

7 Tips for Running a Stellar Toastmasters Speech Contest

By Diane Pleuss, Contest Chair





It's contest time - yea!



We know enough to be dangerous.



Why?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.



1. Network
2. Gain confidence
3. Accelerate your growth as a speaker
4. Obtain realistic appraisal of your skills
5. Discover the power of the spoken word
6. Further develop your leadership skills
7. Hear great speeches





Start now!

Fall Contests

Humorous (5-7 minutes)

Evaluation (2-3 minutes)

Club Contests – August

Area Contests – September

Division Contests – October

District Contest – November





Rinse, repeat!

Spring Contests

International Speech (5-7 minutes)

Table Topics (1-2 minutes)

Club Contests – February

Area Contests – March

Division Contests – April

District Contest – May





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Public Speaking Tips

Learn useful tips and tricks that will help you develop your speaking skills and reach your goals.

[Public Speaking Tips](#)



Review online resources – Global



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Develop with Contests

Speech contests are a Toastmasters
Learn why you should compete and
valuable resources to organize your next
contest.

A woman with dark curly hair and glasses, wearing a patterned top, is smiling and holding a large, multi-faceted glass trophy. She is standing in front of a dark curtain and a large banner that features the Toastmasters International logo.

TOASTMASTERS
INTERNATIONAL

Review online resources - Regional

Contest Resources



Speech contests are a Toastmasters tradition. Each year thousands of Toastmasters compete in the Humorous, Evaluation, Tall Tales, Table Topics and International speech contests. Competition begins with club contests and winners continue competing through the area, division and district levels. The International competition has two additional levels – semifinal and the World Championship of Public Speaking®.

Below are the most helpful resources for those organizing and competing in contests.

Contest Toolkits

- [Humorous Speech Contest Toolkit \(Zip File\)](#)
- [Evaluation Speech Contest Toolkit \(Zip File\)](#)
- [International Speech Contest Toolkit \(Zip File\)](#)
- [Table Topics Contest Toolkit \(Zip File\)](#)



Helpful Resources from Toastmasters International

- [Official Contest Rulebook](#) – Last updated July 2017

UPCOMING EVENTS

[District Executive Council Meeting \(DECM\)](#)

August 26 @ 9:00 am - 12:00 pm PDT

[Division B Club Officer Training](#)

August 31 @ 6:30 pm - 9:30 pm PDT

[Area F20 Humorous Speech and Evaluation Contests](#)

September 8 @ 6:00 pm - 9:30 pm PDT

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Name	Kind	Date Added	Date Modified
▼ 20172018EvaluationContestKit	Folder	Today, 3:39 PM	3:39 PM
📄 510ASpeechContestCertificate1stPlace.pdf	Portable Document Format	Today, 3:39 PM	8/4/16
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📄 510DSpeechContestCertificateParticipant.pdf	Portable Document Format	Today, 3:39 PM	8/4/16
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📄 1171 Speech Contest Rulebook 2017.pdf	Portable Document Format	Today, 3:39 PM	3/16/17
📄 1175TimeRecordSheet.pdf	Portable Document Format	Today, 3:39 PM	8/4/16
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📄 1177 Evaluation Contestant Notes.pdf	Portable Document Format	Today, 3:39 PM	3/31/17
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📄 1179EvaluationContestBallot.pdf	Portable Document Format	Today, 3:39 PM	8/4/16
📄 1182NotificationofWinner.pdf	Portable Document Format	Today, 3:39 PM	8/4/16
📄 1183 Speaker's Certification of Eligibility and Originality.pdf	Portable Document Format	Today, 3:39 PM	3/28/17
📄 1189ContestantProfile.pdf	Portable Document Format	Today, 3:39 PM	8/4/16

Contest Toolkits



SPEECH CONTEST RULEBOOK

JULY 1, 2017 TO JUNE 30, 2018



SPEECH CONTEST RULES

General Rules for All Toastmasters Speech Contests

Unless otherwise stated, these rules apply to all speech contests conducted by Toastmasters International clubs, areas, divisions, and districts, as well as all contests conducted at the International Convention.

