

Toastmasters International
Speech Contest Judging Criteria

*This document is a quick-reference guide
and is not intended to be a substitute for any Toastmasters International publication.*

The front of each Judges Guide and Ballot lists a *synopsis* of the full standard for each criterion. **These synopses are not the entirety of the criteria. Judges must base their scores only on the criteria printed on the back of the Judges Guide and Ballot, not on the synopses.**

To assist both judges and contestants, the criteria of all four District 14 contests are herein reprinted, with the synopsis in *italics* below each criterion title.

PAGE	CONTEST	CRITERIA	
2, 3	INTERNATIONAL	CONTENT (50%)	Speech Development (20%) Effectiveness (15%) Speech Value (15%)
		DELIVERY (30%)	Physical (10%) Voice (10%) Manner (10%)
		LANGUAGE (20%)	Appropriateness (10%) Correctness (10%)
3, 4	HUMOROUS	CONTENT (55%)	Speech Development (15%) Effectiveness (10%) Speech Value (15%) Audience Response (15%)
		DELIVERY (30%)	Physical (10%) Voice (10%) Manner (10%)
		LANGUAGE (15%)	Appropriateness (10%) Correctness (5%)
5	TABLE TOPICS	SPEECH DEVELOPMENT (30%) EFFECTIVENESS (25%) PHYSICAL (15%) VOICE (15%) LANGUAGE (15%)	
6	EVALUATION	ANALYTICAL QUALITY (40%) RECOMMENDATIONS (30%) TECHNIQUE (15%) SUMMATION (15%)	

Toastmasters International requires the use of **official speech contest forms** only.

A speech contest form is not "official" unless it is

complete,

which may mean double-sided,

and

current,

because rules occasionally change.

INTERNATIONAL CONTEST SPEECH CRITERIA

CONTENT (50% International Speech Score)

SPEECH DEVELOPMENT (20% of International Score)

Structure; Organization; Support Material

Speech Development is the way the speaker puts ideas together so the audience can understand them. The speech is structured around a purpose, and this structure must include an opening, body, and conclusion. A good speech immediately engages the audience's attention and then moves forward toward a significant conclusion. This development of the speech structure is supported by relevant examples, illustrations, facts, and figures, delivered with such smoothness that they blend into the framework of the speech to present the audience with a unified whole.

EFFECTIVENESS (15% of International Score)

Achievement of Purpose; Interest; Reception

Effectiveness is measured in part by the audience's reception of the speech, but a large part is your subjective judgment of how the speech came across. You should ask yourself such questions as "Was I able to determine the speaker's purpose?" "Did the speech relate directly to that purpose?" "Was the audience's interest held by the speaker?" "Was this speech subject appropriate for this particular audience?"

SPEECH VALUE (15% of International Score)

Ideas; Logic; Original Thought

Speech Value justifies the act of speaking. The speaker has a responsibility to say something meaningful and original to the audience. ***The listeners should feel the speaker has made a contribution to their thinking****. The ideas should be important ones, although this does not preclude a humorous presentation of them.

** Editor's Note: Emphasis added.*

DELIVERY (30% of International Score)

PHYSICAL (10 % of International Score)

Appearance; Body Language; Speaking Area

Physical presentation of a speech carries part of the responsibility for effective communication. The speaker's appearance should reinforce the speech, whether profound, sad, humorous, or instructional. Body language should support points through gestures, expressions, and body positioning. The speaker makes effective use of and stays within the designated speaking area.

VOICE (10% of International Score)

Flexibility; Volume

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

MANNER (10 % of International Score)

Directness; Assurance; Enthusiasm

Manner is the indirect revelation of the speaker's real self as the speech is delivered. The speaker should speak with enthusiasm and assurance, showing interest in the audience and confidence in their reactions.

LANGUAGE (20% of International Score)

APPROPRIATENESS (10% of International Score)

To Speech Purpose and Audience

Appropriateness of language refers to the choice of words that relate to the speech purpose and to the particular audience hearing the speech. Language should promote clear understanding of thoughts and should fit the occasion precisely.

CORRECTNESS (10% of International Score)

Grammar; Pronunciation; Word Selection

Correctness of language ensures that attention will be directed toward what the speaker says, not how it is said. Proper use of grammar and correct pronunciation will show that the speaker is the master of the words being used.

