



## Contest Chair Briefing Scripts

Based on a document published by District 55.

### Legend

The following colour scheme identifies if a remark refers to a particular contest:

**International**

**Humorous**

**Tall Tales**

**Evaluation**

**Table Topics**

**Contents**

This document contains:

- Preparations required before the briefing
- Sergeants-at-Arms briefing script
- Contestants briefing script

### Prior to the Briefing

- Club contests: Rule 2. Eligibility A. 8 allows for participation through the use of *online audio, video or other remote technology is permitted at club contests only.* (Exceptions: *participants in the International Speech Contest Region Quarterfinals*)  
The logistics of having contestants **and** judges not physically present at a **club** contest need to be looked at carefully e.g.
  - Online briefing – you may need two feeds if judges are also connecting remotely.
  - All the rules must apply as with physically present contestants.
  - Consider appointing the video conferencing operator to be a separate sergeant for online contestants whose duties should include:
    - Ensuring that an online contestant should be as clearly visible and audible as possible e.g. projected onto a large screen.
    - Making the timing lights visible
    - Ensuring Table Topics and evaluation contestants can't see or hear before their turns.
    - Ensuring the evaluation notes forms are not viewed before each contestant's turn.

- Area, Division, and District contests: Prior to the contest, contact the previous level Contest Chair and ask them to send you the completed Notification of Winners form (1182), **which should list all non-disqualified contestants for that contest.**
- Contests at all levels: Confirm eligibility of each contestant either with your Division Director who has a download of members in your Division, or someone who has access on Club Central or District Central on [members.toastmasters.org](http://members.toastmasters.org). For club contests, all contestants should be verified. For Area, Division, and District contests, all names on form 1182 from previous level contests should be verified.
- Prepare packs for Timers, Ballot Counters and Judges.
- **Supplies:**
  - Packs for the Timers, Ballot Counters, and Judges (Voting and Tiebreaker)
    - Judge's pack: Include envelopes, forms (guide / ballot for each contest, certification of eligibility / code of ethics (1170)) and contest rulebook (save trees, forward electronic version if requested).
  - Winner (510A-C) and participation (510D) certificates
  - Extra pens
  - Make arrangements for inscribing of 510 certificates
  - Extension cord (for timing lights just in case you need it)
- Schedule the briefing on the programme to allow for time for questions (at least 15 minutes).
- Review the Official Toastmasters International Contest Rulebook prior to the contest. Contact the District Chief Judge and Programme Quality Director with questions. So that we can share knowledge, please don't go directly to World Headquarters. The Chief Judge will query on your behalf if advice is required.
  - **Chief Judge** - Karin Cremer, DTM, PDG, [chiefjudge@toastmasters74.org](mailto:chiefjudge@toastmasters74.org)
  - **Programme Quality Director**, [education@toastmasters74.org](mailto:education@toastmasters74.org)

## SERGEANTS-AT-ARMS BRIEFING

**Note:** Before other briefings and before the contest begins, conduct the Sergeants-at-Arms briefing. The rulebook only specifies one, the contest Sergeant-at-Arms, but others may be required depending on the venue. Issue assignments or ask the Sergeants-at-Arms to coordinate their roles as follows:

- One Sergeant-at-Arms assigned to each unlocked access to contest room.
- One Sergeant-at-Arms assigned to escort contestants to and from the holding area (for Table Topics and Evaluations); with one Sergeant-at-Arms remaining in room with contestants that have not yet given speeches.

**State:** As Sergeant-at-Arms, here are your responsibilities:

- Secure all doors at the beginning of contest. Please do not allow entry or departure from the contest room while contestants are speaking. If someone insists on leaving / entering the room, they can only do so during the one minute of silence between the speeches.
- You may assist the contestants with prop placement and retrieval, but you are not required to do so. Is there anyone who would like to assist the contestants with props?

**Note:** If you have a Sergeant-at-Arms who is willing to assist with props they will join you at the contestant briefing.

