

# The Austin Toastmasters "Minor" Roles Guide

The following descriptions explain the basic duties for each of the minor roles at The Austin Toastmasters. Please note that when your role is introduced, it is up to you to explain the role in your own words. There is no need to read these words as your script. The purpose of these words is merely to help you understand your responsibilities in your assigned role.

**Invoker:** The Invocation should be a **brief** quote or passage. It can be inspiring, humorous, thought-provoking, or even tied to the meeting theme. (Note: the Invocator will not explain the Invocation role, unlike the other minor roles. Instead, the Invocator will simply deliver the quote or passage when called on by the President at the beginning of the meeting.)

**Grammarian / Ah Counter:** In many clubs, these are two separate roles, but in The Austin Toastmasters we have combined them into one. The basic responsibilities for this role include:

1. Prior to the meeting, pick a word of the day. Print the word on a sheet of paper in BIG, BOLD letters so everyone in the room will be able to read it. Include a definition. The word of the day should be hung at the front of the room, visible to all.
2. When introducing your role, tell everyone the word, the definition, and use it in a sentence to help clarify its meaning and recommended usage.
3. Explain your role and the audience's responsibilities, including the following two practices:
  - a. There is a \$0.10 penalty per filler word up to \$0.50, to be paid to the piggy bank.
  - b. There is a \$0.10 credit (maximum) toward your total penalty for using the word of the day. This credit applies toward your penalty for that meeting only. If you have no penalty, there is no credit, only an "atta-boy."
4. During the course of the meeting, you will listen for, and record, incorrect (and interesting, if you like) uses of the English language and filler words. Filler words include "um," "ah," "ya' know," or any other word where a pause or simply ending a sentence would be more appropriate.
5. When called upon by the General Evaluator near the end of the meeting, please provide a **brief** report of the speakers' uses of filler words, use of English, and use of the word of the day.

**Timer:** The Timer records the speaking time of each speaker. The timer lights or appropriately colored folders should be clearly visible to the speakers as follows:

- GREEN indicates the minimum time you have to reach to be eligible for an award
- YELLOW indicates that you are halfway between the minimum and maximum time
- RED indicates you have reached the specified time limit, but you have an extra 30 seconds to wrap up and still be eligible for an award.

The following timeframes will be observed: Table topics 1-2 minutes, Evaluators 2-3 minutes, Speakers vary so the timeframe will be supplied to you by the Toastmaster.

**Vote Counter:** The Vote Counter collects and counts the ballots after each designated agenda item is complete. Attendees vote for Best Speaker, Best Table Topic, and Best Evaluator as the meeting progresses. Write the winners' names on the back of the corresponding ribbon and hand the ribbons to the Toastmaster, preferably before the General Evaluator turns the meeting back over to the Toastmaster. If there is a tie, then two ribbons will be awarded.

(Tip: Counting votes is faster if you simply separate the ballots per name and then count the number of ballots, rather than writing each name on a sheet of paper and putting tally marks next to it.)