

Bedstone Olympics  
Toastmasters Club

Speech Evaluation Techniques

Updated for the Web 2003

Based on Special Evaluation Evening

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The following presentations were made by various club members as noted to facilitate an Evaluation evening designed by the club Vice President of Education, Brigitta Freeman. The purpose of the Evaluation evening was to introduce various Evaluation styles available and to serve as an overall educational meeting for the members and guests. Katrina Aburrow, our Vice President of Membership, graciously volunteered to present a speech to assist the presenters in demonstrating each of the Evaluation techniques.

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## Value of Evaluations ( Bob Faye )

Have you ever wondered why people are breaking into hysterical laughter while you are presenting some very strong views on euthanasia or why it looks like everyone in the audience needs a chiropractic adjustment after watching your gestures? If you are not aware that your vocal variety makes you sound like Mickey Mouse then you probably haven't been getting very good feedback on your presentation style.

If your typical response to the question, which is worse, ignorance or apathy" is "I don't know and I don't care," feedback is probably not high on your list of priorities. Most of us in Toastmasters however, are here because we want to become better speakers and people. To do that we need to know where our strengths are and where our opportunities for improvement lie. This is achieved through the feedback we get as a result of evaluations. Evaluations are the fertilizer for our growth and development both here in Toastmasters and in everyday life. One of the best ways to determine your success in a job situation is feedback, or in relationships (my wife always gives me feedback).

In Toastmasters we get our feedback through evaluations. Evaluations help us build upon our strengths. We are often our own worst critics and need that third party objective feedback. For instance you may think that because you sound like Darth Vader when you speak in public because of the way you breathe is a bad thing, some listeners may see it as a sign of strength. Your ability to organize a speech to provide a clear understanding of a difficult topic may be a strength you haven't recognized in yourself but it is certainly a good thing to know. As important as it is to provide positive feedback it is never a good idea to whitewash a performance, there will always be areas for improvement.

You do need to be informed of the things that are distracting and that cause your audience some problems. Even when you give what you feel is your best effort there are things that can be done better. An evaluation however is not to be used as a means of reducing the speaker to a quivering mass of protoplasm. Danielle Steele once said , "A bad review is like baking a cake with the best ingredients and having someone sit on it!". Pointing out flaws or OPPORTUNITIES (as I understand that is the politically correct term for weaknesses) is not the sole purpose of evaluations. Evaluations should include alternatives to the status quo, things that will help the speaker be even better the next time. Above all else this part of an evaluation should be encouraging and positive, something to help the speaker to move forward.

## Value of Evaluations ( Bob Faye )

W. Somerset Maugham once said, "People ask for criticism, but only want praise". This is not the purpose of evaluations. Evaluations are only the evaluators' opinion and you can take what works for you and ignore the rest if you want. For me, the bottom line on evaluations is to motivate the individual to improve and to feel better about themselves. If you can get this reaction from members you are doing great things for the club and the Toastmasters organization. Motivated people will stick around and become solid members for they will always have something new to try or to work on. If we exist in a warm, positive growth environment where we support each other with helpful, positive evaluations we can only succeed. Remember, when we are inducted into Toastmasters we commit to this. I believe a good credo for evaluators to follow is something Queen Catherine II said, "I praise loudly; I blame softly."

Now that I have told you why evaluations are one of the pillars for self-improvement in Toastmasters we now have several members who will show you various methods on delivering a terrific evaluation.

## Sandwich Evaluations ( Mike Thomas )

- Consider the level of the speaker.
- Consider the speech objectives.
- Be honest, sincere, sensitive, caring, maintain self esteem.
- Give feedback, not criticism or judgement, ( be objective and tactful ).
- Accentuate the positive. This is the cornerstone of the “sandwich” method. Thin slices of meat ( or areas for improvement ), sandwiched between thick slices of positive feedback – the meat is the most important part, but it’s not that great on its own!
- Be very specific when talking about areas for improvement and always offer suggestions.
- Evaluations are a two part process:
  1. Initial reaction – look, listen and record your reactions.
  2. Motivational Feedback – share your observations / ideas in a positive way.
- Rule of thumb: open with a strong positive statement.
  - highlight two areas for improvement
  - mention three or four positives per suggestion for improvement
  - highlight one excellent point
  - close with words of encouragement
- The key is to give the speaker reasons to feel good about himself, to raise his level of confidence, so that he will look forward to coming back.

