

# Evaluation and Humorous Speech Timeline and Contest Script

Have you ever attended a Toastmasters contest where you walked in the door to find only 10 or 12 people in attendance with maybe 1 or 2 contestants in each category? And, before you even find a seat someone is already asking you “Would you be our Sergeant-at-Arms tonight?” or “We need counters and timers. Which one would you like to be?” Worse yet is when you get that phone call the night before the contest, which goes something like this: “Would you be willing to be our Toastmaster for our contest? You don’t have to do anything. Just show up!”

Conversely, have you ever walked into an Area or Division contest with over 50 people in the room, with a full slate of contestants, where excitement and anticipation fills the room, and the entire program flows with precision as if every detail had been planned for weeks?

Holding a successful and memorable Toastmaster is a privilege for everyone to attend and a valuable learning experience for all involved. This document has been designed as a step-by-step checklist to help you through every step of planning and conducting a speech contest. This process begins long before contest day.

## At least 4 weeks prior to contest day:

### Contest Chairperson

- Identifies location, time and date for contest
- Assigns Toastmaster and Chief Judge and instructs their roles.
- Recruits Test Speaker.
- Recruits Backup Test Speaker.
- Gets someone to be in charge of food and drinks.
- Creates and distributes promotion flyer to clubs, Area Governors and Division Governor.

## At least 3 weeks prior to contest day:

### Toastmaster

- Contacts contestants to congratulate them of their win at the previous level and makes sure they know when and where to be on contest day/night. Also instructs contestants to show up 45 minutes before the contest start time to complete bio sheets and be present for briefing and drawing for speaking order. Encourage contestants to take advantage of this opportunity and that it will be worth their while to make the effort to compete.
- Attempt to get bios and eligibility forms.
- Recruits Sergeant-at-Arms and instructs to do the following:
  - Show up an hour before contest is to start in order to welcome guests and be on hand to point people to bathrooms and food areas.
  - Locate a room away from the contest room where Evaluation contestants will be taken so that they cannot hear or see the other participants.
  - At beginning of contest, welcome the audience and introduce the Contest Chairperson.
  - When asked, the SAA will escort Evaluation contestants to waiting area allowing five minutes to write notes, takes notes away from them until it's their turn to present, escorts them to just inside the door making sure they do not yet walk to the front of the room, gives their notes back and waits for the contestant to be introduced.
  - While judges are tabulating, SAA gets next contestant and brings the person only inside the door to wait for their introduction.
  - Re-sounds the gavel after the 10-minute break is over and re-introduces the Toastmaster of the evening.

### Chief Judge

- Recruits 2 timers
- Recruits 2 judges from each club or area
- Recruits Chief Counter
- Recruits at least one additional vote counter
- Recruits a tie-breaker judge.
- Instructs all volunteers where to be and when to be there.
- Collects all judging forms and contestant sheets.
  - Speech Ballots
  - Evaluation Ballots
  - Timer's Sheets
  - Certificates of Originality and Eligibility
  - Bio Sheets
  - Counter's Sheets

## At least one day before contest

### Contest Chairperson

- Buys or creates gift of appreciation for Test Speaker. If you plan to give something engraved, allow at least a week. This expense should be reimbursed by the host club but will not be reimbursed by your Division or District.

### Toastmaster

- Prepares a one-page agenda showing contestant names but no titles. Volunteers need not be listed on the agenda.
- Make copies of agenda.
- Contacts contestants one more time by email or phone as a reminder of the contest, when to be there and that you'll be looking forward to seeing them.
- Prepares Certificates of Achievement for contestants.
- Brings 5 or 6 pens for contestants to use to complete forms.

## At the contest but before the show starts:

### Chief Judge

- Arrives at least one hour before contest start time.
- Checks off volunteers as they arrive.
- Briefs all judges and timers beginning 40 minutes before start.
- Briefs all contestants participating in Evaluation Contest 30 minutes before contest start time.
  - Shows where the timing lights are.
  - Explains timing
    - Green=2 minutes
    - Amber=2 minutes, 30 seconds
    - Red=3 minutes
    - Disqualify at less than 2 minutes or greater than 3 minutes, 30 seconds.
  - Explains that the Evaluation contest will occur first.
  - Explains that contestants will be asked to leave the room for which they will have five minutes to prepare notes, notes will be then taken away and returned to them when it's their turn to present.
  - Explains that the SAA will bring contestants in one by one while the others remain in the room away from the contest room and that they are asked to remain just inside the door until their name is announced.
    - Contestants draw for speaking order.
- Briefs all contestants participating in Speech Contest 20 minutes before contest starts.
  - Shows where the timing lights are.
  - Explains timing
    - Green=5 minutes
    - Amber=6 minutes
    - Red=7 minutes
    - Disqualify at less than 4 minutes, 30 seconds or greater than 7 minutes, 30 seconds.
  - Explains that the Speech contest will occur second.
  - Explains introductions will be in the following fashion:
    - Person's name, Title of Speech, Title of Speech, Person's name.
    - (For best results, the speaker should wait to approach front of the room until full introduction is complete.)
  - Contestants draw for speaking order.
- Delivers speaking order of all contestants to Toastmaster.

