

Effective Club Meetings

or “How to have fun once a week”

What makes a great Toastmaster Meeting?



Hybrid vs In-person?

I love hybrid

- Our club has four members who are only online.
- One lives in Florida and is a former local member who moved away but loves our club. She adds great value to our meetings, excellent evaluator, and tests her presentations to club members for feedback before giving her seminars.
- One lives in Wisconsin and cannot drive, she participates in every meeting, is VP of Membership, and has really improved her speaking since she joined.
- We have two members in Uganda. There are no local clubs within 2 hours. These are people I met while working on a Water and Sanitation project that I led.
- We have three members who travel a lot for work and like to dial in when on the road.
- We have between 3 and 8 online members at each meeting, average is around 6. In person attendance is 10 to 18, with an average of 13.

Our Club's Hybrid Setup

Equipment

- Our room has a large TV mounted on the wall
- We have two inexpensive laptops running the meeting on zoom
- We have two webcams on tripods one linked to each computer
 - One looking at the room (from in front of the monitor)
 - One looking at the podium with our banner and US flag behind it
- We have a long HDMI cable from the laptop to the prime laptop

Our Club's Hybrid Setup

Preparation/execution

- We have a paid zoom account to run the meetings
- Our technical person starts setup 20 minutes before the meeting
- The tech guy sits at the prime laptop during the meeting and can mute as needed or kick out any disruptive guest (has only happened twice)
- He enters comments for what we are doing to any online guests
- He gets name and email address for any online visitors
- Our zoom meeting info is posted on our web site and on each meeting agenda page

Preparation

(Planning is a major success factor)

- Monthly Club Officer meetings
- Having a Toastmaster who picks a theme early
- Having all roles filled in prior to the meeting
- Having a title and introduction for each speaker
- Having a fun but unusual word of the day
- Put out forms for feedback notes at each table just prior to meeting
- Setup the flag and banner
- At the lectern have agenda and speaker introductions
- Have forms, timer flags, etc.



BALLOTS AND BRIEF EVALUATIONS
Write both strong points and suggestions for improvement. For more space use reverse side. Include speaker's name in space provided.
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FIRST SPEAKER _____

SECOND SPEAKER _____

THIRD SPEAKER _____

TOPICMASTER _____

GENERAL EVALUATOR _____

TOASTMASTER OF MEETING _____

BALLOT
Best Evaluator _____

BALLOT
Best Speaker _____
Second _____
Most Improved _____

BALLOT
Best Table Topics* Speaker _____
Second _____
Most Improved _____

Meeting Venue

(The right place can make a big difference)

- Clean and quiet with good lighting
- Enough tables and chairs for everyone
- Large monitor with speaker - if hybrid
- Convenient location
- Parking
- Signage - have something on the door letting them know where to go

