

## CONQUERORS GUIDE TO SERVING AS SPEAKER

### **Before the Meeting:**

1. Confirm your attendance at meeting when you receive email/phone call from Toastmaster
2. Advise Toastmaster (by Tuesday or Wednesday of the week before) if your speech is not a standard 5-7 minute speech, so the Toastmaster can assess timing issues (note: if your speech is longer than 12 minutes you should have informed the VP-Education of that when you signed up for the speech)
3. Prepare Your Speech, based on the Manual Project you are doing (No non-manual speeches!)
4. Run Through Your Speech and Figure Out Your Time—If You Need to Modify Your Speech to Meet The Time Period Set Forth in the Manual, Do So (The meeting is timed and going over your allotted time may cause the meeting to go over)
5. If you can't make the meeting, find a replacement and advise the Toastmaster of your replacement
6. Prepare an introduction to give to the Toastmaster. At a minimum, it should be typed in large letters (14 point or bigger), and should include (a) your name (b) your Toastmasters designation (c) your speech manual and project (d) any necessary set-up for your speech and (e) your speech title. It should not take more than 1 minute to read.

### **Monday Before Leaving For the Meeting:**

1. Assemble the following:
  - a. Your speech notes, if you are using any
  - b. Your introduction (take extras in case one is lost)
  - c. A pen or pencil (take a spare)
  - d. The manual you are working in (for the project you are doing, write in the date and the speech title)
  - e. Any props or exhibits you will be using for your speech
  - f. If appropriate, your laptop computer and projector
2. Take all this with you to the meeting.

### **Monday shortly before the meeting:**

1. Arrive by 6:20 so the Toastmaster Evaluator knows he or she does not have to substitute for you
2. Provide your Introduction to the Toastmaster. If there's anything about the introduction that you think requires special instruction—delivery of a joke, special emphasis on a word or phrase, or a dramatic pause—make sure you discuss that with the Toastmaster (best if those instructions are already typed into your introduction)
3. Go to the Timer and advise of the time for your speech
4. Go to your evaluator, give the evaluator your manual, and let the evaluator know if you are working on anything special other than what's already in the manual (generally this will be something that you know from past speeches you need to improve)
4. Sit at the appropriate speaker slot for the number of speaker you are

### **If you Have Props or Hazardous Gestures, Either Before the Meeting or During Dinner:**

1. If you have props, set them up where you can quickly put them into place when called upon to speak.
2. If necessary, recruit someone to help you set up props quickly when you are called upon to speak, and/or to hand you items as you speak
3. Very important: make sure you have made arrangements for any props that you use to be removed from the speaking area and put away after you speak—this is to prevent them from being a distraction for the rest of the meeting
4. Also very important: if your speech involves any gestures like tossing or flinging something for dramatic effect, make sure you know exactly where you will do that so as not to hit or hurt anybody. Also, arrange for someone to pick the item up quickly, even while you are speaking, so it won't be a distraction during the rest of your speech
  - a. If your speech involves any broad gestures, especially with items in your hand (e.g., swinging a baseball bat, swinging a tennis racket), make sure you know where to stand to do that without risk of hitting anyone. This may be a consideration in deciding to do a speech from a position other than behind the lectern.
5. If you are using any type of computer presentation, set it up and test it, make sure it's running properly—and recruit someone to advance the pages at your signal in case any remote control device fails
6. If your speech involves fire in any way (striking a match, lighting a candle, setting anything on fire), make sure of the following:
  - a. Your props include a wide mouthed container with plenty of water in it, that you can dump and put out the lit object (wide enough that you can throw the lit item in there even if the whole item is aflame)
  - b. You have recruited an assistant with a large pitcher of water to address any mishaps-e.g, you drop the lit object on the floor
  - c. You and your assistant know exactly where the fire extinguisher is and how to use it (best to set it near the speaking area)
  - d. You will not be producing enough smoke to set off the fire alarm or sprinkler system—any doubt in this regard, don't use fire

### **Before Your Speaking Turn Comes Up:**

1. Empty your pockets of change, etc., anything that could cause a noise (coins clinking, for example). Also anything that could cause a visible bulge under your clothing.
2. Remove your Toastmasters nametag
3. If you have a work name badge or key card, remove it

