

## CONTEST CHAIRPERSON RESPONSIBILITIES

### **I. Contest Planning and Preparation**

As early as possible, the Contest Chairperson should form a committee to plan and host the contest. At the Area level, maximum involvement should be sought from the Club Officers. Although the responsibilities in this section are listed as those of the Chairperson, most may be delegated to responsible committee members. In preparing for the contest, the Chairperson's role should be one of coordination, delegation and follow-up.

- A. Select the contest date, time and location.
  - 1. Establish the contest date as early as possible and avoid conflicts with other contests.
  - 2. Survey club officers at council meetings to obtain consensus on a suitable site and date.
  - 3. Arrange for special needs in advance (microphones, lecterns, audiovisual equipment, etc.)
  - 4. Prepare advertising flyers for the contest and distribute widely.
  
- B. Prepare a budget:
  - 1. Estimate revenues and expenses.
  - 2. Room and equipment rental, and food service, if any, should be the only significant expenses.
  
- C. For the Evaluation Contest, select a target speaker.
  - 1. Ask a representative from another Area/Division to provide a speaker for your contest and offer to reciprocate. Since the contest can not proceed with this speaker, it is a good idea to have a backup.
  - 2. The target speaker should be working toward the CTM designation and be requested to deliver a speech that meets the objectives of any project ranging from 3 through 6 in the Communication and Leadership manual.
  
- D. Select contest officials
  - 1. Chief Judge  
At all contests except the District, the chief judge is responsible for selecting the contest judges, the tie breaking judge, a chief timer, an assistant timer, and the ballot counters. (In some cases, this task may be delegated to a planning committee member; however, this should always be coordinated with the Chief Judge.)
  - 2. Toastmaster  
The contest chair may fulfill this role or appoint a Toastmaster
  - 3. Sergeant At Arms  
Need at least one for both the spring and fall contests. The chief judge may act as the second SAA.
  
- E. Collect the Speaker's Certification of Eligibility and Originality and the Speech Contestant Biographical Information forms well in advance of the contest.  
  
Verify contestant's eligibility prior to the contest.
  - 1. Note: All contestants for the International Speech contest must have completed a minimum of 6 speech projects from the Communication and Leadership manual in order to compete. The only exception is for charter members of clubs chartered since July 1 of the current Toastmaster year.

2. Notify any contestant who is disqualified. If a disqualification occurs, notify the next qualified person that they are eligible to compete.
- F. Delegate arrangements for a timing light and a backup device to the host club. Also arrange to have two stop watches available for the contest.
- G. Prepare legible copies of all contest forms. The forms for the contest judges, timers and ballot counters should be placed in appropriately labeled envelopes and provided to the Chief Judge at the contest.
1. Speaker's Certification of Eligibility and Originality
  2. Speech Contestant Biographical Information
  3. Judge's Guide and Ballot
    - a: Fall: Humorous and Evaluation ballots
    - b: Spring: Table Topics and International Speech ballots
  4. Tie Breaking Judge's Guide and Ballot
    - a: Fall: Humorous and Evaluation Tie-Breaking ballot
    - b: Spring: Table Topics and International Speech Tie-Breaking ballot
  5. Time Record Sheet and Instructions for Timers
  6. Counters' Tally Sheet
  7. Notification of Contest Winner
- H. Prepare contestant certificates
1. Type or print all known information in a neat manner to convey a professional appearance.
  2. Indicate the specific contest and function for which the certificate is being presented.
- I. Contact all contestants and judges.
1. Request assistance from the Chief Judge
  2. Strongly request that they arrive at least 30 minutes before the contest.
- J. Assign the host club the responsibility of greeting guests and recording a guest register.
- K. Prepare the contest program and make sufficient copies for the number of people expected at the contest.
- L. Bring the trophies (received in advance from the Lt. Governor of Education and Training) to the contest.
- M. Familiarize yourself with all contest rules and procedures. Review the *Checklist* (form contained in this booklet) for the contest several times, including just prior to leaving for the contest.

## **II. Pre-Contest Procedures**

- A. Arrive early to confirm all arrangements are proceeding as planned.
- B. Brief contestants.
  1. Conclude briefings at least 15 minutes before the contest's starting time.

2. Familiarize contestants with the speaking area.
    - a. Discuss any circumstances that may affect the contest, e.g., site restrictions, equipment problems, unavoidable noise.
  3. Review the contest's timing sequence.
  4. Show contestants the location of the timing light.
  5. If microphones are to be used, have each contestant test the equipment to become comfortable with its feel and operation.
  6. Review contest rules thoroughly.
    - a. Refer to the Judge's Briefing Guide.
    - b. Explain the criteria that judges will likely use to render their evaluation.
    - c. Explain the rules regarding protests and judge's decisions.
  7. Review procedures for introducing contestants and post-contest interviews.
  8. Draw for speaking positions and notify the chief judge of the speaking order.
  9. For the Evaluation Contest, notify the chief judge of the time requirements for the Target Speaker's speech.
- C. Confirm that the Chief Judge is briefing Contest Judges, Timers and Ballot Counters.
1. Refer to the Chief Judge's Guide, Timer's Guide and Ballot Counters Guide.
- D. Brief the Sergeant At Arms.
1. Refer to the Sergeant At Arms Guide
  2. Discuss special needs or circumstances that may need to be addressed.
- E. If possible, provide guests with contest evaluation forms without the official ballot portion.
1. Allows the audience to participate more fully.
  2. Helps the audience better understand the criteria for selecting a winner.

