

The role of the Toastmaster of the Evening (TOE)

*This text is based on the information presented by easyspeak.
(<http://district59.eu/portal.php?page=-1&marknow=0>)*

I modified it for the specific needs of the Bonn International Toastmasters. Don't hesitate to ask an experienced Toastmaster to act as special mentor for your first time as a TOE.

Klaus Roth

The main duty of the Toastmaster is to act as the host and make the introductions.

Participants should be introduced in a way that encourages the audience to listen to them. The Toastmaster creates an atmosphere of interest, expectation, and receptivity.

Usually this task will not be assigned to you until you are familiar with the Club and its procedures.

Before the meeting

Call or post an email in advance to all speakers to remind them that they will give a speech.

You can contact them via the BIT Yahoo-group. Ask for their speech title, manual project number, purpose to be achieved, time requested and some information about themselves and/or their speech to use for your introduction (job, family, hobbies, education, why this topic for this audience etc.).

Usually you can find this information in the comments of the doodle list. The doodle list can be found here: ([http:// www.bonn-international-toastmasters.de/Members.html](http://www.bonn-international-toastmasters.de/Members.html))

Post a **reminder email** to the BIT yahoo-group (bonn-international-tm@yahoogroups.com) a few days before the meeting to motivate members to participate and to get them interested in the upcoming meeting. For example give some information on the topics of the speeches. And – if necessary – encourage members to fill in any vacant roles in the agenda.

Prepare introductions for each speaker. A proper introduction can add to the success of the speaker's presentation.

Prepare remarks which can be used to bridge the gaps between programme segments. You may never use them, but you should be prepared in order to avoid any awkward periods of silence which might occur.

Remember that performing as Toastmaster is one of the most valuable experiences in your club work. The assignment requires careful preparation in order to have a smoothly-run meeting.

Finally, create an **agenda** for the meeting. A template can be downloaded at the website "members". You will find the number of expected participants on the doodle list. Print 5-7 extra sheets for unexpected members or guests.

At the same site you find the template for the **speech award**. Modify for the evening.

Check the future doodle lists. Who has already signed in? Note it.

At the meeting

Arrive early in order to finish any last-minute details.

Check with the speakers for any last-minute changes. Welcome everyone, especially the guests. Note their names.

Select your seat. Make sure the seat you select allows you to easily reach and depart the speaking zone.

Speaking and greeting each person can help fill any vacant roles in the agenda.

Leadership is delegation. So let others hand out the nametags, the agenda sheets, the stopwatch, etc. Before you start you should check if everything is done.

“Fellow toastmasters, dear guests”

You start.

Read the final agenda loud, so everyone can update the printed agenda. You do not have to find speakers for the table topics — they will be selected by the table topic master.

Try to include all Toastmasters in the agenda. Nonessential roles like “joke” can be skipped if there is no volunteer.

If there are guests, welcome them. Did you note their names? Before each item of the agenda, you should provide some brief information to them. For example: why do we have a word of the evening? Describe what the table topics are about and how they are handled.

During the meeting

Preside with sincerity, energy and decisiveness. Take your audience on a pleasant journey and make them feel all is going well.

Study the agenda carefully so you do not miss any items such as the timekeeper’s report etc.

Always lead the applause before and after each presentation.

Before each speech let the evaluator read the executive summary of the speech project to the audience.

After introducing a speaker, remain standing at the speaking zone until you have shaken hands - signifying you are now handing this part of the meeting over to this person - then seat yourself.

When a speaker has finished, shake hands again to signify that control of the meeting is being returned to you.

You are the conductor. You are responsible for the orchestra. You must make the solo players (the speakers) sparkle.

Closing the meeting:

Ask the guests if their expectations have been fulfilled, if they will come again or if they want to join the club.

Also, ask the members to sign up for upcoming meetings. Mention who has already signed up for the next meeting and ask for a commitment. Be strict.

Some days later

Put all the names you collected on the appropriate doodle list. Post a **summary mail** to the BIT-yahoo-group. There you can mention highlights and anything else you were impressed with, repeat any information like a website or event. This mail will remind the participants of a nice evening. And it will make the non-participants think: "Oh, I missed it. Next time I will conquer my weaker self and come."

Uff, done!

Believe me conducting a toastmasters´ meeting is not easy. But the second time, the third time it will run more smoothly. You will enjoy the surfing standing on your surfboard (the lectern). The mighty and huge wave is under YOUR control. What a good feeling!

Bonn 2010

Klaus Roth