

TOASTMASTERS INTERNATIONAL
INTERNATIONAL SPEECH CONTEST
 Judges' Guide and Ballot



JUDGING ITEMS (SEE OVER FOR DESCRIPTION)	SUGGESTED POINT VALUES													
	EXCELLENT	VERY GOOD	GOOD	FAIR	NAME	NAME	NAME	NAME	NAME	NAME	NAME	NAME	NAME	NAME
					1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
SPEECH DEVELOPMENT STRUCTURE, ORGANIZATION, SUPPORT MATERIAL	20	14-19	9-13	0-8										
EFFECTIVENESS ACHIEVEMENT OF PURPOSE, INTEREST, RECEPTION	15	11-14	6-10	0-5										
SPEECH VALUE IDEAS, LOGIC, ORIGINAL THOUGHT	15	11-14	6-10	0-5										
PHYSICAL APPEARANCE, BODY LANGUAGE	10	7-9	4-6	0-3										
VOICE FLEXIBILITY, VOLUME	10	7-9	4-6	0-3										
MANNER DIRECTNESS, ASSURANCE, ENTHUSIASM	10	7-9	4-6	0-3										
APPROPRIATENESS TO SPEECH PURPOSE AND AUDIENCE	10	7-9	4-6	0-3										
CORRECTNESS GRAMMAR, PRONUNCIATION, WORD SELECTION	10	7-9	4-6	0-3										
TOTAL SCORE (100 POINTS POSSIBLE)														

Toastmasters International
 District 70

Speech Contest Judging

A handbook for Judges

(Detach and submit to counters)

Judge's Official Ballot
INTERNATIONAL SPEECH CONTEST

Name of Contestant:

(Signature of Judge)

PLACE

- First
- Second
- Third

RANKING POINTS

- 3
- 2
- 1

(NOTE: Votes must be cast for first, second, and third place or the ballot will be voided.)

(Judge's Name; Please Print)

A District 70 Judge's Promises

Congratulations on accepting the challenge to be a Toastmasters speech contest judge. We trust that this booklet will help you prepare for the role.

As a judge, you will accept a number of obligations. These can be expressed as a series of promises

To the contestants:

I will be fair, impartial and objective. I will consciously remind myself of the barriers to effective judging and commit to a dedicated performance of my duties.

To Toastmasters International:

I will uphold the reputation of Toastmasters, our District and our officers who depend on my excellence in conducting speech contests. I will avoid bad judging which creates animosity and tarnishes the reputation of Toastmasters.

To the audience:

I will give the audience a good speech contest with fair and unbiased judging. I realise that otherwise the audience may be discouraged from attending or participating in future contests.

To myself:

I, as a Toastmaster, will perform my duties as a contest judge to the best of my ability. I will make well thought-out decisions when judging as part of my own commitment to self-improvement.

To pick a winner:

I will make a confidential decision which I will not under any circumstance discuss with anyone else. I am not there to evaluate speakers at the time so I will not explain or justify my decision to anybody.

by the chief judge. Contestants will then draw for their speaking position with the contest chairman.

C. If a contestant is absent from the briefing, the alternate speaker, if present, may be included in place of the primary contestant. If the primary contestant is not present when the person conducting the contest is introduced to conduct the contest, the primary contestant is disqualified and the alternate officially becomes the contestant. Should the primary contestant arrive after the briefing but before the person conducting the contest is introduced, the primary contestant may compete provided the primary contestant: 1) reports to the contest chairman upon his/her arrival, and 2) has all required paperwork in good order before the person conducting the contest is introduced to begin the contest. The primary contestant waives the opportunity of a briefing.

D. Introduce each contestant by announcing the contestant's name, speech title, speech title, and contestant's name.

E. There will be one minute of silence between contestants, during which the judges will mark their ballots.

F. Contestants may remain in the same room throughout the duration of the contest.

G. In contests with five or more participants, a third place winner (if wanted), a second place winner, and a first place winner will be announced. In contests with four or fewer participants, a second place and first place winner will be announced.

H. Announcement of contest winners is final unless the list of winners is announced incorrectly, in which case the chief judge, ballot counters, or timers may immediately interrupt to correct the error.

