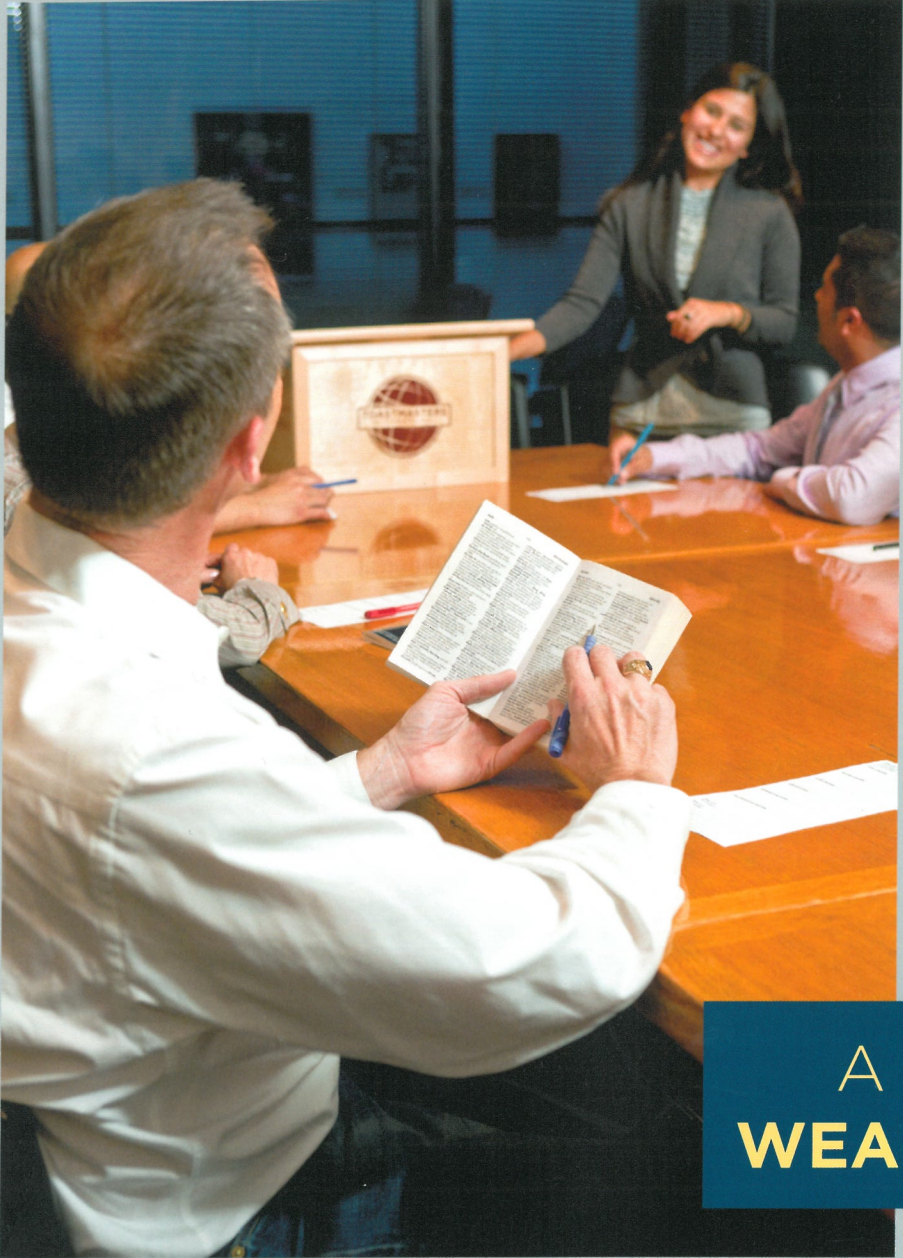


**TOASTMASTERS**  
INTERNATIONAL



A TOASTMASTER  
**WEARS MANY HATS**



**WHERE LEADERS  
ARE MADE**



# MEMBER MEETING ROLES

Often a person's role determines the hat he or she wears. The hats of a police officer and a chef, for example, are as different as their responsibilities. Toastmasters club meetings provide opportunities for members to learn and practice communication and leadership skills by assuming a variety of roles. If each meeting role called for a different hat, Toastmasters members would have plenty to choose from!