1. Speech Contest Policy

- A. Toastmasters International recognizes and supports the following official speech contests: International, Evaluation, Humorous, Table Topics, Tall Tales, and Video (only for members of undistricted clubs). No other contest types, showcases, etc., shall be conducted by districts.
 - 1. Districts must conduct the International Speech Contest. The International Speech Contest shall only be conducted in English.
 - 2. Districts may conduct up to three additional English speech contests each year.
 - 3. Districts may also conduct up to four non-English speech contests each year.
 - a) Each of these contests is conducted in a language selected by the district director and approved by the district executive committee.
 - b) A non-English contest may be conducted using the rules of the International Speech Contest. Such a contest shall be titled using the name of the language. For example: Chinese Speech Contest.
 - c) Non-English contests shall not continue beyond the district level.
- B. Contests must originate at the club level and proceed through the area, division, and district levels, respectively; only contests following this progression are permitted at each level. All clubs are eligible to advance contestants to the area level in all contests regardless of the contest language or the primary language of the club.
- C. Toastmasters International pays the travel expenses of each contestant who participates in the International Speech Contest at the semifinal level at the International Convention. The travel allowance is computed in the same manner and subject to the same restrictions as that of district leaders.
- D. The *Speech Contest Rulebook* is protocol and applies to all official Toastmasters speech contests. Modifications to rules may only be made through the administrative protocol review process. Exceptions shall not be permitted.
- E. Individual admission fees to a contest may be charged to audience attendees and contest officials; however, contestants may never be charged a fee to compete in a contest, and clubs may never be charged a fee to send a contestant to a contest.

2. Eligibility

- A. To be eligible to compete in any official Toastmasters speech contest, a member must:
 - 1. Be a paid member of the club, area, division, and district in which he or she is competing.

Helpful Resources from Toastmasters International

- [Official Contest Rulebook](#) – Last updated July 2017
- [Speech Contest FAQs](#)
- [Online Speech Contest Training](#)

Planning your Contest

- Contest Planning Guide – Very organized and concise guide to planning a contest.
- [Toastmasters International Speech Contest portal](#) – Several useful links on running a contest.
- [Online Speech Contest Tutorials](#) – fundamental principles to help members understand speech contests.
- [Training manual for Area/Division Directors](#)

Contest Scripts

- [Contest Script – International Speech & Table Topics](#)
- [Contest Script – Evaluation](#)
- [Contest Script – Humorous Speech](#)

[Click here](#) for an overview of the contests District 57 organizes.

Last updated: 7/23/17

RECENT EDUCATION AWARDS

04-30 ACS Gardiner, Jacob
Toastmasters on Campus

04-29 PREMASL2 Marshall, George D.
Speakers Forum

04-29 CC Yanos, Emil
Napa

04-28 LEADEVL1 Fairfield, Janice M
ChevMasters

04-28 ALB Bonner, Marianne
Diablo Champagne Breakfast

[CLICK HERE](#) to see more!

Contest Scripts

District 57 Table Topics and International Speech Contest Script

The following is a suggested script for the Area-level Table Topics and International Speech contests. For Division contests, change Area references to Division. Clubs may also use this as a template.

The script's purpose is to ensure that contest rules such as speaker introductions and timing are adhered to. As long as you cover items outlined in the current Speech Contest Rulebook, you can modify the script – but do consider time carefully if you add any additional content.

