

# Contest Chair Briefings

This is a script for the Contest Chair to brief the Contestants, Sergeants-at-Arms, and the Toastmaster. Note that some sections of this script are specific to certain contest types and may not apply to your contest; therefore, they can be skipped.

## INSTRUCTIONS

The Checklist: just before the briefings begin is a list of items to be addressed at the contest site prior to the start of the briefings so that you and the Chief Judge can effectively conduct your briefings. Plan to arrive early enough to take care of those items in addition to other Contest Chair tasks you need to address.

The Sergeant-at-Arms briefing script and the Contestants briefing script are intended to be read verbatim. Review the Toastmaster pre-contest questions with the Toastmaster. Yellow-highlighted italicized elements enclosed in “< ... >” are instructions and are not intended to be read. IMPORTANT: Do NOT delay the Contestant briefing if a contestant is absent.

AFTER YOU COMPLETE THE BRIEFINGS AND QUESTIONS, give the Chief Judge the filled-out Speaker's Certification of Eligibility and Originality forms. For District contests, give the District videographer the filled-out Video Release forms, and notify the videographer about any contestant who does not want his or her speech to be recorded.

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## CHECKLIST: JUST BEFORE THE BRIEFINGS BEGIN

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- Define the staging area where contestants are to proceed in the moment of silence before their speeches and stay until they are introduced.
- For the **Evaluation** contest, select the holding area outside the contest room where the contestants will prepare their evaluations and wait prior to their turn to speak.
- For the **Table Topics** contest, select the holding area outside the contest room where the contestants will wait prior to their turn to speak.
  - For the above two contests, be sure that you choose the holding area location such that the contestants cannot hear what is being said in the contest room. Also, determine through which door the contestants will enter.
- Give all contest officials a two-minute warning prior to the briefings start time.

### Briefing order will be:

- Contestants briefing
- Sergeants-at-Arms briefing
- Toastmaster pre-contest questions

# Contest Chair Briefings

## CONTESTANT BRIEFING

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### Attendees:

- All Contestants
- The Toastmaster or emcee
- (Optional) the “Prop” Sergeant-at-Arms

### Bring:

- Speaker’s Certification of Eligibility and Originality forms completed and blank
- Speech Contestant Profile forms completed and blank
- (District contests only) Video Release forms, completed and blank
- A list showing which completed forms you have. (from the document handler)
- Numbered draw for order slips of paper and cup or envelope
- Speech Contest Rulebooks (1171) **BE SURE YOU HAVE THE CURRENT ONE**
- (Optional) Agendas
- Extra pens
- A copy of this document
- **(For Evaluation Contest Only) Blank Official Evaluation contest note sheets 2 per contestant.**
- **Blank Order sheets 3, complete and give to Chief Judge, Sergeant at Arms, keep one**

**Location – <Hold the briefing in or near the speaking area so that contestants can familiarize themselves with the speaking area.>**

Thank you for participating in the speech contest and for attending the briefing. This briefing will be performed in sections.

## FORMS

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First, I need to ensure that I have all completed forms. If I do not have your signed Speaker’s Certification of Eligibility and Originality form, please fill one out now and return it to me.

You have certified your eligibility by signing this form. If you are a contestant in the International or Humorous Speech you have also certified that your speech meets the originality requirements stated in the rule book.

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If I do not have your completed Speech Contestant Profile form, please fill one out now and return it to me. If you are in the International Speech or Humorous Speech contest, please be sure to provide your speech title. The information you provide about yourself could be used during your Contestant interview, so be sure you are comfortable with that information. Do not include any sensitive or otherwise inappropriate information.

*<Pass out forms as needed. Collect the forms when they are complete.>*

Do I have all the forms?

*<When you have collected all of the Profiles, hand them to the Document Handler or Toastmaster to prepare for the interviews>*

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### PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEORECORDING

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We will now discuss photography and video recording. No one will be allowed to take a photograph while you are speaking. Your speech may be recorded only with your permission and my permission. If you want to record a speech, please raise your hand.

*<Ask those that raise their hands which speeches they want to record and where the recording equipment will be positioned.>*

Those of you whose speech has been requested to be recorded, do you give your permission?

