



# Table Topics Master

This is a fun leadership role to have! Table Topics is the impromptu portion of the meeting and often the favourite of many! Your role is to lead a smooth Table Topics session, providing questions that will allow members to practice their impromptu speaking skills. This role will also use your listening skills and help with your own impromptu speaking and MC skills going forward.

Generally, you will have around 14 minutes for the full task (including evaluators). This means 6-10 table topics- depending on how much time you take personally with introductions, connections etc. Aim for 8 Table Topics questions – and keep in contact with the Chairperson, who will prompt you when we only have time for the last question.

Here is a basic outline for the task:

1. Before the meeting:
  - a. Prepare 8-10 simple questions. They can be completely random or you can arrange them around the theme of the meeting, which will be on the roster sent to you beforehand. Make the questions easy to understand, but thought provoking.
  - b. Look at the roster and **pre-plan** people to give questions to – start with an experienced Toastmaster to get the session off to a good start, and then allocate a question to anyone.
  - c. If possible, do not allocate questions to members who are presenting a speech, the Timer, Table Topics evaluators or the Chairman. It is best to pre-plan who you will be inviting to speak, as it allows your session to run more smoothly.
  - d. Plan a 30 second introduction to the section – explaining what the purpose of Table Topics is and how the session will work.
  
2. At the meeting:
  - a. Look at the agenda and make any adjustments necessary to your line-up.
  
3. During Table Topics:
  - a. Clear the stage area from the lectern or anything else in the speakers way.
  - b. Stand in the centre of the stage (preferably with no notes), and provide a 30 second introduction to Table Topics.
  - c. Introduce the evaluators for the session.
  - d. Clearly and slowly, state your question to the entire audience, look around the room and after a few seconds, announce the member/guest you would like to answer the question, beginning the applause. Shake hands, and then sit down.
    - i. It is useful to sit on the side of the room that the speaker came from, so that you can again shake their hand as they leave the stage afterwards.
    - ii. It is also useful to have 2 print outs of your questions so you can keep one on each chair. If you know the next question and name of the person, you don't need your notes! *Note- if you do need your notes the first time, that's OK – just be careful of how you use them in your hands so it's not distracting.*

- e. At the end of the speech:
  - i. Start the applause when the speaker is finished.
  - ii. Shake the hand of the speaker.
  - iii. Make a comment about something the speaker said, this will use your listening and impromptu skills. Keep your comments short – just a sentence or two is fine,
  - iv. State your next question – go to the top of point D! □

4. End of the Table Topics Speeches –

- a. Make a comment about how wonderful the speakers did, and invite the first/second evaluator up to the stage.
- b. After the evaluators – take 15-20 seconds to wrap up the Table Topics session with an overall congratulations of your own to the speakers, before handing the meeting back to the chairman