TABLE TOPICSMASTER

Prior to the meeting - See the manual for information about theme meetings and selection of topics.

Find out who the prepared speakers, evaluators, general evaluator, and Toastmaster are so you can call on the other members first. Only if time permits at the end of the topics session should you call on program participants (speakers last).

Keep your comments short. Your job is to give others a chance to speak, not to give a series of mini-talks yourself.

During the meeting - When introduced, briefly state the purpose of the topics session.

Set the stage for your topics program. Keep your remarks brief but enthusiastic. If the Club has a "Word of the Day," encourage speakers to use the word in their response.

Keep the program rolling; be certain everyone understands the maximum time they have for their response and how the timing lights/device works (if the timer hasn't already done so).

State the question briefly -- then call on a respondent. This serves two purposes: First, it holds everyone's attention -- each one is thinking of a response should he or she be called on to speak; and second, it adds to the value of the impromptu element by giving everyone an opportunity to improve his or her "better listening and thinking" skills.

Call on speakers at random. Avoid going around the room in the order in which people are sitting. Give each participant a different question. Don't ask two people the same thing unless you ask each specifically to give the "pro" or "con" side.

Watch your total time! Check the printed agenda for the total time allotted to Table Topics and adjust the number of questions to end your segment on time. Even if your portion started late, try to end on time to avoid the total meeting running overtime.

Source: Toastmasters International Communication and Leadership Program, Catalog No. 225, pg. 73.