

Meeting Speaker

Show your vocal verve!

No doubt you've guessed that the speaking program is the center of every Toastmasters meeting. After all, what's Toastmasters without the talking? But members don't just stand up and start yakking. They use the guidelines in the *Competent Communication (CC)* manual and the *Advanced Communication Series (ACS)* manuals to fully prepare their presentations.

The CC manual speeches usually last 5-7 minutes. ACS manual project speeches are 5-7 minutes or longer depending upon the assignment.

Every speaker is a role model and club members learn from one another's speeches. Prepare and rehearse to ensure you present the best speech possible. Don't insult your fellow club members by delivering a poorly prepared speech. However, it's also true that no speech is perfect. So, get out there and try! Here's what to do:

- **Check your club's meeting schedule regularly** to find out when you're assigned to speak. Begin working on the speech at least a week in advance. That way, you have enough time to devote to research, organization and rehearsal.
- **If you don't write your own speech introduction, make sure the Toastmaster of the meeting prepares a good one for you.**
- **Several days before the meeting, ask the general evaluator for your evaluator's name.** Talk with your evaluator about the speech you'll give. Discuss your speech goals and personal concerns. Let your evaluator know where you believe your speech ability needs strengthening, so he or she can pay special attention to those aspects of your presentation. Remember to bring your manual to the meeting.
- **You should arrive at the meeting early** to check the room and anything else that could malfunction and ruin your talk. Give your manual to your evaluator before the meeting starts and discuss any last-minute issues with him or her. Sit near the front of the room and carefully plan your approach to the lectern and your speech opening.

- **During the meeting, give your full attention to the speakers at the lectern.**
Don't study your speech notes while someone else is talking. When you're introduced, smoothly and confidently leave your chair and walk to the lectern. After your speech, wait for the Toastmaster to return to the lectern, then return to your seat. Listen intently during your evaluation for helpful hints that will assist in building better future talks.
- **After the meeting, reclaim your manual from your evaluator.** Discuss any questions you may have concerning your evaluation to clarify and avoid any misinterpretations.
- **Finally, have the vice president education (VPE) initial the Project Completion Record in the back of your manual.**

You'll enjoy a growing sense of confidence as you repeat these steps with new speech projects. Don't be afraid to do the work, enjoy the applause and reap the educational benefits. Your courage will be rewarded!

Citation:

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Toastmasters International website

<http://www.toastmasters.org/Members/MemberExperience/MeetingRoles/MeetingSpeaker.aspx>