

Table Topics Master

You should have five or six impromptu topics prepared. Explain the purpose of the Table Topics and timing procedure, especially if guests are present. Each topic should last for 1-2 minutes. The ideal is to try to speak for exactly 2:00. *You should not call upon prepared speakers, evaluators, or members who already extensive duties on the program. Do not call on guests.*

The subject should be interesting, sometimes controversial and fairly well-known. The subject should not be so esoteric that members are confounded or overwhelmed. It should be challenging, but not impossible. Also, the subjects and ideas should be fresh and new. A little "spice" and some variety will add excitement to the meeting. Some ideas:

- Improvisational skits. These call for participation by two Toastmasters at a time. One member plays the role of a particular person, for example a rude sales clerk. The other member is given a slip of paper which tells him or her what he or she is supposed to do - for example, be a customer who is undaunted by the rudeness of the salesclerk and who eventually befriends the salesclerk.
- Telephone conversations. This also involves two members. One member is assigned a specific role, perhaps a "loan shark" asking for delinquent payment of a loan secured to pay gambling debts. The other member plays the respondent, in the example a remorseful gambler.
- Gripe sessions. Everyone has pet peeve. Ask members to air their complaints.
- News or sports shows. Have members act as newscasters, sportscasters or even call a horse race, just like on television.
- Talk shows. Two members seat themselves at the front of the room. One acts as the host, the other as the guest. The host is then told the guest's name (real or fictional) and the occupation. The host then attempts to conduct an interesting interview.

You should ask new members, before the meeting, if they wish to be included in table topics before you call upon them. Some new members are very shy.

Ask the Toastmaster of the evening, how many table topics to present.

Enclosed is a list of all members to help you decide who to call on.