## ▶ WHEN YOU ARE A SPEAKER

A major part of every Toastmasters meeting is centered on three or more scheduled speakers. Members prepare their speeches based on project objectives in *Competent Communication* (Item 225), the *Advanced Communication Series*, and other manuals.

Giving a prepared speech provides an excellent opportunity to practice your communication and leadership skills, including planning, organization, and time management.

To present the best speech possible, allow plenty of time for preparation and rehearsal. Below are helpful hints to practice before, during, and after you deliver your speech.

### Prior to the Meeting

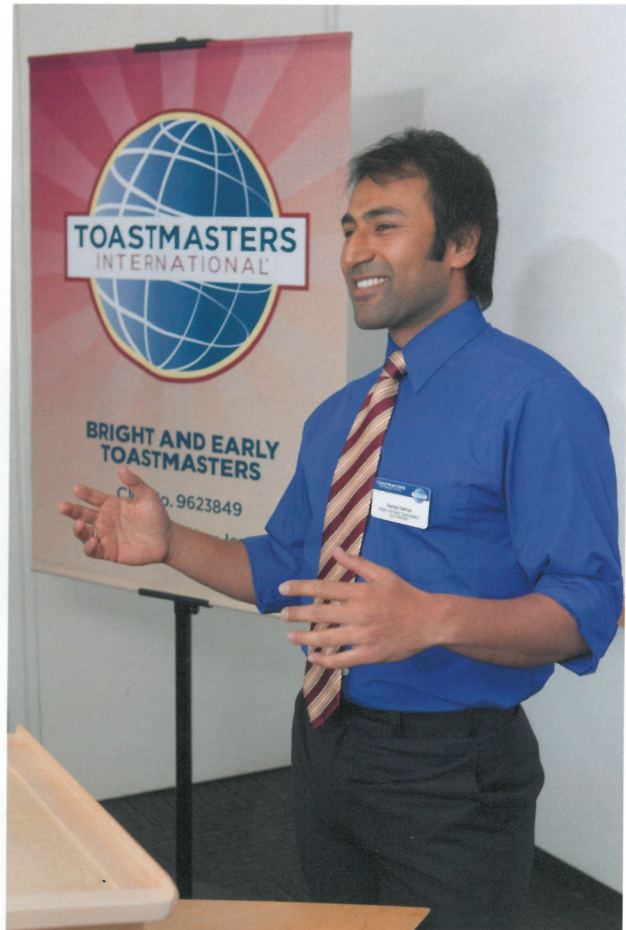
- ▶ Check the meeting schedule to find out when you are to speak.
- ▶ Begin working on the speech at least a week in advance so you have enough time to devote to research, organization, and rehearsal.
- ▶ If you don't write your own speech introduction, ensure that the Toastmaster of the meeting prepares one for you.
- ▶ Ask the General Evaluator for your evaluator's name. Speak to him or her about the speech you'll be presenting. Discuss your speech goals and any personal concerns about your speaking abilities. Emphasize any areas you feel need strengthening.
- ▶ Remember to take your manual to the meeting.

### Upon Arrival at the Meeting

- ▶ Arrive early so you can check the microphone, lighting, and any props or equipment needed for your speech before everyone else arrives.
- ▶ Sit near the front of the room for quick and easy access to the lectern.
- ▶ Give your manual to your evaluator before the meeting starts.

### During the Meeting

- ▶ Give your full attention to the speakers at the lectern. Avoid studying your speech notes while someone else is talking.
- ▶ When introduced, walk with confidence to the lectern.



- ▶ When finishing your speech, wait for the Toastmaster to return to the lectern; then return to your seat.
- ▶ During your speech evaluation, listen for helpful advice that will assist you in delivering better speeches in the future. Pay attention to suggestions from other members too.

