



I am Judging a Speech Contest:

Now what?

Agenda

- Part 1: Expectations and Rules for Judges: Content Presentation
- Part 2: Mock Speech Contest: Two speakers
- Part 3: Expert Judging Panel and Audience Interaction/Q & A

Audience Expectations

- Focus on the training: Please do not multi-task. Stay engaged.
- Save and write down questions for the end so we can get through the training.
- At an actual contest we would NEVER identify who is judging and how they judged- we are doing this for training purposes as a learning opportunity.
- We'll take breaks as needed. We are allowing 2-3 hours max for this training.
- We'll start with content presentation by Anne as the District CJ

Judges Expectations In A Contest



Three Purpose of a Speech Contest:

- Provide an opportunity for competitive speaking.
- Provide interesting educational programs for members and the public.
- Provide the audience an opportunity to learn by observing proficient speakers.

Judges Have An Obligation To:

- Contestants
- Toastmasters International
- Audience
- Themselves

Judges vs Evaluating:

- Judges = selecting a winner
- Evaluating = appraisal and advice
- Judges' decisions are **confidential!!**
 - They do not talk ANYONE about how they voted or why. Why? See above. And there is no time limit on this when the contest ends.



Good Judges Are:

- Accurate
- Fair
- Trustworthy
- Knowledgeable
- Good listeners



Barriers to Objectivity:

- Speaker position
- Champion for the underdog
- Halo effect
- Reverse halo effect
- Second time around (or more)
- Not the norm
- Prejudices and personal preferences



Know The Rules:

- Prevent Misconceptions-
SO let's go to the
Rulebook for some
highlights



Contest Rules and Judges Certificate of Eligibility



The **RULEBOOK**



SPEECH CONTEST **RULEBOOK**

JULY 1, 2025 TO JUNE 30, 2026



Judges Eligibility Requirements – Pages 7 and 8

- To be a chief judge, voting judge, or tiebreaking judge at a Toastmasters speech contest, you must meet all eligibility requirements identified below.
- At a club contest, be a paid member.
- At an Area, Division, or District contest:
 - Be a paid member for a minimum of six (6) months, (and judged at an Area contest or higher)
- Have completed a minimum of six (6) speech projects in the *Competent Communication* manual or earned certificates of completion in Levels 1 and 2 of any path in the Toastmasters Pathways learning experience.
- Be physically present at the contest for which you are serving. (Exceptions: contest officials for the Online Speech Contest.)

Judges Eligibility Requirements – Pages 7 and 8

- Candidates for elected District leader positions for the term beginning the subsequent July 1 are ineligible to serve as a contest official or as a test speaker at the Area, Division, or District level.



General Procedures – Page 12

- All voting judges and the tiebreaking judge receive the Judge's Certification of Eligibility and Code of Ethics (Item 1170). The form must be signed and returned to the Chief Judge.
- Judges eligibility requirements are also listed on this form. Let's go there.....

Judges Certificate of Eligibility and Code of Ethics



Judge's Certification of Eligibility and Code of Ethics

All judges must complete this form before the contest and submit it to the chief judge at each level of competition.

Name of Contest:

- Evaluation Humorous International Video Speech Contest
 Online Table Topics® Tall Tales

Contest Level:

- Club Area Division District
 Quarterfinal Semifinal World Championship Video Speech Contest

Date of Contest (MM/DD/YYYY):

Eligibility

Judges Certificate of Eligibility and Code of Ethics

Eligibility

To be a chief judge, voting judge, or tiebreaking judge at a Toastmasters speech contest, you must meet all eligibility requirements identified below (as outlined in the *Speech Contest Rulebook*, 2.Eligibility, D).

1. At a club contest, be a paid member.
2. At an Area, Division, or District contest:
 - a. Be a paid member for a minimum of six (6) months.
 - b. Have completed a minimum of six (6) speech projects in the *Competent Communication* manual or earned certificates of completion in Levels 1 and 2 of any path in the Toastmasters Pathways learning experience.
 1. Only members who joined Toastmasters prior to the rollout of Pathways in their region can apply speeches from the *Competent Communication* manual towards eligibility for judging.
 - c. Be physically present at the contest for which you are serving (Exception: contest officials in the Online Speech Contest).

