



# District ONE – “Toastmasters - Serve ONE, Serve ALL”



Everything You Always Wanted To Know About Contest Judging!

### Purpose of Judging

Speech contests are an important part of the Toastmasters (TMs) Program. They provide an opportunity for experienced speakers to compete against their peers. Also, they provide an opportunity for non-competing TMs and the general public to learn by observing more proficient speakers. So, contests are a total learning experience, benefited both the contestant and the audience.

It is important that all speech contests are conducted properly, in a way that encourages speakers to compete and others to attend to observe. Good judging is vital to this. Good judging leaves the contestants and the audience feeling that the contest was fair and that the right choice was made. The purpose of the contest judges training is to help you develop your speech contest judging skills so that the person you select as the winner is also the best speaker.

### Contest Judging vs. Evaluation

Although no feedback is given at a contest, many of the attributes of good evaluation are the same for judging. That person must understand all the elements of a speech contest, and be able to break them down into categories. Both Evaluator and judge are charged with the responsibility of gauging how well the who presentation was presented. Neither is given the right to impose personal views or values on the speaker's subject matter or belief. More important to our purpose is the contrast between the assignments. Here are some aspects of both to consider.

#### Aspect – OBJECTIVES

**Judging** – strictly laid out by the judging form with no room for opinion

**Evaluation** – broadly laid out in the manual & entirely call for opinion

#### Aspect – FUNCTION

**Judging** – to pick a winner

**Evaluation** – to encourage speakers, help others evaluators

#### Aspect - OUTCOME

**Judging** – The winner advances to the next level

**Evaluation** – improvement of both speaker & evaluator

#### Aspect – REACTIONS

**Judging** – always controversial & at time hostile

**Evaluation** – appreciation & lively discussion

#### Aspect – JUSTIFICATION

**Judging** – no explanation for decision is necessary

**Evaluation** – obligation to confer with the speaker

These differences confirm that judging is more difficult than evaluation. Be aware of the function and desired outcome of each position as well as, the responsibilities. A poor evaluation can be rectified; poor judgment is irrevocable and hurts the integrity of the contest more than the speaker.

### Blue Language

Language used by the contestant must be appropriate.

### Protests

Protests may be made only by judges & contestants. Any protests are to be lodged with the chief judge and/or contest chair prior to the announcement of the winner & alternate(s). The contest chairman shall notify the contestant of a disqualification regarding eligibility prior to the announcement before the meeting at which the contest took place is adjourned.

Contestants must prepare their own speeches, which must be substantially (51%) original & certified as such in writing to the Chief Judge by the contestants prior to the presentation of the speeches. Any quoted material must be so identified during the speech presentation.

All decisions by the judges are final.

### Disqualification

Contestants may be disqualified ONLY for:

1. Violating eligibility rules;
2. Violating originality rules;
3. Speaking under time or over time (A time disqualification is to be announced at the time the contests winners are announced. However, the name of the contestant disqualified is not to be announced.)

Contestants may not be disqualified for any other rule violation.

### Judges... The Obligations

... To the Contestants

Fairness, impartiality, professionalism

...To our Organization

Reputation for excellence

... To the Audience

Deserving of fair, unbiased contest

... To Ourselves

Personal commitment to self improvement

### Qualities of a Judge

... Accurate

Correct decision, attention to ballot

... Fair

No interference, even disapproval of topic

... Trustworthy

Entrusted by contestants, audience, officials

... Knowledgeable

Know the rules and the forms

... Good Listeners

No daydreaming, no distractions

### Barriers to Objectivity

**Barrier** – First or Last Speak is Best

**Judges Challenge (JC)** – Treat each speaker the same

**Barrier** – Let's Help the Underdog

**JC** – Don't let feelings influence your judging

**Barrier** – Halo Effect

**JC** – Resist giving speakers high marks for anything other than good performance

**Barrier** – Reverse Halo

**JC** – Don't downgrade in one category because of performance in a different category

**Barrier** – Second Time Around

**JC** – Judge the speech as if it's the first time you've heard it

**Barrier** – Give Someone Else a Chance

**JC** – Never consider past successes or failures

**Barrier** – Club Norms

**JC** – Think about the norms in your Club. Then determine whether they should be applied universally

**Barrier** – Prejudice & Personal Preference

**JC** – Set aside likes & dislikes by asking yourself...

♦ What do you like or dislike about this speech?

♦ Is what I like or dislike relevant?

**Barrier** – Unfamiliar Judging Forms

**JC** – Study them thoroughly

**ELIMINATE BIAS ... BE FAIR**

### Judges' Code of Ethics

1. Judges will consciously avoid bias of any kind in selecting 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> place contestants. They will not consider any contestant's club, area, division or district affiliation. Nor will they consider any contestant's age, sex, race, creed, national origin, profession or political beliefs. They will demonstrate the utmost objectivity.
2. Judges will not time the speeches and will not consider the possibility of under-time or over-time when judging a contestant's speech.
3. Judges will support by word and deed the contest rules and judging standards, refraining from public criticism of the contest and revealing scores and ranking only in accordance with official policy.

### Types of Contests

There are 5 types of speech contests:

1. Evaluation (2-3 minutes)
2. Humorous (5-7 minutes)
3. Table Topics (1-2 minutes)
4. International (5-7 minutes)
5. Tall Tales (3-5 minutes)

C:/Contest Judge Reference Card

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**Judging Criteria**

**EVALUATION**

*Analytical Quality* – refers to the effectiveness of the evaluation. Should carefully analyze the strengths & weaknesses of the speaker’s presentation.

