

Impromptu Speaking Organisation

Planning

It is likely that there will be time for around 6-8 speeches but have extra subjects (12 max) in case required e.g. if the session must be extended to fill time if one of the main speakers should fail to turn up.

Think about links between the speakers - these need to be just long enough to allow the person doing the review to complete their notes but no longer. You shouldn't take up time that would allow an extra speaker to be fitted in, unless there is a need to fill time.

Think about the theme for the evening and try to look at it as others might see it rather than how you regard it. In other words, try to select subjects that the speaker is likely to understand and be able to talk about. Often a dictionary or Wikipedia will offer up angles on a word that may not have occurred to you. Keep it simple! One- or two-word subjects are better than sentences. However, feel free to use objects or images in place of words.

At The Meeting

Before the start/During first half

Obtain a copy of the attendees list before the start. During the first half of the meeting decide who you will ask to speak. Talk to first time visitors if possible before the start or otherwise at the interval (see below).

Speaking priority is: 1) First time visitors (or returning visitors who didn't speak previously); 2) Members who don't have any other role in the meeting; 3) Returning visitors who have spoken previously; 4) Members who have had other speaking roles at the meeting. The person providing feedback for Impromptu Speaking (or Meeting Reviewer) should not be asked to speak.

At the Interval

Check your watch when the meeting chairman announces the post-interval re-start time, as you may not be precisely synchronised.

First time visitors should be invited to introduce themselves briefly, possibly including their motivation for visiting. They should be advised not to worry about their speech timing.

It can be assumed that members will speak, so no need to consult them.

Appoint a timekeeper - preferably someone who has taken part in the first half of the meeting, so doesn't need to deliver an impromptu speech.

Move the lectern to one side.

Continued overleaf ...

Impromptu Speaking organisation continued ...

For timing planning, allow approx 4-5 mins per speaker (i.e. 2 minute speech time + the time to & from front of room + link time between speakers + feedback time).

Aim for completion of speeches by around 9.45pm to allow for the feedback. (If there is a meeting reviewer, timing should be adjusted to accommodate them).

Agree signal for next speaker with reviewer i.e. give them time to finish writing before announcing the next speaker.

Start Impromptu Speaking

Introduce yourself if there are guests.

Explain session (briefly!) - no need if all present are familiar with Impromptu Speaking. Explain the speaking order priority.

Explain coloured cards are for guidance only. The target is to finish speaking while the amber or red card is showing. For the usual 2 minute speeches, times are:

- Green - 1 min
- Amber - 1½ mins
- Red - 2 mins
- Scissors - 2¼ mins

Advise speakers they should wrap up fairly quickly if still speaking when scissors card is shown. Advise the salutation, which is informal and could be simply **Good Evening Everyone** or something similar.

Explain you will:

1. identify the speaker
2. state the subject
3. call the speaker to the front, repeating the subject title.

Alternatively:

1. state the subject
2. identify the speaker
3. call the speaker to the front, repeating their name and the subject

Remain standing and applauding speakers until they have given the salutation

Return lectern to front

Hand back to overall meeting chair prior to feedback.