



PUTTING ON A SUCCESSFUL CONTEST

A guide for Area/ Division Directors

2024-2025

Objectives

- Help AD/DDs with a structured approach to planning, organizing and executing well run contests
- Provide a planning checklist with timelines to aid in successful contest preparation
- Provide links and resources to use to conduct successful contests
- List 25 Tips for success

Why Speech Contests



- Participants gain speaking experience.
- Contests provide an opportunity for members to meet their personal and professional goals.
- Members of the audience observe proficient speakers.
- Audience members learn about a variety of topics.
- As speakers progress, they grow beyond their clubs.
- Those who organize and conduct the contests practice serving in leadership roles and on teams.
- Awareness of Toastmasters spreads in the community.
- Visibility and membership grows.



The ONE Source of Truth

SPEECH CONTEST **RULEBOOK**

JULY 1, 2024 TO JUNE 30, 2025



Contest Rules Caveat

The Speech Contest Rulebook is protocol and applies to all Toastmasters speech contests. Modification to rules may only be made through the administrative protocol review process. Exceptions are not permitted.

Additional Resources

- **Speech Contests Frequently Asked Questions** www.toastmasters.org/speechcontestFAQ
- **Speech Contest Tutorials** <http://www.toastmasters.org/Leadership-Central/Speech-Contests/> Speech-Contest-Tutorials
- **Policy 6.0: Speech Contests** www.toastmasters.org/Leadership-Central/Governing-Documents

Contest Planning Suggestions – Area Council Meeting

Assignment of Contest Chair

Can be one of your Club officers

Date, Time and location of Area contest

Can be one of your Club's regular meeting location. Does not have to be on a Saturday at a neutral location

Dates of Club Contests

Coordinate with Division Director

Logistics of Area Contest

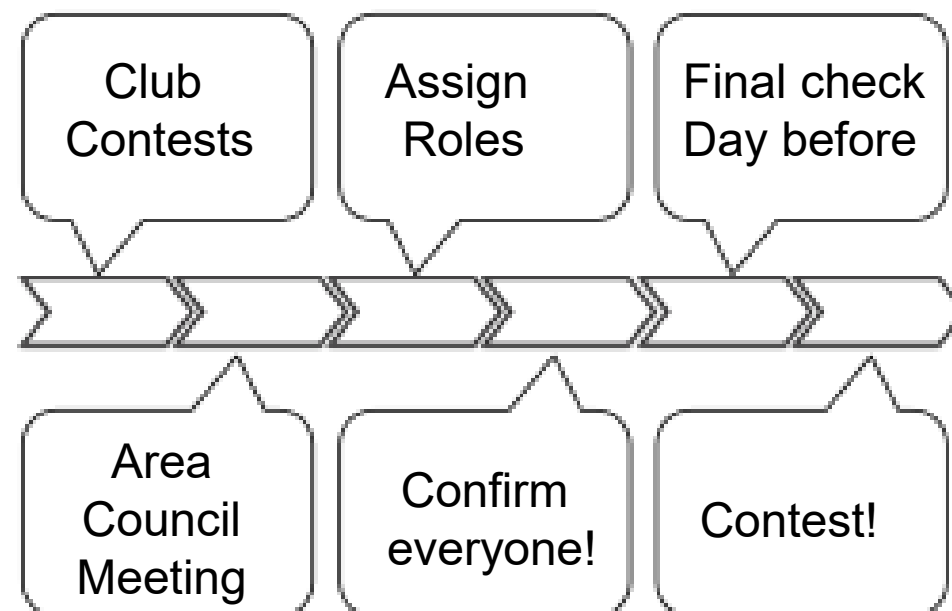
Food, helpers, chief judge, contest master, print coordinator etc.

Help needed from Clubs

Pot luck food, raffle prizes etc.

Contest Time Line

- Before
 - Area Council meeting to plan the contest
 - Sign up sheets
 - Publicity for your contest
 - Paperwork
 - Food planning
- During
 - Oversee contest
 - Protocol List
 - Introduce contest master/s
 - Award trophies for contests
- After
 - Thank everyone
 - Submit Notification of Winner list to the next level functionaries



Suggested contest Time Lines

- Introductory Contest Planning At least 4 weeks prior to contest
- Assign Contest Chair & other functionaries 4 weeks in advance
- Secure location, date, time etc. 4 weeks in advance
- Get contestants names & details As they become available
- Get trophies, certificates At least 3 weeks before contest
- Complete Club/ Area level contests 2 weeks before Area/ Division
- Confirm all contest functionaries At least 1 week before contest
- Reconfirm attendance, time to be there Day before contest
- Mobilize food & other items to venue Day of contest
- Conduct contest in excellence Day of contest
- Celebrate contest After contest