Judges Certificate of Eligibility and Code of Ethics

Judge's Code of Ethics

1. I will uphold the Toastmasters core values of integrity, service, respect, and excellence.
2. I will demonstrate the utmost objectivity by consciously avoiding bias of any kind in selecting first, second, and third place contestants.
3. I will not consider any contestant's club, Area, Division, District, or region affiliation.
4. I will not consider any contestant's age, race, color, creed, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national or ethnic origin, sexual orientation, or physical or mental disability.
5. I will not time the speeches and will not consider the possibility of undertime or overtime when judging a contestant's speech.
6. I will support by word and deed the contest rules and judging standards, refrain from public criticism of the contest, and only reveal my participation as a judge, my selected scores, and the ranking I assigned in accordance with speech contest rules.
7. I am not a member of the same club as any contestant when judging at the Division, District, quarterfinal, semifinal and final levels.
8. I have no conflict of interest with any of the contestants that would cause me to be biased.

I certify that I am eligible to serve as a judge, under the current speech contest rules, and will uphold the Judge's Code of Ethics. I acknowledge that by serving as a judge I am no longer eligible to compete in this contest type at any level, in any District, for this contest cycle.

Full Name:

Member Number:

District:

Signature:

Date (MM/DD/YYYY):

General Procedures – Page 12

- Before the contest, the Chief Judge selects a member to act as tiebreaking judge. **The identity of the tiebreaking judge is secret, and known only to the chief judge.**
- The tiebreaking judge does not attend the judges' briefing.
- The Chief Judge must provide a Tiebreaking Judge's Guide and Ballot to the tiebreaking judge before the beginning of the contest.
- The tiebreaking judge form is **ONLY** used if there is a tie.

Timing of Speeches– Pages 15- 17

- International, Humorous, and Online contest speeches must be from five (5) to seven (7) minutes. A contestant will be disqualified if the speech is less than four (4) minutes 30 seconds or more than seven (7) minutes 30 seconds.
- Timers must not consider fractions of a second. A contestant is not qualified until their time reaches four (4) minutes and 30 seconds and is not disqualified until their time reaches seven (7) minutes and 31 seconds.
- Judges DO NOT take into consideration under or over time of a contestant. That what the Timers are for.
- In the event of technical failure of the signal or timing equipment, a speaker is allowed 30 seconds extra overtime before being disqualified

Protests and Disqualifications– Page 17

- Protests are limited to eligibility, originality, and reference to another contestant or another contestant's speech and must only be lodged by voting judges and/or contestants. Any protest must be lodged with the Chief Judge and/or contest chair prior to the contest being adjourned.
- The Chief Judge, contest chair, voting judges, and contestants must not consider protests from audience members.
- Before a contestant can be disqualified on the basis of originality, or for referencing another contestant's speech, the contestant must be given an opportunity to respond to the voting judges. A majority of the voting judges must concur in the decision to disqualify.
- All decisions of the voting judges are final.

Online Speech Contest Rules– Page 21

- The Online Speech Contest is conducted with all contestants and contest officials participating **live**, online from physically distant locations.
- All contestants and contest officials must participate in the contest live, in real-time, using equipment that they obtain themselves.
- All briefings and rehearsals must be conducted online.

Online Speech Contest Rules – Tech Issues Page 22

- If a contestant experiences a technical difficulty in which their audio, video, or both are severely weakened or completely lost during the contest:
- The chief judge and contest chair confer and determine whether the contest is paused. If the contest is paused, the impacted contestant is allowed no more than 10 minutes to attempt to reestablish a secure connection to the contest. If the contestant is able to reestablish a secure connection within the 10 minutes, the contest chair indicates the last word or sentence that was heard and the contestant continues their speech from that point with no additional time allowance.
- If the contestant is unable to reestablish a secure connection within the 10 minutes, the contest continues with the next contestant.

Online Speech Contest Rules – Tech Issues Page 23

- If a voting judge experiences a technical difficulty in which they are unable to hear or see a contestant well enough to complete their responsibilities, they must notify the Chief Judge immediately and their ballot will not be included in the final results of the contest.
- Backup judges may be appointed prior to the contest to serve as a judge in the event of a technical difficulty. If backup judges are appointed, they must judge the entire contest, but their ballot will only be consulted if a primary judge was unable to complete their role.

Online Speech Contest Rules – Tech Issues Page 23

- If enough contest participants experience a technical difficulty in which the contest is unable to proceed, the chief judge and contest chair confer and determine whether to pause the contest. If the contest is paused, it must be resumed within one (1) hour or the remainder of the contest must be rescheduled.
- The Chief Judge and/or contest chair must communicate their decision to all contest participants in a timely fashion.

Online Speech Contest Rules – Tech Issues Page 23

- If the contest is paused and can be resumed within one (1) hour, if a contestant was partway through a speech when the disruption occurred, the contest chair indicates the last word or sentence that was heard and the contestant continues their speech from that point with no additional time allowance.

