EVERY ROLE HELPS YOU GROW

Every meeting is a chance to practise leadership. You do not need to be an experienced speaker to take a role. Start small, prepare well and learn by doing. Your club may use different role names or additional activities; always follow your Gavel Club Counsellor's meeting agenda.

1 Why meeting roles matter

When you take a meeting role, you learn to listen carefully, manage time, introduce others, give encouraging feedback and think on your feet. A successful meeting is a team effort: every role makes it easier for fellow Gaveliers to learn.

2 Understand the meeting flow

- Opening: The presiding officer or meeting leader welcomes members and guests, shares announcements and introduces the Toastmaster of the Day.
- Prepared speeches: Speakers deliver speeches or projects; evaluators listen for strengths and useful improvements.
- Table Topics: Gaveliers practise responding to unfamiliar questions with little preparation.
- Evaluation and reports: Evaluators and role holders share observations; the General Evaluator brings the feedback together.
- Closing: The meeting leader recognises participation and closes the meeting.

3 Before accepting a role

Ask yourself: What is my responsibility? How much time do I have? Who introduces me? What information or materials do I need? Who should receive my report?

4 Choose a role and build your confidence

New to meetings? Try Timer, Grammarian or Ah-Counter. Ready to guide a segment? Try Table Topics Master or Speech Evaluator. Ready to coordinate? Try Toastmaster of the Day or General Evaluator. These are suggestions, not prerequisites—your club may assign roles differently.

My next meeting role: _____
One skill I want to practise: _____
Who can help me prepare: _____

LEAD THE MEETING WITH CONFIDENCE

A confident meeting leader is prepared, welcoming and flexible. Your job is to help others shine—not to take all the speaking time.

5 Toastmaster of the Day (meeting host)

- Before: Check the agenda, theme, names, speech titles, pronunciation and introductions; confirm who is present.
- During: Set a positive tone, introduce each segment and speaker, keep transitions smooth and respond calmly to changes.
- After: Thank participants and pass the meeting back to the presiding officer or designated leader.

> Try saying: “Welcome, everyone! Today we will practise speaking, listening and encouraging one another. Let us begin with our prepared speech segment.”

6 Table Topics Master

- Prepare a variety of clear, age-appropriate questions that invite different opinions or stories.
- Explain the activity and any club-specific timing before inviting speakers.
- Invite a range of Gaveliers, especially those without another major speaking role; avoid pressuring guests.
- Listen to responses, thank each speaker and keep the segment moving.

> Try saying: “Your topic is: What is one small action that can make a big difference at school? Take a moment to think, then share your response.”

7 General Evaluator

- Confirm that evaluators and supporting role holders understand their responsibilities.
- Observe the overall meeting: preparation, flow, transitions, participation and timing.
- Invite the evaluation reports as arranged in the agenda.
- Give balanced, specific feedback about the meeting process—not personal criticism.

A useful approach: Name one strength, explain its impact, then offer one practical improvement for the next meeting.

SUPPORT SPEAKERS AND LEARNING

Supporting roles develop your observation skills. Your reports should be accurate, brief and kind, helping Gaveliers improve without feeling judged.

8 Speech Evaluator

- Before: Ask the speaker about their speech objective or project; understand what feedback they want.
- Listen: Note specific examples of effective content, organisation, voice and body language.
- Report: Highlight meaningful strengths and offer one or two achievable suggestions.
- Remember: Evaluate the speech and its effect—not the speaker as a person.

> Try saying: “Your opening question immediately caught my attention. One way to strengthen your conclusion would be to return to that question and connect it to your final message.”

9 Timer

Before the meeting, confirm the timing ranges and signals for each meeting segment. Club meeting timings may differ from contest timings. Test the stopwatch and signal cards or lights. During speeches, track time accurately and display signals as agreed. Report each participant’s time clearly when invited.

10 Ah-Counter

Listen for unnecessary filler sounds and words, such as “ah,” “um,” repeated “you know,” or habitual pauses filled with sound. Record observations fairly and report patterns without embarrassment or exaggeration. Natural pauses and thoughtful silence are not mistakes.

11 Grammarian / Word of the Day

Introduce the Word of the Day, explain its meaning and demonstrate it in a sentence. Listen for expressive language, effective word choices and recurring grammar issues. In your report, celebrate strong examples and offer respectful corrections where helpful.

> Word of the Day example: Resilience — the ability to recover and keep going after difficulty. “Her resilience helped her try again after a challenging speech.”

12 Other roles your club may use

Sergeant at Arms: Help prepare the room, welcome participants and support meeting logistics. Hark Master / Listening Master: Ask attentive-listening questions about the meeting. Quiz Master, Vote Counter or Theme Presenter: Follow your club’s specific instructions and keep the activity fair and welcoming.

YOUR MEETING-DAY TOOLKIT

Preparation makes even a first-time role easier. Use this page as your personal checklist before your next Gavel Club meeting.

13 Your before–during–after checklist

- ☐ Before: I confirmed my role, reporting time, agenda and the person who will introduce me.
- ☐ Before: I prepared any questions, notes, equipment or Word of the Day needed.
- ☐ During: I listened carefully, followed the agenda and respected the allotted time.
- ☐ During: I encouraged participation and spoke clearly and respectfully.
- ☐ After: I gave my report, thanked others and reflected on one improvement.

14 Quick role rehearsal: practise in five minutes

- Minute 1: Say your opening or introduction aloud.
- Minute 2: Rehearse how you will invite or introduce another Gavelier.
- Minute 3: Practise a smooth transition if the next speaker is absent.
- Minute 4: Give a short, constructive sample report.
- Minute 5: Check your timing and improve one phrase.

15 Three habits of a supportive Gavelier

Be prepared: Good preparation respects everyone’s time. Be encouraging: Mention what worked, not only what could improve. Be adaptable: Meetings do not always follow the plan; stay calm and help the team move forward.

16 My meeting-role reflection

Role I completed: _____
Something I did well: _____
One improvement for next time: _____
A role I would like to try next: _____

“Every role you take is another opportunity to find your voice and help someone else find theirs.”

Reference: Toastmasters International educational guidance on club meeting roles and evaluations. Role names, meeting procedures and timing may be adapted by individual Gavel Clubs; follow your club’s approved agenda and Counsellor’s guidance.