

**International Speech Contest
Contest Chair Notes and sample script
(Posted August, 2014)**

Have the Sergeant-At-Arms introduce you as the Contest Chair. Whenever possible, provide the SAA with a short introduction of you in writing before the meeting.

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.

Greetings and welcome to the (insert title here i.e., Area 21) International Speech Contest and tonight (or today) our winner(s) going forward in this tradition 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.

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, Blackberry or anything that might be a distraction etc.
- Photographs cannot be taken until all the speeches are complete.
- In between each speaker, there will be one minute of silence to allow the judges to fill out their ballots
- The timing lights are situated (indicate the location of the lights) so that only the speakers can see them.

As Contest Chair, I have briefed the speakers on the contest protocol and the speaking order has been randomly selected.

Speeches shall be from five to seven minutes long. Contestants, who speak less than 4 minutes, 30 seconds or more than 7 minutes, 30 seconds will be disqualified. The timing for the speeches will commence at the first sign of verbal or non-verbal communication.

Each speaker is a Toastmaster in good standing and has maintains their speech is substantially original.

Our Chief Judge (insert name and title here) has briefed the judges, timers and ballot counters of their duties and responsibilities. Could I ask that the contestants please rise. Could the judges now rise? Is the Chief Judge satisfied with the seating arrangements?

In fairness to all speakers, I will be announcing only their name and the title of their speech, followed by the title of their speech and 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.

(Congratulate each speaker prior to their interview...At the club and area level speech contests, it's best to use the Speech Contestant Biographical 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.

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 can then return control back to the SAA or Toastmaster for the meeting.