

SPEECHCRAFT ASSIGNMENT GUIDE



SPEECHCRAFT ASSIGNMENT GUIDE

CONTENTS

CHAIRMAN.....	3
GRAMMARIAN	5
WELCOME.....	7
THE TOAST	8
IMPROMPTU SPEAKING	9
TABLE TOPICS MASTER	9
TABLE TOPICS EVALUATOR	10
GUIDELINES FOR TABLE TOPICS EVALUATION.....	11
TABLE TOPICS SPEAKER.....	12
OPTIONAL MINOR ASSIGNMENTS.....	13
HUMOUR SPOT/TONIC	13
INSPIRATIONAL	14
READ OR RECITE.....	15
BOOK/MOVIE REVIEW	16
MASTER OF CEREMONIES (Speech Toastmaster)	17
WHEN YOU ARE THE SPEAKER	20
SPEECH EVALUATOR	21
GENERAL EVALUATOR.....	23
LISTENING POST	24
SERGEANT-AT-ARMS.....	25
TIMER	26

The following is a guide only.

You are encouraged to add your personality to your presentation.

CHAIRMAN

AIM

- To ensure the smooth and efficient running of the meeting.
- To ensure the meeting runs according to agenda timing.

PREPARATION

- Read the agenda prior to the meeting so you are familiar with the order of meeting assignments.
- In the lead up to the meeting, prepare a few light-hearted remarks to address to the meeting after the Co-ordinator introduces you.

ON THE NIGHT

- Choose a standard of dress that is suitable for a person who is to be treated with respect.
- Arrive at least 15 minutes before the meeting is due to commence. Check with the Co-ordinator to determine if there are any last minute program changes and amend your copy of the agenda.

The four most desirable qualities you should embody as Chairman are –

- impartiality
- firmness
- tact
- common-sense

Do not talk too much during the meeting, and do not be dictatorial – you are responsible for the meeting's orderly conduct and you can do this without being verbose.

Here are some points to remember -

- Maintain order
- Limit long winded Speakers
- Maintain balance, calm and self-restraint
- Be just, fair and impartial

Following is a script that you may find useful for the Chairman's role.

The Chairman stands to receive the gavel from the Co-ordinator. "Thank you Mr / Madam Co-ordinator – Speechcrafters and Toastmasters..."

The Chairman then addresses the meeting with a few light-hearted remarks.

Chairman With the permission of all present, I will conduct this meeting seated, *Chairman then sits.*

Ask the Co-ordinator for any apologies and to advise any program alterations.

Chairman Call upon each person as listed on the agenda to deliver his/her assignment. Use the format such as "Please welcome ... to the lectern" as the general introduction for all future tasks. This continues down the agenda. The Chairman is responsible for introducing each session on the agenda.

When declaring the meeting in recess, be very specific about how long the break is and be very clear about what time members are due back. This will help the Sergeant-at-Arms.

It is your role to close the meeting after all assignments on the agenda are completed by declaring the meeting closed and banging the gavel.

GRAMMARIAN

AIM

- To help people express themselves clearly and concisely by reporting on good expressive use, and incorrect use, of the English language.
- To present a Word of the Evening that should improve or expand the vocabulary of everyone.
- To enhance your listening skills.

PREPARATION

Select a Word of the Evening for the Speechcrafters to incorporate into their assignments. The idea is to help people expand their vocabulary. Select a word that can be used in daily conversation, but is not commonly used, or is different from the way we usually express ourselves.

Have the Word of the Evening ready to display on two large pieces of paper that can be attached to the lectern and to the table in front of the Chairman. You may also include a brief explanation of the word or examples on how to use the word. The word should be clearly visible from either end of the room.

ON THE NIGHT

Early in the meeting you will be asked to present the Word of the Evening. Stand and address the Chairman and Speechcrafters.

Make sure you know the correct spelling; give an example of the correct use of the word in a sentence and encourage members to use it during the meeting.

