Cheat Sheet:

**What you need:**
- A one to two minute speech
- A drink
- Somewhere to rest the drink when you're talking

**The week before the meeting**
- Check with the VPE that you're on the programme. Make sure you've got your manual so that you can get credit for the assignment.

**On the night, before the meeting**
- Arrive 25 minutes early
- Introduce yourself to the VPE and President and Sergeant. Locate the speakers and the evaluators.
- Ten minutes before the meeting starts, make sure
  - The Toastmaster can pronounce your name.
  - The Sergeant knows where you want the furniture.

**How to propose a toast well**
- If you will be drinking a toast to people, warn them beforehand. The custom is that if your health is being drunk to, you don't stand up. You stay sitting while everybody else stands in your honour. So it's best if you have a quiet word with them before hand and tell them: "I'm going to drink a toast to you. Don't stand up when we do because you're person being toasted."
- The person being toasted also doesn't clap when everybody else is clapping – the audience is clapping for them after all.
- Take your drink up with you. You can toast with any liquid in a leak-proof container – water, tea, wine, beer – it doesn't matter.
- Before you begin speaking, make sure everybody has something to drink. Don't start until they've all got something in their glasses. Just wait for the shuffling and murmurs to subside. Traditionally, you say: "Before I start, please charge your glasses," which is a fancy way of saying that you need to have something to drink.
- Speak for a bit about your chosen subject.
- Ask your audience to "Please rise," (or "stand," if you prefer). Wait while they do so. Once they're all standing, say:
- "and drink with me a toast to..." (followed by a word or two) Here you can say: "drink a toast with me..." or simply: "Let's drink a toast to..." The important bit is to keep the..."
phrase short – one or two words at the most!

• People then repeat what they're drinking a toast to, and start clapping.
(Please stand..... and let's drink a toast to... The Bride and Groom.) <clap>
<clap> <clap> <clap> <clap>
<clap> <clap>

• While the audience is clapping, go to your seat and sit down. The custom dictates people must keep on standing and clapping for as long as you are standing. Put them out of their misery by sitting down pronto.

The Loyal Toast
The British have a toast they toast their monarch with. The King or Queen is honoured with The Loyal Toast.

This custom has been adopted in South Africa as well.

The custom is that you are not supposed to applaud the toast: you simply say:
"To South Africa" or "To South Africa and her people," and everybody stands, repeats the formula, and you can tell them to sit down.

Some authorities say there is no such thing in South Africa as the "Loyal Toast." It is still something that is useful to know about, in case you are asked to propose one.

To Toastmasters International
This is a traditional toast. The speaker makes a short speech extolling the virtues of Toastmasters International and the toast is "To Toastmasters International." Everybody claps and you sit down.

Stuff that routinely goes wrong

• The people being toasted stand up and clap because they don't know any better. This makes them look foolish and embarrasses the crowd.

• The speaker forgets to take a drink up. He usually realizes it just as he says: "And drink a toast to..." and then looks at his empty drink-holding hand in horror.

• The Toaster proposes a toast, but people in the audience don't have drinks because they didn't get one before the Toast began. Or they noticed they didn't have a drink but were waiting for an opportunity to reach across the table and fill their glass. But the Toaster didn't give them one.

• The Toaster says: "Please stand and let's drink to the Bride and Groom." But his words are drowned out by people pushing their chairs back so only half of the room knows what's going on. That half says: "To the Bride and Groom" and starts clapping. The other half starts asking their neighbours: "What did he just say?"

• The Toaster says: "Let's drink to the Bride and Groom for being such fabulous people whom we are all so blessed to know and don't they look lovely today?" Which is a lovely sentiment, but which bit does the audience repeat? If you make this blunder, simply repeat: "To the Bride and Groom." That removes any confusion.

• The person proposing the toast stands at the lectern. This makes the audience stay standing until somebody asks him to please sit down so the rest of us can.

• People clap during the Loyal Toast. It may be a good idea for you or the Toastmaster just to warn the audience beforehand not to clap.

That's all there is to it. A bit tricky, but easy enough to master.