Toastmasters Roles

Note: Some of the roles might differ depending on what club you are in.

**INVOCATOR:** Every meeting begins with an invocation. As the invocator you are responsible for preparing the invocation or you can use the preprinted cards which are available at the club. The invocation can be a short prayer, an inspirational or motivational quote, or something that inspires us, or all of the foregoing. The invocation is followed by a toast. Using our imaginary glasses, we will raise our glasses and repeat your toast. Example: “Please join me by raising our glasses in a toast to Canada and the Queen.”

**CHAIRPERSON:** As Chairperson it is your responsibility to run the entire meeting. The meeting should be called to order at 1:00 p.m. and is done so by hitting the gavel on the lectern. The meeting always opens with the invocation first. Following that you will run through the meeting roles and have each role taker stand and explain his or her duties. Mid-way through the meeting there should be a 5 to 10 minute break. Speeches usually follow the break and the Chairperson will call upon the introducers to come forward to complete introductions for each speaker. Following speeches, the General Evaluator will take over the lectern (see responsibilities for General Evaluator above). It is the chairperson’s responsibility to ensure the meeting runs on time.

**TIMER:** The timer is responsible for timing every aspect of the meeting – the start time, break time, and end time. At 1 minute before 1:00 p.m. the timer is to ring the bell to warn the Toastmaster that the meeting should start in one minute. The same goes for the break. The timer will also time the table topics and record the length of time each person spoke. The timer times all speeches and records times for each speech. The timer uses a stop watch, timing lights, and a bell – all of which are provided by the club. During table topics you will start the stop watch as soon as the speaker starts talking. When the speaker reaches the allotted time you will ring the bell to let the speaker know that his or her time is up. During speeches, again you will begin timing when the speaker first speaks but with speeches you will use the timing lights or cards.

**QUIZMASTER:** Over the course of the meeting you will write down questions based on what is said during the meeting. Communication is just not about speaking but also listening. In the latter half of the meeting the General Evaluator will call upon you to present your questions to see how well everyone was listening. Ten to twelve questions are sufficient. A quizmaster book is available at the club for recording questions.

**GRAMMARIAN AND ‘AH’ COUNTER:** As the grammarian you are responsible for providing the word of the day. The word of the day is usually a word that we don’t often use or hear. You are to write the word on the blackboard along with its pronunciation and definition. You are to provide, on the blackboard, a sentence using the word of the day. The club has a dictionary available along with pre-printed cards that you can also use. A grammarian book is available at the club for recording the use of the word of the day and all ahs and ums.

As the **“AH” counter**, you are responsible for recording all “ums” and “ahs” and other filler words that you hear. Such filler words are discouraged in Toastmasters. By recording these fillers words and bringing them to the speaker’s attention, the speaker realizes an area that requires work. Users of filler words are fined for each one and a piggy bank is available for deposit of fines. The fine is set by you, the ‘ah’ counter. Payment of fines is strictly on an honour system. You may hear Toastmasters tapping their pens on the tabletops when filler words are used. This is bring immediate attention to the speaker.

**JOKEMASTER:** (this changes based on whatever club you are in) As the Jokemaster you will be presenting a joke. The joke should be clean, non-racist, not contain swear words and should not make reference to hair colour! After the joke is told, the Jokemaster will open up the floor to challengers. A vote will be held at the end of the jokes to see you told the best joke or told the joke the best. You will tally the votes. An award is handed out by the Jokemaster when called upon by the General Evaluator.

**TABLE TOPICS MASTER:** Table topics is speaking extemporaneously, or off the cuff. As Table Topics Master you will determine the topic(s) for each member and you will establish the length of time each person will speak. There are table topics cards available at the club if you so choose to use them. Most people who take on this role, like to make up their own ideas. One example is having each person open a fortune cookie and explaining how the fortune fits into their life. Upon completion of table topics, a vote is held on who did the best in table topics. You will tally the votes. An award is handed out by the TableTopics Master when called upon by the General Evaluator.

**GENERAL EVALUATOR:** The General Evaluator (GE) takes over the lectern in the latter part of the meeting. The GE gives a general evaluation of the meeting including congratulating speakers, introducers, etc. There is no set format in this regard so it is at the GE’s discretion. You will call upon all role takers to give their reports and/or hand out awards. You will also ask speech evaluators to stand up and present their evaluations. When all reports have been presented, you will hand the lectern back over to the chairperson.