If you have prepared a sign of the word, affix it in a prominent position as a reminder during the meeting.

As the meeting progresses, listen and note the following examples in all assignments (including the chairman and speakers) -

- Words/phrases that have impact, create pictures, provide colour, and express subtle shades of meaning.
- Anything in the "I wish I had said that" category - i.e. memorable words.
- Any obvious/awkward misuse of the language, e.g. a new innovation (tautology), Joe and his Dad was fishing (Joe & his Dad were ...).
- Over-use of clichés (as clear as mud!).
- Mispronunciation of words, slurring of syllables and endings (runnin, comin).
- Note everyone who uses the Word of the Evening and how many times.

PRESENTING YOUR REPORT

- Proceed to the lectern and acknowledge the Chairman and Speechcrafters.
- Summarise the use of the Word of the Evening - who used it most successfully and how many times.
- Select the best examples of the memorable words/phrases - repeat them and compliment those who used them. This encourages us all to be more expressive.
- Point out any glaring misuse of language or sentences that are confusing or annoying.
- Offer pointers for improvement.

POINTS TO REMEMBER

Do not become pedantic and obsessed with schoolbook grammar - it can destroy creativity and vibrancy in a presentation.

If you are complimenting, mention the name of the person. If you are pointing out an error, it may not be appropriate to mention the name, especially if someone has difficulty with grammar. It is just as effective to preface your report with "Tonight, I heard...." or "One Speaker said"

WELCOME

AIM

- To welcome Speechcrafters and Toastmasters and make them feel at ease, relaxed and looking forward to a great night.
- To give some background information on the Speechcraft program and what people can expect to hear during the next few hours.
- To set the atmosphere for the rest of the evening - the warmth and sincerity of your welcome is important.

PREPARATION

Note a few points to include in your Welcome, such as why you joined the course and how you are benefiting, the objectives of Speechcraft, how each person contributes to the meeting.

ON THE NIGHT

Approach the lectern and commence "Mr / Madam Chairman, Speechcrafters and Toastmasters" then present your Welcome.

Conclude your assignment by returning control of the Meeting to the Chairman with "Back to you Mr/Madam Chairman".

POINT TO REMEMBER

You should always welcome dignitaries first (if any are present), in order of rank.

THE TOAST

AIM

- To pay formal tribute to a person, group, or special event with which the meeting will readily identify.
- To present a brief mini-speech with an opening, body and close.
- To set a positive, light tone for the rest of the evening. Avoid too serious topics.

PREPARATION

Research your assignment. What significant or relevant time of the year is it? What special day or event is being celebrated?

You can construct your Toast around any of these ideas or you can make up one yourself.

ON THE NIGHT

Remember to take your drink to the lectern and place it nearby.

Ensure that everyone has a drink with which to Toast. This can be done by the Chairman before the meeting commences or when you are at the lectern by stating "Please make sure you have liquid in your glasses ready for the Toast".

Commence your assignment with "Mr / Madam Chairman, Speechcrafters and Toastmasters....."
Give the subject of the Toast and then continue with a mini speech.

When you are ready to call for the Toast -

- Ask everyone to stand and take up their drink.
- Wait until everyone is ready, ask them to raise their glasses to join the "Toast to". At the most, the Toast should only be three or four words for the audience to repeat.
- If necessary, prompt the audience response, then take a sip from your glass.
- After everyone has toasted, ask the audience to be seated.
- Wait until everyone is seated and settled.

Hand back to the Chairman with "Back to you Mr/Madam Chairman".

POINTS TO REMEMBER

- Do not leave the audience guessing as to who or what you are toasting - ensure this is clear in your opening remarks.
- Avoid clichés like "be upstanding", "down the hatch". A well-presented Toast can simply commence with "please join me in toasting...."
- Ensure your Toast to is short, sharp and concise; no more than 3 or 4 words.
- The Toast can contain humour. It should be warm, sensitive, special, and sentimental.

