# Chief Judge’s Briefing Script for Area or Division Contest

*The script below can be used for briefing Timers, Ballot Counters, Judges, and the Tie-Breaking Judge.*

*Most often, one Timer is briefed earlier in the contest room, while the other Timer can join in the Chief Judge's Briefing.*

*The Tie-Breaking Judge is always discreetly briefed alone before anyone else. One of the first items a Chief Judge should take care of at the contest is selecting and briefing the Tie-Breaking Judge. Ideally, the Chief Judge will arrive earlier than most others, so he/she can select and brief the Tie-Breaking Judge.*

Chief Judge send the following forms electronically to the Timers, Judges, and Ballot Counters via email.

* Judge’s Certification of Eligibility and Code of Ethics forms (signed copy from each judge needed.
* Ballot Form sent to each Judge. (Also send Ballot Submission Form)
* Tie Breaking Ballot Form to the tie breaker judge. (Also send Ballot Submission Form)
* Timer’s form (item 1175) to the Chief Timer and Assistant Timer.
* Tally Sheet for Ballot Counters to tally the ballots.

Prior to the meeting share the list of all contest helpers with the Contest Producer (Meeting Host) so that they will be able to invite people to the breakout room. Additionally, make sure you have contact info (email and phone #) for all helpers. Judges, Tie breaking judge and timers will email to you.

The Tie-Breaking Judge is always discreetly briefed alone before anyone else. One of the first items a Chief Judge should take care of before the contest day is selecting and briefing the Tie-Breaking Judge. The briefing of the Tie Breaking judge must occur via a separate prescheduled meeting however must cover all the same information as the regular judges.

*The content below can be read to the contest roles as a script.*

## Appreciation to All Contest Officials

First, I’d like to thank each of you for serving an important role in this contest. It takes a lot of help to run a contest, and we couldn’t have this contest without your help. Thank you very much for helping.

## Overview

In this briefing, I’ll cover what each role needs to know for this contest. I’ll start with the briefing for the Timer role, then the Ballot Counter role, and finish with the Speech Judge role. To help the contest start on time, this briefing must be done swiftly, and I’ll need your attention and cooperation throughout the briefing. However, if you have any questions, please ask.

## Zoom Overview

In addition to the Main room, there are two breakout rooms. We are currently in the “Judges” breakout room. There is a “Contestants” breakout room for the Contestants Briefing. We will all return to the “Main” room when the Judges Briefing is complete. At the conclusion of each speech contest, the Chief Judge and Ballot Counters will return here to the “Judges” room to count ballots.

After the final speaker is complete, please click “Breakout Room” in the bottom menu to return back to the “Judges” room. Only you can move yourself between rooms. In this briefing, I’ll cover what each role needs to know for this contest. I’ll start with the briefing for the Timer role, then the Ballot Counter role, and finish with the Speech Judge role. To help the contest start on time, this briefing must be done swiftly, and I’ll need your attention and cooperation throughout the briefing. However, if you have any questions, please ask.