*Recommendations* – are an important part of an evaluation. Points out the strengths & weaknesses of a speech, he/she also offers specific recommendations for improvement. Recommendations should be practical, helpful and positive & should enable the speaker to improve his/her next presentation.

*Technique* – refers to the manner in which the evaluator presents his/her comments and recommendations. Should be sensitive to the feelings and needs of the speaker, yet inspire & encourage the speaker in his/her future speaking efforts.

*Summation* – is how the evaluator concludes the evaluation. The conclusion should briefly summarize the evaluator’s comments & suggestions, and be positive & encouraging.

**HUMOROUS SPEECH**

*Speech Development* – is the way the speaker puts ideas together so the audience can understand them. Speech structured around a purpose/theme & the structure must include an opening, body & close. A good humorous speech immediately engages the audience’s attention & then builds to significant close; not a series of jokes/ monologue.

*Effectiveness* – refers to the subjective judgment of how the speech came across. What was the purpose or theme of the speech? Did speech relate directly to that purpose/theme? Humor used effectively?

*Speech Value* – justifies the act of speaking. Did speaker say something meaningful & original to the audience, even in a humorous speech? Ideas important even though presented humorously.

*Audience Response* – reflects the audience’s reaction to the speech. Did speech hold the audience’s attention? Did people understand & laugh at the humor?

*Physical* – presentation of a speech carries part of the responsibility for effective communication. Speaker’s appearance should reinforce the speech. Body language should support points through gestures, expressions & body positioning.

*Voice* – is the sound that carries the message. Was it flexible, moving from one pitch level to another? Should have a variety of rate & volume. A good voice can be clearly heard & the words easily understood.

*Manner* – is the indirect revelation of the speaker’s real self as the speech is delivered. Did speaker speak with enthusiasm & assurance, showing interest in the audience & confidence in their reactions?

**HUMOROUS SPEECH (Continued)**

*Appropriateness* – of language refers to the choice of words that relate to the speech purpose & to the particular audience hearing the speech. Language should promote clear understanding of thoughts, fit the occasion & should be in good taste.

*Correctness* – of language ensures that attention will be directed toward what the speaker says, not how it was said. Proper use of grammar & correct pronunciation.

**TABLE TOPICS**

*Speech Development* – in the way the speaker puts ideas together so the audience can understand them. The Table Topics response is structured around a purpose, & this structure must include an opening, body & conclusion. The response is supported by relevant examples & illustrations, facts & figures if appropriate & is delivered smoothly.

*Effectiveness* – is your subjective judgment of how the response came across. What was speaker’s purpose? Did speech relate directly to the given question or topic?

*Voice* – is the sound that carries the message. Should be flexible, moving from one pitch level to another for emphasis. Should have a variety of rate & volume. A good voice can be clearly heard & the words easily understood.

*Language* – refers to the choice of words that related to the response. Language should promote clear understanding of thoughts & fit the occasion precisely. Proper use of grammar & correct pronunciation will show that speaker is the master of the words being used.

**INTERNATIONAL**

**Content (50%)**

*Speech Development* – is the way the speaker puts ideas together so the audience can understand them. Speech is structured around a purpose. Speech structure must include an opening, body & conclusion.

*Effectiveness* – is measured by the audience’s reception of the speech, but a large part is your subjective judgment of how the speech came across.

*Speech Value* – justifies the act of speaking. Was something meaningful said & did it contribute to listener’s thinking?

**Delivery (30%)**

*Physical* – presentation of a speech carries part of the responsibility of effective communication. The speaker’s appearance should reinforce the speech whether profound, sad, humorous or instructional. Body language is important.

*Voice* – is the sound that carries the message. Should be flexible, moving from one pitch level to another for emphasis & should have a variety of rate & volume. A good voice can be clearly heard & the words easily understood.

**INTERNATIONAL (Continued)**

*Manner* – is the indirect revelation of the speaker’s real self as the speech is delivered. Speak with enthusiasm & assurance, showing interest in the audience.

**Language (20%)**

*Appropriateness* – refers to the choice of words as they relate to speech purpose.

*Correctness* – of language ensure that attention will be directed toward what speaker says, not how it was said. Proper use of grammar & correct pronunciation.

**TALL TALES**

*Speech Development* – is the way the speaker puts ideas together so the audience can understand them. A good tall tales speech immediately engages the audience’s attention, them smoothly builds up to a climax and conclusion.

*Speech Techniques* - refers to the use of various tall tales skills, such as exaggeration, irony, pun, humor & surprise twists. These techniques are the essence of the tall tale & they must be skillfully incorporated into the tale.

*Physical* - presentation of the response carries part of the responsibility for effective communication. A speaker’s appearance should reinforce the story. Body language should support the story through gestures, expressions & body positions.

*Voice* - is the sound that carries the message. Should be flexible, moving from one pitch level to another for emphasis & should have a variety of rate & volume. A good voice can be clearly heard & the words easily understood.

*Language* – refers to the choice of words that relate to the story. Language should promote clear understanding of thoughts & should fit the occasion precisely. Proper use of grammar & correct pronunciation will show that the speaker is the master of the words being used.

**Contestant Qualifications**

To be eligible to compete in all speech contests the contestant must:

1. Be a member in good standing of the Club in which he/she is competing.;
2. Belong to a Club in good standing with Toastmasters;
3. Have completed at least six manual speeches from the Competent Communication Manual prior to the Club contest (International); and
4. Maintain eligibility at all levels of any contest.

**Ineligible Participants in Contests**

1. Incumbent Int’l Officers & Directors;
2. District officers;
3. Declared Int’l Officers, Directors or District Officers;
4. Past 1<sup>st</sup> place winners (Int’l)
5. Presenters of educational sessions at contests or conferences.