## Sandwich Evaluations ( Mike Thomas )

### Individual Speech Evaluation Form

#### How to use the Evaluation Form

This form contains 12 separate evaluation categories, plus room for you to add additional categories if appropriate. Each category is followed by a five-point rating scale and space for you to provide specific recommendations for improvement.

Rate the speaker from one to five in each category, using the guide given below. Then, add your recommendations for improvement.

NOTE: Don't attempt to make recommendations for every category. Simply select those categories in which improvement is both warranted and possible. Ask yourself, "In which category or categories can this speaker make the greatest amount of overall improvement in his or her next speech?"

If using this form as a basis for an evaluation, also select those categories in which the speaker scored the highest and recognize the speaker's strengths.

#### Rating Guide

Use this guide when assigning numerical ratings to the categories on the evaluation form:

1. **EXCELLENT**; worthy of special praise and recognition.
2. **VERY GOOD**; the speakers ability in this category is above average for his/her level of experience.
3. **ACCEPTABLE**; the speaker's performance in this category is satisfactory.
4. **SHOULD IMPROVE**; the speaker should work to improve his/her performance in this category.
5. **MUST IMPROVE**; the speakers performance in this category is a barrier to effective communication and requires immediate attention.



## G.I.F.T. Evaluations ( Vilnis Muiznieks )

<b>G</b> ood	Mention the strong points of the speech
<b>I</b> nform	Tell how the good points came across
<b>F</b> ix	Provide constructive advice on how to improve specific aspects of speech
<b>T</b> hank	Identify how the presentation helped the membership

### **Why the GIFT Approach?**

- Variety adds spice.
- Approach forces the evaluator to look at more than the strong points and areas for improvement ( good for evaluator, speaker and club members ).
- When sandwich method ( probably the most popular approach ) is used all the time, there is a danger that listeners will get too used to it and start focusing on the “filling” and start discounting the positive points.
- Ensures that the evaluator is very clear in explaining the speech’s strengths.

### **The Components of GIFT**

**G** Mention things that the speaker did well.

E.g., “ Your use of gestures was excellent.”

- I**
- Inform speaker about what worked, how it was accomplished and why it worked.
  - Illustrate your point in a straightforward way that will be easily understood by the speaker and the audience. Do not belabor the point.
  - Use this as an opportunity to inform the audience about what the speaker did that really worked. This is particularly valuable when you’re evaluating an exceptional speaker.
  - An effective strategy is to toggle back and forth between the **G** and the **I**.

E.g., “ When you got on your toes and spread your arms to show us how big this football player was, I could clearly see that you meant huge.”

## G.I.F.T. Evaluations ( Vilnis Muiznieks )

**F** Use constructive suggestions to highlight areas for improvement.  
E.g., “ I believe that had you limited your talk to 4 main points, instead of so many, you would not have to rush so much. You could have then slowed right down when touching on the key ideas, to really emphasize them. ”

**I** Thank the speaker for the benefits the speech had for the audience. This refers to the audience-related purpose of the speech – such as to persuade, inspire, inform, or entertain.

E.g., “ Thank you for helping us all better understand the rationale for providing tax breaks to professional hockey teams.”

### **General Considerations Related to GIFT**

- Focus the evaluations on the objectives of the speech.
- Try evaluating your own speeches using the GIFT approach before you deliver them at your club or elsewhere. When starting to prepare your speech, ask yourself what you would like the (“**T**”) to be.
- When identifying areas for improvement (“**F**”), illustrate how you feel the speaker could have, in your opinion, been more effective.

### **Bonus Tips**

- Two tips related to evaluating speakers that were suggested by Jenny Hoops at the recent District 42 Toastmasters Conference were:
  1. *Successes are permanent; failures are temporary.* Suggest that the good points from this speaker are the norm while the weaker areas were either unusual for this speaker or are things that could easily be fixed.
  2. *Success is universal; failures are local and limited.* Generalize or universalize the good points and be very specific on areas that could be improved.

