

QUIZMASTER

Your Job as Quizmaster

You as QM generate 6 open and closed ended Q&A around the prepared speeches and table topics for the audience members to address. Skills used in the role are similar to that of General Evaluator / Grammarian / Toastmaster. By challenging and encouraging the audience to actively listen (with pen and paper) and share their answers, you set up multi-participant dialogue that invites everyone to show up, pay attention, and take risks. (optional: Today to get the most out of this session, suggest you all have a pen and paper handy to take notes on what you think is most memorable)

Before Meeting Starts

1. The week before the meeting, the QM originator that week will ask another team member to volunteer for this role, and prep them as needed (acting as your QM buddy).
2. At the start of the meeting, communicate to the Toastmaster of the day (and your QM buddy) that you are the Quizmaster to make sure that the Toastmaster will introduce you at the start of the meeting
3. At the start of the meeting, communicate with the Timer that the Quizmaster session is 4 to 6 minutes long. The Timer will show green at 4 minutes, yellow at 5 minutes, and red at 6 minutes. Be sure to tell the Timer that he/she is timing the entire session, not each speaker.
4. Have paper/pen ready or a word document open on your computer to take notes during the meeting.

During the Meeting

1. At the start of the meeting when the Toastmaster of the day calls on you, introduce yourself and your role (see above).
2. As the meeting progresses, jot down notes on what you see and hear during prepared speeches and Table Topics speeches.
3. Use your notes to create around 6 questions (e.g., 4 close-ended/recall questions, 2 open-ended/discussion questions).
4. Midway through, let your QM buddy know your status. If you need any support and/or share your Q&A if you need additional suggestions, please let them know by mid-way in the session (e.g. before Table Topics).

Your Quizmaster Session

When the Toastmaster or General Evaluator calls on you after speech evaluations, but before timer/ah-counter/grammarian reports, you have 4-6 minutes to conduct your session. You may provide a quick overview to reorient the audience on what will happen during the session and the audience will participate (e.g. if they will be called upon, or if they can unmute and respond without prompting, popcorn style, etc).

Begin by asking your first question. Give a few seconds for the audience to respond. If audience members do not answer rapidly, start calling on people. If they are not able to answer, pick someone else.

To enable more of a dialogue on open ended Q&A, feel free to comment and reflect on their answers, to enable others to volunteer to provide their answers.

When your time is up or if you reach the red card, wrap up the session, thank the audience for their participation, share an uplifting message, and pass control back to the Toastmaster or General Evaluator.

Tips:

You will need to multi-task during the meeting with both analysis and active listening to generate questions and answers live

It is okay to have more or less than 6 questions: if you have fewer questions or are having difficulty,, shoot a text to your QM buddy for question suggestions

Focus on one idea per question.

Give the audience time to think of the answer without giving them any hints

If the meeting is running late or overtime, keep the Quizmaster session shorter by asking fewer questions. Consider timing the session 2-3 minutes like an evaluation speech instead of 4-6 minutes.

How to Write Questions

Questions come in four categories:

Close-ended questions are questions that have one-word answers like yes/no, true/false, multiple choice, or a keyword/phrase, and may reference content or physical aspects of speech delivery e.g. body language, vocal variety.

Open-ended questions are questions that invite the audience to give a longer and more thoughtful answer, and may reference content or physical aspects of speech delivery e.g. body language, vocal variety.

Recall questions are answered purely from what the audience saw and heard during speech presentations (i.e. recalling factual information or what the speaker had said)

Discussion questions are answered by taking information from the speech presentation and offering your own viewpoint. You may connect what was said in a speech and apply it to another situation, talk about a broader concept related to public speaking, speech impact, etc. Discussion questions should invite multiple people to answer and create a conversation.

1. Look at your notes
2. Consider the merits of each question and decide if you want to add a close-ended vs open-ended question to your pool of questions.
3. Decide if you want your audience to recall information, or express their viewpoints on information taken from a speech to start a discussion.

Question writing examples:

Watch the following YouTube clip and then review questions that were written by your fellow Boston Toastmasters:



Aaron Beverly

[“An Unbelievable story”](#)

- How does the shoe game work?
- What is an “ominous smiler” according to the speaker?
- The headline “idiot ruins wedding and US India relations” is an example of what literary device?
- What is the point of the shoe game according to the speaker?
- The speaker’s refusal to give the shoes to anybody suggests what personal attributes?
- How did you feel about the storytelling aspect of the presentation?
- What three hand motions stood out to you?
- What themes are present throughout the presentation?
- How do you feel this speaker ended the speech?