

Table Topics Speech Contest
Contest Chair Notes and Script

*Sergeant-At-Arms: introduces the Contest Chair
(Whenever possible, the Chair could provide a short introduction in writing before the meeting)*

Contest Chair: (NOTE - the Contest Chair must choose the question and repeat it exactly the same way for each contestant. Questions are to be of a general nature.)

Contest Chair Opening remarks

The speech contest is a tradition in Toastmasters International. Each year thousands of Toastmasters compete for the coveted title of “World Champion of Public Speaking” which is decided at the International Convention in August. Thousands more compete locally up to the District level in Tabletopics contests.

Greetings fellow Toastmasters, Chief Judge _____, *(add other District Officers in attendance and any past District Governors/Directors) and guests.* Welcome to the *(place event name here)* Tabletopics Speech Contest. Tonight our winner going forward to the *(place next level information here)* will be decided.

The Toastmasters speech contest has three purposes:

To provide an opportunity for proficient speakers and those Toastmasters who are interested in competitive speaking to gain contest experience.

To provide an interesting educational program for Toastmasters and the general public. This program can create a community awareness of the opportunities in the Toastmasters program.

To provide an opportunity to those Toastmasters who are not participating in the contest to learn by observing proficient speakers.

Before we get started on the actual contest, we will have a 10 minute break so that I can brief the contestants and the Chief Judge, _____ can brief the timers, ballot counters and judges. Could our timers please let us know when the 10 minutes is up?

After the briefing, call attention to the contest again:

Before we begin the contest, there are some housekeeping details to go over:

We ask that you not leave the room during the contest. However, if you need to leave, you will be expected to leave during the minute of silence between speakers and will not be allowed back in the room until all contestants have spoken.

Please ensure that ALL noisemaking devices are turned off so as to avoid distracting the speakers. This includes; your cell phone, pager, watch, baby or anything that might be a distraction.

Photographs cannot be taken until all the speeches are complete. Videos are not allowed except at the request of a contestant for his or her personal use.

In between each speaker, there will be one minute of silence to allow the judges to fill out their ballots.

The timing cards/lights are situated so that only the speakers can see them.

Table Topics speeches will be from 1 to two minutes long. Contestants who speak less than 1 minute or more than 2 minutes, 30 seconds will be disqualified. The timing for the speeches will commence at the first sign of verbal or non-verbal communication.

The speakers will receive a green signal at 1 minute which will remain visible until the yellow signal, displayed at 1 minute 30 seconds. The red signal will be shown at 2 minutes and will remain visible until the speaker concludes his speech.

As Contest Chair, I have briefed the speakers on the contest protocol and the speaking order has been randomly selected. For the convenience of all, here is the speaking order:

Each speaker has declared him or herself a Toastmaster in good standing.

The Chief Judge _____ is familiar with the contest rules. All decisions of the Chief Judge are final.

Our Chief Judge has briefed the judges, timers and ballot counters of their duties and responsibilities. Could the judges now rise? Is the Chief Judge satisfied with the seating arrangements?

In fairness to all speakers, I will be announcing only the speaker's name, the question, the question and the name.

I will ask the timers to please indicate the passing of 1 minute after the speakers where we shall all remain silent.

Following the final speaker of the contest, we ask that silence be maintained until the judges have completed their ballots and the Chief Judge and ballot counters have left the room.

At that time it will be my pleasure to join you in cheering our participants and welcoming them back to the stage where we will learn more about each of our speakers with the interviews.

Now on with the contest. Our first contestant will remain in the room
Our Sergeant at Arms will now leave the room with the remaining contestants.

Name _____

Question: _____

Question: _____

Name _____

Repeat for all contestants.

(Congratulate each speaker prior to their interview. It's best to use the Speech Contestant Profile information to form your questions. This is to avoid any potential biases regarding speech topics and delivery for the next contest level.)

Present each speaker with their certificate of participation before asking the next contestant to join you.

If interviews have adjourned prior to the Chief Judge returning, you may ask for announcements. Don't forget to thank the host club, judges, and all Toastmasters and guests in attendance for making the event a success.

I see the Chief Judge and ballot counters have returned. Please welcome Chief Judge _____ to announce the winners.

Winners: If there are four or less contestants, only 1st and 2nd place should be announced. If there are five or more contestants then 1st, 2nd and 3rd (if wanted) will be announced. Even if there are only three contestants, first and second place must be announced.

You or the Chief Judge may then turn the lectern back to the SAA or Toastmaster for the meeting.