IMPROMPTU SPEAKING

TABLE TOPICS MASTER

AIM

- To encourage people to think quickly, accurately and express their thoughts intelligently and articulately.
- To make this a lively and enjoyable session, the Table Topics Master can canvas opinions on social/community issues or use a variety of ideas to improve impromptu speaking skills.

PREPARATION

Prepare a list of 10-12 topics in advance. The topics can be on any subject, current, historical event, or even abstract. Topics that may cause offence or embarrassment should be avoided (e.g. religion, sex). The topics can have a theme.

Keep the topics short and to the point, not longer than one sentence.

Write out the topics before the meeting and have a copy available for each Evaluator. (Remember to ask the topics in the same order.)

ON THE NIGHT:

- Proceed to the lectern. Address the meeting and, briefly explain the purpose and procedure of the session.
- Advise the Timer that each Speaker is expected to speak for 60 seconds.
- Announce the Evaluators of the odd and even numbered Speakers and remind them that each evaluation should be no more than 30 seconds.
- Announce the first topic and then nominate the Speaker. Call on Speakers at random, direct them where to stand (either at their place or at the front of the room) and speak immediately.
- When announcing the topics it is helpful to Evaluators to say "Topic number 3" as in this way there can be no confusion as to which topic number it is and who is evaluating.
- After presenting all the topics, call the Evaluator of the odd numbered topics, then the Evaluator of the even numbered topics to give their evaluations from the lectern.
- Continue until you finish your topics and hear the evaluations. Thank the Evaluators, Timer and participants and return control of the meeting to the Chairman.

POINTS TO REMEMBER

- Avoid framing the topic to suit the Speaker.
- Remember your task is to give others a chance to speak so keep the introductions and topics brief.

This assignment offers scope for variety and initiative. Many people find Table Topics a challenging assignment so relish your role as Topics Master. Even though you are the Topic Master, be prepared for a revenge topic from someone in the audience.

TABLE TOPICS EVALUATOR

AIM

- To assist Speechcrafters to improve their Impromptu Speaking skills.
- To provide useful feedback to the Speaker and the meeting on the Table Topics responses.

HINTS ON EVALUATING

As the Evaluator of the Impromptu Speaking segment, you have only 30 seconds per Speaker to present your evaluation. Evaluations should be brief and to the point. Restrict yourself to two to three points of praise and one or two aspects you consider could be improved. Use the method of effective evaluation - Praise, Improve, Praise.

Do not repeat the question, this wastes time.

Do not evaluate whether the content of the answer was right or wrong.

Concentrate on the physical appearance, posture, eye contact, voice modulation, voice clarity, gestures. Was the response a mini speech with an opening, body and close? Were they very evident? Was the topic addressed? Did the Speaker use humour?

PREPARATION

Read the assignment guide on Table Topics Master so you are familiar with how the session is run. Review any material you have on Effective Evaluations.

ON THE NIGHT

- Obtain any special instructions from the Table Topics Master and, if possible, a list of the topics.
- Make sure you are clear whether you are evaluating the Odd or Even numbered topics.

When called upon to give your evaluation -

- Go to the lectern and acknowledge the Table Topics Master.
- Commence your evaluation by naming the Speaker.
- Give a brief evaluation of the Speakers allocated to you.
- Return control to the Table Topics Master.

POINTS TO REMEMBER

Look and listen intently and choose the points that will prove most useful to the Speaker. You will need to employ all your listening and evaluating skills. It may be useful to point out to the audience a feature that made the speech particularly effective (e.g. the word picture, the construction).

Evaluations are for the benefit of the whole meeting and not just for the Speaker. If you say that one Speaker had a pleasant smile and confident stance, these are characteristics we can all try to adopt when we next speak. Each and every evaluation helps all of us improve.

As the evaluations are for everyone, address your comments to the meeting and not directly to the person (as in "you"). For example, Joan's voice showed her enthusiasm for the subject and I could see from her natural hand gesture that Joan felt very comfortable answering this question.

