire meeting from room set-up to evaluators.

The GE should highlight the strengths and weaknesses of the meeting as a whole. Did each participant do his or her job (properly, completely, fabulously). The GE should:

- ✓ Comment on the Chairperson (How well was the first half of the meeting and the business meeting conducted? Was there bridging? Were the Chairperson's comments well-prepared?)
- ✓ Comment on the TTE
- ✓ Give feedback on the Invocation & Toast, Humourist, Grammarian
- ✓ Evaluate the Speech Evaluators, using the sandwich method
- ✓ The GE does not normally offer additional evaluations for the speakers or TT speakers, since they have already been evaluated. The exception would be if the evaluators for those speakers missed an important aspect of the evaluation, or if the evaluator was overly critical.
- ✓ Try to stick to your allotted time of 4-5 minutes (timer should use lights)

Chairperson

Primary role: to ensure that the first half of the meeting is run smoothly.

Some preparation beforehand of your comments is required and should relate to the meeting theme. These comments should be approximately 1-2 minutes. The Chairperson should also:

- ✓ Assign a Secret Greeter (you can even do this the night before by calling a member or even a guest if you know someone is visiting the club)
- ✓ Call upon the Grammarian to introduce their role and the word of the day and the person giving the Toast, etc, following the agenda
- ✓ Make sure that the Sign Up Sheet starts circulating
- ✓ Conduct the Business Meeting. Bang the gavel at the start and conclusion of the business meeting, when the minutes are adopted as read and when a motion is passed. Breaking down this part of the meeting:
 - Minutes: read from the last meeting by the Secretary. The Chair asks if there are any errors or omissions and then adopts the minutes as a) read or b) amended.
 - Business arising from the minutes: any motions not voted on (this would usually be the result of no quorum at the previous meeting).
 - Correspondence: generally items received by the President from Toastmasters International, or items from the District/District officers.
 - Committee Reports: if there are any active committees
 - Executive Members' Reports: if there is any activity to report on
 - New Business: this is where a motion would be made. Ideally the maker of the motion should have the motion written out, to make the Secretary's job easier. The maker of the motion has the first opportunity to speak on the motion, followed by the seconder of the motion, then anyone else. The motion is then voted on (ensure first that there is a quorum).

- Announcements: Items that need to be brought to members' attention but that don't fit into some other part of the Business Meeting.
- ✓ Introduce the TTM: prepare a few words of introduction of the TTM. You might tell us about the TTM's position in the club, number of years in Toastmasters, some personal facts, etc. as way of introduction.
- ✓ Generally, after the TTE has finished, the TTM will close the first half of the meeting and tell us what time the meeting will resume.

Toastmaster (TM)

Primary role: responsible to run the second half of the meeting.

The TM should be enthusiastic, attentive and ready to make sure that all the participants and audience members enjoy themselves during the prepared speeches portion of the meeting.

The TM is very much like a master of ceremonies. The TM:

- ✓ Speaks to program speakers either before the meeting or at the break to obtain information for an introduction. This introduction should tell us a few things about the speaker and you should get the speech title.
- ✓ When doing the speaker introduction during the meeting, first ask that person's evaluator to provide the speech objectives and timing instructions, then provide some words about the speaker, give us the speech title and enthusiastically welcome the speaker to the lectern.
- ✓ Allow one minute of silence between speakers, to give the audience an opportunity to provide written feedback and give the speaker's evaluator time to complete their notes.
- ✓ Provide bridging between speakers and any one else called upon during the second half of the meeting.
- ✓ Call upon the speech evaluators to provide their verbal feedback.
- ✓ Call upon the Grammarian, GE and Timer for their reports.
- ✓ Call the Ballot Counter to the front to hand out the hardware. Assist the Ballot Counter by picking out the trophies and shaking the winners' hands as they come up.
- ✓ Asks the Secret Greeter to reveal him/herself.
- ✓ Request comments from any guests, but make sure the guests know that they do not have to speak.
- ✓ Ensure that the Sign Up Sheet has gone around the table and gets back to the VPE
- ✓ Don't forget about the 50/50 draw—we need a winner!
- ✓ Adjourn the meeting and bang the gavel.

Secret Greeter

Primary role: acts like a "mystery shopper" and reports on whether or not all the members of the club greeted each another and each of the guests. This person is there to remind us to help each other, and guests in particular, feel welcome and comfortable.

Prepared by Brenda Koch (2003), Revised by Teresa Cooper (2018)