## Timers

* The Chief Timer will keep their webcam on for the duration of the contest and ensures that contestants are able to view an accurate green, yellow, or red signal at appropriate times during the speech.
* Each Timer will record the time of each contestant in the timing forms I’ve provided.
* Each timing form will be for a separate contest. Each timer will complete 1 form per contest.
* When each contest completes, finish recording the time for the last contestant, then fold up the timing record/form and I’ll stop by to collect the form from both Timers. Put your name on the top of the form so I’ll know which form came from the Chief Timer, and which is from the Assistant Timer.
* For each contestant, start timing when the contestant utters his/her first word, or makes a gesture to the audience, indicating the beginning of the speech. When in doubt, give the benefit to the speaker, but please be consistent.
* Before each contestant starts, be sure the timing lights are off. To ensure this, reset the lights after each contestant completes his/her speech.
* If the timing lights fail, use the colored folders provided to you instead.
* Times for the contests are listed on the timing record form.
* For Table Topics (1-2 minutes):
  + Display the black background at the beginning.
  + the green light at 1 minutes.
  + Display the yellow light at 1 minutes, 30 seconds.
  + Display the red light at 2 minutes. The red light will remain on for the remainder of the contestant’s speech.
  + If a Table Topic contestant’s time is less than 1 minutes, or if it exceeds 2 minutes 30 seconds, circle the time after recording it on the timing record form.
* For the International Speech (5-7 minutes):
  + Display the black background at the beginning.
  + Display the green light at 5 minutes.
  + Display the yellow light at 6 minutes.
  + Display the red light at 7 minutes. The red light will remain on for the remainder of the contestant’s speech.
  + If an International Speech contestant’s time is less than 4 minutes 30 seconds, or if it exceeds 7 minutes 30 seconds, circle the time after recording it on the timing record form.
* After each contestant finishes, except for the last contestant in a given contest, time for 1 minute of silence, and briefly turn on the green light, indicating to the Toastmaster that the 1 minute of silence has expired.
* After the last contestant finishes in a given contest, time for 1 minute and discreetly signal to me that 1 minute has passed. After the last contestant completes their speech, the Judges will have an indefinite amount of time to complete their ballots.
* Also, during the intermission, time for the number of minutes planned for the intermission. When the intermission time has expired, let the Sergeant-at-Arms know.

Time the contestant interviews if the contest toastmaster asks you to do so.

Are there any questions related to the Timer role?

When you return to the contest room now, could the Chief Timer please email or text the Producer so they can send you into the contestant's room for the contestant briefing. Are there any questions related to the Timer role? The Timers are now briefed and can return to the contest room.

*The Timers are now briefed and can return to the contest room*.

## Ballot Counters

* Each of the judges will send the lower half of the ballot via text or email to me, the Chief Judge, and all ballot counters. If they are unable to scan the lower portion of the of the ballot or take a picture of the lower portion of the ballot, send an email/text with the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place with the corresponding names.
* When I have all of the ballots, including the Tie breaker ballot, and the Timing Records, I will let the Toastmaster know that all ballots have been collected.
* We will return to the Judges breakout room to count the ballots and determine the contest winners. To do this you will click on the breakouts room icon on the lower right of your screen and select to move to the breakout room.
* After all the ballots and timing records have been collected, we’ll meet to count the ballots and determine the contest winners.
* Since you’ll be involved in counting the ballots and determining the placement of each contestant, it’s critical that you do not discuss the scores or placement of any contestant either during or after this contest.

Are there any questions regarding the Ballot Counter role?

## Judges

* You must remain anonymous during the Speech Contest. Please maintain your anonymity.
* Please read and sign the Judge’s Certification of Eligibility and Code of Ethics forms provided to you. Give the signed forms to me.
* Send the signed forms to me via text or email (share your cell phone number or email address).
* These forms certify that you are a Toastmaster in good standing for the last 6 months, that you’ve completed at least 6 CC manual speeches, and have met the other requirements in that form.
* Is any of you a member of a club with any of the contestants listed on the contest program? *(****Area contests:*** *If more than one judge is a member in a club with any given contestant, one of those judges will not be able to serve as a judge in this contest****. Division contests:*** *No judge may be a member of any club in which a contestant is a member.)*
* Is any of you currently competing in a contest, or planning to compete in a speech contest this round? If so, you won’t be able to serve as a judge in this contest.
* You are to remain unbiased toward each contestant. Do not be influenced by a contestant’s club, area, division, or experience in Toastmasters. Do not consider the contestant’s age, sex, race, creed, national origin, profession, or political beliefs. Instead, focus only the factors found on the ballot for the given speech contest.

Remember, in the **Table Topics** Speech Contests all contestants must receive the same topic, which must be of a general nature.

When Judging, the final score is based on Content (55%), Delivery (30%), and Language (15%). For a full explanation, the breakouts are on the back of the ballot.