Online Speech Contest Rules – Tech Issues Page 23

- If the contest must be rescheduled, only contestants who have not yet presented will present during the rescheduled contest.
- If a contestant was partway through a speech when the disruption occurred, they can begin their speech from the start during the rescheduled contest. Contest officials must send all partially completed forms (Judge's Guide and Ballot, Time Record Sheet, etc.) to the Chief Judge to be stored until the rescheduled contest.

Online Contest Judges Guide and Ballot



Judges Guide And Ballot – Front side



Online Speech Contest Judge's Guide and Ballot

JUDGING ITEMS		SUGGESTED POINT VALUES				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
		EXCELLENT	VERY GOOD	GOOD	FAIR										
Speech Development Structure, Organization, Support Material	CONTENT 50	15	11-14	6-10	0-5										
Effectiveness Clear purpose, Achievement of Purpose, Relevance		10	7-9	4-6	0-3										
Speech Value Ideas, Logic, Original Thought		25	17-24	9-16	0-8										
Physical Appearance, Body Language, Speaking Area	DELIVERY 30	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	LANGUAGE 20	10	7-9	4-6	0-3										
Correctness Grammar, Pronunciation, Word Selection		10	7-9	4-6	0-3										
TOTAL SCORE (100 Points Possible)															

(Detach and submit to chief judge)

Judge's Official Ballot - Online Speech Contest

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

Write contestants' names in the space below. Counters will assign points.

First Place (receives three points): _____

Second Place (receives two points): _____

Third Place (receives one point): _____

Judges Guide And Ballot- Bottom portion

(Detach and submit to chief judge)

Judge's Official Ballot - Online Speech Contest

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

Write contestants' names in the space below. Counters will assign points.

First Place (receives three points):

Second Place (receives two points):

Third Place (receives one point):

(Signature of Judge)

(Judge's Name; Please Print)

Judges Guide And Ballot- Back side

Judging Criteria

Purpose

The International Speech Contest enables members to practice public speaking and content development in a competitive setting. The topic and purpose of each speech is determined by the speaker. Every speech should fit within the overall purpose of the contest: To clearly develop and present ideas in a substantially original speech.

Content (50%)

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 and 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 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 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.

Delivery (30%)

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 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 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%)

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 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.

Judge's Code of Ethics

1. Judges will uphold the Toastmasters core values of integrity, respect, service, and excellence.
2. Judges will demonstrate the utmost objectivity by consciously avoiding bias of any kind in selecting first, second, and third place contestants.
3. Judges will not consider any contestant's club, Area, Division, District, or region affiliation.
4. Judges will not consider any contestant's age, race, color, creed, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national or ethnic origin, sexual orientation, or physical or mental disability.
5. Judges will not time the speeches and will not consider the possibility of undertime or overtime when judging a contestant's speech.
6. Judges will support by word and deed the contest rules and judging standards, refrain from public criticism of the contest, and only reveal participation as a judge, selected scores, and the ranking assigned in accordance with speech contest rules.
7. Judges will not be a member of the same club as any contestant when judging at the Division, District, quarterfinal, semifinal, and final levels.
8. Judges will have no conflict of interest with any of the contestants that would cause bias.

Member Number: _____ District: _____

Judges Guide And Ballot – Front side- Filling it out



Online Speech Contest Judge's Guide and Ballot

JUDGING ITEMS		SUGGESTED POINT VALUES				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
		EXCELLENT	VERY GOOD	GOOD	FAIR											
Speech Development Structure, Organization, Support Material	CONTENT 50	15	11-14	6-10	0-5											
Effectiveness Clear purpose, Achievement of Purpose, Relevance		10	7-9	4-6	0-3											
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Manner Directness, Assurance, Enthusiasm		10	7-9	4-6	0-3											
Appropriateness To Speech Purpose, and Audience	LANGUAGE 20	10	7-9	4-6	0-3											
Correctness Grammar, Pronunciation, Word Selection		10	7-9	4-6	0-3											
TOTAL SCORE (100 Points Possible)																

(Detach and submit to chief judge)

Judge's Official Ballot – Online Speech Contest

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

Write contestants' names in the space below. Counters will assign points.

First Place (receives three points): _____

Second Place (receives two points): _____

Third Place (receives one point): _____

Judges Categories

- Content – 50%
- Delivery – 30%
- Language – 20%

JUDGING ITEMS	
Speech Development Structure, Organization, Support Material	CONTENT 50
Effectiveness Clear purpose, Achievement of Purpose, Relevance	
Speech Value Ideas, Logic, Original Thought	
Physical Appearance, Body Language, Speaking Area	DELIVERY 30
Voice Flexibility, Volume	
Manner Directness, Assurance, Enthusiasm	
Appropriateness To Speech Purpose, and Audience	LANGUAGE 20
Correctness Grammar, Pronunciation, Word Selection	

