

Above & Beyond Toastmasters

Standard of Conduct

Educational Section

The purpose of this document is to set clear expectations for speakers and evaluators in terms of how evaluations are to be conducted for the Above & Beyond Toastmasters Club.

Dr Ralph Smedley realized early that the success of the Toastmasters program depended on effective evaluations. Many people speak in public – in their work, community and personal life – but very few speakers receive feedback. Often people in a position to speak in public develop a false sense of competence only because they are comfortable speaking in front of a group of people. Members of Above & Beyond Toastmasters have already achieved a level of comfort through completing the ten basic speeches required for a Competent Toastmaster or Competent Communicator. The members have also obtained a certain level of competence by delivering those ten speeches focused on the basic skills of public speaking, and by receiving feedback on those efforts.

One of the main objectives of any advanced Toastmaster club is to help members go “above and beyond” the skills developed during that first Competent Communication manual, whether they are specialized skills such as motivational speaking, humorous speaking or professional skills (e.g. sales presentations) or more general skills which can encompass any specialized skill. Above & Beyond Toastmasters has set itself apart from regular Toastmaster clubs by adapting a culture and mission that will take any and all of its members to the level of a truly advanced public speaker. The key method for accomplishing this goal will be to have members focus on speeches from advanced Toastmaster manuals, and then receive oral and written evaluations from a multitude of experienced Toastmasters who have received, delivered and listened to many Toastmaster speech evaluations.

In order to make the evaluations as effective as possible – whether oral or written – there has to be a common understanding among all members of the club of how the evaluations are to be conducted. This standard of conduct, to be voted on by the members of record when made as a motion, shall be distributed to all members. This document will also be part of any new member kit delivered to new members upon joining.

Once voted on and accepted this document shall set the expectations for speakers and evaluators of the Above & Beyond Toastmasters club.

The expectations for speakers are as follows:

1. Speakers shall strive to deliver speeches from advanced Toastmaster manuals.
2. If a speaker desires to deliver a Competent Communicator speech, an educational, or a special speech (i.e. practice a contest speech, practice a work related speech) they may do so after requesting permission from the Vice President of Education.
3. Speakers shall bring the manual from which they are speaking to the meeting and offer it to their lead evaluator.
4. Speakers shall prepare a project introduction which specifies the manual, project, title and timings. This shall be given to the Toastmaster, Evaluator(s) and Timer at least the day before the meeting.
5. A speech introduction shall be prepared for the specific speech. It should not be a generic biography of the speaker, but an introduction which introduces the speaker and the speech. This will be given to the Toastmaster at least the day before the meeting.
6. Speakers shall have on hand at the meeting a hardcopy of the project introduction and speech introduction.
7. Speakers shall prepare to the best of their ability, honouring the objectives of the selected project.
8. Speakers shall prepare an evaluation form for any member present to prepare a written evaluation of the speech. This form may be a copy of the evaluation sheet from the manual speech and/or a customized form of the speaker's choosing.
9. Speakers can request that the evaluators focus on objectives additional to those stated in the project speech. This could be as simple as eye contact or voice volume. These additional evaluated skills shall be known as *Focus Skills*.

10. Speakers understand that all comments are the opinions, and opinions only, of the evaluators.
11. Speakers have the right to incorporate, modify or ignore any opinion offered by any member when evaluating.
12. Speakers shall make every effort to communicate with the evaluator, lead evaluator, or evaluation team before delivering a prepared speech in order to discuss the speech objectives, any focus skills and other concerns of the speaker or evaluator(s).
13. Speakers may provide the evaluator(s) with the text of the speech. This is especially effective when delivering speeches from the *Interpretive Reading* manual.
14. Speakers should receive evaluations in the spirit of Toastmasters, with grace and gratitude.

The expectations for speech evaluators – speech evaluators are Lead Evaluators, members of an evaluation team, participants in a round robin evaluation and/or members who provide written evaluations - are as follows:

1. Every member has an obligation to participate in evaluations, either orally or written.
2. Evaluations are to be offered in the spirit of Toastmasters – an opinion which includes strengths and recommendations for improvements, delivered with grace and empathy.
3. Evaluators recognize that evaluations are the true strength of the Toastmasters program, and that every member, whether the speaker or not, will have the benefit of oral evaluations.
4. Evaluators deliver their evaluations in a manner that is motivational and uplifting. It is not so much what is wrong with a speech, but how it can be even better.
5. Evaluation is about giving the speaker feedback in regards to the effectiveness of his/her speech. By being a member of the audience and hearing the speech, you are uniquely qualified to provide such feedback from your point of view.
6. Evaluators shall provide feedback on the speech and the person only as a speaker. The evaluator shall not judge the person.
7. Anyone who experiences a speech is qualified to provide feedback from their point of view.
8. The evaluations will involve more than one oral evaluation. Evaluators must evaluate the prepared speech, not evaluators who have spoken before them. However, that does not prevent any evaluator from expressing an opinion which counters the opinion from another evaluator. For example, one evaluator may find certain humour inappropriate, whereas another speaker may not. That is important information for the speaker, for they may then realize they need to better analyse an audience before choosing a particular type of humour.
9. The evaluator always expresses their opinions in the first person – “I saw,” “I heard,” “I felt.” Try to refrain from using “You” unless you preface it with something like “I felt that you.”
10. The evaluator should refrain from making assumptions and speaking for the audience. For example, just because you thought the speaker did not speak loud enough, do not assume everyone else thought the same. Try to keep it as your own opinion.
11. The Lead Evaluator shall:
 - a. Either lead an evaluation team of 2-3 evaluators, or conduct an oral round robin evaluation with the members present;
 - b. Assign roles for members of an evaluation team;
 - c. State the objectives of the project speech, and what form is to be used for written evaluations by the members;
 - d. Ensure the speech objectives are covered during the evaluations.

Evaluations are the reason we prepare and deliver speeches before our peers; however evaluations are opinions, and only opinions.

Revision History			
Version	Author	Description	Dated Accepted by Members
1.0	Bill Bishop	Creation with Educational Section	13 October 2007