7. TIMING OF THE SPEECHES

A. Speeches will be five to seven minutes. A contestant will be disqualified from the contest if the speech is less than four minutes 30 seconds or more than seven minutes 30 seconds.

B. Upon being introduced, the contestant shall proceed immediately to the speaking position. Timing will begin with the contestant's first definite verbal or nonverbal communication with the audience. This usually will be the first word uttered by the contestant, but would

include any other communication such as sound effects, a staged act by another person, etc.

C. Timers shall provide warning signals to the contestants, which shall be clearly visible to the speakers but not obvious to the audience.

1. A green signal will be displayed at five minutes and remain displayed for one minute.
2. An amber signal will be displayed at six minutes and remain displayed for one minute.
3. A red signal will be displayed at seven minutes and remain on until the conclusion of the speech.
4. No signal shall be given for the overtime period.
5. Any visually impaired contestant may request and must be granted a form of warning signal of his or her own choosing. Acceptable warning signals would include, but not be limited to: a buzzer, a bell, or a person announcing the times at five, six, and seven minutes. If any special device and/or specific instructions for such signal is/are required, the contestant must provide same.
6. In the event of technical failure of the signal, a speaker is allowed 30 seconds extra overtime before being disqualified.

D. Prior to announcing results, the chairman should announce if time disqualification(s) occurred, but not name the contestant(s) involved.

8. PROTESTS AND DISQUALIFICATIONS

A. Protests concerning eligibility and originality will be limited to judges and contestants. Any protest will be lodged with the chief judge and/or contest chairman prior to the announcement of the winner and alternate(s). The contest chairman shall notify the contestant of a disqualification regarding originality or eligibility prior to that announcement before the meeting at which the contest took place is adjourned.

B. Before a contestant can be disqualified on the basis of originality, the contestant must be given an opportunity to respond to the judges. A majority of the judges must concur in the decision to disqualify. The contest chairman can disqualify a contestant on the basis of eligibility.

C. All decisions of the judges are final.

contest will be held; presenters of educational sessions at regional conferences and/or the International Convention. An individual may not be a judge at any level for a contest in which they are still competing.

C. The winner of the contest finals held each August during the International Convention is not eligible to compete again at any level.

D. Toastmasters who are members in more than one club and who meet all other eligibility requirements may compete in each club contest in which membership in good standing is held. However, should they win more than one club International Speech Contest, the contestant may represent only one of the clubs at the area level. No contestant can compete in more than one area International Speech Contest, even if the two areas are in different divisions or different districts.

E. A contestant must be a member in good standing of the club, area, division, district, or region being represented when competing in a speech contest at the next level.

F. Each contestant must complete the Speaker's Certification of Eligibility and Originality (form 1183) and submit it to the chief judge prior to the contest.

G. Each contestant must be present to compete. Participation by audio and video tape and teleconference is not permitted.

5. SPEECH SUBJECT AND PREPARATION

A. Subject for the prepared speech shall be selected by the contestant.

B. Contestants must prepare their own five to seven minute speeches, which must be substantially original and certified as such in writing to the chief judge by the contestants prior to the presentation of the speeches (on form 1183, Speaker's Certification of Eligibility and Originality). Any quoted material must be so identified during the speech presentation.

C. All contestants will speak from the same platform or area designated by the contest chairman. All contestants and judges will be advised of the speaking area before the contest begins. The contestants may speak from any position within the designated area and are not limited to standing at the lectern/podium.

1. A lectern/podium will be available. However, the use of the lectern/podium is optional.

2. If amplification is necessary, a lectern/podium fixed-mounted microphone and a portable microphone should be made available, if possible. It is suggested that the fixed-mounted microphone be nondirectional. The selection and use of a microphone is optional for each contestant.

3. All equipment will be available for contestants to practice prior to the contest. Contestants are responsible for arranging their preferred setup of the lectern/podium microphone and other equipment in a quiet manner before being introduced by the Toastmaster.

D. Every participant must present an entirely new and different speech for the regional and for the International contests than given in any contest that same year. Up to and including the district contest, contestants may use the same speech, but are not required to do so.

E. Winners of each district contest shall present a detailed outline of their winning speech in the district contest to the chief judge of the regional contest. Winners of the regional contest will prepare and mail to World Headquarters outlines of their district and regional winning speeches, which will be given to the chief judge at the International contest.