GUIDELINES FOR TABLE TOPICS EVALUATION

	✓ Praise	✓ Improve
Physical:		
What I saw
Appearance
Use of hand gestures
Eye Contact with audience
Facial Expressions
Voice:		
What I Heard
Tone
Vitality
Volume
Vocal Variety
Structure of Response:		
What I understood
Did opening get our attention?
Did response develop as mini speech?
Was there a clear ending?
Language:		
Appropriate use of words
Word pictures
Emotive words
Use of humour
Manner:		
Enthusiastic
Confident
Poised
Timing:		
Was the Speaker able to round off within time?

IMPROMPTU SPEAKING (TABLE TOPICS)

Giving a speech without preparation is more challenging than giving a prepared speech.

The Impromptu Speaking session prepares us for everyday life when we are called upon to give impromptu speeches such as job interviews, answering the phone, speaking to customers, shopping, at your child's school.

To become confident in Impromptu Speaking, it is important to -

- Listen to the topic. Show that you listened by reinforcing the other persons' words and add a compliment. Effective listening sharpens your powers of concentration. Resist the impulse to interject.
- Take a moment to pause. This allows you to refresh your thoughts and formulate an answer. No one expects you to rattle off facts. Smile and nod to indicate that you have heard the question. Avoid starting with Um or Ah.
- Confirm the topic. This allows your brain to absorb the concept and provide you with a clearer idea of how to respond. It helps to verify the topic.
- Express your thoughts and opinions and stay focussed. Sound as if you know a lot more than you are telling. Remember you only have a limited time.
- Say what you have to and bring it to a close. Emphasise your point, smile and sit down.

Selecting a strategy

- Maintain an interest in the world. It is impossible to prepare your subject material, but there are some strategies which will help you survive the TELL part.
- Express an opinion. Give a supporting statement and give reasons why you agree or disagree.
- Address cause and effect. State the situation then discuss its cause and the eventual consequences.
- Break the topic into components. Discuss each component individually.
- Discuss the past, present and future. Organise what you want to say in time line fashion.

There are THREE definite don'ts in an Impromptu Speaking situation

1. Don't apologise. Take time to pause, restate the topic, but don't apologise. Don't end with "I'm sorry, I don't have more to say" or "I hope I didn't bore you".
2. Don't ramble, repeat, add new points or backtrack. To end, wrap up your talk by coming the full circle and state your original points or the topic.
3. Don't invent. Strive for sincerity, not inventiveness. In the real world, if you don't know the answer, say so and then indicate your interest by asking a question

It takes time and effort to become a good extemporaneous speaker. If you understand the basics, you will find yourself ready and able to accept the challenge.

OPTIONAL MINOR ASSIGNMENTS

HUMOUR SPOT/TONIC

AIM

- To put the meeting on a bright, positive note and set the tone for the assignments to follow.
- To give you the opportunity to speak with humour.

PREPARATION

- Remember that great joke you heard recently? Start practising so you do not forget the punch line!
- If you have difficulty remembering jokes, canvas newspapers and magazines for amusing short stories.

ON THE NIGHT

- Be ready at the lectern when you are called to give your assignment. Remember you are setting the tone for meeting - be enthusiastic!
- Acknowledge the meeting and commence your assignment. Conclude by acknowledging the Chairman.

SUGGESTIONS

- A joke (remember it should be in good taste and not likely to cause offence)
- A humorous story or anecdote - perhaps about yourself, a family member, or friend
- An amusing article - Readers Digest, newspapers and magazines often have suitable short stories

POINT TO REMEMBER

This is a short but important assignment so make the most of your time. Be theatrical, inspirational, funny, uplifting and sparkling. It is a chance to use your imagination!

INSPIRATIONAL

AIM

- The object is to inspire by leaving everyone with something to think about.
- To bring the audience to a realisation of a truth or to create within each person a deep-seated acceptance of your thoughts and the desire to live out the principles you place before them.

