



EVALUATION vs CONTEST JUDGING

You are now a CTM! A nearby Toastmasters Club has asked you to be a judge at their next speech contest! You are chuffed! But what next, what do you know about judging?

I suggest you begin with Clare's Clues on Evaluation – v – Contest Judging and the relevant judging sheet and rules for the specific contest. Clare's Clues are included below with compliments from Distinguished Toastmaster Clare Murphy Past District 69 Governor and International Director. District 69 is our northern neighbour and includes Northern New South Wales, Queensland and Northern Territory.

CLARE'S CLUES

Evaluation and judging are not the same. Sometimes confusion exists in the minds of evaluators and judges regarding the difference between evaluation and judging. Let us look at these two important, but incompatible, aspects of Toastmasters and examining their differences.

AN EVALUATOR	A JUDGE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Observes the speaker's application to the manual assignment and assesses the performance in light of the assignment techniques. <input type="checkbox"/> Works on confidence building aimed at improving the speaker's skills. <input type="checkbox"/> Knows there is no competition. The speaker is competing with themselves. It is not evaluated against a range of standards and techniques. <input type="checkbox"/> Is Honest, Analytical, Sensitive and Encouraging. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Deals with the cold hard facts. <input type="checkbox"/> Assesses the performance, on the day, of one speaker against another governed by the rules of the competition. <input type="checkbox"/> Aims to choose the best contestant to represent us at the next level of the contest. <input type="checkbox"/> Marks according to the standards and techniques on the judging sheet.

THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN EVALUATION AND CONTEST JUDGING ARE:

Aspect	Evaluation	Judging
Parameters	Broadly laid down in the manual and are entirely based on opinion.	Strictly laid down by the judging sheet with no room for opinion.
Aim	To encourage the speaker and help other evaluators.	To choose a winner.
Consequences	Improvement of both the speaker and evaluator.	The winner advances and wins a prize.
Reactions	A lively and fruitful discussion of our evaluations is common.	Audience sometimes may not understand result, forming opinion on emotion rather than use of a Judge's Guide.
Justification	Evaluators are obliged to talk about their evaluations with the speaker.	Judges do not have to explain to speakers the reasons for their decisions.

If we are performing these tasks, we must be aware of the reasons for their existence and the differences in their aims and consequences. A couple of years experience, a certain level of educational achievement or a club/district officer position held does not guarantee sufficient credentials for being a judge. A poor evaluation is a sad thing, as it harms the speaker and annoys the audience, but a bad judgement is irrevocable and can deny a contestant further honours.

As evaluators and judges, we must think seriously about our responsibilities to speakers and contestants.

HONESTY AND ANALYSIS, SENSITIVITY AND ENCOURAGEMENT is essential to a good evaluation.

There is only one thing essential for a good judgement – **TO ENSURE THE BEST SPEAKER (at the time) WINS.**