- **For *Evaluation Contests* only:** We will now review the Evaluation Contest procedures. When you are directed to do so by the Contest Toastmaster, please escort all contestants out of the room.

Contestants should be escorted to a separate room / area that has been selected by the Contest Chair. The room / area should be far enough away from the contest, so the contestants are not able to hear the other contestants give their evaluation.

Each contestant will be given 5 minutes to prepare his / her evaluation. The 5 minutes will start once all contestants are present and seated. After the 5 minutes is complete, have each contestant write his/her name on their evaluation notes and the Contest Sergeant collects them. Ensure that the notes are collected in the speaking order drawn during the contestant briefing. Prepared notes shall be returned to each contestant as he or she is introduced to present the evaluation. Retrieve the next contestant during the one minute of silence between evaluations.

**Please ensure that no contestant takes any digital or other device (tablet, cell phone etc.) with them (new Evaluation Contest rule 2.C – 2015), and from 2016, only the 1177 Evaluation Contestant Notes 2016-03 form may be used by contestants. A contestant may use more than one sheet.**

- **For Table Topics Contests only:** We will now review the Table Topics Contest procedures. When you are directed to do so by the Contest Toastmaster, please escort all contestants out of the room, except the first contestant.

Contestants should be escorted to a separate room / area that has been selected by the Contest Chair. The room / area should be far enough away from the contest, so the contestants are not able to hear the Table Topics question or the response from the other contestants. Each contestant will be called back in the speaking order drawn during the contestant briefing to present their speech. Retrieve the next contestant during the one minute of silence between speeches.

**Please ensure that no contestant takes any digital or other device (tablet, cell phone etc.) with them (new Table Topics Contest rule 4 – 2015).**

**State:** Are there any questions? (Wait for response).

**State:** This concludes the Sergeant-at-Arms briefing. Thank you for participating in this contest as a Sergeant-at-Arms.

## CONTESTANTS BRIEFING

### Who should attend:

- Contest Toastmaster, this may be the same person who conducts the briefing
- All contestants from the previous level contest. For official rules on who can compete at your contest, please visit the Speech Contest rulebook, General Procedures, Section D.
- (Optional) One Sergeant-at-Arms to assist the contestants with prop setup.

### Supplies:

- Contest agenda with contestant names
- Speaker order slips of paper or playing cards
- If Sergeant is present, paper to note speaking order and requirements for props
- Contestant Profile (1189) and Speaker Certification of Eligibility and Originality (1183) forms
- Evaluation Contestant Notes 2016-03 (1177) for each Evaluation contestant
- Speech Contest Rulebook 2019 (1171)
- Extra pens
- Notification of Winners forms from the previous level contest.

### Briefing:

**Note:** Use slips of paper with numbers on them (or playing cards). Determine how you want to draw for order; name by alphabetical order is one way.

**State:** Thank you for participating in this contest and for attending the briefing. The briefing has several purposes, including determining the speaking order, completing the required forms for the contest, and reviewing the rules and procedures for the contest.

Hand out the Contestant Profile and Eligibility / Originality forms. Note the test speaker for the evaluation contest should also complete a Contestant Profile.

The first order of business is to draw for the contest speaking order. We will do that now. \_\_\_\_\_, you are drawing first. Please select a slip of paper and announce the number you see on it.

**Note:** Repeat the process for all contestants giving the exact same instructions. Collect all speaking order slips of paper. Write down the speaking order on the agenda and send the agenda with that information immediately via Contest Toastmaster (or acceptable courier) to the Chief Judge (in separate briefing) or else arrange to display the speaking order with a data projector.

**State:** If I haven't already received your Contestant Profile and Eligibility / Originality forms, please complete these now and turn them in to me.

The information you provided about yourself should be on topics that you will be comfortable answering in an interview. The Contest Toastmaster may ask you about anything you include on the form during the contestant interviews to be conducted after your contest. Do not include any sensitive or otherwise inappropriate information.