### **III. Contest Procedures**

**The following are procedures for the first contest:**

- A. Sergeant At Arms
1. Calls the meeting to order.
  2. Introduces invocator or delivers the invocation.
  3. Leads the pledge of allegiance.
  4. Introduces the Contest Chair.
- B. Contest Chair
1. Welcomes the audience.
  2. Recognizes distinguished guests (past and present Toastmasters International officers, past District Governors, and current District Officers).
  3. If Contest Chair is not serving as the Toastmaster, introduces the Toastmaster.

The following duties are performed by the Contest Chair or Toastmaster if appointed.

4. Introduces the Chief Judge.
  - a. Refer to the Chief Judge's Guide
  - b. Monitor the explanations to ensure that all essential details have been covered.
5. Announce the speaking order of the contestants.

6. This item (#6) is specific for the Evaluation Contest:
  - a. Introduce the target speaker.
    - 1) Announce the Speaker's Name, Speech Title, Speech Title, and Speaker's Name.
    - 2) Neither the manual project nor any objectives that the speaker may have shall be made known to the contestants, judges or audience.
  - b. When the target speaker concludes speaking, the Sergeant At Arms will escort all contestants from the room.
  - c. Interview the target speaker while the contestants are finalizing their evaluations.
    - 1.) Prepare questions that convey a professional image and allow the speaker to feel comfortable in responding.
    - 2.) Award a certificate of appreciation.
  - d. Allow brief announcements by district officers if needed to fill the time until the contestants are ready to present their evaluations.
  - e. The Sergeant At Arms will signal when the contestants are ready.
    - 1.) Introduce the contestants in their designated speaking order.
    - 2.) Announce the contestants by stating only the Speaker # and Speaker's Name.
  - f. At the conclusion of each evaluation, request one minute of silence for the judges to complete their worksheets. Before introducing the next contestant make certain that no judges require more time.
  - g. After the final contestant has spoken, direct the judges to finalize their voting and submit their ballots. Allow the judges as much time as they require.
  - h. Interview the contestants after the Chief Judge and Ballot Counters have left the room to tabulate the ballots.
    - 1.) Allow approximately 90 seconds for each contestant's interview.
    - 2.) Award a certificate of participation to each contestant.
  - i. When the Chief Judge returns with the contest results announce a short break.
    - 1.) 20 minutes should be sufficient
    - 2.) If contestants and judges for the Humorous Speech Contest have not been briefed, request that they remain in the room so that this requirement can be completed.
  
7. This item (#7) is specific for the Table Topics Contest:
  - a. The Sergeant At Arms will escort all contestants from the room. The waiting area must be situated so that sound from the main room cannot carry to the waiting area.
  - b. The SAA will escort contestants back to the main area one at a time.
  - c. Introduce each speaker by giving the Speaker's Number and Speaker's Name.
  - d. Ask the question.
  - e. At the conclusion of each speech, request one minute of silence for the judges to complete their worksheets. Before introducing the next contestant make certain that no judge requires more time.
  - f. After the final contestant has spoken, direct the judges to finalize their voting and submit their ballots. Allow the judges as much time as they require.
  - g. Interview the contestants after the Chief Judge and Ballot Counters have left the room to tabulate the ballots.
    - 1.) Allow approximately 90 seconds for each contestant's interview.
    - 2.) Award a certificate of participation to each contestant.
  - h. When the Chief Judge returns with the contest results announce a short break.
    - 1.) 20 minutes should be sufficient.
    - 2.) If contestants and judges for the next contest have not been briefed, request that they remain in the room so that this requirement can be completed.

**After the break, the following procedures are for the second contest:**

- A. **Sergeant At Arms:**
  - 1. Calls the meeting to order.
  - 2. Introduces the Contest Chair.
  
- B. **Contest Chair:**
  - 1. Welcomes the audience.
  - 2. Introduces the Toastmaster or proceeds with the contest.
  - 3. Introduces the Chief Judge.
    - a. Refer to the Chief Judge's Guide.
    - b. Monitor the explanations to ensure that all essential details have been covered.
  - 4. Announce the contestants' speaking order.
  - 5. This item (#5) is specific for both the Humorous Speech and the International Speech Contests:
    - a. Introduce each contestant by announcing the Speaker's Name, Speech Title, Speech Title, and Speaker's Name.
    - b. No other information should be given on the speaker or speech.
    - c. At the conclusion of each speech, request one minute of silence for the judges to complete their worksheets. Before introducing the next contestant, make certain that no judge requires more time.
    - d. After the final contestant has spoken, direct the judges to finalize their voting and submit their ballots. Allow the judges as much time as they require.
    - e. Interview the contestants after the Chief Judge and Ballot Counters have left the room to tabulate the ballots.
      - 1.) Allow approximately 90 seconds for each contestant interview.
      - 2.) Award a certificate of participation to each contestant.
    - f. If a Toastmaster was appointed, that person now returns control of the meeting to the Contest Chair.
  
- C. **Presentations and announcements.**
  - 1. Present certificates of appreciation to the Toastmaster, Chief Judge, Ballot Counters and Timers.
  - 2. Allow announcements to be made by district officers or designated representatives.
  - 3. Announce contest winners and present trophies to the first and second place winners of each contest.

**IV. Post-Contest Procedures**

- A. Adjourn the meeting **IMMEDIATELY** following the presentation of awards.
- B. The Notification of Contest Winner forms for both contests should be completed as soon as possible. These forms, along with the Biographical Information forms for the first and second place winners in each contest, should be forwarded to the Contest Chairperson for the next higher level contest.