E.g., “ You are such a dynamic speaker. “ or

E.g., “ Your presentation would have been more effective if you had spoken louder during times you expressed anger.

## G.I.F.T. Evaluations ( Vilnis Muiznieks )

### **Remember**

- As with all comments made during evaluations, do not say things that you do not believe are true.
- There is no perfect formula which to follow for all evaluations.

## Open & Contest Evaluations ( Laura Chambers )

I have been asked to speak to you about “Open” and “Contest” evaluations.

You might wonder what possible difference there could be ... after all ... an evaluation is an evaluation, right?

And you’d be right ... to a certain extent.

But remember, in the club, you’re almost always asked to give the speaker their evaluation based on a manual speech. The manual will direct your evaluation. You will be given criteria to look for, objectives that the speaker needs to meet. And you’d have the opportunity to talk directly to the speaker to ask if they would like you to watch for anything in particular.

Once in awhile, you might do an open evaluation here in the club. I have seen speakers do non-manual speeches. But, still, you’re able to talk to the speaker to ask for their concerns.

In a contest, you wouldn’t have that benefit.

Every evaluator has their own style. Everyone of you will have your own preferences when it comes to style and delivery of your evaluation. What I would like to accomplish here tonight is to give you some pointers, some guidelines, a sort of “Rule of Thumb” when it comes to Open and Contest evaluations.

There are a number of areas that you should be looking at. Even when you’re doing an evaluation of a manual speech, these areas should be of concern to you, but especially during an Open evaluation.

1) **Speech structure**... was the opening dynamic? Did the speaker capture our attention? Did the show open with a bang, so to speak?

Was the body of the speech organized? Did it flow nicely and did it lead to a logical conclusion?

Was the conclusion the grand finale? Were you left with a clear message of what the speaker was trying to tell you?

If not ... and you mention this ... remember to have a suggestion as to how you thought it could have been made stronger.

## Open & Contest Evaluations ( Laura Chambers )

- 2) **Watch for all the usual points** ... vocal variety, timing, gestures, eye contact, ums & ahs, and again, if you wish to mention that a certain area needs improvement, have a suggestion on how to do that.

One of the best I have seen recently was a couple of weeks ago when Karen Kirsch evaluated Brigitta. She mentioned that Brigitta could have used more vocal variety. She repeated what Brigitta had said, how she said it, and then showed her how she believed it could have been made better. Do you remember ... Don't you ever, ever, ever draw on the walls.

- 3) **If the speaker used humor**, did he/she pause for laughter?
- 4) **If the speaker used props**, were they used properly and smoothly. Often a speaker will use an overhead projector, but spend too much time with their back to the audience.
- 5) **If the speaker used notes**, did you feel they used them well, or did they appear to be reading their speech.

You are all familiar with the areas to watch for. You have to really watch and really listen, and that's a talent you will develop, especially the ability to watch, listen and write your notes.

Remember ... you are evaluating the delivery of the speech, not the contents. It's an easy trap to fall into, especially if you disagree with the speakers' point of view.

Okay, now that we have covered what to watch for lets talk about the delivery of your evaluation.

An evaluation ... a good one, and especially a contest evaluation, should be entertaining. It needs to be as well delivered as the speech you're evaluating. Don't be afraid to use humor, and one of the best ways to do that is to poke fun at yourself. It is very effective to relate the speakers areas for improvement with your own. After all, we usually pick up on the things we need to work on ourselves.

## Open & Contest Evaluations ( Laura Chambers )

Maintain a very positive, upbeat tone. Open strongly with something praising the speakers talents.

“Your opening really grabbed my attention, and as I looked around the room, I could see you had them all in the palm of your hand.”

Use small examples of the talents you’re praising, perhaps something like, when you said “ My god, I was terrified, your vocal talents really came to the fore. “

But remember, you can’t repeat the speech. I have seen this done ... the evaluator spends far too much time reiterating the speech. Keep your examples brief.

Mention one or two of the speakers’ strongest points. Lavish the praise. Let them know how much you appreciate the work they put into their presentation and how much you admire their skills.

Move on to one or two things you saw that needed improvement. Again, use only small examples. Contest evaluations are only 2 to 3 minutes long ... you don’t have that much time.

And remember, if you see an area for improvement, always have a suggestion for how you believe that could be done. Be specific.