**Note:** Collect forms. Keep the Eligibility / Originality forms. Give the Toastmaster the Contestant Profiles.

**State:** We will now review the rules and procedures for this contest.

Your speech should comply with ALL current Toastmasters International rules. You should have already reviewed this year's rulebook. If you do not have one and would like one, please see me at the conclusion of this briefing.

You will be judged on the appropriate use of the assigned speaking area for this contest. The speaking area for the contest is:

**Note:** Describe the speaking area. Ideally walk to the end points of it and point out the boundaries if there are any boundaries.

#### **For *Table Topics* and / or *Evaluation* Contests**

**State:** At the appropriate time in the contest, a designated Sergeant-at-Arms will escort you to the assigned speaker holding area, which is located \_\_\_\_\_. Please note you may not use digital or other devices during the contest. The rules maintain you can gain an unfair advantage.

Evaluators, you may **only use the form (1177)** provided to write notes for your presentation. More than one sheet may be used.

**Note:** Describe the holding area which should have been determined well in advance.

**State:** Are there any questions regarding the speaking area?

**Note:** Address any questions. When introducing the contest, announce that the speaking area has been determined to be \_\_\_\_\_ and that it has been described to the contestants.

**State:** Each contestant should remove any badge or other item that reveal his or her educational level and also his or her club affiliation. It is not a rule but we feel it is a fair request. Please do this now.

**Note:** Check to make sure contestants are not wearing inappropriate identifying information.

**State:** We will now review the rulebook time limits for your speech. For the \_\_\_\_\_ speech competition, a qualifying time is \_\_\_\_\_. The timers will display:

- A green light at \_\_\_\_\_
- A yellow light at \_\_\_\_\_
- And a red light at \_\_\_\_\_
- You will be disqualified for speeches over \_\_\_\_\_ or under \_\_\_\_\_.

Fill in the blank lines above using this information:

**Speech presentation time limits:**

| CONTEST                     | QUAL  | GREEN | YELLOW | RED   | DISQUAL |
|-----------------------------|-------|-------|--------|-------|---------|
| <b>International</b> Speech | 04:30 | 05:00 | 06:00  | 07:00 | > 07:30 |
| <b>Humorous</b> Speech      | 04:30 | 05:00 | 06:00  | 07:00 | > 07:30 |
| <b>Tall Tales</b>           | 02:30 | 03:00 | 04:00  | 05:00 | > 05:30 |
| <b>Table Topics</b>         | 01:00 | 01:00 | 01:30  | 02:00 | > 02:30 |
| <b>Evaluation</b>           | 01:30 | 02:00 | 02:30  | 03:00 | > 03:30 |
| <b>Test Speaker</b>         |       | 05:00 | 06:00  | 07:00 |         |

**State:** The timers have been instructed that the start time of your speech begins 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. **If you have an unusual way of starting your speech, e.g. the arranging of your papers is part of your speech, it is to your advantage to inform the timers as soon as this briefing is over.**

Timers and timing lights are located \_\_\_\_\_. Please take a few minutes to stand in the speaking area and locate the timing devices. They should be in the centre of your field of view and should be in full view of the speaking area. The lights should be unobstructed by audience members and any room obstacles.

This is all important information. Do you have any questions on the timing indicators or about qualifying and disqualifying times, or the location of timing devices?

**Note:** Answer any questions that contestants have about the lights and time limits. Ideally, have someone demonstrate the timing lights during this part of the briefing.

**State:** Here is how you will be introduced. The Contest Toastmaster will announce your name, followed by \_\_\_\_\_, again \_\_\_\_\_, and then your name.

When you hear your name the second time, that’s your cue to begin moving toward the speaking area. The Contest Toastmaster may request that you shake hands on arrival at the speaking area.