6. GENERAL PROCEDURE

At the club level contests, a contest chairman, chief judge, at least five judges, a tiebreaking judge, three counters, and two timers are appointed as far as practical.

At the area level contests, there should be at least five judges or equal representation from the clubs comprising the area in addition to a contest chairman, chief judge, a tiebreaking judge, three counters, and two timers are appointed as far as practical.

At the division or district level contests, there should be at least seven judges or equal representation from the areas composing the division or district in addition to a contest chairman, chief judge, a tiebreaking judge, three counters, and two timers. At the district contest, no judge shall be a member of the club represented by a contestant.

All judges will judge all contestants.

B. Before the contest, contestants are briefed on the rules by the contest chairman. Judges, counters, and timers are briefed on their duties

Qualities of a Judge

There are five qualities that good judges must display and use if they are to make a wise and informed decision in a Speech Contest.

Judges need to be

- **Accurate**

Good judges are dedicated to making a well thought out decision. They fill out the judging form correctly and total points carefully.

- **Fair**

Good judges are totally impartial. Good judges don't allow friendship, affiliation, age, sex, race, creed, national origin, profession or disapproval of speech topics to interfere with their decision.

- **Trustworthy**

Good judges realise the contestants, contest officials and the audience have entrusted them with the responsibility of selecting the best speaker as the winner. They live up to that trust. Unfortunately, there have been cases where judges have marked down better speakers so a favoured speaker could place. Good judges would never dream of doing such a thing.

- **Knowledgeable**

Good judges know the current contest rules. They study the rules before each contest and they make no exceptions to the rules. They are familiar with the judging form and they know how to judge properly.

- **Good listeners**

Good judges listen carefully to each speaker. They don't daydream or become distracted.

Toastmasters International Speech Contest Rules

An edited summary of the rules as they apply to contests within the District

Judging checklist

When you asked to be a judge for a speech contest, this is what you must do:

- **Confirm that you are not or will not be competing in the particular contest at any level.**
- Note the date, time, and place of the contest. Check directions and leave early.
- Take a notepad, pen, pencil and eraser.
- Be on time for the briefing by the Chief Judge. Let the Contest Chairman and Chief Judge know you have arrived. Check if there is any seating allocation for judges. If not, find a suitable position where you are not seated close to other judges.
- If selecting your own seat, go where you can see the lectern but do sit not at the front.
- Attend the briefing with a program and pen. Note the speaking order if it is given. Don't talk during the briefing even if you have been to 100 before. Other judges haven't.
- During the contest, listen and look but don't eat, drink or talk. Take notes for each speaker and put in marks on the judging form.
- On completion of each speech, total your marks and compare them with previous speakers. Try not to listen to any conversation around you.
- On completion of the contest, fill in ballot form nominating 1st, 2nd and 3rd, remembering that no ties are permitted. Sign and print your name.
- Tear off the ballot, fold once and hold high in the air to be collected by the counters.
- Sit back and enjoy the rest of the proceedings.
- Note the results and compare them with your own.

1. PURPOSE

A. To provide an opportunity for speakers to improve their speaking abilities and to recognize the best as encouragement to all.

B. To provide an opportunity to learn by observing the more proficient speakers who have benefited from their Toastmasters training.

2. APPLICABILITY

These rules, unless otherwise noted, apply to all Toastmasters speech contests which select contestants for the annual International Speech Contest, which is conducted in English only. These rules may not be supplanted or modified, and no exceptions may be made.

3. SELECTION SEQUENCE

A. Club, Area, District. Each club in good standing may select a contestant to compete in the area contest. A club may choose its contestant by whatever means the club desires. If a contest is held, it must comply with all these rules and the contest result is final. The area speech contest winner then proceeds to the division contest (if applicable). The division winner then proceeds to the district contest. Should an area or division contest winner be unable to participate in the next level contest, the highest placed available contestant will advance to that level. **NOTE:** The district contest chairman informs World Headquarters of the name and address of the winner and alternate in the district contest. Information concerning the regional contest is then mailed to the winner and alternate.