Judges Categories – Content – 50%

- Speech Development
- Speech Effectiveness
- Speech Value

Speech Development Structure, Organization, Support Material	CONTENT 50	15	11-14	6-10	0-5
Effectiveness Clear purpose, Achievement of Purpose, Relevance		10	7-9	4-6	0-3
Speech Value Ideas, Logic, Original Thought		25	17-24	9-16	0-8

Judges Categories – Delivery – 30%

- Physical
- Voice
- Manner

Physical Appearance, Body Language, Speaking Area	DELIVERY 30	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

Judges Categories – Language – 20%

- Appropriateness
- Correctness

Appropriateness To Speech Purpose, and Audience	LANGUAGE 20	10	7-9	4-6	0-3
Correctness Grammar, Pronunciation, Word Selection		10	7-9	4-6	0-3

Judges Guide And Ballot- Ideal Ballot

(Detach and submit to chief judge)

Judge's Official Ballot - Online Speech Contest

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

Write contestants' names in the space below. Counters will assign points.

First Place (receives three points): Tom Jones

Second Place (receives two points): Brad Pitt

Third Place (receives one point): Donald Trump

Anne Groetsch Anne Groetsch
(Signature of Judge) (Judge's Name; Please Print)

Page 1 of 2

Examples of a Spoiled Ballot



Examples of a Spoiled Ballot- What is wrong here?

(Detach and submit to chief judge)

Judge's Official Ballot - Online Speech Contest

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

Write contestants' names in the space below. Counters will assign points.

First Place (receives three points): Tom Jones

Second Place (receives two points): Brad Pitt

Third Place (receives one point): Hillary Clinton

(Signature of Judge) (Judge's Name; Please Print)

Page 1 of 2

Examples of a Spoiled Ballot- What is wrong here?

(Detach and submit to chief judge)

Judge's Official Ballot - Online Speech Contest

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

Write contestants' names in the space below. Counters will assign points.

First Place (receives three points): Tom Jones

Second Place (receives two points): Brad Pitt

Third Place (receives one point): Hillary Clinton

Not signed

(Signature of Judge)

(Judge's Name; Please Print)

Page 1 of 2

Examples of a Spoiled Ballot- What is wrong here?

(Detach and submit to chief judge)

Judge's Official Ballot - Online Speech Contest

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

Write contestants' names in the space below. Counters will assign points.

First Place (receives three points): Robert Smith

~~First~~ ~~Second~~ Place (receives two points): Nancy Blue

~~Third~~ Place (receives one point): Tom Keyes

Second

(Signature of Judge) (Judge's Name; Please Print)

Page 1 of 2



Examples of a Spoiled Ballot- What is wrong here?

(Detach and submit to chief judge)

Judge's Official Ballot - Online Speech Contest

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

Write contestants' names in the space below. Counters will assign points.

First Place (receives three points): Robert Smith Can't have two First places

First Second Place (receives two points): Nancy Blue

Third Place (receives one point): Tom Keyes

Second Not signed

(Signature of Judge) (Judge's Name; Please Print)

Page 1 of 2

Examples of a Spoiled Ballot- What is wrong here?

Contestants are:

- Ken Flowers
- Jodi Maxwell
- John Smith

(Detach and submit to chief judge)

Judge's Official Ballot - Online Speech Contest

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

Write contestants' names in the space below. Counters will assign points.

First Place (receives three points): Jodi Maxwell

Second Place (receives two points): Ken Smith

Third Place (receives one point): John Flowers

Anne Groetsch Anne Groetsch
(Signature of Judge) (Judge's Name; Please Print)

Page 1 of 2

Examples of a Spoiled Ballot- What is wrong here?

Contestants are:

- Ken Flowers
- Jodi Maxwell
- John Smith

(Detach and submit to chief judge)

Judge's Official Ballot - Online Speech Contest

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

Write contestants' names in the space below. Counters will assign points.

First Place (receives three points): Jodi Maxwell

Second Place (receives two points): Ken Smith **Names not correct**

Third Place (receives one point): John Flowers

Anne G. Grottsch Anne Grottsch
(Signature of Judge) (Judge's Name; Please Print)

Page 1 of 2

Resources



Resources

<https://www.toastmasters.org/search?t=contentTab#gsc.tab=0&gsc.q=judges%20%20training> TI Judges training page

<https://ccdn.toastmasters.org/medias/files/department-documents/speech-contests-documents/1190a-speech-contest-judges-training.pdf> Speech contest Judges Training PDF

<https://www.toastmasters.org/resources/speech-contests/speech-contest-tutorials>
TI Video tutorials

Part 2: Mock Speech Contest



Part 3: Expert Judges Panel Discussion and Q & A