### After the Meeting

- ▶ When your evaluator returns your manual to you, ask him or her questions you may have about your evaluation.
- ▶ Ask the vice president education to initial the Project Completion Record in your manual.

#### Resources

- ▶ *Competent Communication* (Item 225), included in your New Member Kit
- ▶ *Your Speaking Voice* (Item 199) [www.toastmasters.org/199](http://www.toastmasters.org/199)
- ▶ *Gestures: Your Body Speaks* (Item 201) [www.toastmasters.org/201](http://www.toastmasters.org/201)

## ▶ WHEN YOU ARE AN EVALUATOR

People join Toastmasters clubs to improve their speaking and leadership skills. They learn by doing—completing speech and leadership projects—and receiving evaluations in a positive, supportive way. Members prepare and present speeches based on projects in *Competent Communication* (Item 225), or they serve in club meeting or other leadership roles to learn skills and fulfill requirements of projects in *Competent Leadership* (Item 265). You may be asked to serve as an evaluator for a speech or leadership project. In addition to a verbal evaluation, you provide a written evaluation using the guide in the manual of the fellow member you evaluate.

Serving as an evaluator is an opportunity to practice leadership skills, including listening, critical thinking, providing feedback, and motivation. When evaluating a speaker, your purpose is to help him or her be less self-conscious and improve speaking skills. When evaluating a project in *Competent Leadership* (Item 265), your purpose is to help the member become more confident, effective, and able to achieve his or her goals.

Evaluation involves knowing the member's skill level, habits, and mannerisms, as well as his or her progress to date. Your overall evaluation should be encouraging and motivate the member to become a better speaker or leader.



### Prior to the Meeting

- ▶ Carefully review *Effective Evaluation* (Item 202) [www.toastmasters.org/202](http://www.toastmasters.org/202).
- ▶ Talk with the member you will be evaluating to find out which project he or she is completing. Review the project goals and the objectives the member hopes to achieve.
- ▶ To be beneficial, an evaluation should be carefully prepared. Study the project objectives and the evaluation guide in the manual. Remember, the purpose of evaluation is to help fellow Toastmasters members develop their speaking or leadership skills in various situations. By actively listening and tactfully offering useful advice, you motivate them to strengthen their abilities.

### Upon Arrival at the Meeting

- ▶ When you enter the meeting room, look for the member you will be evaluating, and get his or her manual.
- ▶ Meet briefly with the General Evaluator to confirm the evaluation session format. Then confer with the member you will evaluate to determine if he or she wants you to watch for any specific areas to be strengthened.

### During the Meeting

- ▶ Record your impressions in the manual, along with your answers to the evaluation questions. Be as objective as possible.
- ▶ Remember that the best evaluations encourage and motivate members to improve. In addition to mentioning areas to be strengthened, provide specific solutions or actions to accomplish this.
- ▶ When giving a verbal evaluation, you may stand when you're introduced, then provide your evaluation. Begin and end with a note of encouragement or praise. Though you may have written lengthy responses to manual evaluation questions, don't read them. Your verbal evaluation time is limited, so don't try to cover too much.
- ▶ Praise a successful speech or leadership assignment and give specifics about why it succeeded. Share specific ideas the member could apply in the future such as smiling more often or using humor. If making recommendations for improvement, make sure they concern the speech or fulfillment of a club role, not the member personally. Be tactful, sensitive, and deliver the evaluation in the same manner you'd like to receive one yourself.

### After the Meeting

- ▶ When returning the manual to the member, give him or her a few words of encouragement and congratulations.

#### Resources

- ▶ *Effective Evaluation* (Item 202)  
[www.toastmasters.org/202](http://www.toastmasters.org/202)

## ▶ WHEN YOU ARE THE TIMER

One of the skills speakers practice is the ability to express themselves within a specific amount of time, which varies by project. That's one reason the timer's role is so important. In addition to speeches, the timer tracks every part of the meeting agenda.