Then close on a positive note. Mention another strength, tell the speaker how their speech touched you, how you could relate to their topic. It can be very effective to use a small quote from their speech, or to end by bringing your evaluation back to the point where you started.

As I mentioned, we all have our own style, our own way of saying things. You’ll find your own style with practice. Be honest. Don’t white wash, but don’t be cruel. Treat the speaker and his feelings with respect. Be warm and sincere.

Every toastmaster who competes puts their emotions on the line when they’re up there. It is your job to help them in their quest for improvement. Do that with honesty and warmth and you can’t go wrong.

## Panel Evaluations ( Travis Thibeault )

( Notes from Toastmasters International – Assessment by Panel Discussion )

### **Note to the Evaluating Team**

This evaluation method provides a “speech clinic” for the speakers. It gives each speaker a chance to benefit from the opinions and reactions of several Toastmasters.

Opinions differ. Individuals react differently. The speech which one Toastmaster pronounces as inadequate may have been very successful in the opinion of another Toastmaster.

Evaluation team members give the speaker a sampling of the audience reaction.

### **Evaluation by Discussion ( Dialogue ):**

Each Evaluation Team Member keeps notes of his/her own impressions of all the speakers and of any other features of the meeting which need comment. Speakers should receive only positive responses from the Evaluation Team when the talk concerns the speakers beliefs’ or values. Negative responses should be given to a speaker only with positive suggestions for improvement.

At the close of the speech program, the General Evaluator, acting as chairman of the evaluation team, calls on interested club members to discuss the meeting and moderates the evaluation session. All toastmasters present at the meeting should have an opportunity to participate in the evaluation of the session. There will be no discussion of any participant’s opinion, and no judgements are to be made of the values of the speech.

To conserve time and create interest, make your comments brief and do not repeat comments in detail. Discuss the speeches and the speakers frankly and impersonally. Do not dispute the opinions of other evaluators.

The General Evaluator, as a moderator, asks leading questions of the group such as:

1. Which of the speeches impressed you most and why?
2. Which speeches did you enjoy most and why?

## Panel Evaluations ( Travis Thibeault )

3. Were you especially impressed by the Opening or Conclusion of any of the speeches?
4. Which speech will you remember longest and why?
5. Circle any of the following descriptive words that can be applied to any of the speeches?
  - a) Inspiring
  - b) Tiresome
  - c) Logical
  - d) Convincing
  - e) Entertaining
  - f) Scattered
6. What improvement did you observe in each of the speakers?
7. What alternatives for improvement can you offer each speaker?
8. Was there anything in the leadership of the meeting ( President, Toastmaster, Table Topic Master, etc. ) on which you care to comment?

These questions are examples only. Select only those questions which best serve your needs,

NOTE: There are no formal speeches of evaluation and no evaluation form to fill out and hand the speaker in this method. The moderator briefly summarizes the opinions of the group and does not add any "new" opinions at this time.

### **Suggestions to the Evaluation Team:**

The following check list is to guide you in listening and evaluation. Don't try to cover all criteria in all groups. Select only one group. Limit your discussion to only those criteria you think will be the most helpful to the speaker. Do not repeat any previous suggestions.

A speech may be assessed in three classes:

- 1) Delivery
- 2) Preparation
- 3) Closing

## Panel Evaluations ( Travis Thibeault )

Some of the criteria for evaluating speech delivery are:

1. **Voice** – is the speaker pleasing to hear?
2. **Enunciation** – does the speaker talk clearly?
3. **Modulation** – does the speaker vary pitch, tone and frequency to prevent monotony?
4. **Speed** – does the speaker talk at the rate of approximately 125 – 160 words per minute depending upon his/her individual speaking style?
5. **Appearance** – does the speaker present a physical appearance which is compatible with listeners' dress, the speech topic and the occasion?
6. **Body Language** – does the speaker make use of appropriate facial expressions and gestures in support of the speech?
7. **Posture** – does the speaker stand in a manner which conveys confidence and is appropriate to the topic?
8. **Distracting habits** – does the speaker possess any distracting physical mannerisms or annoying speech patterns?
9. **Organization** – does the talk have an introduction with a stated purpose, a body or material in logical and rational order which supports ideas, and a closing which leaves listeners with the message?
10. **Clear Opening** – does the talk begin by identifying the purposes and the means of attaining these purposes during the talk?
11. **Emphasis on key facts and ideas** – did the speaker stress key facts and ideas in a manner to aid listeners in identifying these statements and remembering them?
12. **New terms defined** – did the speaker define in simple language all possible words and expressions used in the talk which listeners might have a difficult time understanding?

