



Flexible Club Programming

One area of club programming is often overlooked: creating a flexible meeting agenda that fits the meeting size. When planning your next club meeting, think about what the meeting might look like to a guest. Ensure that he or she experiences a well-organized meeting that is easy to follow.

Creating a Flexible Agenda

Many of us have enjoyed the vibrant programming of a successful larger club. There may have been three speakers and a well prepared Toastmaster. All of the standard roles were filled and some members had the chance to participate as audience-only members with no assigned roles. An adept Table Topics Master probably called on them to ensure that *every member had an opportunity to speak*.

Agenda for Rebuilding Clubs with Low Membership

Many of us have also attended very small meetings in which attendees held multiple roles. If a guest was present, they may have experienced a lot of confusion seeing a meeting that looked more like a jack-in-the-box session than a Toastmasters meeting. Even worse, club members apologized for the small turnout at the meeting and may even have begged the guests to join. . This situation could easily been avoided if the meeting planner had used a flexible club programming approach.

		Attendees									
		5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	20	
Meeting Role	Toastmaster	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
	General Evaluator				x	x	x	x	x		x
	Table Topics Master			x	x	x	x	x	x		x
	Speaker 1	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x
	Speaker 2						x	x	x		x
	Speaker 3										x
	Evaluator 1	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x
	Evaluator 2						x	x	x		x
	Evaluator 3										x
	Timer	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x
	Grammarian/Word					x	x	x	x		x
	Ah Counter	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x
	Optional Role 1										x
	Optional Role 2										x
		Total	5	5	6	7	8	10	10	10	14

Figure 1. 'x's indicate roles to include in the agenda based on attendance.

General Evaluator or Table Topics Master roles is necessary at this time. As the club grows, it will be easy to add back unused roles, and it will be less confusing for new members and guests when this occurs. Second, make sure that every role is handled professionally. It is possible to have a great meeting with only 5 attendees.

Use the chart provided as a guide to effectively plan your next club meeting. For very small attendance, collapse roles. For example, the Toastmaster role can also assume the General Evaluator and Table Topics Master roles. The Ah Counter, Word of the Day, and Grammarians can also be rolled together. Do this seamlessly and a guest will experience a meeting that makes sense.

Here are two suggestions. First, do not mention or apologize for collapsed roles. When describing the role, the Toastmaster simply describes her role as leading the meeting, conducting an impromptu speaking session called Table Topics, and conducting a general evaluation of the meeting. No mention of the



Agenda for Vibrant Clubs with Large Membership

When your club expects 19 or more attendees on a regular basis, consider adding a third speaker and evaluator and possibly some small optional roles such as an Inspirational Speaker, Quiz Master, or Joke master. Time permitting, these roles can become 1-minute speaking opportunities that can fit into a well-run 1 hour meeting.

Flexible Club Programming is the first step to having exceptional meetings. With a little practice, your club can have a dynamic meetings no matter the club size. As you create your meeting agenda from a guest's perspective, new members will see a club they *want* to join.