HUMOROUS CONTEST SPEECH CRITERIA

CONTENT (55% of Humorous Score)

SPEECH DEVELOPMENT (15% of Humorous Score)

Structure; Opening; Body; Support Material

Speech Development is the way the speaker puts ideas together so the audience can understand them. The speech is structured around a purpose or theme, and the structure must include an opening, body and conclusion. A good humorous speech immediately engages the audience's attention and then builds to a significant conclusion; it is not a series of jokes or a monologue.

EFFECTIVENESS (10% of Humorous Score)

Excitement Created; Suspense; The Unexpected Twist; Surprise; Connection of Humorous Events; Achievement of Purpose

Effectiveness refers to your subjective judgment of how the speech came across. What was the purpose or theme of the speech? Did the speech relate directly to that purpose or theme? Was humor used effectively?

SPEECH VALUE (15% of Humorous Score)

Ideas; Originality of Thoughts and Material

Speech Value justifies the act of speaking. The speaker has a responsibility to say something meaningful and original to the audience, even in a humorous speech. The ideas should be important, even though they are presented humorously.

AUDIENCE RESPONSE (15% of Humorous Score)

Attentiveness; Laughter; Interest; Reception

Audience Response reflects the audience's reaction to the speech. Did the speech hold the audience's interest? Did people understand and laugh at the humor?

DELIVERY (30% of Humorous Score)

PHYSICAL (10% of Humorous Score)

Appearance; Body Language; Speaking Area

Physical presentation of a speech carries part of the responsibility for effective communication. The speaker's appearance should reinforce the speech. Body language should support points through gestures, expressions and body positioning. The speaker makes effective use of and stays within the designated speaking area.

VOICE (10% of Humorous Score)

Flexibility; Volume

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

MANNER (10% of Humorous Score)

Directness; Assurance; Enthusiasm

Manner is the indirect revelation of the speaker's real self as the speech is delivered. The speaker should speak with enthusiasm and assurance, showing interest in the audience and confidence in their reactions.

LANGUAGE (15% of Humorous Score)

APPROPRIATENESS (10% of Humorous Score)

To Speech Purpose and Audience; Reflecting Good Taste

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

CORRECTNESS (5% of Humorous Score)

Grammar; Pronunciation; Word Selection

Correctness of language ensures that attention will be directed toward what the speaker says, not how it is said. Proper use of grammar and correct pronunciation will show that the speaker is the master of the words being used.

TABLE TOPICS CONTEST SPEECH CRITERIA

SPEECH DEVELOPMENT (30% of Table Topics Score)

Opening; Body; Close; Organization; Smoothness

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

EFFECTIVENESS (25% of Table Topics Score)

Logic; Directness; Enthusiasm; Achievement of Purpose; Audience Response

Effectiveness is your subjective judgment of how the response came across. Were you able to determine the speaker's purpose? Did the speech relate directly to the given question or topic? Was the response clearly and logically presented?

PHYSICAL PRESENTATION (15% of Table Topics Score)

Appearance; Body Language; Speaking Area

Physical Presentation of the response carries part of the responsibility for effective communication. The speaker's appearance should reinforce his or her response. Body language should support points through gestures, expressions and body positioning. The speaker makes effective use of and stays within the designated speaking area.

VOICE (15% of Table Topics Score)

Flexibility; Volume

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

LANGUAGE (15% of Table Topics Score)

Appropriate to Speech, Purpose & Audience; Good Grammar, Pronunciation & Word Selection

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

EVALUATION CONTEST SPEECH CRITERIA

NOTE:

From the Judges Code of Ethics:

“Judges will support by word and deed the contest rules and judging standards...”

Judging should be based on the criteria printed on the respective Judges Guide and Ballot.

The current Evaluation Contest judging criteria do not include

Delivery

(Physical, which includes Speaking Area; Voice; and Manner)

or

Language

(Appropriateness and Correctness).

ANALYTICAL QUALITY (40% of Evaluation Score)

Clear; Focused

Analytical Quality refers to the effectiveness of the evaluation. Every evaluation should carefully analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the speaker's presentation. Were the evaluator's comments clear and logical? Did the evaluator identify specific strengths and weaknesses of the presentation?

RECOMMENDATIONS (30% of Evaluation Score)

Positive; Specific; Helpful

Recommendations are an important part of an evaluation. An evaluator not only points out the strengths and weaknesses of a speech, he/she also offers specific recommendations for improvement. Recommendations should be practical, helpful and positive, and they should enable the speaker to improve his or her next presentation.

TECHNIQUE (15% of Evaluation Score)

Sympathetic; Sensitive; Motivational

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

SUMMATION (15% of Evaluation Score)

Concise; Encouraging

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