

Toastmasters Meeting Roles

Read about Fellow Toastmasters experiences and tips !

WHY DO YOU LIKE THIS ROLE?	PREPARATION TIME	ANY TIPS?
SPEAKER		
<p><i>"I feel most creative"</i> Max</p>	<p>4-5 hours a few years ago 0:5 -2 hours nowadays</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Always have in mind what can your next speech be - For new members: rehearse to get the right timing, delete boring parts, etc.
<p><i>"When I deliver a speech, I really challenge myself: I work on the structure of the speech and the story that I want to tell or the message that I want to convey. Highly stressful to prepare and so rewarding when it's done"</i> 😊 Concetta</p>	<p>It takes less and less time Cf Max above - idem</p>	<p>To start with, I need a clear idea of what I want to say, and then I decide on how to start, how to end, and how to deliver the message clearly to the audience. I always try to add some personal experience in it to make it unique. I should try to add one or 2 jokes, that will be my next challenge.</p>
<p><i>"I like delivering speeches because there is no limit at the Toastmasters! You can dress up, use props, sing a song, dance, and you can do anything else you wish. You have the liberty in order to improve the delivery of your message and to communicate it more efficiently. More importantly, you receive a bunch of feedback at the end and many materials to improve your next speech."</i> Candan</p>	<p>If I have some elements (notes) beforehand, it takes around 2 hours and then I have several refining sessions of 20-30 minutes.</p> <p>If it is a topic to write from zero, then building up a speech takes around 3-4 hours, mostly spending time on thinking different elements such as humour, key message, dialogue, etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Take a note immediately any time a speech material comes to your mind (I found it easy to create a note on my phone and note down separate elements such as dialogues that can be used, jokes, personal stories, etc.). You never know when the inspiration comes to you! - Have a scaffold with the items that you include in all your speeches (see above- I always try to include at least a joke, a personal story, a dialogue.)

"I like the creative writing process. Drafting a good speech, in my view is art. There are many elements to take into accounts: the story line, structure, use of language, but also many psychological elements: how to create a connection with the audience?" **Michael**

For the speeches that I have done, this varies between 2-3 hours to more than 20 hours for an area contest speech.

Delivering an outstanding speech that has the ability to score well in a contest above club level would take any speaker at least 20 hours (including rehearsals) on the world stage, rather think of hundreds.

- There are so many things to think of, that I have created [a speech-writing checklist \(available on the website\)](#). Really checking all the points helps improving it.
- Write for the ear, not for the eye. Speech writing is different from writing articles.
- Always ask yourself "what do I want my audience to know, feel or do after my speech"

EVALUATOR

"Evaluation is the essence of learning. Being an evaluator allows you to really help someone improving. Effective feedback can make someone instantly make a better speaker than before." **Michael**

The only preparation is to eventually exchange with the speaker if there are specific things to pay attention to and to understand the purpose of the speech.

- Rather than giving too much generic advice, reflect how you personally experienced the speech and what would have helped to make it better for *you*.
- Be honest and clear and do not add 'softening language'. Often heard example: "you went 1 minute overtime *but we forgive you as you had so much interesting content to share*"

GENERAL EVALUATOR

"This is a very interesting role, quite challenging and a very good exercise to develop active listening, be synthetic and convey constructive messages across specific roles and about the evening." **Sophie**

It does not require preparation, except if I need to refresh my memory about the role's expectation; I take a quick look at our wiki page.

- Be ready to take short notes following the order of the agenda and the roles that you need to evaluate. It will help you as a guideline.
- Give examples of what the participants you evaluate have said/done during the evening to illustrate your evaluation and add recommendation.

TOASTMASTER OF THE EVENING

"I see being TME as hosting a party, you need to pick the venue, the menu, the theme and send the invitations.

As host, you need to be organised, to follow the structure of the meeting, flexible, to respond to what participants say, and mindful, to make sure everyone enjoys the evening!"

Adrien

It probably takes me about 5 hours in total; the first time took me a little longer though I think about the theme for weeks!

I think PowerPoint is an excellent media and I organise myself to have one slide per items on the agenda.

"Because I get to set the evening's theme and I have the perfect motivation to learn more about the topic.

Funnily, I feel under less pressure than when I do a speech."

Gráinne

Hem, afraid to tot up the hours here.

Do not stress about filling the roles. Trust in "it will be all right on the night!"

JOKE OF THE DAY

"I like making people laugh." **Doris**

It can take days sometimes to think of something.

Find a funny story to which everyone can relate.

TABLE TOPIC

"One of the hardest aspects of public speaking is impromptu speaking because it requires you to provide information that falls into parameters you do not control.

What I like is the challenge of finding a question that is both light enough for respondents not to feel pressured, but unexpected enough that they cannot rely too much on automatism."

Adrien

About 2 hours, but only because I include the time I spend thinking about questions.

Keep the questions interesting and challenging by making sure they cannot be answered with a simple "Yes/No" and allow room for humour and creativity (Bonus points from your TME if you match the theme of the evening!)

"I am quite a talker by nature and believe you can find interesting questions in absolutely anything.

Table Topics is a good way to bring people back to good memories from the past and understand their different views of the future. " **Gráinne**

About an hour if I put my mind properly to it!

Add a funny or curious introduction to your question. It gets people thinking.

WORD OF THE DAY

*"I like a speech that pays attention to rhythm and sounds as much as content. All those things can be added by **selecting a word of the day that gives speakers a chance to use more descriptive words** than "nice" and "red" to describe their marvellous carmine scarf!"* **Adrien**

About an hour

My advice is twofold:

- 1) pick a word that challenge speakers a little, it should be a "less common" word
- 2) if you do not have one, think about the theme of the evening, and look for synonyms of the word that comes to mind

*"It is a bit a challenge that you pose to your fellow members to help them improve their speaking skills. I consider it is a **valuable role** especially in our club where we do not elect any "best speaker" (or other roles) of the meeting."* **Fabio**

About half-an-hour

Difficult to tell because it is not necessarily a time when you sit on a chair Rodin-style and think about a word. You can reflect about it, in connection to the theme of the meeting, also while doing other things.

- It has to be well crafted, not too general to fit into every sentence, nor too specific to find its place only in rare occasions. Not too familiar to most of us, otherwise it is a missed learning opportunity, but not completely obsolete and obscure either.
- I would also avoid adjectives, because we tend to use them brute-force even when they do not naturally fit.
E.g. "blossoming" -> "many thanks [Speaker X] for your sharing blossoming thoughts"

*"I like to **learn new words and enrich my vocabulary**, and a **TM meeting helps me use them properly**."* **Cibele**

About half-an-hour to prepare what you will say, but good to keep thinking about good words as you do other things.

Pick a word that can be useful for a professional speech but that is not often used by non-native speakers like most of us are.

TIME KEEPER + REPORTING

"I usually volunteer for this role when I have no time to prepare for a speech – no need to prepare anything".

No need to prepare anything – except: ensure that the chrono works properly and that the 3 colours (green, amber and red) are visible to all participants.

Once you have done it once, it is an easy and fun job to do. I like it.

ZOOM MASTER / HYBRID MEETING MASTER (HMM)

*"HMM is an extremely **useful skill that we all need to master, as our new normal is hybrid**. I learned many things in this role that I use at my OECD job."* **Cibele**

About half an hour to set up the meeting. Previous experience in doing this before is certainly helpful.

- Before the meeting, liaise with HMMs from previous meetings to learn from their experience.
- Have several back-up plans in case the ideal solution does not work.