Keys for an Effective Meeting

Enthusiasm required

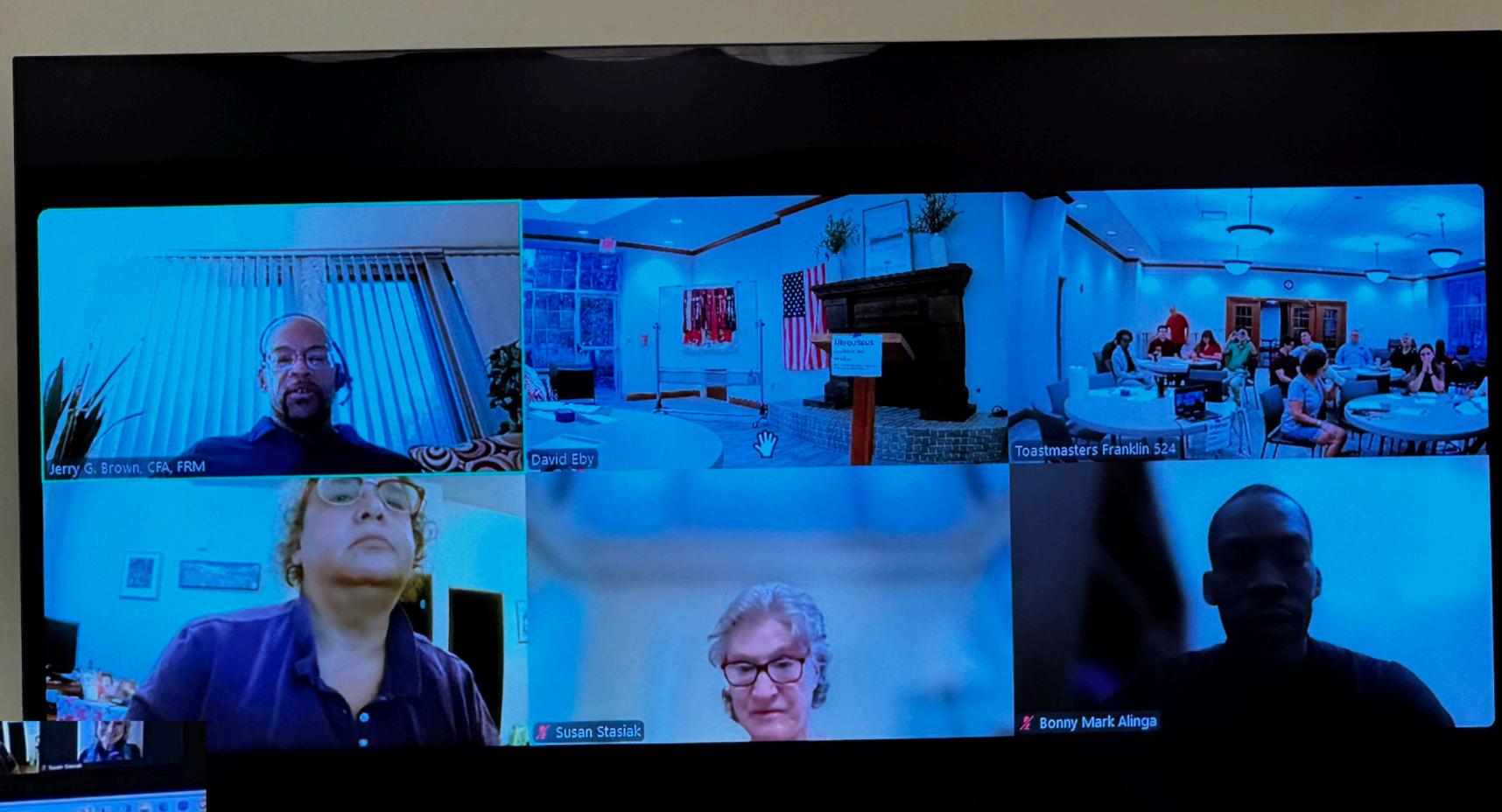
- ***Start right on time and be enthusiastic!***
- Have printed agendas at every seat
- Our club has everyone read our mission statement together - led by Sergeant at Arms
- Every role is introduced by the prior role
- Toastmaster should be entertaining and keep everything on time
- General Evaluator should explain what will happen during the feedback portion of the meeting
- Try to have everyone contribute to the meeting.

Presiding Officer

This is the key to club success



- The club president needs to add an air of comfort, inspiration, and welcoming of all attendees. Toastmasters change each week, but the president is a constant, stabilizing role.
- Recognize visitors and ask what brought them to the meeting. Make them feel recognized and welcome.
- Go over any upcoming dates, etc, but with a bit of humor added.
- Introduce the Toastmaster.
- At the end of the meeting, ask each visitor what they thought of the meeting and make them feel welcome to return (or become a member).



Our Last Club Meeting

Diversity - Camaraderie - Fun

- Review our last meeting agenda - 14 people in person and 4 online
- We have 28 paid members and this meeting had 2 guests, one for a second time
- We have a wide mix of ages (18-76)
- Balance of experienced Toastmasters and New Members, wide variety of backgrounds
- We try to get all new members a mentor and schedule online zoom training for Pathways, next training scheduled for Tuesday at 7:15 am
- We have an extra agenda item - **“Toastmaster Educational Minute”**

Some special meeting ideas

More ways to have fun

- Joint meeting with another hybrid or online club - we did one with a club from Shanghai, hope to get one with a club from Australia and Malaysia in next 6 months.
- Bring in a special guest speaker - ask advanced clubs if they could have someone give a speech if you are having trouble getting enough speeches scheduled.
- Create a few ad hoc committees (3-4 people each) and have them brainstorm ideas and then have a set of meetings with what each committee came up with.
- Have a meeting with impromptu speeches - sort of like extended table topics, pulling topics out of a hat that align with meeting theme. (so no prep needed)
- Have a meeting with 3 or 4 icebreaker speeches.

Visit other clubs

Check out the competition

- Everyone is invited to attend one of my club's meetings either in person or online. <https://franklin524.toastmastersclubs.org>
- Visit other clubs while on vacation or out of town for work, or just online.
- At one club I visited (Missoula Montana), the best part of the meeting was the timer's report
- Become facebook friends with Toastmasters from around the world - get ideas from their posts.
- Visit one of the advanced clubs in your area