

Judges' Briefing Guide

The text below is meant as a guide for running the Judges' Briefing. It is not a script and is not a replacement or amendment to the *Speech Contest Rulebook* (Item 1171). This guide is applicable for the July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017 time period and may no longer be applicable after June 30, 2017. Always refer to the *Speech Contest Rulebook* (Item 1171) when conducting speech contests.

Introduce yourself and remind officials why contests are conducted and the important role they play in making them happen.

"Speech contests are an important part of the Toastmasters educational program. They provide an opportunity for Toastmasters to gain speaking experience, as well as an opportunity for other Toastmasters to learn by observing proficient speakers."

Speech Contest Rulebook (Item 1171), page 4

Distribute the following to each voting judge:

- List of contestants in speaking order
- Judge's Guide and Ballot
- Speech Contest Rulebook* (Item 1171)
- Judge's Certification of Eligibility and Code of Ethics (Item 1170)
- Envelope

Distribute the following to each counter:

- List of contestants in speaking order
- Counter's Tally Sheet (Item 1176)
- Speech Contest Rulebook* (Item 1171)

Distribute the following to each timer:

- List of contestants in speaking order
- Speech Contest Time Record Sheet and Instructions for Timers (Item 1175)
- Speech Contest Rulebook* (Item 1171)
- Stopwatch

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Role of the Judges

- Review the purpose of a judge: to select the speaker who has given the best speech on that day using the criteria provided in the Judge's Guide and Ballot.
- Review the Judge's Guide and Ballot in detail, covering the judging criteria and suggested point values.
- Review suggested methods for using the Judge's Guide and Ballot.
 - Avoid bias by not filling out the guide during the speech
 - Take notes and catalog what the speaker did well or poorly during their speech
 - Use notes to enter point values for each category on the guide when the speech concludes
 - Use point values suggested for each rating (excellent, very good, good, fair).
 - Use other points available in the range (e.g., if "excellent" is 20 points judges can assign fewer points if the contestant did not epitomize excellence).
 - Use a system of pluses and minuses to rate speakers as they compete. After all contestants have spoken, assign points.
 - Put the first contestant's name in the far right column and mark the ballot. Fold that column under, then judge the next speech. Fold that speaker's column under. Judges won't be influenced by their rating of previous speakers.
- Review the Judge's Certification of Eligibility and Code of Ethics (Item 1170), have judges sign and collect.
- Review judging procedure.

"K. When the last contestant finishes speaking, the contest chair will ask for silence until the ballot counters have collected all the ballots.

1. In order for a ballot to be valid, judges shall:
 - a) Complete their ballots by entering their choices for first, second, and third place.
 - b) Sign and print their names on the ballot.
2. When voting judges have finished marking their ballots, they shall tear off the bottom portion of the ballot, place it in the provided envelope, and hold up the envelope for the ballot counters to collect.
 - a) The top portion of the ballot is not provided to the ballot counters and must be discreetly discarded by the voting judge after the contest."

Speech Contest Rulebook (Item 1171), page 11

- Instruct voting judges to sit close to the contest area in case of an outside disturbance or malfunctioning technical system.
- Remind judges that timing of speeches is the sole responsibility of the timers. Judges are not permitted to time the speeches and will not consider the possibility of under-time or overtime when judging a contestant's speech.
- Remind judges to remain in the room until results have been announced and the contest has concluded.

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Review the protest process.

"7. Protests and Disqualifications

- A. Protests are limited to eligibility and originality and shall only be lodged by voting judges and contestants. Any protest shall be lodged with the chief judge and/or contest chair prior to the announcement of the winner and alternate(s).
- B. Before a contestant can be disqualified on the basis of originality, 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.
- C. The contest chair can disqualify a contestant on the basis of eligibility.
- D. All decisions of the voting judges and qualifying judges are final."

Speech Contest Rulebook (Item 1171), page 14

- Tell the judges the cue the contest chair will say to alert them to gather at the back of the room to discuss a protest.

Role of the Counters

- Review the purpose of a counter: to tabulate the results accurately to determine the correct winner of the speech contest using the Counter's Tally Sheet (Item 1176).
- Review the Counter's Tally Sheet (Item 1176).
- Tell counters the preferred method of tabulating results.
- Review counting procedure.

"K. When the last contestant finishes speaking, the contest chair will ask for silence until the ballot counters have collected all the ballots.