When you are the timer, the Toastmaster of the meeting calls on you to explain the timing rules. Explain your duties and report times to the club clearly and precisely. This exercise is an excellent opportunity to practice giving instructions and managing time—things that we do every day.





### Prior to the Meeting

- ▶ Confirm members who are scheduled to participate with the Toastmaster and the General Evaluator.
- ▶ Confirm the time allotted to each prepared speech with all speakers.
- ▶ Write your explanation of timing in the clearest possible language, and rehearse it. For the benefit of guests, be sure to emphasize timing rules and how timing signals are given.

### Upon Arrival at the Meeting

- ▶ Get timing equipment (stopwatch and signal device) from the sergeant at arms. Check that the timing equipment works and that you know how to use it.
- ▶ Sit where the signal device can be seen easily by everyone.

### During the Meeting

- ▶ When introduced, explain the timing rules and demonstrate the signal device.
- ▶ Throughout the meeting, listen carefully to each participating member and signal him or her as indicated below. In addition, signal the Toastmaster and Topicsmaster with red when they have reached their allotted or agreed-upon time.
- ▶ Record each participant's name and the time he or she used.
- ▶ When called to report by the Topicsmaster, Toastmaster and/or General Evaluator, you may stand near your seat to announce each speaker's name and the time he or she took. State those eligible for awards (if your club issues them). Generally, speeches should be within 15 seconds (plus or minus) of the allowed time; prepared speeches must be within 30 seconds. However, these times vary from club to club.

### After the Meeting

- ▶ Return the timing equipment to the sergeant at arms.
- ▶ Give the completed timer's report to the secretary for recording speech times in the meeting minutes (if this is done in your club).

## ▶ WHEN YOU ARE THE TOPICSMASTER

In Toastmasters, there is a tradition that every member speak at a meeting. Guests are also invited to speak if they're comfortable doing so. The Table Topics™ session is the portion of the meeting that ensures this tradition. The purpose of Table Topics is to give members the opportunity to speak extemporaneously for a minute or so. The Topicsmaster prepares and issues the topics; which should be as original as possible. Each speaker may be given an individual subject, or a choice of subjects may be presented from which the members choose or draw at random.

Serving as Topicsmaster provides good practice in leadership such as planning, preparation, organization, time management, and facilitation. Work to balance the amount of time available for Table Topics with the number of people participating and the amount of time each uses to respond to topics.

### Prior to the Meeting

- ▶ Check with the Toastmaster to find out if a theme meeting is scheduled. If so, choose topics that correspond to that theme. If there isn't a theme, choose a wide selection of topics. Review the *Toastmaster* magazine and other publications for ideas. Try not to repeat Table Topics from recent meetings.
- ▶ Find out who the speakers, evaluators, General Evaluator, and Toastmaster are so you can call on the other members first. Only if time permits at the end of the topics session should you call on participants already scheduled to speak.
- ▶ When choosing your specific topics, select those that inspire the speakers to expound on them and give their opinions.
- ▶ Keep your comments short. Your job is to give others a chance to speak.
- ▶ Remember, Table Topics has a twofold purpose. First, it gives everyone in the room an opportunity to speak, especially those who are not scheduled in the program. Second, it helps people learn to think and speak extemporaneously.



### During the Meeting

- ▶ When introduced, briefly state the purpose of the Table Topics session.
- ▶ Set the stage for your topics. Keep your remarks brief but enthusiastic. If the club has a word of the day, encourage speakers to use it in their responses.
- ▶ Keep a steady pace; be certain everyone understands the maximum time they have for their responses and how to understand the timing signal (if the timer hasn't already done so).
- ▶ State the question or topic briefly; then call on someone to respond. This serves two purposes. First, it holds everyone's attention, because each one is thinking of a response, should he or she be called on to speak. Second, it adds to the value of the impromptu element by giving everyone an opportunity to improve his or her listening and thinking skills.

