

THE TOASTMASTER

This assignment gives you experience introducing speakers to an audience - in some situations this would be described as Master of Ceremonies. 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:

At least one week prior to your assignment, contact each speaker to find out the following:

- Speech Title
- Purpose of the assignment (i.e. Ice Breaker Speech, C & L Manual Speech No 1, or Advanced Manual etc)
- Obtain any helpful information to introduce the speaker (eg. if an Advanced Manual speech you may like to know why the speaker chose that particular manual)
- Timing
- Any special requirements of the speaker, eg. lectern, whiteboard

ON THE NIGHT:

The speeches may be held in either the first or second half of the meeting. You should check the agenda as soon as you arrive so you know when your assignment will occur. 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? An introduction may be long the lines of: *“We now come to an important part of the Toastmasters programme - prepared speeches. Tonight I have the pleasure of introducing x speakers. After the speeches have been given I will be calling on their evaluators to represent their report on how the speakers have fulfilled the objectives of their assignment”*.

2. Timer

Give the timer advice on the lighting signals required as per speech requirements - if all speeches are the same length, just give one instruction to the timer at start of session. For example:

“Madam/Mr Timer - our three speeches this evening are 5 - 7 minutes. Please assist the speakers by giving a - green light at 5, amber light at 6 and a red light at 7. Evaluations should last no more than three minutes

If the timing is different for each speech, make sure you give instructions to the timer during your introduction of each speaker.

3. 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 stand and read the objectives of the speech during your introduction.

4. Introducing Speakers

You are now ready to introduce the first speaker. Give his/her name, evaluator and some background material to ‘set the scene’ for the audience and speaker. eg.

“Our first speaker is Tom Green. Tom is giving a presentation from the Advance C & L Manual - Speaking to Inform. Please join me in welcoming Tom to the lectern with his speech entitled “Does Sydney need the Olympics”. (Refer example template at the end of this guide that may be useful for Toastmasters to gather and present the introductions).

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. Don't 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 they return to his/her seat. 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. If guests are present you may like to give a brief explanation of why we evaluate speeches. Introduce the first evaluator:

“Our first evaluation is of the speech by Tim Brown n entitled “Does Sydney need the Olympics”. The evaluator is Peter Clark. Please welcome Peter 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 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, eg.

“Ladies and gentlemen, I have enjoyed the opportunity to be Toastmaster for this part of our meeting. Thank you to our speakers (name them if you want but DO NOT EVALUATE); thank you to our evaluators for your assistance and to our timer. Mr/Madam Chairman.”

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 - don't 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 preparations 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 an 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 each speaker
- help you display this information in an easy to read format

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| Speaker Number | |
| Name | |
| Current Award | |
| Speech No | |
| Manual | |
| Time | |
| Timing instructions | |
| Name of Evaluator | |
| Evaluator to read objectives | |
| Introduction | |
| Speech title | |
| Welcome | |