## Beat the Best ( Ray Mulvihill )

There are two occasions when someone wants to beat the best:

1. in the Club during a regular meeting and
2. in a Toastmasters competition

### **1. In the Club during a regular meeting**

#### **Prepared Speeches:**

Prepare carefully.

Know the assignment well and strive to achieve it as much as possible.

Carefully prepare the assignment.

Rehearse the assignment as much as possible.

- Lack of familiarity with the material automatically suppresses Vocal Variety, Eye Contact, and Body Animation.
- As you become more familiar with your material you will find that:
  - a) Some sections (words) simply don't fit and your editing will become more effective.
  - b) You usually will falter at the same place in your speech. This is often a clear signal that you need to make a more major modification in the speech. This might involve deleting a point that you "feel" should be in the speech but your subconscious mind is telling you that it needs to be eliminated. It may be that the point belongs in the speech but needs to be "reworked" until it integrates better with the whole presentation.
- Rehearsal Reveals Revision Regions.

## Beat the Best ( Ray Mulvihill )

Rehearsals can become boring, tiring and tedious. Overcome this by playing with your speech. Experiment with various methods to express your message. Use different voices ... a whisper, a newscaster, a teenager in love, a motor-mouth on the bus in the seat behind you ... the possibilities are endless. Always exaggerate in rehearsal. Experiment with your body too! Act like King Henry VIII or Clint Eastwood, or a hot sexy dame or mister macho. Each time you experiment, you expand your repertoire of expressive capabilities.

Look after your speech and it will look after you.

Contact your evaluator. When Dr. Norman Vincent Peale was a young Minister, he was required by his father (who was also a preacher) to summarize his speech in a single sentence on Saturday night. If he couldn't do that he would not be permitted to preach that Sunday. Tell your evaluator what you are going to do. Help your evaluator to give you a good evaluation.

### **Table Topics**

Bring extra paper to the meeting. When you hear the question, start writing what you would say if the question were asked of you. Use each table topic as an opportunity to practice putting your thoughts into words. This would properly be called "covert rehearsal". If you read the paper, check the Editorial Page. The editorials are written by some very learned people. It is worthwhile to study *what* they say and *how* they say it.

### **Evaluations**

#### Speech Evaluation

Talk to the speaker prior to the meeting. If they don't know what their topic is, prod them to do some thinking. Often, they have a partially developed idea and it can be very helpful to act as a sounding board for the speaker. Find out what the assignment is, how they would like to execute the assignment and how they expect to deliver the speech. Also, ask if they have any areas from past evaluations that they want to incorporate into the specific assignment.

## Beat the Best ( Ray Mulvihill )

### Table Topics Evaluation

In some of the meetings, practice evaluating. Bring extra paper and write down what you see, hear, notice and feel. Call the Table Topics Master prior to the meeting and find out what that person is planning. If they have an intention to have people “sell” something, watch for “features” and “benefits” and a close. If the assignment is not very obvious, pick a theme and focus on that theme for all speakers. For example;

- How could they Improve Answering the Question?
- Did the Speaker Answer the Question?
- Intro, Body and Conclusion?
- what about Organization?
- Body Language?
- Vocal Variety?
- Gestures?

It is not possible to evaluate every aspect of each speaker, so pick a “flavor of the day”.

Also, in three minutes, it isn’t possible to cover each speaker. By picking a theme, you could say: “Joe and Marsha both had a good Intro and Body but needed more work on the Conclusion. They would have had better luck by summarizing their points at the end.”

Talk to the Table Topic Master in advance and have him/her advise the membership what the evaluators focus will be. This helps everyone and gets things done within time.

### **2. In a Toastmasters Competition**

Everything that works in giving a presentation at the Club works when preparing a contest speech. Prepare carefully. Rehearse a lot. In Latin, we say: “Repititio ad Nauseum”. Make the rehearsals as much fun as possible.

