

The Table Topics Master

This role will give you the opportunity to practice performing as a facilitator. You will also gain valuable practice in the art of lectern etiquette.



Before the Meeting

- Review the General Evaluator Guidelines for evaluating the Table Topics Master to familiarize yourself with what is important in your role.
- Select a theme and questions that promote easy discourse.

Being creative and concise is the key to a successful Table Topics program. Keep in mind that the goal of Table Topics is to provide an opportunity for members and guests to speak extemporaneously. This is not a “stump the speaker” exercise.

- **Prepare six questions (or more depending on club schedule)**
- Act as a facilitator, not a speaker, by making your questions concise and to the point. This will give more members and guests the opportunity to participate

At the Meeting

- Review the program and check which persons have their names displayed in red. These are the individuals who have major functionary duties or speaking roles and should not be called upon in Table Topics unless time permits.
- Towards the end, ask if any guests would like to try. Give guests EASY questions.
- When the Toastmaster calls on you, approach the lectern, shake the Toastmasters hand. You are now in control of the meeting.
- Explain the purpose of table topics and the rules:
 - The purpose is to practice speaking on our feet, with a goal to be clear and concise.
 - The respondent is encouraged to answer the question, but since the real purpose is to become comfortable speaking to an audience, the respondent can choose another table topic question or speak on whatever topic they are comfortable

speaking about. Voters are asked to consider, however, whether a person addressed the question asked as a criterion for a ribbon.

- Responses are limited to 1.5 minutes, with 30 seconds grace period. Respondents who speak for longer than 30 seconds and less than 2 minutes are eligible for a ribbon.
- Announce to guests that they have three choices: decline, introduce themselves, or take a previously offered Table Topic.

And then:

- Briefly explain your theme or reason for the questions at this point. Your explanation of Table Topics and introduction of your theme should last no more than 2 minutes.
- Ask your question, then call on a person to answer. If your Table Topics requires a person to pick a piece of paper or an item, stay at the lectern until the person arrives, shake their hand and be seated nearby. When the person concludes, be ready to approach the lectern to shake their hand and release them to their seat.

Otherwise, call on a person to stand at his/her seat and answer the question. You remain at the lectern.

- Lead the applause when a respondent completes his/her response
- Call for the Timer's report.
- Ask the audience to vote for the eligible candidates and pass their ballots to the Vote Counter.
- Return control to the Toastmaster.