

Sergeant-at-Arms Standards

Outside of the club meeting

1. Schedule the meeting location.
2. Maintain club equipment and supplies.
3. Attend club executive committee meetings.
4. Attend district-sponsored club officer training.
5. Arrange for a replacement if you are unable to attend a club meeting or for help if you need assistance.
6. Prepare your successor for office.

At the club meeting

1. Arrange the room before the meeting begins.
2. Greet members and guests.
3. Greet visiting officers.
4. Arrange for food service.
5. Ensure the meeting starts on time.
6. Collect ballots and tally votes for awards.

My opinions on best practices for meeting these standards are at <http://www.danpuckett.org/saa/>

Questions? E-mail dan@danpuckett.org

Schedule the meeting location

Important step	Key points	Reasons
Ask those who manage your club's meeting site to reserve a room for the meeting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider whether your meeting needs a bigger or smaller room. • How far in advance to schedule? Follow your club's custom. 	
Before each meeting, confirm the room reservation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If they keep canceling your reservations at the last minute, perhaps you need to change how you reserve the room. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You may be speaking to the wrong person, or perhaps you need to speak to two people. Ask how you can make the reservation process easier for them.
If your club's plans change, make sure you tell those who manage your club's meeting site.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain a good relationship with meeting site management.

Maintain club equipment and supplies

Important step	Key points	Reasons
After each meeting, pack up all club property.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Store in a secure place. • Store on-site if you can. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discourages theft. • Carrying property to and from every meeting is a real drag.
After each meeting, check club supplies and plan to restock, if necessary.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask club secretary to order more name tags, ballots, and so on from Toastmasters International. • Toastmasters policy limits what a club is allowed to own or rent: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • YES: Coffee makers, lecterns, banners, stationery, mailing supplies, timing lights, recognition awards (such as trophies), audiovisual equipment (such as a data projector and screen), sound systems, similar equipment (such as flip-charts and easels), educational materials • NO: Motor vehicles, office space, real property, furniture, telephones and telephone systems • Other items: ask Secretary to ask World Headquarters if permitted to own 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ordering from Toastmasters International is part of the Secretary's duties.

Attend club executive committee meetings

Important step	Key points	Reasons
Attend next club executive committee meeting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executive committee meets regularly. • Use the meeting to formally approve ideas you have already discussed privately with individual officers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides guidance for the club. • People are more likely to listen to your ideas when you present the ideas one-on-one.

Attend district-sponsored club officer training

Important step	Key points	Reasons
You did it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good job! 	
Come to the next one.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Club officer training happens twice a year. • Attend if you can—it's not just for new officers. 	The more you attend, the more you will learn, and the better you will become at filling your role.

Arrange for a replacement if you are unable to attend a club meeting or for help if you need assistance

Important step	Key points	Reasons
Ask for help.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When asking, individual contact is best, either face-to-face or by phone. • Ask someone new every time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An announcement to everyone feels safer, but will rarely get you help. • Spread information throughout the club.
Train your replacement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use your meeting checklist as the basis for training. • Do the training in your meeting room, if possible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Familiarizes your trainee with the checklist, plus prevents you from forgetting information. • Makes training clearer if you can point to what you are talking about.
Give your replacement any club properties needed for the meeting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't forget to give the key. 	
After the meeting, retrieve club properties and ask your replacement how the meeting went.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't forget to get the key. 	
Improve meeting checklist.		Your replacement will find some things unclear in the checklist. This is your chance to clarify them for next time.

Prepare your successor for office

Important step	Key points	Reasons
Stay alert for possible candidates.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who attends many meetings? • Who arrives early? • Consider other officers as well. 	Your replacement will probably not volunteer for the job. You need to find him or her yourself.
Before nominations, suggest the role to the candidate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Privately, face-to-face • Pre-prepare answers for common objections: “I don't know how,” “I'm too busy,” etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximizes chance of success. • Most people naturally resist change, even when it's in their best interest. You need to be ready to overcome this reflexive resistance.
Nominate your candidate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreement with the candidate ahead of time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you try to spring a nomination on someone in the meeting, her or she probably won't go for it.
Train your successor.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use your meeting checklist as the basis for training. • Do the training in your meeting room, if possible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Familiarizes your successor with the checklist, plus prevents you from forgetting information. • Makes training clearer if you can point to what you are talking about.
Give your successor any club properties needed for the meeting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't forget to give the key. 	

Arrange the room before the meeting begins

Important step	Key points	Reasons
Arrive early.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 30 minutes early. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You need to have setup done before the first person arrives, so you will be free to greet members and guests.
Follow meeting checklist.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begin with “Meeting Room Checklist” from the Sergeant-at-Arms manual. Customize it for your own needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A checklist helps you remember what to do and makes training your replacement or successor easy. Without a customized checklist, you have to rethink your checklist all the time.

Greet members and guests

Important step	Key points	Reasons
Stand by the door.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Smile! Welcome everyone. Introduce yourself to guests. 	Before the meeting, you are the “face” of Toastmasters: make it a friendly one.
Ensure everyone signs in.		For inclusion in the club records.
Ensure everyone has a name tag.		Makes talking with one another easier.
Arrange for guests and new members to sit with experienced Toastmasters.		Prevents folks from feeling abandoned in a room full of strangers.
During the meeting, sit near the door.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome late arrivals. Prevent interruptions. Do any necessary errands.

Greet visiting officers

Important step	Key points	Reasons
Escort any visiting officers to the club President.		Area governor will visit at least twice a year. Company officers may visit at clubs hosted by a company.

Arrange for food service

Important step	Key points	Reasons
If a meal is served during the meeting, determine how many and what kind of meals must be prepared, then notify the restaurant.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any factors that will affect attendance? Allergies? Food preferences? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Holidays, etc. can affect how many meals will need to be prepared.
Prepare any coffee or snacks wanted by the club.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note any low supplies. Leave time to clean up afterwards. 	

Ensure the meeting starts on time

Important step	Key points	Reasons
Bang the gavel.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Don't wait for everyone to sit down before starting. If necessary, walk around one minute before start time and tell people they should take their seats soon. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you gavel it, they will come. To collect people in clubs where the gavel isn't enough to bring them in.

Collect ballots and tally votes for awards

Important step	Key points	Reasons
Distribute ballots before meeting begins.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One on each seat. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't want to disturb the meeting by passing out ballots.
Collect ballots from voters.		
Count the votes.		
Give the results of the vote to the Toastmaster, or announce them yourself when called upon.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only reveal the winner, not how many votes he or she received. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revealing the margin of victory or defeat isn't useful and can hurt peoples' feelings.
Throw away used ballots.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell Secretary if you need to order more from Toastmasters. 	