PREPARATION

- Devise a mini-speech that develops an introduction to capture interest, a body that establishes and consolidates your message and a conclusion that reaffirms this.
- Source material can be from anywhere (perhaps your own experiences or maybe things you have read, the life of someone famous or of someone you know, a fable or piece of received wisdom).

ON THE NIGHT

- Inform the Chairman of your title and how you would like him/her to introduce you.
- Acknowledge the meeting and commence your assignment. Conclude by acknowledging the Chairman.

POINTS TO REMEMBER

- This assignment enjoys maximum impact when done with minimal use of notes, which signals greater internal conviction in what you are saying. This implies significant preparation.
- Deliver the mini speech with due regard to pausing for impact, and to give people a chance to dwell on the significance of what you have said.
- When you are finished hand back to the Chairman.

READ OR RECITE

AIM

- To provide you with an opportunity to exercise vocal variety and body language in the delivery of a piece written by someone else. Children's stories and excerpts from famous speeches are examples of such material.

WHEN PREPARING

- Choose a piece of poetry or prose and decide whether your objective will be to read or recite.
- If you are going to read from a book, make a photocopy with enlarged print. This will help you follow the text more easily and enable you to look up and maintain some level of eye contact.
- As with all assignments, prepare and rehearse to ensure correct timing. Readings seem to be particularly prone to going over time.

BEFORE THE MEETING

- Inform the Chairman of your title, and how you would like him/her to introduce you.

WHAT TO DO DURING YOUR ASSIGNMENT

- Keep any introduction short, maximum of 15-20 seconds.
- Allow yourself to concentrate on delivery - voice, pause, pace, gestures. The whole idea is to relieve you of the burden of worrying about what to say.

When you are finished, hand back to the Chairman.

BOOK/MOVIE REVIEW

AIM

- To provide a commentary on a book you have read or a movie you have seen. Your goal is to persuade or discourage the audience to read the book or to view the movie.

WHEN PREPARING

- Select a book or movie that will be topical or of interest to the audience.
- Prepare a mini speech around the item you have selected, remembering to have a proper opening, body and conclusion.

As with all assignments prepare and rehearse for correct timing

BEFORE THE MEETING

Inform the Chairman of your title, and how you would like him/her to introduce you.

WHAT TO DO DURING YOUR ASSIGNMENT

- You may wish to show the audience a copy of a book, but do not let such a prop become a distraction or the focus of the speech.
- Do not summarise the plot. Rather highlight the nature of the book or movie. Its intriguing aspects and what you feel were its good and poor aspects.
- This speech should be delivered with minimal notes in a style which reflects your passion for what you are presenting. Remember to use pauses for impact and give people a chance to absorb the significance of your message.

When you are finished hand back to the Chairman.

MASTER OF CEREMONIES

This assignment gives you experience introducing Speakers to an audience. (Sometimes this role is referred to as the Speech Toastmaster.) The introductory remarks by which Speakers are presented to their audiences are an important part of public speaking and should create an atmosphere of expectation and interest.

AIM

- To conduct the prepared speech session, introducing the Speakers to the audience and putting each Speaker at ease in front of the audience.
- To prepare the audience for the speech session (create the atmosphere!).
- To introduce the Evaluators.

PREPARATION

Before the meeting, contact each Speaker to find out the following -

- Speech title
- Project number
- Purpose of the speech
- Obtain any helpful information to introduce the Speaker
- Timing
- Any special requirements of the Speaker (e.g. lectern, whiteboard)

ON THE NIGHT

Before the meeting commences, re-check the details with the Speakers to make sure they have not changed their title, etc. Make sure all the requirements for the session are in place **before** you commence your assignment (lectern, whiteboard, a chair at either side of speaking area for you to sit on during speeches).

