SPEECH EVALUATION

Listen closely. Think critically. Help a speaker grow.

Speech Evaluation is the art of observing a presentation, recognising what works, and offering thoughtful suggestions that help the speaker become even more effective. It brings together active listening, analytical thinking, clear communication and encouragement.

What happens in the contest?

- Listen: All contestants watch the same 5–7 minute test speech.
- Prepare: After the speech, contestants receive five minutes to organise their evaluation notes under supervision.
- Present: Each contestant delivers an individual 2–3 minute evaluation. Evaluations do not have speech titles.

What makes an effective evaluation?

- Specific observations: Identify the speaker's strongest techniques and explain how they affected the audience.
- Constructive recommendations: Suggest practical, achievable ways to strengthen the presentation.
- Balanced and respectful feedback: Evaluate the speech and delivery, not the speaker's personality.
- Clear organisation: Deliver a focused introduction, useful analysis and an encouraging conclusion.

A simple structure to practise

1. Opening: Briefly recognise the speech's central message or impact.
2. Strengths: Highlight two specific elements that worked well, with examples.
3. Improvements: Offer one or two actionable recommendations, explaining their value.
4. Closing: Reinforce the speaker's potential and end on a positive note.

The goal is not merely to identify weaknesses; it is to offer feedback that a speaker can confidently put into practice.

CONTEST ESSENTIALS & PREPARATION

Official timing at a glance

Test speech	5–7 minutes
Evaluation preparation	5 minutes, supervised
Evaluation speech	2–3 minutes
Timing signals	Green 2:00 | Yellow 2:30 | Red 3:00
Disqualification limits	Below 1:30 or above 3:30

How are evaluations judged?

Toastmasters' Evaluation Contest judging guidance considers four broad areas:

- Analytical quality: Insightful, accurate observations of strengths and areas for improvement.
- Recommendations: Practical suggestions that the speaker can apply.
- Technique: Tactful, engaging and supportive delivery of feedback.
- Summation: A clear, positive conclusion that reinforces the key points.

Tips for Gaveliers

- Listen for the message, organisation, language, vocal variety, gestures and audience connection.
- Write short keywords and concrete examples rather than attempting to record every sentence.
- Choose your most valuable observations; depth matters more than the number of points.
- Use encouraging phrases such as "One way to make this even stronger would be…"
- Practise delivering evaluations within the allotted time, with a natural and confident tone.

Important contest note

The official Toastmasters rules require contestants to use the Evaluation Contestant Notes sheet (Item 1177) if they take notes during the test speech. The Sergeant at Arms supervises preparation and collects the sheets after five minutes, returning them as each contestant is introduced. For complete procedures, refer to the OGCPS 2027 Rulebook and the Toastmasters International 2026–2027 Speech Contest Rulebook.

Sources: Toastmasters International — 2026–2027 Speech Contest Rulebook; Speech Contests; How to Evaluate Effectively; Evaluation Speech Contest Kit. This is an OGCPS educational summary, not an official Toastmasters publication.