

How to Host Table Topics

1. When you first go up to the podium to begin the Table Topics session, explain the purpose of Table Topics, give tips on how to prepare to answer a question, and how to let the Table Topics Master (you) know when they're finished. As each speaker comes up, shake their hand, then be seated. When they're done, go back up to the podium, thank them, shake their hand, and ask the next question.

Thank you, Mr./Madam Toastmaster. Greetings, fellow Toastmasters and guests. The purpose of Table Topics is to give members an opportunity to learn to "think on your feet." You never know when you may be asked some tough questions, either by a supervisor, a news crew, or a Job Interviewer. It is to our benefit to know how to properly answer the questions, or, at least, look like we're in control of the situation, even if we don't know the answer. The more we practice this, the better we'll get.

If you are chosen to answer a question, as you walk up to the podium, try to organize your answer into the *three parts*** of a good speech: Opening, Body, and Conclusion.**

And a good way to let me know that you are finished with your answer is to say, "Mr./Madam Table Topics Master" when you are done.

The first question is ...

After the last question has been answered and you've shaken the hand of the last speaker, you can say:

This concludes Table Topics for today's meeting. Mr./Madam Toastmaster?

(The Toastmaster of the Day will come back up and shake your hand. You resume your seat.)

2. For Table Topics, people in the audience without a duty are supposed to be picked to answer questions, because the others are busy doing their jobs. Therefore, do not pick any speaker, timer, grammarian, evaluator, Toastmaster of the Day, unless there aren't enough people in the audience. But try to leave evaluators alone because they're busy trying to write up their evaluations of the speakers. Before the meeting starts, review the agenda and note who will be 'working' during the meeting. At the start of the meeting, if there isn't one already, make a list the people who do NOT have a duty so you can call upon them.
3. Sometimes Table Topics Masters ask for a volunteer to come up and answer the question. Sometimes volunteers know exactly how to answer the question, and so you'll get a very interesting, sometimes passionate, answer. Some Toastmasters do not agree with asking for volunteers because it defeats the purpose of having people learn to "think on their feet."

Please your mentor or your club's VP of Education you have any questions.

Good luck! Have fun as Table Topics Master! ■