

How to Look Good as an Impromptu Presentations Emcee

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So you find yourself on your organization's schedule as the Impromptu Presentations Emcee. What should you do? Follow our **Success Tips for Impromptu Presentations Emcees**.

1. **Make up a bunch of impromptu topics**, more than you expect you'll need. We suggest 15 to 20 topics. Place each topic on an index card or separate strip of paper.
2. **Choose EASY topics**. Your mission is not to drain the last brain cell out of your fellow members. It's to give them the opportunity for growth—to stand confidently before an audience and give an unprepared, yet organized presentation. For example:
 - ✓ “Describe your idea of a great vacation.”
 - ✓ “My ideal mate is _____.”
 - ✓ “Driving in rush hour traffic is hard on the _____.”
 - ✓ “Overcoming fear is _____”
 - ✓ “I love my _____.”

Avoid lengthy, hard-to-understand-and-decipher descriptions such as:

- ✗ “Pretend you're a dog and you're about to be captured by aliens from another planet during the Civil War. What are you feeling?”
- ✗ “You're in a hotel room alone with former President Clinton. What do you plan to do?”
- ✗ “You see a lousy TV show. Tell your friends why they should watch the same show.”

Keep It Simple!

3. **Announce the time limits for Impromptu Presentations**. Say, “The green card will be held up at 1 minute, the yellow card at 1 minute, 30 seconds, and the red card at 2 minutes. Then the participant will have 30 seconds to finish. The goal is to speak until you see at least the green card. That's the minimum time and no more than 30 seconds past seeing the red card, the maximum time.”
4. **Determine how much time you will have for Impromptu Presentations**. This will enable you to figure out how many people you can call up. Allow about 3 minutes per

How to Look Good as a Table Topics Master

person. So if you determine you have 11 minutes, then you may be able to squeeze in 4 participants or stop after 3.

5. **Call up members first before calling on any guests.** It's important for guests to see how it's done before you call up a guest. If possible, avoid calling members who already have speaking roles on the program.
6. **Call up the Impromptu Presentations participant first, then state the topic.** Allow the person to randomly pick the topic (pick a card or strip of paper) and then you, the Impromptu Presentations Emcee, read the topic out loud.
7. **Call up guests without encouraging them to decline.** Before your meeting, talk to your guests and find out their level of comfort speaking in front of a group. If a guest has a public speaking phobia, do not call him or her up to do Impromptu Presentations. Call on another guest.

When you call on a guest, say, "Our club/chapter likes to give our guests a chance to participate and grow, so let's welcome to the lectern John." Then you, as Impromptu Presentations Emcee, lead the applause, encouraging the guest to come up.

Don't say, "John, want to come up? You can say 'no.'" If you do that, John will say "no" and so will Mary, Anita, Fred and all the remaining guests in the room. Your guests will go home worrying about being called up next time they come to visit the club and some, probably most, will not come back. You'll have stolen their chance to grow in public speaking, because you thought you were being nice. It's best for them to do an Impromptu Presentation and get it over with before they have time to think about it.

8. **Give guests VERY EASY topics.** Set aside a few easy topics such as...
 - ✓ "What kind of work do you do and why did you choose your profession?"
 - ✓ "What do you like to do in your spare time and why?"
 - ✓ "Describe your ideal vacation."

The topics should not require a lot of thought. When guests can handle an impromptu topic, they leave with a sense of satisfaction. They say to themselves, "That wasn't so bad. I can handle that."

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