Don’t act. Actors portray a message. Speakers convey a message.

Public Speaking is a form of entertainment. Remember, “Nightmare on Elm Street” is just as valid as “The Mask”. Strive to make your message and you, one. “The Medium is the Message”, said Marshall McLuhan.

## Beat the Best ( Ray Mulvihill )

People who smile a lot are considered to be more attractive. Smiling will do your presentation more good than a meticulously selected wardrobe.

### **Table Topics Contests**

Very difficult to prepare for except by making notes during the meetings to practice what you would say if you were asked. Work very hard at structure. Clear Intro, 2 or 3 points and a good closing comment.

Many good speeches are ruined by struggling past the green light. If you have a tight speech in 60 seconds, don't try to expand it beyond that point. More speakers talk themselves OUT of the winners circle than talk themselves INTO it.

### **Evaluation Contests**

Have your structure prepared in advance. Know your strategy and even some of your tactics.

A winning Evaluation often begins with some form of congratulations or thanks. Points that you like – use examples – quote the person ( judges seem to like humor repeated ).

Prescription – make some remedial suggestion and explain why you suggest it or what impact you think the change would have on the audience.

Conclude with at least one more good point, a summary of what you like and a further thanks or congratulations.

## General Evaluators Duties ( Larry Mewhort )

The General Evaluator's primary purpose is to observe the club meeting as a whole and evaluate what takes place. He is also responsible for the evaluation team. Like a speech evaluator, the General Evaluator notes what was done well and suggests areas for improvement. Members can then incorporate these suggestions into the next meeting, helping the club to maintain meeting excellence.

### **Prior to the meeting:**

- Make sure you communicate with the Toastmaster, who will be introducing you. Call all the evaluators to confirm with them who they are evaluating and suggest each evaluator call his or her speaker, remind them to bring their tapes, and remind them that evaluation is a positive, helping act.
- Call the remaining members of the evaluation team; Table Topics Evaluator, timer, grammarian and um-ah counter.
- Prepare a brief but thorough talk on the purpose, techniques and benefits of evaluation. Emphasize that evaluation is a positive experience designed to help people overcome weak habits and add power to good ones.
- If you need to, review the "Effective Speech Evaluation" manual to refresh your memory on evaluation techniques and principles.

### **Upon arrival at the meeting:**

- Arrive at least 15 minutes early.
- Make sure the evaluators have the speakers' manuals and understand the speech objectives.
- Sit near the back of the room so that you have full view of the meeting.

## General Evaluators Duties ( Larry Mewhort )

### During the meeting:

- Take notes on everything that happens
- Cover each participant in the program but don't re-evaluate the speakers (unless something really important is missed).
- When introduced, give your introduction, introduce and thank each evaluator as well as the other members of your evaluation team.
- Wrap up by giving your general evaluation of the meeting using the notes you took throughout the meeting. You may wish to evaluate the evaluations. Were they positive, upbeat, helpful? Did they point the way to improvement?

The General Evaluation is a challenging task especially since you only have five minutes. Here are some tips to help you make the most of your time:

- 1) **Cover only the most important points.** Highlight some aspects of the meeting that went well. Likewise, mention only flaws that in your opinion seriously detracted from the quality of the meeting.
- 2) **Be direct.** Clarity and brevity are important, since time is limited.
- 3) **Be sensitive.** Never humiliate or embarrass anyone.
- 4) **Make it positive.** The overall tone of your evaluation should be encouraging and helpful. You want to build the participant's self-esteem and motivate them to do better next time. A positive approach is the best way to accomplish this.

Constructive criticism is an art to be mastered in all relationships, whether at home, on the job, with friends or at Toastmasters meetings. The feelings of those being evaluated should be your number one concern. Evaluations set the tone for the level of excellence at each club meeting. They serve as learning experiences for each person present and promote teamwork as well as individual growth. So the next time it is your turn to serve as the General Evaluator, give it the attention and preparation it deserves.

## Table Topics Evaluator Duties ( Wendy Mewhort )

You are the Table Topics Evaluator—how are you going to evaluate up to half a dozen or more speakers in the seconds between speeches? This task can seem pretty daunting, especially if it's your first time.