1. Introduction

Approach the lectern and introduce the prepared speech session with a few brief remarks -
What will happen? Why do we make prepared speeches?

For example -

Tonight, I have the pleasure of introducing five Speakers. After the speeches, I will call on the Evaluators to present their reports on how the Speakers have fulfilled the objectives of their assignments”.

2. Evaluator

Mention the Evaluator when you introduce each Speaker so there is no confusion as to who is evaluating which Speaker. Ask the Evaluator to present their report at the lectern

3 Introducing Speakers

You are now ready to introduce the first Speaker. Give his/her name. Add some background material to set the scene for the audience and Speaker.

For example -

“Our first Speaker is Tom Green. Tom is giving his first speech. Please join me in welcoming Tom to the lectern with his speech entitled ROSES ARE RED”.

Lead with enthusiastic applause and remain at the lectern until the Speaker arrives. Greet the Speaker with an encouraging smile and handshake and exit from the area as quickly and quietly as possible to the closest chair. Do not walk in front of the Speaker or cross behind the Speaker as you exit.

When the Speaker has finished his speech, lead the applause as he/she returns to a seat and pass a brief complimentary or relevant remark before you introduce the next Speaker.

Introduce each successive Speaker in the same manner until all Speakers have completed their assignment.

5. Evaluations

At the conclusion of all speeches you will be calling on the Evaluators.

For example -

"Our first evaluation is of the speech by Tom Green entitled "ROSES ARE RED". The Evaluator is James Brown. Please welcome James to the lectern".

Lead the applause, and when the Evaluator reaches the lectern, exit to a convenient seat. When the Evaluator has finished, thank him/her and introduce the next Evaluator until all evaluations have been completed.

At the conclusion of the session, make brief closing remarks thanking the Speakers, Evaluators and Timer.

For example -

"Ladies and gentlemen, I have enjoyed the opportunity to be Master of Ceremonies for this part of our meeting. Thank you to our Speakers, our Evaluators and to our Timer. This completes my assignment."

POINTS TO REMEMBER

Introductions need not be flat, dull and stereotyped. They can be graceful, fun to give and interesting to hear provided you remember the following -

- Give star billing to the Speaker. Do not be a scene stealer. Direct the group's attention to the Speaker, not to yourself.
- Know what the Speaker will be talking about. Do your preparation so you can tailor your introductory remarks and make the Speaker/audience feel at ease.
- Set the mood for the Speaker and the speech. If Jim has just given a hilarious speech about his fishing vacation and the next Speaker you are about to introduce will be talking about the need to support cancer research, your audience must be mentally prepared for the subject transition. Your introduction needs to shift the mood from humorous to serious.
- Be brief - 30 seconds to 1 minute for an introduction is adequate.

Here is a Speaker Introduction guideline that you may find useful to -

- help you gather the required information for each Speaker
- help you display this information in an easy to read format

Speaker Number	
Speaker Name	
Project Number	
Evaluator Name	
Time	
Introduction and purpose	
Title of the Speech	

WHEN YOU ARE THE SPEAKER

As a Speaker, you are responsible for preparing a worthy introduction for yourself. Work with the Master of Ceremonies to ensure he/she receives the background for your presentation (objectives, why you are speaking about the chosen topic).

If there is a special reason you are presenting the speech (e.g. it is relevant to your work, sporting interests) tell the Toastmaster so he/she can include it in the introduction.

Speak to your Evaluator before the meeting, discuss the objectives of the assignment and if you would like the Evaluator to pay particular attention to any area of your presentation. Remember to bring your manual to the meeting so a written evaluation can be given.