## Toastmaster

- Arrives at least one hour before contest start time.
- Chooses a seat near the front, on the side offering easy access to the front of the room and back to the seat.
- Checks off contestants as they arrive.
- Gets them to complete Eligibility and Bio Forms.
- Points out the Chief Judge and when the briefings will begin.
- Identifies District Officers who have showed up, verifies pronunciation of names, writes their names and position for introduction and reference.
- Coordinates kick-off of contest with SAA who will introduce either the Contest Chairperson (commonly the Area Governor for an Area contest or Division Governor for a Division contest.)
- Accumulates speaking order from Chief Judge and provides list to timers.

## The Contest Begins!

### Sergeant-at-Arms

Sounds the gavel, welcomes everyone, introduces Contest Chairperson or Toastmaster. (Note: The Chairperson might be the Toastmaster. In that event, it's probably more appropriate to introduce that person as the Toastmaster of the day or evening. If this is not the case, the Contest Chairperson will say a few welcoming words and will quickly introduce the Toastmaster.)

### Toastmaster

- Welcomes group.
- Provides an upbeat introduction and overview of what the audience will see. Gives introduction to the contest itself. Ideas to cover might include why public speaking contests are important, how the contestants have chosen to participate in the contest at their club level to "step beyond their comfort zone" and gain experience beyond the club.
- Mentions that the first place winners of tonight's events will go on to the Division (or District) contest to be held on XYZ Date:
- Introduces district officers in the audience by simply stating their names and having them stand (if present):
  - District Governor
  - Lieutenant Governor, Education and Training
  - Lieutenant Governor, Marketing
  - Public Relations Officer
  - District Secretary
  - District Treasurer
  - Immediate Past District Governor,
  - Division Governors
  - Area Governors
  - Others
- Introduces Chief Judge

## Chief Judge

- Informs audience
  - that contestants, judges, timers, and counters have been briefed.
  - that contestants have drawn for speaking order.
  - that judges will not consider timing as this is considered separately.
  - that all beepers, cell phones, etc be turned off.
  - that no one should enter or leave the room while a contestant is speaking.
  - of timing for each event.
  - that the contest may now begin!

## Toastmaster

- Makes a smooth transition between Chief Judge comments.
- This is a great time to reiterate to the audience that, to have a fair contest, it is VERY important that each contestant be offered the same equal platform to participate as the next. This means no leaving the room, no doors slamming, no dropping change on the floor, etc.
- Announces "We will start this evening with the Evaluation Contest. At this time, I would like to introduce our Test Speaker First Name, Last Name, Title, Title, First Name, Last Name." There is no other introduction of the Test Speaker at this time except for the name and title.

### Sergeant-at-Arms

- Escorts all of the contestants outside the room to a separate location where they cannot hear the other contestants.
- After 4 minutes, the SAA goes back to the contest room, signals that 5 minutes is near, and returns to get the first contestant.
- After 5 minutes is up, the SAA gives notes to the first contestant and escorts them to stand just inside the door of the contest room until introduced.
- After the first contestant has completed his/her response, the judges will have 1 minute on the clock to mark their ballots.
- The SAA immediately goes outside the room and retrieves the next contestant.
- The SAA instructs the contestant to stand at the door until introduced.

### Toastmaster

#### Conducts Evaluation Contest:

##### A. Toastmaster calls for first contestant:

"Our first Evaluation Contestant tonight is: Person's Name.  
Please help me welcome: Person's Name."

##### B. Contestant walks to front of room. Toastmaster extends a handshake and walks away.

##### C. After a contestant has completed the response, say:

"May we please have one minute of silence while the judges mark their ballots?"

##### D. After one minute on the clock, Toastmaster says:

"Judges, please prepare for the next presenter."

##### E. Toastmaster introduces next Evaluation participant:

"Our next Evaluation participant is...Please help me welcome..."