B. In those areas with four assigned clubs or less eight weeks prior to the area contest, districts have the option to allow the two highest placed available contestants from each club to compete in the area contest. Should additional clubs charter prior to the area contest, the two highest placed available contestants from each club may compete. In those divisions with four assigned areas or less, districts have the option to allow the two highest placed available contestants from each area to compete. In districts with four assigned divisions or less, districts have the option to allow the two highest placed available contestants from each division to participate in the district contest.

The decision whether or not to allow two contestants to advance from club to area, from area to division, and/or from division to district must be made and communicated throughout the district prior to the commencement of the contest cycle – i.e. prior to any club contests being held. Once the

decision is made, it must be implemented consistently throughout the district in all areas and divisions affected. If a district decides to allow two contestants to advance from club to area, its decisions regarding the number to advance from area to division and/or from division to district need not be the same.

C. Each region shall select a winner and an alternate. The contest chairman, usually the first-year director, informs World Headquarters of the name and address of the winner and alternate in the regional contest. Information concerning the International Speech Contest is then mailed to the winner and alternate. One speaker from each region competes in the International contest. An additional speaker or speakers, selected in special speech contest(s) among districts outside of the United States and Canada, also will compete in the International contest.

4. ELIGIBILITY

A. To be eligible to compete at any level of the International Speech Contest, an individual must:

1. Be a member in good standing of the club in which he or she is competing. The club also must be in good standing. A new, dual, or reinstated member must have dues and membership application current with World Headquarters.
2. Have completed at least six manual speeches in the *Competent Communication* manual prior to the club contest. However, a charter member of a club chartered since the previous July 1 may compete without having completed six manual speeches in the *Competent Communication* manual. The club must be officially chartered before the area contest.
3. Maintain eligibility at all levels of any contest. If at any level it is discovered that a contestant was ineligible to compete at any previous level, the contestant must be disqualified even if the ineligibility is not discovered until a later level and has been corrected.

B. The following are ineligible to compete in this contest: incumbent international officers and directors; district officers (governor, any lieutenant governor, secretary, treasurer, public relations officer, division governor, or area governor) whose terms expire June 30; international officer and director candidates; immediate past district governors; district officers or announced candidates for the term beginning the upcoming July 1; presenters of educational sessions at the area, division, and district event at which the

Establishing the Winner

In Toastmasters, we do not rely on a single judge to determine the result of a contest. **Rather our prescribed method is to have as large panel of judges as possible at each contest level, supported by a special method of ballot counting.**

The **minimum** number of judges required is specified in the Speech Contest Rules (although frequently larger numbers are used) as follows;

For Club and Area levels - Five

For Division and District levels - Seven

For Regional, Inter-District and International - Nine

The theory of this method is supported in management literature, with the best treatise probably being “The Wisdom of Crowds” by James Surowiecki. This book supports the premise that the collective wisdom in a group is greater than the wisdom of any individual in the group.* The book further clarifies that when imperfect judgements are aggregated together they tend to produce a superior collective decision.

For this concept of collective wisdom to work, a number of conditions must apply, all of which are satisfied in Toastmasters Speech Contests.

- **Diversity** - There needs to be a large diverse group of people involved, which is why the judging panels get larger and more diverse the higher our level of contest.
- **Independence** – There should be no discussion between the people involved before they are asked to express their opinions, which is why our judges have to sit in separate places in our contests.
- **Aggregation** – There needs to be some system of aggregating the results in order to arrive at a group answer, achieved by having a panel of ballot counters separate to the judges.

* The classic demonstration of this theory is having people estimate the number of jelly beans in a jar. Only 1 or 2 will be closer than the collective average. If repeated 10 times with different size jars, the group's performance is always the best and the 1 or 2 who beat it each time are never the same.

The Methodology of Judging

The purpose of Speech Contest Judging is to **PICK A WINNER**, nothing else. That is, to select the speaker who has given the best speech on the day, without deciding whether it was necessarily a good or a poor speech. This is quite different to evaluation. A judge is not at a contest to help speakers. So a judge must not explain, justify, evaluate or advise speakers! A judge's decision must remain **confidential**.