Tips for speech preparation

- **Select a topic** – an occasion, your interests, current affairs, something to motivate your audience. Maintain a file of interesting material. Prepare speech outlines as you think of them and read.
- **Organise your material** - What is the aim of your speech? Write your speech. Select three or four main points and organise the material in some order to maintain interest.
- **Timing** - Work out your own rate of speaking. It varies between Speakers but is usually between 100 and 130 words per minute.
- **Structure the speech** – opening, body and conclusion. Know your opening and closing so that you can deliver without notes.
- **Prepare** – practise out loud, record your speech, use a stop watch to check the time.
- **On the night** – walk to the lectern with confidence, take a deep breath, look around the audience and silently count to 3. Now start your speech and when you have finished enjoy the applause.

Read the support folder for more detail on these points.

SPEECH FEEDBACK

(Evaluator)

AIM

- To help the Speaker improve his public speaking skills by providing useful, honest, helpful feedback for the Speaker and the meeting. Remembering that this is your opinion only.

PREPARATION

- Speak to the Speaker prior to the meeting to discuss his/her speech. Ask if there are any particular areas the Speaker would like you to pay close attention to.

ON THE NIGHT

- Read previous feedback and pay special attention to areas which were previously suggested for improvement. Always keep in mind the aim of the speech.

THE FORMAT OF GIVING FEEDBACK

While each has their own ideas on how this should be done, and different speeches and Speakers may call for different techniques, giving feedback may proceed on these lines -

- **Praise**
Show the Speaker that you listened to and appreciated the presentation. This will create a sound bond between you and the Speaker. Be generous with your praise.
- **Improve:** Identify weak points. What can be improved?
Discuss any negative reactions you may have had to the presentation and suggest ways the Speaker can improve on these areas. Always with encouragement.
- **Praise**
Finish on a positive, encouraging note by restating the strengths of the Speaker.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Select three or four areas for praise and one or two areas for improvement that you feel are the main strengths and weakness of the Speaker.

Voice

Volume too little or too loud? Tone too shrill or pleasantly pitched? Uninteresting monotone or change of tone used to highlight material and arouse interest? Diction - words slurred, run together, could words be heard clearly.

Appearance/Manner

Confident, organised, appearance, enthusiasm, apologetic, sincere, nervous.

Speech Content

Appropriate, logical, interesting, enough material or too much, analytical, quality and impact of introduction and conclusion.

Structure

Look for an opening, body and conclusion. Are the ideas of reasoning well presented?

Gestures

Inappropriate, forced, absent, natural, relaxed, eye contact, added impact.

Effectiveness

Did the Speaker achieve what he/she set out to do? Did he/she achieve the objectives of their speech?
Did he/she maintain interest? Was the speech well received?

Did the Speaker use visual aids? Were the aids clear?

Whatever points you choose to praise or comment on, the following should be borne in mind if your feedback is to be useful.

What: Identify strengths and weakness as above

Why: Analyse why this aspect of the presentation affected you as it did.

For example –

“Jane’s concern for preserving endangered birds certainly came through in her speech”.

How: Give positive suggestions on how to improve.

For example -

“The presentation would have more impact if Bob could arrange his visual aids so that he did not need to turn his back on the audience”.

“I feel I would have appreciated Jane’s point more if she had given specific data on the number and type of endangered birds that are taken out of the country”.

POINTS TO REMEMBER

Each speech has objectives - make sure you emphasise these in your evaluation and whether or not the Speaker has achieved the speech objectives.

Complete the written feedback form for the Speaker in their manual and discuss your feedback with the Speaker at the end of the meeting.

At the lectern give feedback in the third person, it will then inform the entire audience, not just the Speaker.

Be just, kind and generous in your praise. Do not give a worthless whitewash. Remember your aim is to assist the Speaker, not to dazzle the audience with your word power.

Do not waste time repeating the title of the speech or explaining what the speech was about. Feedback requires analysis of the speech, not description of the content.

GENERAL EVALUATOR

AIM

To give an overall impression and evaluation of the meeting, and evaluate assignments that have not been evaluated during the meeting.