*<At this time, decide and announce whose speeches will be recorded and where the recording equipment will be located.>*

#### **<For District contests Only >**

The District videographer will be recording this contest and will record your speech only if you sign the Video Release Form. If you give your permission, please give me your signed Video Release form if you have not already done so. A video is required to move up to the semifinals

*<Pass out forms as needed. Collect the forms when they are complete.>*

Your speech may be recorded by others besides the District videographer only with your permission and my permission. If you want to record a speech, please raise your hand.

Those of you whose speech has been requested to be recorded, do you give your permission?

*<At this time, decide and announce whose speeches will be recorded and where the recording equipment will be located.>*

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## DRAW FOR SPEAKING POSITION

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You will now draw for speaking position. The drawing will be done by contest. After you have drawn, when I call out your number, please pronounce your name so that the Toastmaster can fill in the script. If you are in a speech contest, also pronounce the title of your speech.

*<Call out the number starting with one through the number of contestants. When you have finished, repeat this procedure for each contest Complete the speaker order form.>*

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## BADGES

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You need to remove your badge or any items that reveal your education level and/or your club affiliation. Please do so now.

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## RULEBOOK

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We will conduct this contest according to the current Rulebook. You should have reviewed the rules prior to this contest. If you would like access to a rulebook, please see me after this briefing.

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## SPEAKING AREA

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*<Point out the speaking area>* Here is the speaking area. Please stay within this area during your speech. You will have the opportunity to familiarize yourself with the speaking area in a few minutes.

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## PROPS

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We will now discuss props for the International Speech and Humorous Speech contests.

You are responsible for your props. You may enlist someone to help you with positioning or using props, and/or a designated Sergeant-at-Arms may assist you *<Point out the "Prop" SAA.>* If used, props are to be put in place in the minute of silence before your speech, and removed in the time of silence after your speech. If you want assistance from the Sergeant-at-Arms, please work out the details at the conclusion of this briefing. Please realize that the Sergeant-at-Arms is not required to assist you.

Are there any questions about props?

# Contest Chair Briefings

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## EVALUATION CONTEST SPECIFICS

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After the Test speech is delivered, the “Prep Time” Sergeant-at-Arms and the “Contestant” Sergeant-at-Arms will escort all the contestants to a holding area where they will be given five minutes to prepare Evaluations. Official Evaluation Notes forms have been provided. When five minutes has elapsed, contestant notes are given to the “Prep Time” Sergeant-at-Arms. The “Prep Time” Sergeant-at-Arms will then escort the first contestant to the contest room. The remainder of the contestants will stay in the holding area with the “Contestant” Sergeant-at-Arms until it is their turn to speak.

**Please note that, according to the newest Rulebook:** “contestants may not use digital or other devices during the contest to gain an unfair advantage.” It is recommended that, if you have a digital device with you, you give it to a friend or secure it someplace other than on your person for the entirety of the contest. The SAA will not allow digital devices in the holding area. You may access your device(s) once the contest is finished.

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## TABLE TOPICS CONTEST SPECIFICS

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After the Toastmaster announces the speaking order, the “Contestant” Sergeant-at-Arms will escort all but the first contestant out of the contest room to the holding area, where they will stay until it is their turn to speak. The first contestant will stay in the contest room.

**Please note that, according to the newest Rulebook:** “contestants may not use digital or other devices during the contest to gain an unfair advantage.” It is recommended that, if you have a digital device with you, you give it to a friend or secure it someplace other than on your person for the entirety of the contest. The SAA will not allow digital devices in the holding area. You may access your device(s) once the contest is finished.

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## STAGING

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We will now discuss how you will be staged prior to your speech.

All contestants need to be in the staging area before they are introduced by the Toastmaster. **<Point out the location of the staging area.>** I will now discuss when and how you will get to the staging area.

