

HOW TO GET READY FOR TABLE TOPIC CONTEST

Speaker: Fred Pan
Duration: 40-45 minutes

ABC's of Table Topic

- Table topic threatens our composure more acutely than any other toastmasters activities.
- Answer of it is essentially a speech miniature just as any prepared speeches. Organize it into opening, body, and conclusion.
- All contestants shall receive the same topic, which shall not require a detailed knowledge but should lead to an opinion or conclusion.
- Topics could be any except for religion, politics, and sex.

Judging Criteria

- **Time Limit:** one to two minutes
- **Speech Development (30%)**
The structure includes opening, body, conclusion. The response is supported by relevant facts and illustration and is delivered smoothly.
- **Effectiveness (25%)**
Speaker's purpose can be clearly identified. The response is clearly and logically presented.

Judging Criteria

- **Physical (15%)**
The speaker's appearance should reinforce his or her response. Body language should support points through gestures, body positioning.
- **Voice (15%)**
Emphases are made through flexible volume and variety of rate. A good voice can be clearly heard.
- **Language (15%)**
Word selection promote clear understanding of thoughts and should fit the occasion precisely. Proper use of grammar and correct pronunciation.

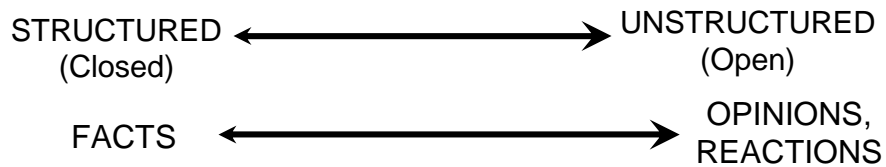
OPENING

- Pause! Collect thoughts then launch!
- Don't open with "Thank you for ..."
- Using Quotation
- Do not solely repeat the topic.
Paraphrase the question or create an introduction to the topic!!

PARAPHRASE QUESTIONS

- In what ways are US films different from Chinese films?
- How long have you been speaking for money?
- What's the most essential human quality?
- What kind of clothes should you wear on a first date?

Question Types



Answering Strategies

- Temporal Relation:
past → present → future
before → after
- Spatial/ Geographical Relation:
Far → Close , Taipei → Beijing → New York

- Do I care about my appearance?
- What is missing in the life of Taiwan's students?

Answering Strategies

- PREP: point → reason → example → point
- Balanced Opinion: pros and cons
- Problem and Solution

- Is crime on the rise in Taiwan?
- Joy and sorrow of being a toastmaster.
- What might be the biggest problem of the 21st century?

Answering Strategies

- 5W1H: who, what, when, where, why, how
- Story and lessons
- Analyze all possibilities

- If you could, where would you choose to live in Taiwan?
- The most unforgettable experience you have ever had.
- If you love someone who doesn't love you, and there's one who loves you but you don't. What would you do?

CONCLUSION

- People remember longest the last thing they hear, so make it striking, forceful, and meaningful
- Wrap up by clear transition statement such as “in conclusion”, “let me end by saying”, “in summary”; or people may feel that you’re hedging.
- **Closing Methods**
 - *echo the opening*
 - *summarize the speech*
 - *reemphasize main idea*
 - *motivate response*
 - *rhetorical question*
 - *quotation*

DELIVERY

- What counts, finally, is often not so much what you say as how you say it.
- Pause before returning to seat; accept applause graciously.
- Only acknowledge interjections if they assist your speech.
- Smile and enjoy yourself
- Maintain eye contact with the audience

VOICE AND LANGUAGE

- Voice Practice
 - Strategic pauses
 - Rate variation
 - Vocal emphasis on key words
- Verbal Language
 - Pronunciation (stress and vow)
 - Grammar
 - past/present/future tense
 - subjective mood
 - Appropriateness

Tactics Review

- **Memorize some quotations**
- **Borrow some stories from cinemas, soap dramas, internet articles**
- **Buy time to think by pause**
- **Paraphrase the question**
- **Grab attention & establish rapport**
- **Distinct paragraph transition words**
- **Aim high, achieve high;
aim low, achieve low.**

QUESTION BANK

- **Technology**
 - The greatest invention in modern life
 - If there were no televisions/ internet....
- **Impossible-If**
 - If you had only one week to live...
 - How would your life be different if you didn't have to sleep?
 - If you could live in a different time and space, where and when you want to live?
 - If you could be empowered with one superhuman ability, what ability would you choose? Why?

QUESTION BANK

- **“Most” Experience**
 - If you could spend an afternoon with a famous person (living or dead) who is your pick?
 - What teacher had the greatest impact on you? Why?
 - My favorite holiday
 - My favorite movie
 - The craziest thing I have ever done
 - What is the best birthday celebration you have ever had?
- **Personal Viewpoint**
 - Changes I would like to make in myself
 - My views on beauty contest and plastic surgery
 - The definition of an ideal career
 - How can we make our world be better