

MENAI TOASTMASTERS CLUB



SPEECH EVALUATOR (2 minutes, maximum 2.5 minutes)

The time allotted for each evaluation is two minutes. Planning for the evaluation is as essential as planning for the manual speech itself. Both parts require study and preparation. Neither can be left to chance. Read the notes on the role of Evaluator in your Communication and Leadership manual.

The speakers for the evening are not competing with each other, they are only competing with their own previous performance/s. Therefore, the purpose of evaluation is to provide immediate, positive feedback which will point out to the speaker, areas which may need improvement. This form of feedback will help the speaker improve for the next occasion.

The Evaluator's task is to provide honest reaction to the speech, in a constructive manner. The Evaluator is not a judge, nor an authority on speaking, the evaluator should just simply relate his own reaction to the speech and state his own opinion, nothing more. A recommended structure for an effective evaluation is,

Commend, Commend, Recommend, Commend.

When you are an Evaluator comment on the speaker's strengths and make one or two suggestions (in your opinion) that will help the speaker improve for the next speech. Your evaluation should be warm, friendly and helpful. Always finish your evaluation with a note of praise.

Some points to consider:

- Each speaker should receive a written and an oral evaluation. If time does not allow for an oral evaluation, the evaluator should confer with the speaker later, preferably immediately after the meeting.
- The Evaluator should obtain the speaker's manual and study previous written evaluations, to see if there are any reoccurring suggestions. If so, pay particular attention to these points during the speech, and comment on them during the evaluation.

- Determine from the previous written evaluations, if the speaker has been meeting the objectives of each speaking project. Be aware of the speaker's objectives for the speaking project you are evaluating.
- As Evaluator, you should talk to the speaker before the presentation of the speech, and discuss any particular points that the speaker may want you to look for during the presentation. If the speaker wants you to look for such points, be sure to comment on them during your evaluation.
- The Evaluator should read and understand the "Note To The Evaluator" section on the Evaluation page of the speaker's speaking project. This page nominates specific areas for the Evaluator to add written comment, which mainly relate to the objectives of the project. The oral evaluation should take a different approach as mentioned above, i.e., commend, commend, recommend, commend. Comment on what you saw, what you heard, and what you felt. In other words, talk about your reaction to the speech and state your opinion. Your evaluation should be just, kind and friendly, generous and constructive.
- Occasionally a speaker will deliver a speech that does not fit the objectives stated in the speaking project of the speaker's manual. If the divergence is significant you should consider suggesting to the speaker that he/she ought to repeat the exercise at a future meeting, in order to gain the intended benefits and learning offered by the project. This should be handled with extreme diplomacy, so as not to offend the speaker, but rather, in a way that will help the speaker feel happy with your suggestion.

What to look for as an Evaluator

Appearance:

The speaker's appearance should be such that it does not distract your attention, but should be pleasantly unobtrusive and appropriate for the occasion.

Opening:

The speaker's opening remarks should capture your attention and arouse your interest. The opening remarks should also lead into the subject of the speech.

Vocal Variety:

Voice volume, speaking rate, vocal pitch, voice tone, vocal vitality, and articulation are all areas which can detract from or enhance a speech, and should be considered for the evaluation. Read project 5 in the Communication and Leadership manual.

Grammar:

The phrases and words used throughout the speech should be correct for the context, and spoken in a literate manner.

Visual Aids:

The speaker has the option of using a form of visual aid to enhance the presentation, and the speaker's handling of the visual aid should be considered for the evaluation.

Poise & Gestures:

The speakers use of body language, facial expressions and hand gestures should add emphasis to the points and meaning of the speech.

Audience Interest:

The speaker should be able to attract the attention of the members of the audience, and hold their attention all through the speech. Keep an eye on the audience to see if this is the case.

Organisation:

The various points in the speech should be arranged in a logical sequence so that they flow from one to the other. Skipping back and forth, or not relating different points, displays poor organisation. (Read project 3 in your Communication and Leadership manual).

Word Pictures:

The text of the speech should build clear, vivid mental pictures in the minds of the members of the audience. This activity will help to hold the audience's attention. (Read project 6 in your Communication and Leadership manual).

Enthusiasm:

The speaker should be enthusiastic about the subject of the speech to win the support of the audience for his views. Without enthusiasm the speaker will be unconvincing.

Sincerity:

To convince you, the speaker must be convinced himself. If he is sure of his facts and certain that they are right, he will present his speech with sincerity. Read project 2 in your Communication and Leadership manual.

Information:

Where appropriate, the speaker should quote examples and cases, and make comparisons, which support the argument. When presenting facts and figures, the speaker should also indicate the authority of the sources of the information.

Conclusion:

The speaker should not introduce any new material during the conclusion. The conclusion should be forceful and confident. Examples of a good way to conclude are:

- summarise the points of the speech,
- a specific appeal for action,
- a story, a quotation, or illustration that emphasizes the point,
- a rhetorical question.

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