- ▶ Call on speakers at random. Avoid going around the room in the order in which people are sitting. Give each speaker a different question; don't ask two people the same thing unless you request each specifically to give the "pro" or "con" side of a debate.
- ▶ Watch your total time! Check the printed agenda for the time allotted to Table Topics, and adjust the number of questions or topics to end your segment on time. Even if you start late, try to end on time to avoid the meeting running late.
- ▶ If your club presents a Best Table Topics Speaker award, ask the timer at the end of the Table Topics session to report those eligible for the award. Then ask members to vote for Best Table Topics Speaker and pass their votes to the sergeant at arms or vote counter. If the club has a Table Topics evaluator, ask for his or her report, and then return control of the meeting to the Toastmaster.

### Resources

- ▶ *Think Fast!* Table Topics Handbook (Item 1315)
- ▶ TableTalk (Item 1318)
- ▶ *Master Your Meetings* (Item 1312)

## ▶ WHEN YOU ARE A TABLE TOPICS SPEAKER

Table Topics helps develop your ability to organize your thoughts quickly and respond to impromptu questions or topics.

The Table Topics section of the meeting usually follows the prepared speech presentations. The Toastmaster of the meeting introduces the Topicsmaster, who gives a brief description of the purpose of Table Topics and mentions if the topics are part of the meeting theme (if any).

The Topicsmaster states the question or topic briefly and then calls on a member or guest at random to respond. Each Table Topics speaker receives a different topic or question.

As a Table Topics speaker, you may stand next to your chair and give your response. Your allotted time may be one to two minutes or whatever was specified by the Topicsmaster.

## ▶ WHEN YOU ARE THE GENERAL EVALUATOR

The General Evaluator is just what the name implies — someone who evaluates everything that takes place throughout the meeting. The General Evaluator role provides excellent practice in leadership skills such as critical thinking, planning, preparation, organization, time management, motivation, and team building.

As the General Evaluator, you are responsible to the Toastmaster who introduces you. At the conclusion of the evaluation segment of the meeting, you return control to him or her. You are responsible for the evaluation team, which consists of the timer, grammarian, Ah-Counter, speech evaluators and Table Topics evaluator, if your club has one. The usual procedure is to have one evaluator for each prepared speech, but this isn't essential. Your club is free to set up its own procedure. Each evaluation should be brief, yet complete. There are many methods for conducting evaluation sessions. Review *Effective Evaluation* (Item 202) for ideas.

### Prior to the Meeting

- ▶ Check with the Toastmaster to find out how the program will be conducted and if there are any planned changes to the usual meeting format.
- ▶ Phone all of the evaluators to brief them about their job, let them know whom they'll be evaluating, and the evaluation format you'll be using. Encourage them to prepare thoroughly for their roles and to call the speakers to discuss any special evaluation requirements suggested in the manual for the speech.



- ▶ During the phone call to evaluators, emphasize that evaluations are positive and helpful. As conscientious Toastmasters, their goal as evaluators is to help fellow members develop their skills. Emphasize that evaluations are meant to preserve or enhance speakers' self-esteem.
- ▶ Call the remaining members of the evaluation team to remind them of their assignments.
- ▶ Prepare a brief but thorough talk on the purpose, techniques, and benefits of evaluation (for the benefit of any guests).

### Upon Arrival at the Meeting

- ▶ Ensure that the individual evaluators have the manuals of those members who are speaking or fulfilling a club leadership role, that they understand the project objectives, and that they know how to evaluate them.
- ▶ Greet all evaluators. If one is absent, consult with the vice president education to arrange for a substitute.
- ▶ Verify each speaker's time and notify the timer.
- ▶ Sit near the back of the room so that you can view the meeting and participants.

