

## **Table Topics Contest Briefing for Contestants**

**Toastmaster:** Gather all speakers and cover the following points:

1. Confirm that all contestants have provided their Eligibility and Originality forms to the Chief Judge. (See item 11 for eligibility rules.)
2. Make sure all contestants have provided legible Biographical Data forms to Toastmaster.
3. Let contestants know they will be introduced as follows: Contestant #, Name, Table Topic Question, repeat Table Topic Question, repeat Name.
4. Clarify that all contestants will answer the same Table Topic question. All but the first Table Topic contestant will be escorted from the room before the Table Topic question is first asked. The remaining speakers will be brought back into the room one by one, after the prior contestant has finished speaking.
5. Verify pronunciation of each speaker's name.
6. Table Topics are 1-2 minutes. Speeches less than 1:00 (one minute) or more than 2:30 (two minutes, thirty seconds) will be disqualified.
7. Inform contestants where timekeepers are located and ensure they can see the timing devices.
8. The lights will be activated as follows:
  - a. Green Light at 1 minute
  - b. Amber Light at 1-1/2 minutes (one minute 30 seconds)
  - c. Red Light at 2 minutes and will stay on until the conclusion of the speech. No notice shall be given should a speaker go over time.
9. In the event of light failure, 30 seconds will be granted to the speaker (should not be necessary if card boards are in place).
10. Time starts with first word uttered or when any form of communication is used.
11. Disqualifications are for:
  - a. Time - Chief Judge and Timers. If there is a disqualification for time, it will be announced (no name) before the announcement of the winners.
  - b. Originality – it would be highly unlikely in a Table Topics contest, but Judges and Contestants may protest to the Chief Judge or Contest Chair, before winners are announced, if they feel the Table Topic response is plagiarized, substantially unoriginal or if quotes are not attributed to source. Should a protest be lodged, the Chief Judge will call the judges and the speaker aside for a

review.

c. Eligibility - must be a member in good standing of a club in good standing, and not a district officer or candidate for district office.

11. Once a winner has been declared, all decisions are final. Note: The Chief Judge and Ballot Counters can correct the Contest Chair if he reads the winners incorrectly.

12. Define speaking area. Explain that if contestants step out of the speaking area they are not automatically disqualified but may be marked down by the judges.

13. Once all contestants have spoken, the Toastmaster will interview them briefly, asking them their club name/number and one or two questions from their biographies. (If a contestant is competing in both contests, the Toastmaster interviews that contestant after the last contest is completed).

14. Draw for speaking order.

15. Have contestants remove name tags and any other indications of proficiency or club affiliation. The small Toastmasters pin is acceptable.

16. Confirm the following with the speakers and Sergeant-at-Arms.

a. Use of microphone - this should be set up during the minute of silence between speakers

b. Lectern required

17. Are there any questions?