It is very important to understand that speech contest judging is very different from judging events such as gymnastics, ice skating or wine tasting. In those events, performances are judged **in isolation to each other. This is standard based judging.** An equivalent in speech contest judging would be to cover up each speaker's marks after they are scored, comparing each speaker's performance to some hypothetical standard of excellence. Since we lack such a model or definition, this method of scoring should not be used.

However, it is necessary to have some sort of pre-determined standard based on your experience in order to allocate marks to the first few speakers. This should not be the first speaker, since this may set your scoring too high. But equally, as you are not judging against some absolute standard the exact marks given are not important. For this reason, do not put emphasis on the column headings of Excellent, Very Good, Good and Fair. Rather select points ranges to help you in the comparison task.

What is important is that your scores must be based on comparative (**reference based judging**) and not absolute judgements and thus should indicate relevant differences between speakers in each section of the judging form.

Thus the process of picking a winner consists of comparing performances and deciding which is better, without attempting to rate them.

The Judging Process

Carefully judge each section of the form. Study the form. Think of the sections clearly and individually. Do not let a good delivery influence your judgement in the content section for example or the use of inappropriate language influence your marks elsewhere. At the same time block out personal prejudices as best you can.

Pay special attention to audience reaction and the achievement of speech purpose. The main speech purposes are to inform, persuade, inspire and entertain. So ask yourself, What is the speaker's purpose? That is, What is the speaker talking about and why? You need to do this, because an important part of the judging process is deciding

- Was the speech of interest to this audience? (Something they needed to know or could do something about.)
- How did the audience react to the message?
- Did it touch the hearts and minds of the audience?

Sub-total the Content (50% of marks), Delivery (30% of marks) and Language (20% of marks) sections for each speaker. This aids addition and comparison. **You should review your totals and sub-totals after each speaker to be happy about your relative ratings.** In this way you can resolve ties as you are judging. This is the advantage of using a pencil and an eraser.

You should always take plenty of **notes** during the speeches. The aim is to try and record the speaker's outline and organisation. Refer to your notes at the end after totalling, especially if you have a tie or very close scores. This helps you to compare two speakers who you may have scored similarly during the contest but who were separated by a number of other speakers. You should do this note taking even in a simple contest at Club level, because it is excellent practice.

Note - From Division level upwards, judges tend to look for areas where speakers should lose marks in order to sort out winners and losers. In general such higher level contests are mainly decided on differences in the content section.

Give Someone Else a Chance

Even if a speaker has won a contest in previous years, that speaker is entitled to the same judging as other speakers. Past performance should never influence current performance.

Not the Norm

Outside the Speech Contest Rules, there is no norm for speakers. As a judge, consider what is usually the norm for a good speech. Ask yourself if you expect everyone to fit into that norm. If so, you may be out of step.

Prejudices and Personal Preferences

Tastes, beliefs, preferences, and prejudices are the most prevalent barriers to unbiased judging. Try to remember to judge not what the speaker **is** but what the speaker is saying.

The Unknown Judging Form

As a judge you need to be familiar with the judging form. If this is not so, you may spend time analysing and understanding the form instead of listening to the speakers. Study the form.

Speech Contest Manual

This manual spells out duties of the Contest Chairman through provision of a checklist. The manual also defines the pre-contest briefing responsibilities as shown below.

Contest Chairman	Chief Judge
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Verify presence of contestants and pronunciation of names• Draw for speaking positions• Review speech contest rules with speakers• Acquaint contestants with speaking area and provide opportunity to test equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review Judge's Guide and Ballot and speaking area with judges• Review Time record Sheet and Instructions for Timer with timers• Brief the counters

Judges Beware!

Judging is a subjective process that we as judges must try to make objective. Each one of us has likes and dislikes which can unconsciously affect our decisions. You should be conscious of the following barriers to objectivity so that you can judge effectively and fairly.

First or Last Speaker Is Best

We tend to remember first and last speakers best so they have an advantage over other speakers. The first speaker because he or she becomes a reference point and the last because they are more easily remembered. As a judge we need to be equally attentive to the middle speakers.

Let's Help the Underdog

Do we need to give a break to the new Toastmaster? Resist the temptation to mark highly because a speaker deserves a win. Use the judging form scrupulously.

Halo Effect

A speaker with a **reputation** should be judged using the same criteria as we employ to judge other speakers. Resist giving high marks because the speaker dresses well or has a dynamic delivery but rather give high marks because the speaker is **good**.