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For contests with no lapel microphones

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Right before it is your turn to speak, you need to proceed to the staging area. **<Point out the location of the staging area.>**

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- For all but the Evaluation contest, the first contestant will go to the staging area when the Toastmaster announces the speaking order.
- **<Read only if an Evaluation contest is being conducted.>** For the Evaluation contest, the first contestant will be escorted to the staging area by the “Prep Time” Sergeant-at-Arms, the one who has your notes.
- Subsequent contestants in all contests will go to the staging area when the time of silence is announced by the Toastmaster before it is their turn to speak

We will now allow you a short time to become familiar with the speaking area. Those of you who want to practice, feel free to walk on/around the stage one at a time and say a few words. **<Take the time for contestants to practice.>**

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For contests that deploy lapel microphones

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Before it is your turn to speak, you will need to visit the sound station and have the microphone equipment attached to your clothing.

- For all but the Evaluation contest, the first contestant will go to sound station when the Toastmaster announces the speaking order. **<Point out the location of the sound station.>**
- **<Read only if an Evaluation contest is being conducted.>** For the evaluation contest, the first contestant will go to the sound station immediately when you re-enter the contest room after the five-minute evaluation preparation time has elapsed. The “Prep Time” Sergeant-at-Arms, who has your notes, will then escort you to the staging area.
- Subsequent contestants in all contests will go to the sound station when the time of silence is announced by the Toastmaster before it is their turn to speak.

As soon as the microphone system is affixed, proceed to the staging area.

We will now allow you a short time to practice. Those of you who want to practice, one at a time, have our sound person affix the microphone to your clothing, walk on/around the speaking area, and say a few words. **<Take the time for contestants to practice.>**

# Contest Chair Briefings

## INTRODUCTIONS

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We will now discuss how you will be introduced, when you will move to the speaking area, and what to do when you complete your speech.

*<Read only for the current contest briefing>*

- International Speech or Humorous Speech contest
  - Name Title Title Name
  
- Evaluation contest
  - Test Speaker: Name Title Title Name
  - Contestants: Name Name(again)
  
- Table Topics Contest
  - Name Topic Topic Name

For all contests, when you hear your name the second time, begin moving to the speaking area.

When you have finished your speech, exit the speaking area and take a seat in the audience. If you are using a lapel microphone system, return it to the sound station before taking a seat.

Are there any questions on staging and introductions?

## TIMING

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Timing signals will be given there. *<Point out the location of the timing signals>*

Timing will begin with the contestant's first definite verbal or nonverbal communication with the audience. This usually will be the first word uttered by the contestant, but would include any other communication such as sound effects, a staged act by another person, etc.

*<Read only the times for the current contest briefing>*

<u>CONTEST</u>	<u>QUAL</u>	<u>GREEN</u>	<u>YELLOW</u>	<u>RED</u>	<u>DISQUAL</u>
International Speech	04:30	05:00	06:00	07:00	07:31
Humorous Speech	04:30	05:00	06:00	07:00	07:31
Table Topics	01:00	01:00	01:30	02:00	02:31
Evaluation	01:30	02:00	02:30	03:00	03:31
Test Speaker		05:00	06:00	07:00	

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Are there any questions about timing?

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### DISQUALIFICATIONS

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We will now review disqualifications. You can be disqualified for any of the following four reasons:

1. You are not present when the Contest Toastmaster is introduced.
2. Your speech is timed under the minimum qualifying time or over the maximum qualifying time.
3. You are ineligible. The eligibility requirements are listed on the Speaker's Certification of Eligibility and Originality form.  
*<NOTE: As the Contest Chair, you should have confirmed eligibility with Toastmasters International prior to the briefing.>*
4. Your speech violates contest rules on originality. If you are in the International Speech or Humorous Speech, twenty-five percent or less of the speech may be devoted to quoting, paraphrasing, or referencing another person's content. Any quoted, paraphrased, or referenced content must be so identified during the speech presentation.

Are there any questions about disqualifications?

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### PROTESTS

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You can be protested based on eligibility. **Only voting judges and contestants** can lodge an eligibility protest. The protest must be lodged with me and/or the Chief Judge prior to the announcement of the winner and alternate. As Contest Chair, I will make the ruling.

*<NOTE: As the Contest Chair, you should have confirmed eligibility with Toastmasters International prior to the briefing.>*

If you are in the International Speech or Humorous Speech contest you can also be protested based on originality. **Only voting judges and contestants** can lodge an originality protest. The protest must be lodged with me and/or the Chief Judge prior to the announcement of the winner and alternate. Before you can be disqualified on the basis of originality, the Chief Judge will give you the opportunity to respond to the voting judges. A majority of the voting judges must concur with the decision to disqualify.