- F. After final contestant has presented, Toastmaster requests 1 minute of silence for judging. Then, after the minute is up, the Toastmaster says: "Now we will allow extra time for the judges to cast their final votes for best Evaluation. Judges, please raise your ballot in the air when you have completed your votes and our chief judge will collect the ballots."
- G. After all ballots have been collected, the Toastmaster says: "Let's give all of the contestants another round of applause!"
- H. The Toastmaster says: "Now, let's meet our contestants! Could I have all contestants come approach the front of the room please."
- I. The Toastmaster has each contestant introduce himself/herself and mention which club they belong to and how long they have been in Toastmasters.
- J. The Toastmaster picks one item from the contestant's bio sheet and asks the person to elaborate for a brief moment on that topic of interest. The Toastmaster must be very careful to limit responses to 10-20 seconds.
- K. Then the Toastmaster presents each contestant with a Certificate of Appreciation and thanks the person for their participation and asks for one more round of applause as they are asked to return to their seats.

Toastmaster announces 10-minute break.

*[Note: At a Club-Level contest, a break is often not taken in order to keep the meeting running on time. In addition, clubs often elect to have counters stay in the contest room to count votes while the Toastmaster transitions to the speech contest portion. The TM needs to provide a transition that is long enough for the counters to tally the votes. Of course, if the club elects to interview the test speaker after the contestants have delivered their evaluations, this should provide enough time for the counters to count.]*

## Contest Resumes

### Sergeant-at-Arms

- Sergeant-at-Arms gets crowd to sit in their chairs after the break and gets the second portion of meeting moving by re-introducing the Toastmaster.

### Toastmaster

- Provides transition between people who are still not sitting down and the first contestant. This can take some last minute improvisation!!
  - Announces "And now, for the Humorous Speech Contest!"
- #### Conducts Speech Contest
- A. Our first contestant, "first name, last name, Title, Title again, first name, last name."
  - B. Receive contestant by offering a handshake. Try to avoid saying anything to the contestant because if the person responds with any words, the timer will start.
  - C. Ask for one minute of silence while the judges mark their ballots.
  - D. At 45 seconds say "Judges, please complete your balloting."
  - E. "Our next contestant, first name, last name, title, title, first name, last name."
  - F. After last contestant, ask for the same minute of silence but when you get to 45 seconds, say "We will now remain silent until all judges have completed their ballots and the ballots have been collected by our counters." (There is no limit for judges to complete tallying ballots.)
  - G. After ballots have been collected, "Let's give all of the contestants another round of applause for their very well done speeches!"

- H. Invite contestants to front for interviews: "At this time, I'd like to call all of our speech contestants to the front once again."
- I. The Toastmaster has each contestant introduce himself/herself and mention which club they belong to and how long they have been in Toastmasters.
- J. The Toastmaster picks one item from the contestant's bio sheet and asks the person to elaborate for a brief moment on that topic of interest. The Toastmaster must be very careful to limit responses to 10-20 seconds.
- K. Then the Toastmaster presents each contestant with a Certificate of Appreciation and thanks the person for their participation.
- L. Ask for one more round of applause as contestants are instructed to return to their seats.

□ Invites visiting District Officers to make any announcements to the audience. There are usually 2 visiting District Officers at every Area contest and normally 4-7 that will want to speak at the Division. A good way to introduce this is: "While we're waiting for the votes to be tallied, we're going to minimize the suspense a bit by allowing our visiting District Officers to fill the time. Please help me welcome..."

Order to introduce visiting District Officers is:

- Past District Governors
- Area M-1 Governor,
- Area M-2 Governor,
- Area M-3 Governor,
- Area M-4 Governor,
- Division Governor,
- Immediate Past District Governor,
- District Treasurer,
- District Secretary,
- Public Relations Officer,
- Lieutenant Governor, Marketing,
- Lieutenant Governor, Education and Training,
- District Governor.

- Fills any extra time if votes are not completed.
- Conducts the Awards Ceremony by announcing winners for whom there are trophies for. "And, now the person our judges have chosen to represent Area XYX at the Division Contest on XYX date is...."
- Asks for any remarks from first place finishers.
- Presents thank-you's to key participants like Chief Judge, Timers
- Presents any special gifts.
- Gives ending comments and announces the date and location for the next event and encourages attendance
- Returns control of the event to the Contest Chairperson or closes the contest.

### Contest Chairperson

- Congratulates Toastmaster and Chief Judge for a job well done.
- Mentions the date and location of next level contest.
- Requests first and second place finishers to remain for pictures.
- Thank audience for attending.
- Close event.

### Toastmaster

- Gathers bios and eligibility forms of winners.
- Completes Notification of Winners Form.
- Delivers forms to Contest Chairperson of next event.