

## The Toastmaster Greeting Statement in Your Speech

After you have completed your Ice Breaker speech, plan to include in your 2<sup>nd</sup> and later speeches, the Toastmaster Greeting Statement ("Mr. Toastmaster, fellow Toastmasters, and welcome guests [if present]"). However, don't use the greeting as the first thing you say. Instead, use an interesting, compelling speech opening that captures the attention and mind of your audience. Once that is done, then you can deliver the greeting statement and continue with your speech.

The first words you speak in your speech give you the opportunity to grab your audience and get them interested in what you have to say. Starting out with something like "It's nice to be here today" or the Toastmaster Greeting Statement does not capture the interest of the audience. Instead, such statements direct the audience's attention elsewhere and make it harder to get them interested in what you are saying. Instead, use one of the many available speech opening techniques to catapult your audience right into the speech topic. Then, pause to do the greeting statement and continue your speech.

Here is an example of one of my early speeches in which I will show the Toastmaster Greeting Statement as the very first statement and then I will show the greeting being delayed until after the opening.

**=== With 'Greeting' statement as the first statement (Not Recommended) ===**

### A Remarkable Animal

*Mr. Toastmaster, fellow Toastmasters, and welcome guests [if present]:*

I poise these 3 questions to you:

- 1) What was the first domesticated animal of all animals, and why does such a remarkably close relationship exist between it and humans?
- 2) What animal, which you likely see daily, exhibits some startling characteristics?

and

- 3) What animal, which may live with you, demonstrates some amazing behaviors?

To answer these questions tonight, I am going to talk about three facets of dogs that I find most intriguing.

First, we need to look at the interesting history and development of dogs.....

**=== With 'Greeting' statement delayed until after the opening (Recommended) ===**

### **A Remarkable Animal**

I pose these 3 questions to you:

- 1) What was the first domesticated animal of all animals, and why does such a remarkably close relationship exist between it and humans?
- 2) What animal, which you likely see daily, exhibits some startling characteristics?

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- 3) What animal, which may live with you, demonstrates some amazing behaviors?

*Mr. Toastmaster, fellow Toastmasters, and welcome guests [if present]:*

To answer these questions tonight, I am going to talk about three facets of dogs that I find most intriguing.

First, we need to look at the interesting history and development of dogs.....

**--- End of Example ---**

You can see that in the 2<sup>nd</sup> part of the example, the speech opening immediately immerses the audience in the speech topic. They will be thinking about possible answers to the questions, getting interested in learning more, and anticipating the direction the speech will take. After a strong opening, pausing to greet everyone is courteous and helps establish rapport with the audience. But at that point, the greeting does not divert their thoughts away from your speech topic.

After watching many speech contests in our district, I realized that all the better speakers were delaying the Toastmaster Greeting Statement and getting good results. So give this approach a try in your next speech.

Best regards,

Bob Keith

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