# SPEECH EVALUATION

**LISTEN WITH PURPOSE. HELP A SPEAKER GROW.**

## 01 What is Speech Evaluation?

In this contest, you listen to a test speech and deliver an organised evaluation. Your task is to recognise what the speaker did well and offer specific, practical suggestions for improvement.

## 02 Listen for the speaker's purpose

Notice the speech message, structure, delivery and audience connection. Think about what the speaker was trying to achieve, not only what you personally would have said.

## 03 Balance appreciation and improvement

Strong feedback is honest, respectful and useful.

- Identify two or three strengths with evidence from the speech.
- Select one or two meaningful improvements rather than a long list.
- Explain how a specific change could help the audience.

### A HELPFUL FEEDBACK FORMULA

Observation → Effect → Suggestion. Example: "Your opening story drew us in. A shorter transition could help the central message stand out even more."

## 04 Evaluate the speech, not the person

Comment on choices the speaker made and their effect. Avoid personal judgments, unsupported assumptions and criticism without an actionable suggestion.

# ORGANISE YOUR EVALUATION

**TURN CAREFUL LISTENING INTO USEFUL FEEDBACK.**

## 05 Use a clear evaluation structure

Opening: acknowledge the speaker’s message. Strengths: identify effective moments and why they worked. Suggestions: propose realistic changes. Closing: leave the speaker with encouragement and a memorable takeaway.

## 06 Make every comment specific

Instead of “good voice,” say what worked: “Your softer tone during the reflective moment made the message feel sincere.” Replace “improve gestures” with one concrete example.

### PRACTICE EXERCISE

Watch a short speech. Write two specific strengths, one improvement, evidence for each point and one encouraging closing sentence.

## 07 Focus on high-impact improvements

Prioritise changes that would most improve understanding or engagement: a clearer central message, smoother transitions, better pacing or a stronger conclusion.

## 08 Use a supportive voice

Deliver suggestions with confidence and courtesy. An evaluator is a learning partner—not a judge of the speaker’s worth.

# PRACTISE YOUR SKILL

**OBSERVE. SELECT. ORGANISE. DELIVER.**

## 09 A seven-session practice routine

- 1. Listen to a speech and identify its main message.
- 2. Note three specific strengths with examples.
- 3. Practise one actionable suggestion for each speech.
- 4. Deliver a two-minute evaluation to a friend.
- 5. Practise organising notes under time pressure.
- 6. Record an evaluation; review clarity and balance.
- 7. Simulate the full contest and request feedback.

### KNOW THE TIMING

Toastmasters standard Evaluation Contest speeches are 2–3 minutes, with signals at 2:00 (green), 2:30 (yellow), 3:00 (red). Under 1:30 or over 3:30 is disqualifying. Contest note-taking and preparation procedures are set out in the rules and briefing.

## 10 Work with limited preparation time

Develop a simple note-taking system: S for strength, I for improvement and E for evidence. During the official preparation interval, select only your strongest points.

## 11 Avoid common traps

Do not retell the entire test speech, list vague compliments, overwhelm the speaker with too many suggestions or exceed the time limit.

# YOUR CONTEST-DAY TOOLKIT

**GIVE FEEDBACK THAT INSPIRES ACTION.**

## 12 Before the test speech

Attend the briefing, understand note-taking and isolation procedures, and prepare a simple structure you can use without relying on a memorised evaluation.

## 13 During your evaluation

Start with a clear overall observation, use examples from the actual speech, explain your suggestions and end on a constructive note. Speak directly to the speaker while including the audience.

## 14 What judges consider

Toastmasters Evaluation Contest judging considers analytical quality, recommendations, technique and delivery. Relevant evidence, prioritisation and actionable advice matter more than the number of comments.

**YOUR QUICK CHECKLIST**

☐ Speaker’s purpose ☐ Specific strengths ☐ Evidence ☐ Actionable suggestions ☐ Clear organisation ☐ Respectful tone ☐ Within time

## 15 Reflect and improve

After the contest, ask which observations were most useful and whether your recommendations were realistic. Good evaluation is a leadership skill you can practise in every Gavel meeting.

## Official reference and guidance

Toastmasters International Speech Contest Rulebook (2026–2027), Evaluation Contest Rules and Evaluation Contest judging materials. Refer to the applicable OGCPS rules for event-specific procedures.