Are there any questions on protests?

This covers all the information for this briefing. Do you have any additional questions? If not this concludes the briefing. Thank you and good luck!



## Contest Chair Briefings

### SAA – EVALUATION CONTEST

We will have at least one Sergeant-at-Arms (SAA) at each entry door called “Door SAAs.” The “Door” SAA stationed by the entry door in which the contestants leave and re-enter the room is called the “Entry Door” SAA. We will have one SAA who will escort the contestants out of the contest room into a holding area for a five minute preparation time called the “Prep Time” SAA. After the preparation time is over, we will have one SAA who will stay with the contestants in the holding area and stage them back into the contest room called the “Contestant” SAA. Decide now among yourselves who will be “Door” SAA, who will be the “Entry Door” SAA, who will be the “Prep Time” SAA, and who will be the “Contestant” SAA.

**<To the “Door” SAAs and the “Entry Door” SAA>:**

Before the Toastmaster is introduced, position yourselves at the entry doors. **<Point out the entry doors and which one will be the contestant entry door.>** Decide now among yourselves who will be at which door. **<Give them time to decide.>** Remain there during the contestant speeches and times of silence. Do not allow anyone to enter or exit the contest room while contestants are speaking. People can enter and exit during the times of silence.

**<To the “Prep Time” SAA and the Contestant SAA>:**

When the Toastmaster says, “Will one of the sergeants-at-arms and one of the timers please escort all of the contestants out of the room for the five minute preparation time?” please meet the contestants at the entry door and escort them to the holding area where the contestants will prepare their evaluations. **<Point out the location of the holding area.>**

**<To the Prep Time SAA (You may want to *print out his/her script below*)>**

You are presiding officer over the preparation of the evaluations. When the last contestant is situated, state

**<Prep Time SAA script to be read verbatim to the evaluation contestants>**

“This is where you will prepare your evaluations. Please note that, according to the newest Rulebook: “contestants may not use digital or other devices during the contest to gain an unfair advantage.” If you have inadvertently carried a digital device with you, please give it to me now. I will return it to you at the end of the contest. **<Give them a moment to comply.>** Thank you. The procedure will be as follows:

- You may start preparing as soon as I ask the timer to start the stopwatch.
- Please work in silence for the five-minute period.
- The timer will signal me when five minutes have elapsed.
- At that time, give me your notes in speaking order beginning with the first contestant. I will keep the notes in order

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- I will escort the first contestant into the contest room. The rest of you will remain in this holding area with the Contestant SAA until it is your turn.
- I will return your notes when you are introduced, just before you depart for the speaking area.

Are there any questions? If not, Timer, please start the watch for the five minute preparation period”

**<End of Prep Time SAA script>**

After you have collected all the notes, escort the first contestant into the contest room. Escort the contestant to the staging area. For contests that use lapel microphones, escort the contestant to the sound station prior to going to the staging area. DO NOT RETURN THE NOTES PRIOR TO THE CONTESTANT INTRODUCTION! Stay in the staging area until the next contestant arrives, then repeat the process. After the last contestant is handed the notes, your tasks as “Prep Time” SAA are complete.

**<To the “Contestant” SAA>:**

When the five minute preparation time is over, stay with the contestants in the holding area. When the “Entry Door” SAA signals you to send another contestant, ask the next contestant to enter the contest room. When the “Entry Door” SAA signals you for the last contestant, you may escort that contestant to the contest room and then stay in the contest room.

**<To the “Entry Door” SAA>:**

In addition to “guarding” the door, you will assist in the flow of contestants into the contest room. When a contestant speech has ended, signal the “Contestant” SAA to send the next contestant. When the contestant arrives at the entry door, ask the contestant to proceed to the staging area, or the sounds station ten the stating area if lapel microphones are being used.

