

INTRODUCING SPEAKERS, PRESENTING AND ACCEPTING AWARDS TIPS AND TECHNIQUES

INTRODUCING SPEAKERS

Do you ever have the need to introduce a speaker? You might want to try these quick tips for delivering thoughtful speaker introductions:

- **Find out how long your speaker is prepared to speak**, and make sure you have allotted the appropriate amount of time to accommodate the speaker's topic AND the attention-span of your audience. There is nothing more embarrassing than having to stop a speaker in the middle of his or her talk. And, you don't want your members nodding off, either
- **Don't steal the show** by making the introduction too long (60 seconds or less is sufficient), or by speaking on a topic that is in no way related to the speaker.
- **Grab the audience's attention** with a great opening. This can be an inspiring quote, a humorous anecdote, or an impressive milestone the speaker has achieved.
- **Briefly mention the topic** the speaker is addressing, but don't reveal too much about his or her speech.
- **Establish the speaker's authority and expertise.** This information will help solidify with the audience the speaker's credibility as a subject matter expert.
- **Finish with saying the title to the speaker's talk, if appropriate, and then the name of the speaker.** Then, lead the audience in applause to welcome the speaker and, again at the end of the talk, to thank the speaker for a job well done.
- **Always verbally thank the speaker and, if possible, extend to your speaker a small token of your appreciation.**

PRESENTING AWARDS

We hope you recognize your own members, or members of your community, on a regular basis for a job well done! Remember to highlight the value of both the award and the recipient. To create a memorable presentation, explain the criteria for the award and how the recipient met those criteria. Here are a few additional guidelines:

- **Tell a story** about the significance of the award.
- **Pronounce names** of the recipients correctly.
- **Provide background** on the recipient.
- **Hold the award respectfully** and hand it to the recipient as if it were a treasure.

- **Wait to invite the recipient** to the lectern until you formally introduce them.
- **Stand so the audience can see** the recipient and the award dearly. **Lead the audience in a well-deserved ovation.**
- **Allow the recipient time to formally accept the award** — see below.
- **Always lead the audience in applause after the recipient speaks.**

ACCEPTING AWARDS

Not only do you give awards, but we're sure you have the opportunity on a regular basis to accept an award for the great work you're doing! Whether you're accepting an Oscar, community or club recognition, below are some proven tips for delivering a powerful acceptance speech for any type of award:

- **Show your personality.** Your acceptance should come from the heart.
- **Be gracious.** Acknowledge the good work done by others in your organization and thank those that selected you for the award.
- **Show excitement.** You don't have to climb over chairs or even cry, but everyone should recognize that you're happy to have won the award.
- **Be modest.** Your acceptance should be heartfelt but not self-congratulatory.
- **Don't be too long-winded.**

We thank Toastmasters international for these tips! You can find many more on their website at www.toastmasters.org.