### During the Meeting

- ▶ Take notes about everything that happens (or doesn't but should). For example: Is the club's property (trophies, banner, and educational materials) properly displayed? Were there unnecessary distractions that could have been avoided? Did the meeting and each section of it begin and end on time? Your club may want to create a General Evaluator checklist from which you can follow the meeting.
- ▶ Evaluate each participant on the meeting program. Look for good examples of preparation, organization, delivery, enthusiasm, observation, and performance of duties. Although members who present a speech or fulfill a leadership project have evaluators assigned to them, you are free to add comments if you wish.
- ▶ Before Table Topics, you may be asked to stand and brief the audience about your team's means and methods of evaluation. Describe in what way and how evaluations are handled.





- ▶ Identify the grammarian, Ah-Counter, and timer. Ask these members to briefly state the purpose of their roles.
- ▶ Request the word of the day, if your club has one, from the grammarian.
- ▶ When prompted to conduct the evaluation phase of the meeting, go to the lectern and introduce each speech evaluator. Afterward, thank each for his or her efforts.
- ▶ Give your general evaluation based on the notes you took throughout the meeting. Phrase your evaluation so it's helpful and encouraging yet motivates club members to implement the suggestions so the next meeting can be improved. You may comment on the quality of evaluations. Were they positive, upbeat, and specific? Did they point the way to improvement? Then introduce each leadership project evaluator. After each one speaks, thank the evaluator for his or her efforts.

## ▶ WHEN YOU ARE THE TOASTMASTER

The main duties of the Toastmaster are to coordinate and conduct the entire meeting, introduce participants, and act as a genial host. The Toastmaster sets the tone for the meeting. For obvious reasons, this task is not usually assigned to a member until he or she is quite familiar with the club and its procedures. Members who are scheduled to participate in the meeting should be introduced in an interesting way that motivates the audience to listen.

Serving as Toastmaster is an excellent way to practice planning, preparation, organization, time management, facilitation, motivation, and team-building skills as you strive to make the meeting one of the club's best.

### Prior to the Meeting

- ▶ Speak with the vice president education to find out who is scheduled for various meeting roles, if a special theme has been set for the meeting, and if there are any program changes.
- ▶ Phone the Topicsmaster to discuss his or her duties. Provide him or her with a list of members scheduled to participate so he or she will know who already has speaking roles at the meeting.
- ▶ Call all speakers in advance to remind them that they are speaking. Interview them to find out their speech titles, project numbers, purposes to be achieved, time requested, and anything interesting to include in their introductions (such as information about their jobs, families, hobbies, education, or why they chose their topics). Prepare introductions for each speaker.
- ▶ Call the General Evaluator to confirm the assignment. Ask him or her to call the other members of the evaluation team (speech evaluators, evaluators of leadership projects, Topicsmaster, timer, grammarian, Ah-Counter) and remind them of their responsibilities.
- ▶ Prepare remarks that can be used to bridge the gaps between program segments. You might not use them, but you should be prepared in case they're needed.
- ▶ Remember that serving as Toastmaster is one of the most valuable experiences in your club work. The assignment requires careful preparation in order to have a smoothly run meeting.

### Upon Arrival at the Meeting

- ▶ Arrive early to complete any last-minute details.
- ▶ Check with the speakers to address any last-minute changes.
- ▶ Sit near the front of the room and ask that speakers do likewise for quick and easy access to the lectern.

### During the Meeting

- ▶ Preside with sincerity, energy, enthusiasm, and decisiveness.
- ▶ Strive to begin and end the meeting on time. You may have to make adjustments to the schedule during the meeting to accomplish this. Make sure each part of the meeting adheres to the schedule.

- ▶ Lead the applause before and after the Table Topics session, each prepared speech, and the General Evaluator's remarks.
- ▶ After your introduction remain standing near the lectern until the speaker has reached it; then be seated.
- ▶ Introduce the General Evaluator as you would any speaker. He or she then introduces the other members of the evaluation team.
- ▶ Introduce the Topicsmaster.
- ▶ Introduce each speaker in turn.
- ▶ At the conclusion of the speaking portion of the program, request the timer's report, and vote for Best Speaker if your club has this award.
- ▶ Briefly reintroduce the General Evaluator.
- ▶ While votes are being tallied, invite comments from guests and make announcements (such as verification of next week's program).
- ▶ Award trophies if your club does so.
- ▶ Request the thought for the day if your club has one.
- ▶ Adjourn the meeting.

