



2004 Semi Annual Conference

November 6th 2004

How to Win a Speech Contest

Presented by

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District Governor 2000-2001

Practical, easy to follow hints and tips on

- What to say and what not to say.
- What to do and what not to do.
- What to include and what to leave out.

CONTENT (50 % of total points)

SPEECH DEVELOPMENT (20 % of total points)

Structure and Organisation

Magic formula for construction of a winning speech

1. Attention getting opening	TOTAL	1 Min
2. Body		
Three anecdotes each 1 ½ minutes	TOTAL	4 Mins 30 secs
Plus linkage between anecdotes	TOTAL	30 secs
3. Conclusion		
Attention getting preferably referring back to the opening	TOTAL	1 Min

Don't forget to allow reaction from the audience like laughter or hesitation in your speech Allow 30 secs

Total all up 7 mins 30 secs

Support Material

TITLE

Clear, unambiguous and snappy. Make sure the Contest Toastmaster is aware of correct pronunciation so the audience can hear it properly and understand it.

USE OF PROPS

What do you do with the prop when you have finished with them? You can't drop them on the floor. Ask yourself "Would the speech be OK without them?"

USE OF HUMOUR

Use humour all the way through. If there is no humour you won't win. Create a roller coaster of emotion - a range of emotion from humour to sadness, surprise, relief or anger.

EFFECTIVENESS (15 % of total points)

Achievement of Purpose

Your speech should have an identifiable purpose: To educate, motivate, inspire, uplift or persuade.

Interest & Reception

TOPIC SELECTION

The topic must suit the audience - something the audience can relate to that they may have experienced too. It must be uplifting and inspirational NOT depressing or down. Be positive not negative as the audience is there to be inspired, entertained or informed.

Talk about topics such as Achieving Goals, Overcoming Adversity or Handicaps, Self Improvement Procrastination, Give it a Go, You Can Do it, or Try, Try, Try again.

Do not talk about topics that are controversial or trendy, political or religious e.g. Abortion, Refugees, Asylum Seekers, War or Middle East Politics.

The reason for this is that you may alienate parts of your audience that may have strong opinions either for or against these issues. Remember this is a speech contest not a political rally.

SPEECH VALUE (15 % of total points)

Ideas, Logic and Original Thought

Try to be fresh and new – avoid rehashing old material that most people are already familiar with.

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DELIVERY (30 % of total points)

PHYSICAL (10 % of total points)

Appearance

DRESS

Men

Wear a dark suit with jacket done up and a bright tie eg red or gold. A tuxedo may be appropriate at the District Final.

Women

Wear a tailored suit with either skirt or pants. Suitable colours are navy or black with a bright blouse underneath, or maybe a bright coloured suit eg red or electric blue. Do not wear pastel colours or casual gear eg slacks and top. Flashy evening wear, excessive jewellery such as bangles etc can be distracting. Necklaces may interfere with lapel microphones.

Body Language

WALKING ACROSS THE STAGE

Do not just walk from one side of the stage to the other end and back. Your movements have to be choreographed where appropriate.

GESTURES

Make sure that they are relevant to the speech and try to overcome any bad habits that you may have.

VOICE (10 % of total points)

Flexibility

Your voice should move from one pitch to another to show the audience different emotions eg anger, sadness, surprise etc. Ideally a contestant will use a variety of speaking rates within the speech and use pauses for effect.

Volume

Use different levels of volume to emphasise different parts of the speech. Use the microphone wisely. At Division and District level Contests microphones will be provided and should be used.

MANNER (10 % of total points)

Directness

Be confident and professional. Talk directly to the audience

Assurance

Know your speech thoroughly so you can adlib if you forget your lines. The audience will not know the difference.

Enthusiasm

Be enthusiastic throughout the speech.

LANGUAGE (20 % of total points)

APPROPRIATENESS TO SPEECH PURPOSE AND AUDIENCE (10 % of total points)

Do not use toilet humour, rude words, swear words, overt sexual connotations or talk about bodily functions. Be assured points will be lost for inappropriateness!

If in doubt leave it out. You only have to offend one person.

There will be non-Toastmasters – friends or relatives of contestants and possibly dignitaries present. Toastmasters International is on show!

CORRECTNESS (10 % of total points)

Grammar

Lapsing from the third person to first person is a common error as is singular to plural.

Pronunciation

If you stumble on a word then change it. A three or four syllable word may be difficult for the audience (and judges) to comprehend. Substitute smaller words when necessary

Word Selection

Search for simplicity. Don't be afraid to use one word sentences for effect. Use the right word at the right time in the speech.

COMMON CONTEST MYTHS

Even though Judges are supposed to be anonymous contestants manage to find out who some of the Judges are. These are a few common myths that are bandied about.

- The Judges were biased in favour of "X" He's won before. He's their favourite.
- Some of the Judges don't like me.
- I can't win from first position.
- Judges don't like speakers with accents

THE "X" FACTOR

What makes one contestant stand out from the next?

It is that certain something extra that a contestant has – charisma, connection with the audience, a smooth performance and a great appearance. This can be factored into the judging form under the headings "Effectiveness", "Physical" and "Manner"

SOME FINAL HINTS AND TIPS

- Practice your speech at other Clubs to get different evaluations and audience reaction.
- Find a coach, ideally a past contest winner or experienced Judge.
- Get a group evaluation at your Club
- A contest speech is different from a normal Club speech.
- Don't be controversial or use rude words and crude humour.
- Content is 50% of the points awarded
- You have to abide by the rules – don't be disqualified due to timing or eligibility.

***So remember, if you want to win a Speech Contest,
be the best speaker on the night. It's that easy!***

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