Sergeant at Arms	<p>Call contest to order</p> <p><i>Welcome fellow Toastmasters and honored guests to District 57, Area ____ Table Topics and International Speech Contests for 2017.</i></p> <p><i>Here is some logistical information: (as applicable to your venue)</i></p> <p><i>Restrooms are located ____.</i></p> <p><i>Please try to take advantage of the break to use the restrooms. During speeches, the audience is requested not to leave their seats.</i></p> <p><i>Please do not walk around any other areas of the building, for security reasons.</i></p> <p><i>Do not take photographs or video recordings during any contestant speeches. Video recording is allowed only for people who have received advanced written approval from the individual speaker(s) and the Contest Chair.</i></p> <p><i>Please take a moment now to turn off or silence cell phones and any other devices that might make noise during the contest.</i></p> <p>Introduce Host Area Director</p>
Area Director	<p>Welcome</p> <p><i>Before we begin, I want to recognize the dignitaries who have joined us today.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use current protocol list. If not available, announce in following order: Current International Directors, Current District Officers from other Districts, Current District Top 4 & Immediate Past District Governor, Host Division Director, Other Current Division Directors, Current Administration Manager/Finance Manager/Logistics Manager/Parliamentarian, Current Area Directors, Past International Directors, Past District 57 Governors, Past District Governors of other Districts (no other past dignitaries) <p><i>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.</i></p> <p><i>Today's Table Topics and International Speech Contest winners will progress to the Division ____ contests, which will take place on April ____.</i> Those winners will continue on to represent Division ____ at the District 57 contests, which will take place during the Spring Conference on May 6, 2017. If an area or division contest winner is unable to participate in the next contest level, the highest placed available contestant will advance.</p> <p>Introduce Table Topics Contest Toastmaster</p>

District 57 Table Topics and International Speech Contest Script

Table Topics Contest Toastmaster

Thank you _____.

Welcome, Contest Procedures

Welcome everyone. I will begin with an overview of the Table Topics contest procedures, for the benefit of our guests and newer members.

Table Topics are short impromptu speeches, in response to a question or topic, which test the ability to speak on a given subject without advanced notice.

All contestants receive the same topic, and the judges choose the winning Table Topics speech.

When the contest begins, the Sergeant-at-Arms escorts all contestants except the first from the room. Once the other contestants are in a designated area where they cannot hear the proceedings. To avoid any perception of bias, I announce each contestant's name, the table topic, repeat the table topic, and repeat the contestant's name. After I say the contestant's name the second time, your job is to give energetic applause to encourage each speaker. The contestant will speak on the given topic for one to two minutes.

After each contestant has finished, the Sergeant-at-Arms retrieves the next contestant. After delivering their speech, contestants can stay in the room. No one else is allowed in or out of the room during the Table Topics speeches.

The speeches last 1-2 minutes. A green signal is given at 1:00, yellow at 1:30, and red at 2:00. Speeches less than 1:00 or longer than 2:30 are disqualified.

There is one minute of silence after each contestant for the judges to mark their ballots. After the final contestant, I ask for silence until the judges are finished ranking the contestants and the counters have collected all the ballots.

The contestants have agreed upon the following speaking area:

The speaking order has been chosen randomly by drawing lots. I will announce the order now. You might want to mark your program with the contestant numbers.

- Read speaking order and say each contestant's name the same way. Be sure to pause after each to provide audience time to mark program.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

The contestants and judges have been briefed on the rules prior to the contest.



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| SPEECH CONTESTS FAQ

Are contestants required to have completed a minimum number of manual speeches to participate in a speech contest?



Who is ineligible to compete in any speech contest?



What does it mean that "a member serving as a chief judge, voting judge or tiebreaking judge beyond the club level for a contest in which the member is still competing or intends to compete" is ineligible?



What is a contest official? Can they serve more than one role?



What happens if I pay my dues on time, but my club treasurer does not submit my dues to World Headquarters?



Can a member compete in two area contests if the areas are in different divisions or districts?



Can a member serve as a contest chair at one contest and compete in another?



Contest FAQ



Identify your team – Area/Division Directors

Enlist Volunteers

- Contest Chair
- Chief Judge

Supporting roles

- Toastmaster
- Sergeant at Arms
- Timers
- Ballot counters
- Judges
- Utility player





Opportunity to lead, inspire and have fun!

I Commit to Running a Stellar Toastmasters Speech Contest!