### Resources

- ▶ When You're the Introducer (Item 1167E)
- ▶ *Master Your Meetings* (Item 1312)
- ▶ *Chairman* (Item 200)
- ▶ TableTalk (Item 1318)

## ▶ WHEN YOU ARE THE GRAMMARIAN

Being grammarian is an exercise in expanding your listening skills. You have several responsibilities: to introduce new words to members, to comment on the language used during the course of the meeting, and to provide examples of good grammar and word usage.

### Prior to the Meeting

- ▶ Select a word of the day if this is done in your club. It should be a word that will help members increase their vocabulary and one that can be incorporated easily into everyday conversation. An adjective or adverb is recommended, since they're more easily adapted than other parts of speech, but feel free to select your own special word.
- ▶ In letters large enough to be seen from the back of the room, print your word, its part of speech (adjective, adverb, noun, verb), and a brief definition. Prepare a sentence showing how the word is used.
- ▶ Prepare a brief description of the grammarian's duties for the benefit of guests.

### Upon Arrival at the Meeting

- ▶ Place your visual aid at the front of the room where it can be seen by everyone.
- ▶ Be prepared to take notes as people speak during the meeting, or get a copy of the grammarian's log (if your club has one), from the sergeant at arms.





### During the Meeting

- ▶ When introduced prior to Table Topics, announce the word of the day, state what part of speech it is, define it, use it in a sentence, and ask that anyone speaking during the meeting use it.
- ▶ Briefly explain the role of the grammarian.
- ▶ Throughout the meeting, listen to everyone's word usage. Write any awkward use or misuse of language (such as incomplete sentences or incorrect grammar) with a note of who erred.
- ▶ Write who used the word of the day (or a form of it), and note those who used it correctly.
- ▶ When called on by the General Evaluator during the evaluation segment, you may stand near your chair and give your report. Try to offer correct usage in every instance in which there was misuse of grammar. Report the use of creative language, and announce who used the word of the day (or a form of it) correctly.

### After the Meeting

- ▶ If your club imposes fines for grammatical infractions, give your completed report to the treasurer for collection of the fines.

#### Resources

- ▶ Word of the Day (Item 1415)

## ▶ WHEN YOU ARE THE AH-COUNTER

The purpose of the Ah-Counter is to note words and sounds used to fill in pauses by anyone who speaks during the meeting. Words or phrases may be used inappropriately or unnecessarily, such as *and*, *well*, *but*, *so*, and *you know*. Sounds may include *ah*, *um*, and *er*. Serving in the Ah-Counter role provides an excellent opportunity to practice your listening skills.

### Prior to the Meeting

- ▶ Prepare a brief explanation of the duties of the Ah-Counter for the benefit of guests.

### Upon Arrival at the Meeting

- ▶ Have a way to take notes, or get a blank copy of the Ah-Counter's log (if your club has one) from the sergeant at arms.

### During the Meeting

- ▶ When introduced, explain the role of the Ah-Counter.
- ▶ Throughout the meeting, listen to everyone who speaks and note unnecessary words, sounds, and pauses. Write how many sounds or words each person used throughout the meeting.
- ▶ When called on by the General Evaluator during the evaluation segment, you may stand near your chair and give your report.

## ▶ OPTIONAL MEETING PARTICIPANTS AND ACTIVITIES

Your club may have other meeting participants, such as joke master, parliamentarian, and word master. Check with your club officers for guidelines for these additional positions, if any.

Your club may charge fines, which are usually a nominal amount, as a way to help members improve performance. For example, some clubs levy small fines on members each time they use a word to fill a pause. Other clubs may choose to fine members who don't wear their Toastmasters pins. Fines are a light-hearted way of reminding members not to repeat their errors. If your club imposes fines, explain the fine schedule to members, and make sure the treasurer is given a list, after the meeting, of members who owe fines.

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