**Note:** Fill in the preceding blanks based on this information:  
**International / Humorous / Tall Tales:** Name, Title, Title,  
 Name **Table Topics:** Name, Table Topic, Table Topic, Name

**Evaluation:** Name, Name

**Test Speaker:** Name, Title, Title, Name

**State:** At this time, the Contest Toastmaster will verify your speech titles (from the Eligibility / Originality form) as well as the proper pronunciation of your names.

**Note:** Toastmaster reviews both speech titles and name pronunciations.

**State:** Contestants may record or videotape another contestant's speech only with the specific permission from the contestant whose speech is to be recorded or videotaped, and the Contest Chair. **No photography** (not just flash) **is allowed** during the contest. There are plenty of opportunities during the interviews and announcement of results, and after the meeting.

**State:** Now we will review the process for Protests and Disqualification. You can be disqualified for any of the following four reasons:

1. You are not present when the contest is called to order. Please refer to your agenda to see when the contest is scheduled to come to order.

**For prepared speech contests:** if you have planned to stay outside until you speak, please report to me, then organise someone to call you.

2. Your speech is timed as under the qualifying time or over the disqualifying time.

3. You are determined to be ineligible. To be eligible, you must be a member in good standing of a club in good standing according to TI WHQ records.

**For the International Speech contest only,** you must also have completed at least six speech assignments in the Competent Communicator manual, or a minimum of two levels in any Pathways learning experience prior to the club contest. The only exception would be a charter member of a club chartered less than one year before the club contest. The club must be officially chartered. I have verified if you are in good standing by referring to a recent membership download prior to the contest.

4. You violate contest rules on originality. This requires a majority vote of voting judges.

**Ask:** Are there any questions regarding the reasons for disqualification?

**State:** We will now review the process for protests. Only contestants and voting judges may lodge protests concerning Eligibility and Originality with the Chief Judge and / or with me, as the Contest Chair before the contest winner and alternates are announced. The Chief Judge will resolve protests. If an originality protest is lodged against you, the Chief Judge will convene the voting judges and hear your case. The voting judges will then deliberate and vote. All decisions of the voting judges are final.



**For the *International Speech contest only,***

**State:** The **International Speech Contest** is the only contest that proceeds beyond the District level to Region Quarterfinals, Semifinals and the World Championship of Public Speaking. International Speech Contest Rule 1. A. changed in 2019. The District-level contest will be videoed and the videos submitted to World Headquarters to be used in the region quarterfinal judging process. Only winners of the Region Quarterfinals will proceed to the Semifinals to be held at the International Convention.

**State:** Finally, here is the guidance on props. You are responsible for your props. **This includes the positioning of the lectern.** You may enlist someone to help you with this, but it is not the responsibility of the Contest Chair or any other contest functionary to do so. Any props are to be put in place in the minute of silence before your speech, and removed in the minute of silence after your speech.

Please note the new (as of 2016) rule 8.C.2:

*Contestants must demonstrate to the contest chair prior to the contest that the props can be set up and removed in the allotted times.*

a) *If a contestant is unable to demonstrate this, the props cannot be used during the contest.*

**Please inform me now if you are going to use props and make sure you demonstrate to me at the end of this briefing.**

***If the Sergeant-at-Arms is willing to assist,***

**State:** The Sergeant-at-Arms is willing to assist with props. If any of you are using props, please give the Sergeant-at-Arms any necessary instructions for handling placement and removal of those items. Please do that as soon as I announce the conclusion of this briefing.

***If the Sergeant at Arms is not willing to assist,***

**State:** The Sergeant-at-Arms is **not** willing to assist with props. If you need assistance, it is your responsibility to find someone to assist you.

That covers the information required for the contestant briefing. There is still time to address any questions. Do any of you have any questions?

**Note:** Answer any questions the contestants have.

**State:** Hearing no (further) questions, this briefing is concluded. If you are using props and need to provide instructions concerning their placement and removal, please do so with the Sergeant-at-Arms or with your assistant at this time.

Thank you again for your participation, and good luck.