- The role of the General or Master Evaluator is to evaluate the meeting as a whole and to evaluate participants who have not been evaluated such as the Chairman, Table Topics Master, Master of Ceremonies, Evaluators and presenters of other assignments.
- The General Evaluator does not evaluate the prepared speech presenters or Table Topics respondents as they have already been evaluated.
- Often clubs use their more experienced members to carry out this task. From time to time, it is particularly valuable for executive members to invite a General Evaluator from another club as they bring a different perspective to the meetings and can offer some valuable suggestions.

Important aspects of a meeting include -

- Timing
- Smooth transition between presentations
- All speeches being manual speeches
- Positive evaluations
- Informing guests of the Toastmaster Program
- Whether there was a friendly atmosphere.

In a Speechcraft program *The General Evaluator* will usually be the *Speechcraft Coordinator*

In some clubs the General Evaluator will introduce the Evaluators after the prepared speeches.

LISTENING POST

AIM

- To listen carefully to everything that is said during the meeting.
- To test everyone's listening skills by preparing some questions to ask them.

ON THE NIGHT

- Listen carefully during the night and prepare questions based on what was said or done, the content of any assignment or what was learnt.
- Structure questions to enable them to be answered based purely from sound listening skills. They should not be trivial, but neither should they be testing people's skills at cryptic thinking.
- Ask questions on important points that were learned during the evening (e.g. "According to John's educational session, what is the most important job of an Evaluator?")
- Use your imagination to make the assignment both entertaining and a method of revision. You can limit who can answer, award small prizes or make it a written assessment.
- You will need to prepare at least 10 questions, but you may well prepare more questions than you find can fit into your time. When your time is up, end your assignment, even if you have more questions prepared. This shows consideration and professionalism.
- If the meeting is running close to or over time, make your report concise.

Hand control of the meeting back to the Chairman

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS

AIM

- To give you experience at bringing a meeting to control.

BEFORE THE MEETING

- Just before starting time, use the gavel on the lectern to get attention.
- Give a 3 minute warning to get people seated for a prompt start.
- 30 seconds prior to start time use the gavel again to call the meeting to order.
- Ask everyone to be seated, then call the meeting to order.

Once you have control, ask the audience to turn off mobile phones, (if a new venue, indicate exits, toilets etc.). Add a few friendly words of welcome and conclude by introducing the Chairman and handing the gavel over to him/her.

DURING THE BREAK

- Time the break and give a 3 minute warning that the meeting is about to resume. Use the gavel on the lectern and call the meeting to order.
- Remind the audience to turn off mobile phones if they have used them during the break.

Hand control of the meeting back to the Chairman. Your role is now complete.

During a Toastmasters meeting the Sergeant-at-Arms usually assists the President handing out awards at the end of the evening.

TIMER

AIM

- The Timer helps people speak to their allotted time slot and so keeps the meeting at a snappy pace.
- He/she ensures the meeting finishes on time and that everyone on the agenda gets a chance to speak.

BEFORE THE MEETING

- Ensure the timing lights work correctly. If they do not (e.g. flat batteries or broken bulb) organise a substitute with the Sergeant-at-Arms (coloured cardboard or ribbons).
- Familiarise yourself with the timing requirements of the various speeches and how to use the stop watch.

WHAT TO DO DURING YOUR ASSIGNMENT

- Work the lights according to the times on the agenda. Apart from Table Topics, the usual pattern involves green and orange warning lights as the time limit approaches and red light on the time limit. Once the red light goes on it stays on until the Speaker finishes. Sound the buzzer to signal 30 seconds overtime.
- When the time for the business session has elapsed, stand up to attract the attention of the Chairman (if you are not seated beside them) Indicate to him/her that the time has elapsed.

KEEP A RECORD OF PEOPLE'S TIMES.

- When presenting your report at the end of the evening avoid reading out all the times on your list. You will not have time!! Make it an exception report, noting chief offenders or precise performers.
- An exception to the above rule is that it is customary to read out the times of all prepared speeches.
- If the meeting is running over time, make your report concise to indicate regard for time and quickly hand back to the Chairman.