***How many of you have done Table Topics Evaluations?***

***How did you feel about your evaluations?***

This evening you have heard all kinds of advice about the responsibilities of an evaluator; how to evaluate; the purpose of evaluations, etc.

How can you condense all that for Table topics? You must conclude jotting down your notes before the next speaker begins to speak or their opening will be missed and you would be doing them a disservice.

Your duty is to keep your eyes and ears open and your pen ready!

Never forget that you are there to help improve the speaker's self-esteem, while at the same time providing feedback that will help him or her to become a better speaker.

One way to find the specific behaviors to mention in your comments is to ask yourself these questions:

- What one thing worked best in this speech? Try starting with: "I liked the way you..."
- What one thing distracted you the most? Try "I noticed ..."

Be specific. "Great speech" may suggest to the speaker that you don't really have anything positive to say. Johnson & Johnson in the book *The One-Minute Teacher*, suggest a technique called "catching someone doing something right."

For example, "Your gestures were expansive; you painted vivid word pictures; your smile made me want to hear what you had to say; you had a powerful opening/close; I liked the way you...sang, recited poetry, used repetition, alliteration..." It may be no more than, "congratulations for having the courage to take part in table topics."

## Table Topics Evaluator Duties ( Wendy Mewhort )

One technique for suggesting an improvement is to ask a question such as, "Would it work to get out in front of the lectern?" Or, precede your comment with, "You might try..." Try turning a negative into a positive, "Katrina, you have a beautiful smile. I'd like to see you use it more when you are speaking!" Always have suggestions as to how to improve the speech, never simply criticize.

### ***Do you have any other suggestions?***

Another technique you might try is to decide before the Table Topic session what specific techniques you will be looking for. For example, you may decide to concentrate on the opening-body-close of each speech. This way you will be focused when the speaker begins and you can quickly jot down your notes as you listen to the speech. Or, you may watch for eye contact, gestures and use of voice modulation in making the speech effective. Remember, you will not be able to cover all the bases so watching for one or two areas at most will help you to organize your feedback to the speakers. Mention this at the beginning of your evaluation so the speakers are aware of what you were looking for.

### ***Do you think you should ask the Table Topics Master to mention this before he/she calls up the first speaker?***

It is usually more effective to evaluate each speaker individually; however, in the interests of saving time, you may wish to make a general statement for all of the speakers. If you noticed that all of the speakers had well-organized speeches with an opening-body-conclusion or they all turned their backs on the audience, which should be avoided, you may say so then evaluate each speaker separately on other aspects of their speeches. Always remember your time constraints and limit your comments to **three or four sentences for each speaker**. Don't fall into the trap of giving one or two-minute evaluations for each speaker. Remember, two minutes is generally the limit for the prepared speeches! Watch for the lights and, if you find that you are running out of time, keep your comments to **one or two sentences** for each speaker and suggest that you would be happy to speak to the participants individually after the meeting. This will help to prevent the entire meeting from going over time.

Remember, make one or two observations. Be supportive and helpful. And keep it brief!

## Individual Speech Evaluation Form

Speaker: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Subject: \_\_\_\_\_

Time Required: \_\_\_\_\_

Time Taken: \_\_\_\_\_

Evaluator: List your constructive comments under the appropriate headings. Emphasize the strong and the weak points. In your oral comments stress the outstanding qualities and be specific in pointing out the weaknesses of the talk. Write details on this sheet and hand it to the speaker at the close of the meeting. Do not use this form when evaluation is recorded in a manual.

### **As I Saw You**

( Approach, position, personal appearance, facial expression, gestures, detracting mannerisms )

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### **As I Heard You**

( Approach, position, personal appearance, facial expression, gestures, detracting mannerisms )

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### **Voice**

( Approach, position, personal appearance, facial expression, gestures, detracting mannerisms )

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### **As I Reacted to You**

What was the purpose of this talk? \_\_\_\_\_

Was the purpose achieved? \_\_\_\_\_

Was the talk interesting? \_\_\_\_\_

To improve your next speech I suggest that you \_\_\_\_\_

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***Bedstone Olympics Toastmasters Club 7554, Area 49, District 42***

Evaluator \_\_\_\_\_