

The Role of Time Keeper

One of the skills Toastmasters practice is expressing a thought within a specific time. As timer you are responsible for monitoring time for each meeting segment and each speaker. You'll also operate the timing signal, indicating to each speaker how long he or she has been talking. Serving as timer is an excellent opportunity to practice giving instructions and time management – something we do every day.

Here's how to succeed as timer:

- Before the meeting (allow enough time when you arrive), confirm with the Toastmaster and General Evaluator which members are scheduled program participants and the time they'll need for their prepared speech.
- At the meeting, retrieve the timing equipment from the Sergeant at Arms. Be sure you understand how to operate the stopwatch and signal device, make certain the timing equipment works and sit where the signal device can be seen by all.
- The Toastmaster of the meeting will usually call on you to explain the timing rules and demonstrate the signal device.
- Throughout the meeting, listen carefully to each program participant and signal them. Generally, Table Topics speakers should be +/- 30 seconds of allowed time; prepared speakers must also be +/- 30 seconds. However, these times may vary from club to club. In addition, signal the President, Toastmaster and Topicsmaster with red when they have reached their allotted or agreed-upon time. Record each participant's name and time used.
- When you're called to report by the Topicsmaster, Toastmaster or General Evaluator, announce the speaker's name and the time taken. Mention those members who are eligible for awards if your club issues awards.
- After the meeting, return the stopwatch and timing signal device to the sergeant at arms. Give the completed timer's report to the Secretary so he or she can record it in the minutes (if this is done in your club).

Take on this role and the new habits formed will serve you well in your private life and your career. People appreciate a speaker, friend or employee who is mindful of time frames and deadlines.