Do you have any questions? If not, this concludes the SAA briefing for the Evaluation Contest

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## SAA – TABLE TOPICS CONTEST

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We will have at least one Sergeant-at-Arms (SAA) at each entry door called “Door SAAs.” The SAA stationed by the entry door in which the contestants leave and re-renter the room is called the “Entry Door” SAA. We will also have one SAA who will escort the contestants out of the contest room to a holding area and then stage them back into the contest room one at a time called the “Contestant” SAA. Decide now among yourselves who will be “Door” SAAs, who will be the “Entry Door” SAA, and who will be the “Contestant” SAA. **<Give them time to decide.>**

**<To the “Door” SAAs and the Entry Door SAA>:**

Before the Toastmaster is introduced, position yourselves at the entry doors. **<Point out the entry doors and which one will be the contestant entry door.>** Decide now among yourselves who will be at which door. **<Give them time to decide.>** Remain there during the contestant speeches and times of silence. Do not allow anyone to enter or exit the contest room while contestants are speaking. People can enter and exit during the times of silence.

**<To the “Contestant” SAA>:**

When the Toastmaster says, “The first contestant will now proceed to the staging area. The Sergeant-at-Arms will escort the remaining contestants out of the room.” Please meet the contestants at the entry door and escort them to the holding area. **<Point out the location of the holding area.>** when the last contestant is situated, state: **(You may want to print out his/her script below)**

“This is where you will await your turn to speak. Please note that, according to the newest Rulebook: “contestants may not use digital or other devices during the contest to gain an unfair advantage.” If you have inadvertently carried a digital device with you, please give it to me now. I will return it to you at the end of the contest. **<Give them a moment to comply.>** Thank you. I will escort you to the contest room at the appropriate time. Are there any questions? If not, you may relax, and good luck!” **<End of Prep Time SAA script>**

When the “Entry Door” SAA signals you to send another contestant, ask the next contestant to enter the contest room. When the “Entry Door” SAA signals you for the last contestant, you may escort that contestant to the contest room and then stay in the contest room.

**<To the “Entry Door” SAA>:**

In addition to “guarding” the door, you will assist in the flow of contestants into the contest room. When a contestant speech has ended, signal the “Contestant” SAA to send the next contestant. When the contestant arrives at the entry door, ask the contestant to proceed to the staging area.

Do you have any questions? If not, this concludes the briefing for the Table Topics Contest.

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SAA – INTERNATIONAL or HUMOROUS

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We will have at least one Sergeant-at-Arms (SAA) at each entry door, “Door SAAs.” We will also have one SAA assist with contestant props called the “Prop” SAA. Decide now among yourselves who will be “Door” SAAs, who will be the “Prop” SAA. *<Give them time to decide.>*

*<To the “Door” SAAs>*

Before the Toastmaster is introduced, position yourselves at the entry doors. *<Point out the entry doors.>* Decide now among yourselves who will at which door. *<Give them time to decide.>* Remain there during the contestant speeches and times of silence. Do not allow anyone to enter or exit the contest room while contestants are speaking. People can enter and exit during the times of silence.

*<To the “Prop” SAA>*

Please join the contestant briefing to be held right after this briefing where you will determine contestant prop needs. During the contest, position yourself near the speaking area off to one side in a place where you are not conspicuous.

Do you have any questions? If not, this concludes the briefing for the International Speech, Humorous Speech, and Tall Tales contests.

# Contest Chair Briefings

## Contest Toastmaster Pre-Contest Questions

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**<Ask the Toastmaster the following questions>**

Have you prepared and read through your script?

Did you record the speaking order in the script?

**<Ask only if an International Speech or Humorous Speech contest is being conducted.>**

Did you record the speech titles in the script?

**<Ask only if an Evaluation contest is being conducted.>**

Did you record the Test speaker's name and speech title in the script?

Are you comfortable with the pronunciation of names and speech titles?

**<Ask only if a Table Topics contest is being conducted.>**

Do you have the Table Topic and can you read it clearly to the contestants?

Do you understand the proper introduction protocol?

- International Speech or Humorous Speech contest
  - Name Title Title Name
- Evaluation contest
  - Test Speaker: Name Title Title Name
  - Contestants: Name Name(again)
- Table Topics Contest
  - Name Topic Topic Name
- Use ONLY the words above. Do not add words like first, last, final, next; second, third, Mr. or Mrs., etc.

Do you have the filled-out Speech Contestant Profile forms and Speech Participant Certificates?

Do you have any questions or concerns?