You will be judging on the following:

* ***Speech Development*** (30%) is the way the speaker puts ideas together so the audience can understand them. The Table Topics® response is structured around a purpose, and this structure must include an opening, body and conclusion. The response is supported by relevant examples and illustrations, facts and figures, if appropriate, and is delivered smoothly.
* **Effectiveness** (25%) is your subjective judgement of how the response came across. Were you able to determine the speaker’s purpose? Did the speech relate directly to the given question or topic? Was the response clearly and logically presented?
* **Physical presentation** (15%) of the response carries part of the responsibility for effective communication. The speaker’s appearance should reinforce his or her response. Body language should support points through gestures, expressions and body positioning. The speaker makes effective use of and stays within the designated speaking area.
* **Voice** (15%) is the sound that carries the message. It should be flexible, moving from one pitch level to another for emphasis and should have a variety of rate and volume. A good voice can be clearly heard, and the words easily understood.
* **Appropriateness** (10%) of language refers to the choice of words that relate to the speech purpose and to the particular audience hearing the speech. Language should promote clear understanding of thoughts and should fit the occasion precisely.
* **Correctness** (5%) of language ensures that attention will be directed toward what the speaker says, not how it is said. Proper use of grammar and correct pronunciation will show that the speaker is the master of the words being used.

**The International Speech Contest** is on any subject of the speakers choosing, including humorous, inspirational, technical, tall tale, etc. It is not a sad story contest or an inspirational speech contest.

*Please keep in mind that each International Speech contestant selects their own speech topic. Some of the content maybe personal in nature, and contain language and ideas, or beliefs that some audiences may find offensive.*

When Judging, the final score is based on Content (50%), Delivery (30%), and Language (20%). For a full explanation, the breakouts are on the back of the ballot.

