



CONTEST CHAIRMAN BRIEFING FOR THE TABLE TOPICS SPEECH CONTEST

To be conducted by the Contest Chairman or Contest Toastmaster

Club Contest – conduct the briefing either prior to the meeting or during the meeting prior to the start of the contest.

Area, Division and District Contests – conduct the briefing at least 45 minutes prior to the start of the contest.

Before the Briefing

Obtain a copy of the latest version of the Speech Contest Rulebook before the contest, read and understand it.

1. Establish that all contestants are present and have submitted the Speech Contestant Biographical Information and Speaker's Certification of Eligibility and Originality forms.
2. Confirm the eligibility of all contestants. All contestants must be members in good standing of a club, area, division or district in which he/she is competing. The club must also be in good standing.
3. Refer to the Speech Contest Rules for further clarification of the eligibility requirements and the procedure to follow if a contestant is absent from the briefing.

The Contestants' Briefing

Begin the briefing on time. Do not wait for contestants who are late. Focus on the items listed below.

1. Pronounce each contestant's name out loud and confirm that all words are being pronounced correctly.
2. It is suggested that contestants do not wear a name badge as it may interfere with their presentation. **Note:** There is no contest rule that requires contestants to remove their name badge or to wear their badge.

3. Define the SPEAKING AREA. Make sure that contestants agree with it. (Make changes if a contestant needs more room for his/her speech).
4. Review the TIMING GUIDELINES.

Contest timing is 1:30 - 2 minutes. Minimum time is 1 minute and maximum time 2 minutes + 30 seconds. **A contestant will be disqualified for speaking for less than 1 minute or more than 2 minutes + 30 seconds.**

- i. Green Light – 1 minute
- ii. Yellow Light – 1 minute 30 seconds
- iii. Red Light - 2 minutes (light will stay on until speaker finishes)

5. Review the BACKUP TIMING tools and how they work. In the event of a technical failure of the signal or timing equipment, a contestant is allowed 30 seconds overtime before being disqualified.
6. The timers will not give the speakers any signal indicating that the maximum time has been reached.
7. Any vision impaired contestant is permitted to request and must be granted a form of warning signal of his or her own choosing.
 - ♣ Acceptable warning signals would include, but not be limited to: a buzzer, a bell, or a person announcing the time at five, six and seven minutes.
 - ♣ If any device and/or specific instructions for such signal is/are required, the contestant must provide same.
 - ♣ Any vision impaired contestant is permitted to request and must be granted a form of warning signal of his or her own choosing.
8. Prior to announcing the results, the contest chairman will state whether there has been disqualification(s) due to timing but will not name the contestant(s) involved.
9. Draw for speaking positions. Confirm the order by reading it out loud to the group of contestants. Be sure to note the speaking order on your program. Pass the speaking order to the chief judge who may, but is not required to, share it with the timers, ballot counters and judges before the contest starts.
10. Review the PROCEDURES for the contest.

When the contest is due to start, the Sergeant-at-Arms will escort all contestants except the first, from the room. When the first speaker has finished, the SAA will call the second speaker into the room. Please wait by the door. When the contest toastmaster announces your name, walk up to the speaking area. The contest toastmaster will then announce the topic twice and your name again before leading the applause.

11. The subject of the Table Topics speeches shall be determined by the contest chairman. All contestants shall receive the same topic, which will be of a general nature, of reasonable length (5 -10 words), will not require a detailed knowledge and will lead to an opinion or conclusion. Contestants will receive no advance knowledge of the topic until the moment they are introduced by the contest toastmaster.
12. All contestants are to be given the opportunity to test any amplifying equipment before the contest.

Sergeant-at-Arms Briefing

Two Sergeants-at-arms are required.

One SAA is required to escort all contestants (except the first) to another room at the start of the contest and to remain with them until the last contestant is called.

The other SAA is to remain in the contest room. At the conclusion of each speech and during the one minute silence, the SAA is to go and collect the next contestant and bring him/her to the speaking area, ready to be introduced.

Conduct of the Contest

The Contest Chairman is responsible for conducting the contest, including introducing each speaker and conducting the speaker interviews. However, the Speech Contest Rulebook permits the Contest Chairman to appoint a Contest Toastmaster to perform these roles. This is the accepted practice for contests at all levels in District 90. Accordingly the selected Contest Toastmaster should be given the following instructions.

The Contest Toastmaster's Briefing

1. Open the contest with a brief introduction.
2. Read the purpose of holding the Table Topics Speech Contest.

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.
3. Announce the following points:
 - ♣ The audience is requested to turn off all mobile phones and pagers.
 - ♣ No one is to enter or leave the room while the contest is being conducted, unless there is an emergency.
 - ♣ There will be one minute's silence between each contestant. The audience is requested to remain silent while the judges complete their ballots.
 - ♣ At the conclusion of the last speaker, please remain silent until the chief judge and ballot counters have left the room.
 - ♣ There will be no bar service while the contest is in progress. (Only say this if there is bar service provided at other times of the event).
 - ♣ No photos are to be taken whilst the contestants are speaking. There will be ample opportunity for photos at the completion of the contest.
 - ♣ The rules have been reviewed with the judges and the contestants have been informed of the location of the timing lights.
 - ♣ The timing lights have been tested and are in good working order.
4. Announce the contestants' speaking order.
5. Confirm with the chief judge that the judges and timers are ready.

6. Introduce the contestants slowly and clearly. Announce the name, the topic, the topic and name. Lead the applause. Do not make any preliminary remarks about any speaker or the subject nor mention the name or location of the speaker's club or place of residence.
7. Ask for a minute's silence between contestants for the judges to mark their ballots. (Note: If the audience has observed silence, you may omit this request). The timers are to indicate with the red light at the beginning of the 1 minute silence, then at the conclusion of the 1 minute they are to "switch" down through yellow, green to no light so that you know to introduce the next speaker and that the lights are still in good working order.
8. After the last contestant, and before the chief judge and ballot counters have left the room, the audience may be excited about the contest and the level of noise in the room may rise. Be aware that if this occurs you will be required to ask the audience to remain silent. Words such as "Please remain silent while the judges complete their marking" are suitable.
9. When the chief judge and ballot counters have left the room, interview each contestant in speaking order. Start by naming the contestant's club, area and division, then ask one or two questions, keeping the interview brief and present the Certificate of Participation to conclude the interview.
10. When the interviews are completed, collect the contest results from the Chief judge. Announce any time disqualification(s) and then announce the contest results
11. In closing, thank all those who helped make the contest a success and hand back to the contest chairman.

After the contest

Hand the following to the contest chairman for the next level of the contest -

- ♣ Speech Contestant Biographical Information
- ♣ Speaker's Certification of Eligibility and Originality

Our work is the presentation of our capabilities