3. If you have a phone or Blackberry or pager, remove it
4. Ensure your clothing is properly buttoned and zippered, tie straight, suit buttons properly buttoned, etc.
5. Place whatever notes you will be using together, in the order you will use them (Good idea to have them numbered in case something gets out of order)

**If You Have Props, Just Before You Are Introduced, Just After the Previous Speaker Has Concluded:**

1. If it is practical to do this, have your recruited assistant quickly move your props into final position as the previous speaker is walking back to his or her seat

**As you are being introduced:**

1. Take into your left hand (NOT your right) any notes you will be using
2. Stand up. Place your seat back under the table, don't leave it pushed out.
3. Stand there relaxed, friendly, make eye contact with audience—they will start to judge your speech at this point, even before you begin speaking
4. Once the Toastmaster had introduced you, walk to the lectern and shake the Toastmaster's hand
  - (a) If you are speaking from in front of the lectern, you can walk to the front of the lectern and reach across the lectern to shake the Toastmasters hands
  - (b) If you are speaking from the back of the room, you don't have to shake hands, but do make a gesture acknowledging that you have received meeting control from the Toastmaster

**Just Before You Begin Your Speech, After You've Shaken the Toastmaster's Hand:**

1. Place your notes where you want them (to one side or another so you can slide used notes to the other side)
2. Make any necessary adjustments to the microphone (you want it under your chin so your face is still visible)
3. If not done already, move any necessary props into final position (best to have a box or table already set up that you can quickly move into final position, with the help of an assistant if necessary—if it's practical to already have the item in final position, such as having it inside the lectern, or having an assistant move it there as the prior speaker is walking back to his or her seat, so much the better)
4. Stand up straight, find your center, and pause for a second, looking at the audience, to get the audience's full attention

**During Your Speech:**

1. It is customary, at Toastmasters, to at some point say something like: "Mr. Toastmasters, Fellow Toastmasters, and Welcome Guests." Be aware, however, that this does not have to be the first thing you say! And you should not open with it, because it's a very weak opening. Get the audience's attention with a strong opening first, then say this.
2. When using notes: do not flip them from front to back, or hold them where the audience can see them (unless using note cards when in front of the lectern, and even then you should palm them so they are not prominent). The best procedure is to lay them to one side or the other of the surface you are reading them from. Then, when you finish with a page, slide it over to the other side—your next page is now on top to read, and your audience really can't see the sliding motion—particularly if you do the sliding while you're still speaking and looking at the audience.
3. Make eye contact with the audience
  - a. don't just slide your eyes around, but look at one person for a few seconds, then look at another person for a few seconds
  - b. try to look at people in every part of the audience, and both sides (most people tend to favor one side or the other)
  - c. Avoid looking over people's heads
  - d. If real eye contact makes you nervous, then look directly at the person's nose instead. They probably won't be able to tell that you aren't looking at their eyes.
  - e. Especially, make sure you make eye contact with your evaluator!
  - f. Don't forget the people at the head table!
4. Pay attention to the timing lights. If you have to, modify your speech to finish in a timely manner. It's easiest to do this if you assess this issue as soon as the green light comes on.
5. Once the red light comes on, no matter where you are in your notes, finish up quickly.

**Upon Concluding Your Speech:**

1. If you can, conclude your speech with a call to action—that is, tell the audience what you think they should do based on your speech (e.g., read a book, volunteer for something, be kinder to their children).
2. Do not thank your audience. The audience thanks you for sharing your perspectives and experiences with them.
3. Return control of the meeting to the Toastmaster. Generally, this will be by some phrase such as "Back to you, Mister/Madame Toastmaster," or often just "Mister/Madame Toastmaster."
4. Gather your notes into your left hand
4. Remain at the lectern and shake hands with the Toastmaster before leaving the lectern
  - a. If you are at the back of the room and can't do this, then at least make a hand gesture toward the lectern indicative of returning control to the Toastmaster (e.g., extend hand with palm open facing up). Don't point.
5. If you have props or equipment that you used, gather them together and get it out of the way for the remainder of the meeting (if necessary have prearranged help). This includes anything you might have tossed to the floor. You're not done speaking until any props you used have been cleared!
6. Return directly to your seat so the Toastmaster may introduce the next speaker.