- 2. When voting judges have finished marking their ballots, they shall tear off the bottom portion of the ballot, place it in the provided envelope, and hold up the envelope for the ballot counters to collect.
- L. Once all of the ballots have been collected, the ballot counters and the chief judge will leave the contest area and proceed to the counting room.
 - 1. In the counting room, the ballot counters will tabulate the results of the contest using the Counter's Tally Sheet (Item 1176).
 - a) On the Counter's Tally Sheet, each contestant receives points for being ranked first, second, or third place on a voting judge's ballot.
 - 1. Three points are scored for each first-place ranking.
 - 2. Two points are scored for each second-place ranking.
 - 3. One point is scored for each third-place ranking.
 - b) Once all points are entered, the ballot counters compute the total points for each contestant and enter the totals on the bottom of the tally sheet.
 - 1. Point totals must be verified by all ballot counters before results are entered on the sheet.
 - 2. Contestants are then ranked on the bottom of the tally sheet according to number of points scored."

Speech Contest Rulebook (Item 1171), page 11-12

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- Remind counters that if the results are announced incorrectly, they are permitted to immediately interrupt the contest chair to correct the error.

Role of the Timers

- Review the purpose of a timer: to signal each contestant using the provided signaling device, per the timing guidelines in the Speech Contest Rulebook (Item 1171) and accurately time the speeches and record the time using the Speech Contest Time Record Sheet and Instructions for Timers (Item 1175).
- Review the Speech Contest Time Record Sheet and Instructions for Timers (Item 1175).
- Review timing procedure.

"6. Timing of the Speeches

- A. Two timers are appointed by the chief judge. One is provided with a stopwatch, and the other with a signaling device that displays green, yellow, and red colors.
- B. The signaling device must be in full view of each contestant.
- C. The timer with the stopwatch maintains and delivers to the chief judge the written record of elapsed time of each speech on the Speech Contest Time Record Sheet and Instructions for Timers (Item 1175).
- D. The timer managing the timing device ensures that contestants are able to view an accurate green, yellow, or red signal at appropriate times during the speech.
- E. All speeches delivered by contestants must conform to the timing guidelines for the contest.
 - 1. International and Humorous speeches shall be from five to seven minutes. A contestant will be disqualified if the speech is less than four minutes 30 seconds or more than seven minutes 30 seconds.
 - 2. Table Topics contest speeches shall be from one minute to two minutes. A contestant will be disqualified if the speech is less than one minute or more than two minutes 30 seconds.
 - 3. Evaluation contest speeches shall be from two to three minutes. A contestant will be disqualified if the speech is less than one minute 30 seconds or more than three minutes 30 seconds.
 - 4. Tall Tales speeches shall be from three to five minutes. A contestant will be disqualified if the speech is less than two minutes 30 seconds or more than five minutes 30 seconds.
- F. Upon being introduced, the contestant shall proceed immediately to the speaking position.
 - 1. 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.
 - 2. The speaker should begin speaking within a short time after arriving at the speaking area, and is not permitted to delay the contest unnecessarily.
- G. Timers shall provide warning signals to the contestants, which shall be clearly visible to the speakers but not obvious to the audience.
 - 1. For International and Humorous contests:
 - a) A green signal will be displayed at five minutes and remain displayed for one minute.
 - b) A yellow signal will be displayed at six minutes and remain displayed for one minute.
 - c) A red signal will be displayed at seven minutes and will remain on until the conclusion of the speech.
 - 2. For Evaluation contests:

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- a) The green signal will be displayed at two minutes and remain displayed for 30 seconds.
 - b) The yellow signal will be displayed at two minutes and thirty seconds and remain displayed for 30 seconds.
 - c) The red signal will be displayed at three minutes and remain displayed until the evaluation is concluded.
3. For Table Topics contests:
- a) The green signal will be displayed at one minute and remain displayed for 30 seconds.
 - b) The yellow signal will be displayed at one minute 30 seconds and remain displayed for 30 seconds.
 - c) The red signal will be displayed at two minutes and remain displayed until the speech is concluded.
4. For Tall Tales contests:
- a) The green signal will be displayed at three minutes and remain displayed for one minute.
 - b) The yellow signal will be displayed at four minutes and remain displayed for one minute.
 - c) The red signal will be displayed at five minutes and remain displayed until the speech is concluded.
5. In all speech contests, no signal shall be given for the overtime period.
6. Any visually impaired contestant is permitted to request and must be granted a form of warning signal of his or her own choosing.
- a) 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.
 - b) If any special device and/or specific instructions for such signal is/are required, the contestant must provide same.
7. In the event of technical failure of the signal or timing equipment, a speaker is allowed 30 seconds extra overtime before being disqualified."

Speech Contest Rulebook (Item 1171), pages 12-14