

Thank you .... Fellow toastmasters and honored guests. Today, I would like to focus on Table Topics. Table Topics is part of the second half of each Toastmaster meeting where a Table Topics Master decides on a topic to speak about and chooses someone to speak about that topic for 1 – 2 minutes. The topic is not known beforehand which can sometimes leave a speaker confused and speechless. This is a great way to practice impromptu speeches because it can improve other aspects of your life such as unexpected interview questions or toasts at a friend's wedding. More specifically, I would like to cover several strategies for speaking about topics that you may have very little to no knowledge of. I will attempt to put myself through the tortuous task of doing table topics myself to illustrate the strategies I talk about.

Strategy 1 is the Past, Present and Future strategy.

As you can see from the speech, the past, present and future strategy has a very simple but effective structure. Speeches are usually structured so that they have an introduction to the topic, a body where most of your content will be located, and then a conclusion to sum up your points. It takes a look at how something has changed from the past, to the present and how it might change in the future. Alternatives to this strategy can be morning, noon, night or even the four seasons: spring, summer, fall, winter.

Strategy 2 is the Devil's Advocate strategy.

The Devil's Advocate strategy looks at a point, usually an opinion or a one-sided statement and first explains it, and then the speaker can present arguments for the statement and against the statement and then sums up those arguments to let the audience decide.

Strategy 3 is the Elaboration and Stream of Consciousness strategy.

The Elaboration and Stream of Consciousness strategy is a combination of two strategies into one. Realistically, you can use the elaboration strategy in any other impromptu speech you decide to perform, but essentially it is elaborating on details which you otherwise wouldn't be doing. Instead of saying an 'apple', you can say instead, a humongous red apple that was bursting with sweetness. These extra adjectives not only provide the audience with more detail, but it makes the speech livelier. The stream of consciousness is the idea of repeating the question to get your mind thinking and then saying the first thing that comes to your mind and running with that idea. As you start to talk about the first thing that comes to mind, usually what happens is more ideas will pop into your mind and you can start talking about those ideas as well.

For this speech, I have covered the Past, Present and Future strategy where you structure your speech on a timeline, the Devil's Advocate Strategy where you give arguments for and against the topic given and the Elaboration and Stream of Consciousness strategy where you elaborate on details to paint a better picture for your audience and to speak on

the first thing that comes into mind with the hope that as you talk, more ideas will spring to mind.

Thank you. Mr. Toastmaster.