Before the Contest

- Hold Area/ Division Council Meeting to plan:
 - Date, time location of your Area/ Division Contest
 - Could be held at one of your Club's meeting location if they have a large enough room
 - Appoint Contest Chair to oversee the contest details (NOT YOU!)
 - Appoint Contest Publicity Chair
 - Find/ appoint your Area Contest Chief Judge (District Chief Judge will support Division Contests)
 - Distribute contest roles list and get sign ups from your clubs
- Support other AD/DDs in their contest/s (if you're not the first)
- Avoid contest date conflicts. Talk to your DD regarding available contest dates.
- Submit your contest details to the District Website. This will help other AD/DDs in their planning

Speech Contest Checklists

1	AREA/ DIVISION DIRECTOR CONTEST ORGANIZATION CHECKLIST										
2	Check Box	No.	Task	Task Accomplished by	Week 4	Week 3	Week 2	Week 1	Day before	Day of	After
3											
4			PRE-CONTEST PLANNING								
5	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	Hold Area/ Division Council Meeting (preferably in person, but online meetings are OK. Ensure maximum participation)	Area/ Division Director	X						
6	<input type="checkbox"/>		Appoint Contest Leaders	Area/ Division Council	X						
7	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	Contest Chair/ Coordinator	Area/ Division Council	X						
8	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	Contest Publicity Chair/ Coordinator	Area/ Division Council	X						
9	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	Contest Chief Judge (District Chief Judge serves as Division Contest Chief Judge)	Area/ Division Council	X						
10	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	Food Coordinator	Area/ Division Council	X						
11	<input type="checkbox"/>	6	Finalize Contest Date/ Time/ Location	Area/ Division Council	X						
12	<input type="checkbox"/>	7	Plan/ brainstorm food needs incl. costs	Area/ Division Council	X						
13	<input type="checkbox"/>	8	Discuss/ finalize Contest Budget (\$100 per year for Ads, \$200 per year for DDs)	Area/ Division Council	X						
14	<input type="checkbox"/>	9	Check with DD/other ADs regarding date/ time conflicts	Area/ Division Director	X						

Tips for Success

1. When you collect names of contest volunteers get their email and phone numbers. That way you can contact them directly if needed.
2. Contest publicity and buy in from your clubs is crucial to the success of the contest.
3. Don't pick a date when most of your clubs members cannot attend.
4. Have a printing coordinator who will print agendas and certificates for you.
5. Create a timeline for all activities you need to accomplish before the contest. Sweat the details before the contest so that you don't have to sweat during the contest.

Tips for Success – Contd.

6. Collect paperwork from the contestants ahead of time to avoid last minute delays in start of your contest.
7. Attend your clubs' contests (if they conduct the same) so you can support your clubs' efforts. Also you can recruit volunteers for your contest from their membership.
8. Verify eligibility for your contestants. Check to make sure contestants that belong to multiple districts are eligible.
speechcontests@toastmasters.org
9. Try not to use your fellow ADs for roles in your contest. Try to recruit newer members from your clubs first.
10. When printing agendas, please remember NOT to put contestants' designations, club affiliations etc. on the agenda. Please don't put designations, speech titles etc. for contestants and for the Evaluation Contest Model Speaker.

Tips for Success – Contd.

11. Sit in the back of the room so that you can address any issues that may arise during the conduct of the contest.
12. Do not sign up to be Ballot Counter or any such role that will take you outside the contest when it is being conducted.
13. Put helpful signs for your contest – Restrooms, Silence - Contest in Progress, Donations etc. Sign outside in parking lot to direct attendees to enter.
14. Don't just get chips and soda as food!
15. Use your Contest SAA to help you give out awards.

Tips for Success – Contd.

16. Pose for photographs. Have someone designated to serve as contest photographer.
17. Acknowledge your helpers/ volunteers/ club officers etc. Even if not with certificates, provide verbal acknowledgement. Provide Certificates of Appreciation to the Contest Chief Judge, Contest Masters, Model Speaker, Contest SAAs at the very least.
18. Have someone proofread your agendas, certificates and other printed materials.
19. Send invitations (email or otherwise) to your fellow District leaders, to all your Club members.
20. You do not need to have a sign in sheet for your contest, unless it is for contest officials, dignitaries and contestants.

Tips for Success – Contd.

21. If your meeting space needs amplification, ensure that it is available and works! Provide for extra time for contestants to practice with amplification.
22. Have your contest chair confirm and re-confirm with contestants and functionaries. While reconfirming them ensure that they know where to come, at what time to show up and get their mobile number just in case they get stuck in traffic or something. There have been times when contestants did not bother to show up and did not let anyone know.
23. Have food setup/ cleanup helpers from your clubs.
24. Leave the facility better than you found it.
25. Support your next level up contest with dedication and enthusiasm.

Here's to a great contest season!