Reverse Halo Effect

This is the association of one unfavourable trait with another unrelated trait. For example a speech which exhibits poor grammar does not necessarily mean the speech will be badly organised. Resist the temptation to downgrade a score in one area because you are not happy with the performance in another area.

Second Time Around

Even if you have heard the speech previously, it must be judged as if it were a new speech. Always judge as if this were the first time you have heard the speech and the speaker.

The Judging Form

A reminder that the purpose of Speech Contest Judging is to **pick a winner**.

It also means making a selection that is compatible with that of other experienced judges officiating in many other contests around the world at the same level. This is best achieved by use of the standard Toastmasters International Judge's Guide, reviewing a speaker's total performance in the **three key areas** of effective speaking.

Content Delivery Language

After making our assessment, it is **good practice to sub-total each of the three areas** to help in the comparative process before then making a final total and comparison.

The Judge's Guide provides **prompts** to assist us in making our assessment. These prompts give clues to the types of questions we should ask ourselves about a speaker's performance as shown below.

1. Content

The substance/purpose of a speaker's message

SPEECH DEVELOPMENT

Structure, Organisation, Support Material

- How was the speech structured?
- Did it have a clearly defined **Opening, Body and Conclusion**?
- How was the speech organised? Was it easy to follow? Did it have a logical sequence?
- Were there natural transitions?
- Was the **Purpose** clear and well defined?
- What support material was there?
- Were facts, examples, illustrations or humour used to enhance the message?
- Was there too much material, overwhelming the audience with facts for example?

EFFECTIVENESS

Achievement of Purpose, Interest, Reception

- What was the purpose? (Inform, Persuade, Inspire, Entertain)
- Was the purpose accomplished?
- Was it of interest to the audience?
- Was it relevant to the audience? Something they should know or could do?
- How did the audience respond? Did they understand the goal?
- Was the nature of the audience/occasion considered in the speech preparation?

SPEECH VALUE

Ideas, Logic, Original Thought

- What ideas were presented?
- Was there a clearly defined message?
- Did the message develop logically? Did it lead to a conclusion?
- Were the ideas original or a re-hash of other material?
- If it was a time worn subject, was it treated in a new way with flair/imagination?
- Was it in good taste?
- Did the message contribute to the listeners' knowledge, their growth, and stimulate their thinking processes?

2. Delivery

The mechanics of presenting the message

PHYSICAL

Appearance, Body Language

- How did the speaker look? Neat? Professional? Compatible with purpose, adding credibility to message?
- Did the clothes/accessories/colours enhance or detract from the effectiveness?
- How was the stance? Alert, erect, lifeless, swaying?
- How was the stage area and lectern used?
- Did the body language contradict or reinforce the message?
- Were the gestures effective/meaningless/stilted?
- Did the eye contact cover and hold the audience?
- Were the facial expressions friendly, revealing the emotional side of the speech?

VOICE

Flexibility, Volume

- Did the voice convey the correct feelings/attitude for the message?
- Thus was it **firm** to show strength, **assured** to show confidence, **warm** to convey friendliness, or **pleasing** to win the audience for example?
- Did it have variations of rate and emphasis?
- Was the volume adequate and varied and was the microphone used effectively?

MANNER

Directness, Assurance, Enthusiasm

- Did the speaker appear sincere, concerned for the audience?
- Did the speaker appear confident?
- Did the audience **believe** the message?
- Did the style, pace and demeanour build a link with the audience?
- Were some aspects of the presentation distracting, artificial or stilted?
- Did the speaker show **enthusiasm** for the message?

3. Language

The choice of words and grammatical skill

APPROPRIATENESS

To Speech Purpose and Audience

- Was the language used compatible with the speech?
- Was it compatible with the audience? Did it clarify or confuse?
- Did the word pictures **sell** the speaker's ideas?

CORRECTNESS

Grammar, Pronunciation and Word Selection

- Did the speaker use correct grammar?
- If slang or misused grammar was present, did it make a point?
- Was it intentional or a mistake?
- Was the pronunciation correct and was the enunciation clear?
- Were the words chosen appropriate to the message?
- Were they appropriate to the audience?