* **Speech Development (20%)**: The speech is structured around a purpose, and this structure must include an opening, body and conclusion. A good speech immediately engages the audience’s attention and then moves forward toward a significant conclusion.
* **Effectiveness** (15%): ask yourself such questions as “Was I able to determine the speaker’s purpose?” “Did the speech relate directly to that purpose?” “Was the audience’s interest held by the speaker?” “Was this speech subject appropriate for this particular audience?”
* **Speech Value** (15%): The listeners should feel that the speaker has contributed to their thinking.
* **Physical** (10%): Body language should support points through gestures, expressions and body positioning.
* **Voice** (10%): A good voice can be clearly heard, and words easily understood.
* **Manner** (10%): The speaker should speak with enthusiasm and assurance.
* **Appropriateness** (10%): Language should promote clear understanding of thoughts and should fit the occasion precisely.
  + There’ve been some complaints at multiple contests about the appropriateness of some speeches in Toastmasters. Toastmasters is a professional organization, and we must preserve its good reputation. Speeches should not contain potentially offensive, off-color, or objectionable material. There is a section in the judge’s guide for this, and deductions can be given for inappropriate speech content. Further, if you feel that speech content is more appropriate for a comedy club, bar, or some other setting, then it’s ultimately your discretion and decision as a judge on whether that contestant should wind up on 1st, 2nd, or 3rd place on your ballot slip. However, please be consistent.
* **Correctness (**10%): Proper use of grammar and correct pronunciation will show the speaker is the master of the words being used.
* On each ballot, print and sign your name. It’s best to do that now since a ballot without a signature is invalid. Also, please read the back of each ballot.
* Your evaluation and judging of each contestant should be solely based on the presentation of this speech tonight. If you’ve heard a contestant speak prior to today, you should treat it as the first time you’re hearing the speech. Prior performances are not to be considered.
* Do not be concerned with the time of each contestant’s speech. Focus only on the factors listed on the guide and ballot. The Timers will record the time for each contestant, and I (the Chief Judge) will collect those records. Speeches that are under or over time will be dealt with through the timing records.
* As a judge, you are to support the contest rules and judging standards. Refrain from public criticism of the contest, and do not reveal the scores or ranking of any contestant. Please do not discuss how you voted in the contest.
* The judging guide and ballot contains a top portion that’s a guide to score contestants with. Keep notes and scores in that portion. You may find it useful to start from the right-hand side and work to the left, so you can cover up the scores from previous contestants. The bottom portion of the form is the actual ballot. When the last contestant has spoken, fill in the bottom portion with your 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place contestants (for tie-breaking judges, you must rank all contestants). You must break any ties. That is, there can be only 1 contestant in each place on your ballot. Otherwise, the ballot will be invalid and discarded.
* When you’ve completed the ballot, check that it is signed, and your name is printed on it.
* For submitting your ballot: Send your ballot to the ballot counters and myself by email stating 1st Place, 2nd Place, and 3rd Place . Type your name at the bottom of your submission. My email address is \_\_\_\_\_\_ and ballot counter email address are\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Please prepare your email now and type your names in at the conclusion of the contest. (If in doubt, have them send you and the ballot counters a test email now)
* When the speakers are being introduced, pin the video for the next speaker. This will make their video larger on your screen so that you can pay specific attention to gestures, facial expressions, and are not distracted. You may also want to hide NonVideo participants.
* The speaking area will be communicated to you by the contest Toastmaster. If a contestant moves outside the speaking area, you may deduct points from the contestant. However, this is not a disqualifying violation.
* Protests can only be made by judges and contestants. All protests must be made to the Chief Judge or Contest Chair(s) before the contest results are announced. Protests can only be for 2 reasons:
  1. Eligibility
  2. Originality
* The judging guide and ballot contains a top portion that’s a guide to score contestants with. Keep notes and scores in that portion. You may find it useful to start from the right-hand side and work to the left, so you can cover up the scores from previous contestants. The bottom portion of the form is the actual ballot. When the last contestant has spoken, fill in the bottom portion with your 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place contestants (for tie-breaking judges, you must rank all contestants). You must break any ties. That is, there can be only one contestant in each place on your ballot. Otherwise, the ballot will be invalid and discarded.
* When you’ve completed the ballot, send me your email as described above to me, the Chief Judge via email. Do not send the top portion of the ballot that includes the scoring guide; only send the results.
* When the contest is over, please destroy the scoring sheets/guides.
* To lodge a protest, communicate it to me directly via **Chat** ensuring that it is only sent to me. You may also write “\*\* PROTEST \*\*” on the ballot. When I review the ballots, I’ll see that a protest was lodged. If there is a protest, the Sergeant at Arms will ask you to join the “Judges” breakout room. If you see this, please return to the “Judges” breakout room (this location), where we’ll review the protest and discuss it amongst each other. After discussing the protest, the contestant will be brought in to explain his/her thoughts. Then, the contestant will be excused from the “Judges” breakout room, and the judges will vote (verbally or by ballot) to disqualify the contestant or not. A majority vote will determine the outcome.
* Prior to this briefing, I selected and briefed the Tie-Breaker Judge. He/she is only known to me, and he/she will not be in this briefing. The Tie-Breaking Judge’s ballot will only be opened and used if there’s a tie after counting all the other judge’s ballots.
* Do all of the judges have my contact information, and have your email prepared for submitting results?
* Does each of you have a ballot and a way to text or mail the ballot for each contest?
* Are there any questions?

*Note for Chief Judge – when you receive your ballots from the judges after the contest conclusion, please made sure they are complete (contain results) before you announce that you have all the ballots.*

(End of Chief Judge’s Briefing)

## Briefing the Tie-Breaking Judge

The Tie-Breaking Judge should be briefed secretly. The briefing has the same content as the Judges' section, with some exceptions:

* You (the Tie-Breaking Judge) should have ballots specifically for the Tie-Breaking Judge. These ballots require you to fully rank all contestants for a contest.
* For each contest, you must rank all contestants on the ballot. For example, if there are 5 contestants in a contest, you must rank the contestants 1st – 5th on the ballot.
* I will collect your ballots. Do not give your ballots to anyone but me.
* My email address is \_\_\_\_\_\_. Please prepare your email now and type your names in at the conclusion of the contest.
* Are there any questions?