



# Online Meeting Tips

## Before the Meeting

- ▶ Make sure you have the link to the online meeting. If you don't have it, please contact one of your club officers.
- ▶ Try to get access to a camera and some headphones. External speakers sometimes get picked up on microphones and can cause echoing. Some meeting platforms have apps that allow you to join the meeting from your phone, if necessary.
- ▶ If you are performing a meeting role or are going to be a speaker, please join the meeting a few minutes early so that you can test your technology.
- ▶ Some online meeting platforms, like Zoom, allow you to create a free account and customize it. If you want to do this, do it before the meeting starts.

## During the Meeting

### Audience Participants

- ▶ It is important to mute yourself while the speakers are giving their speeches. Meeting platforms will switch to the screen of the participant that is making noise, and you do not want your video to take the place of the speaker's video. It is also distracting to the speaker and the meeting roles to hear other noises while the speaker is giving their speech.
- ▶ If possible, it is best to leave your camera on while the speaker is speaking so that they can see the reactions of the audience. Be sure to not be busy doing other things like texting or watching videos while the speaker is speaking. Give them the same attention you would give them in person. However, videos can cause some members with poor internet connections to lag, so evaluate with your fellow club members.
- ▶ Some video platforms allow you to message people directly, which is optimal for feedback for a speaker, as it helps avoid distractions in the general chat channel.
- ▶ If you would like to participate in Table Topics®, make sure your video is on so that the Table Topicsmaster can see when you are volunteering. Clubs who utilize Zoom can use the "Raise Hand" function, which will show in the participant's panel of the meeting. You may want to verbally volunteer if you do not have a camera.

### Speakers

- ▶ Speakers should practice speaking without a physical audience a few times before giving their speech. In Zoom, changing the view to "Gallery View" will allow you to see the facial expressions of the audience. If you are sharing a presentation, be sure to only share the window the presentation is in (such as PowerPoint) to prevent notifications or other distractions from showing on their screen.

- ▶ Make eye contact with the camera, not your screen, to appear like you are looking at audience members.
- ▶ Have a look at your background. Make sure there is nothing that will distract the audience as you speak.

## Ah-Counter and Grammarian

- ▶ These roles should be relatively unchanged. The Grammarian should send the Word of the Day and its definition to the chat so everyone will be able to see it throughout the meeting.

## Timer

- ▶ The Timer should download the **Toastmasters app** or use some other color-coded timer (or pieces of construction paper, if you have them) to maintain the visual cues for speakers. The Timer will also need a camera so that the speakers can see their color-coded time designation.
- ▶ Some platforms will allow you to change your background. You can use this to change your background to be green, yellow, or red, indicating time remaining to the speaker.
- ▶ A PowerPoint presentation can be created with a green, yellow, and red slide for the Timer to use. As the time progresses, the Timer can change slides to display the corresponding color.

## Toastmaster of the Day

- ▶ The Toastmaster role will not change much other than needing a camera and making sure that the other meeting roles and speakers are prepared to participate in an online meeting.
- ▶ Consider joining 15 minutes early to greet members as they join and possibly help with technical issues.
- ▶ Display the agenda on screen and explain the process of meeting online.
- ▶ If possible, highlight the Toastmaster of the Day on the online meeting platform you are using so they can easily be identified.

## Evaluators

- ▶ Speech evaluators should meet with the speakers before the meeting to understand any constraints the speaker may have (limited stage area, common meeting spaces, etc).
- ▶ The General Evaluator should make note of difficulties specific to online participation and make sure the officers know to remind participants of these before the next meeting.

## Vote Counter

- ▶ The Vote Counter should determine the best way to receive votes (email, chat, or voting form) and communicate this decision to the meeting participants. Votes will not be anonymous through these methods of

communication. Messages should be sent directly to the Vote Counter and not to the general chat for everyone to see.

- ▶ You can also create an online voting form using free services from **Google, Microsoft, Baidu**, or any other provider that will work for your club. You can even use **ElectionBuddy** or **Election Runner** to set up free voting for Best Speaker, Best Table Topics, Best Evaluation, and any other awards your club hands out.

## **Table Topicsmaster**

- ▶ The Table Topicsmaster should decide and inform members on how the volunteer process will work. Options include having the volunteers raise their hands, unmute their mics, or utilize the chat feature