CONTEST JUDGE Reference Card

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 (TM s) 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 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 observers. Good judging is vital to this. Good evaluation is to pick a winner. Contests may be disqualified ONLY for:

- Violating originality rules;
- Violating eligibility rules;
- Speaking under time or over time

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 contestants 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’ Code of Ethics
1. Judges will consciously avoid bias of any kind in selecting 1st, 2nd & 3rd 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)

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.

Qualities of a Judge
... Accurate
Correct decision, attention to detail... Fair
No interference, even disapproval of topic... Trustworthy
Entrusted by contestants, audience, officials... Knowledgeable
Know the rules and the forms... Good Listener
No daydreaming, no distractions

Judges 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

Pen & Paper

Judging
Aspect – beliefs. More important to our purpose is the or values on the speaker's subject matter or place contestants. They will not

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Acknowledgement to Past District ONE Chief Judges. A special thank you to David Bliss, Lois Smith, Earl S. Meallns & Bonny Kamen.
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 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. Did speaker speak with enthusiasm & assurance, showing interest in the audience & confidence in their reactions?

Language - is the indirect revelation of the speaker's real self as the speech is delivered. Speak with enthusiasm & assurance, showing interest in the audience.

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 Topic's 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 relate to the response. Language should promote clear understanding of thoughts & fit the occasion precisely. Proper use of grammar & correct pronunciation will show that the speaker is the master of the words being used.

**INELIGIBLE PARTICIPANTS IN CONTESTS**

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