

## Toastmaster Contest Role: Chief Judge

It is your responsibility as Chief Judge to select the judges. At a club contest, there must be a minimum of 3 judges with 5 if possible. To the extent possible, maintain a balance of male and female judges. It is also your responsibility to select a tiebreaker judge. This person should only be known to you as Chief Judge. Arrange to collect the tiebreaker's ballot yourself or if you are having the ballots put in an envelope, mark the envelope so you will know which one it is. The tiebreaker ballot should only be looked at if there is a tie.



To the extent possible, the briefing should be conducted at least a half hour before the start of the contest to ensure that judges have the opportunity to review the judging form. Ensure you have a copy of the current year's rulebook present when conducting the briefing. Review this in advance to become familiar with the rule. Note any changes from previous years.

When briefing judges and timers:

- Explain the timing. Ensure timers know that when they turn on one light, the previous light should be turned off so there is only one light on at a time. Remind judges they are to ignore timing and are to judge based on the merits of the speech.
- If a speaking area is designated, explain the speaking area to judges. A speaker is not disqualified if he or she goes outside the speaking area but the judges may want to reflect it in their scores.
- Explain who can lodge a protest based on originality (judges and contestants only). A protest must be filed with the Chief Judge prior to any announcement of winners.
- Ensure that no judge is competing at the same contest in another club. If so, that person cannot judge and a replacement will need to be found.
- Brief judges on their responsibilities. Review the code of ethics on the back of the judges' guide. Highlight some areas of explanation on the back of the form – what is meant by purpose, speech value, what appropriate language means, etc. Explain that the guide is just that – a guide. It will not be collected. Judges can use the ballot from left to right or from right to left. The suggested scores are a guideline only. What is important is that the judge is consistent in the way they score from speaker to speaker.
- Remind judges they are judging on how well the speaker meets the criteria on the judging form, not on whether they agreed or disagreed with what the speaker has to say.

- Remind judges that they are judging on how well the speaker does at this contest, not on how well they may have seen the speaker perform previously or how well they think the speaker can perform.
- Ask judges to not sit next to contestants and to spread out among the audience.
- Remind judges that it is their responsibility to pick a first, second and third place winner. If they have a tie, they must break that tie. If a first, second and third are not stated on the ballot (with the obvious exception of a contest with fewer than 3 speakers), the ballot will be declared invalid. Also remind judges to sign the ballot. If the ballot is not signed, it will be declared invalid.