# Chief Judge’s Briefing Outline

Thank all judges and contest functionaries for their service. Remind all that their primary role is to help create a fair contest that is run according to the rules set by Toastmasters International.

For efficiency, brief the functionaries in this sequence and dismiss each group of functionaries when their briefing is complete, and they acknowledge they’re clear on their responsibilities.

## Timers

The primary timer’s timing device is the device of record so long as it works properly AND the primary timer starts and stops their device at the right times. The secondary timer displays green, yellow, and red timing signals at the appropriate times. The secondary timer also uses a timing device as a backup in case the primary timer’s device fails. Arrange to sit so you can be easily seen by the contestants.

Follow the timing guidelines on the Time Record Sheet for each contest. Be sure to keep the red signal displayed until the speaker has concluded. Give no indication if the speaker goes past the allotted time.

Timing of each contestant shall begin with the contestant’s first definite verbal or non-verbal communication with the audience. Timing shall end when the contestant indicates their speech has concluded, either by word or action.

The primary timer will complete the Time Record Sheet and give it to the Chief Judge following the last contestant’s speech.

Please join the Contest Toastmaster during their briefing of the contestants so you can reinforce the need for contestants to clearly indicate they begin and end their speeches so you can time them accurately. Also, make sure the contestants know where you will be seated.

## Sergeant(s) at Arms

For all contests your role is to guard the door. No one is to enter or leave the room during any contestant’s presentation.

For the Evaluation and Table Topics contests, your job also includes taking the contestants to a waiting room and ensuring they stay there until it’s their turn to speak. Be sure that you have the speaking order with you to know when to escort each contestant back to the main room. The Contest Chair will show you the waiting room before the contest begins.

Evaluation contestants are given five minutes in the waiting room to work on their notes. At the end of five minutes, you are to collect all contestants’ notes. Return each contestant’s notes to them when you escort them back to the main contest room.

## Ballot Counters

During the contest, your role is to help collect the judges’ ballots after the last contestant. This is a good time to learn who the judges are and where they will be seated to make this easier.

Please decide between yourselves who will collect which judge’s ballot. Do not hover over a judge waiting for the ballot. Wait until they are done to approach. Return to the back of the room once you have collected all the ballots. Once we have collected all the ballots, I’ll announce this to the Contest Toastmaster and then we’ll go to the waiting room to compute the results. We’ll review the specific procedure of counting the ballots at that time.

## Judges

Above all else, your role is to assess the quality of each contestant’s presentation strictly on the basis of their performance in this contest, on this occasion. Please do not allow any degree of familiarity or lack of familiarity with any contestant affect your assessment and the ranking you put on your ballot.

For prepared-speech contests (i.e., International Speech, Humorous Speech) contestants must prepare their own speech and the speech must be substantially original. From the Contest Rulebook:

Twenty-five percent or less of the speech may be devoted to quoting, paraphrasing, or referencing another person’s content. Any quoted, paraphrased, or referenced content must be identified during the contest presentation.

Contestants may not make a call-back to another contestant. From the Contest Rulebook:

Contestants must not reference another contestant, or a speech presented by another contestant, during their speech at the same contest in which they are competing. This applies to all contests. (Section 4E)

If you believe that a contestant has broken the rule on originality call-backs, write the word PROTEST and the contestant’s name on your ballot. We will then follow the procedure laid out in the Contest Rulebook to deal with the protest.

Please use the scoring grid provided at the top of the ballot sheet. Do your best to assess each contestant in the same manner. Besides your knowledge of good speaking practices, your fairness matters the most.

When you have completed your scoring, put your choices for first, second, and third place (unless there are fewer than three contestants) on the bottom section of the ballot, tear off the bottom part and turn in only the bottom of your ballot.

Do not share your results with anyone else and destroy your scoring grid after the contest. Please write your choices legibly.

For your ballot to be valid, it must have your printed name and your signature. Also, you must include your choices for first, second, and third place. I encourage you to print and sign the ballot while in the room and start to tear/rip/cut the ballot to reduce noise when trying to quietly hand your ballot to a counter.

You may not show a tie between contestants. If you have a tie on your ballot, break your own tie.

Please bear in mind that the timing of the speeches should not be part of your decision.

**TIE BREAKER JUDGE:** Individually brief the tie breaker judge. You will collect this ballot yourself.

# Contestant Briefing Guide

***To be conducted by the Contest Chair and the Contest Toastmaster.***

Verify the presence of all contestants. If one or more contestants have not yet arrived, include their alternates in the briefing. See Contest Rulebook Section 5C for the protocol when a contestant is absent for the briefing.

Verify the pronunciation of all contestants’ names.

Determine the speaking order in a fair manner. NOTE: if time permits, as soon as the speaking order is determined, convey it to the Chief Judge so the order may be given to all judges and functionaries.

Review the rules of the speech contest with all speakers.

Verify that all contestants have provided signed Certifications of Eligibility and Originality. Remind the contestants that by signing this form they certify that they have read and understand all rules regarding their eligibility and the originality of their speeches.

Review with all speakers the rule against referring to any other contestant in any way, including quoting or referring to any part of their speech.

Review the timing protocol with the speakers. Pay special attention to their need to clearly indicate the beginning and end of their speeches by word or action.

Acquaint all speakers with the designated speaking area.

Determine whether any contestants require the use of A/V equipment or will be using any props. Review the rules regarding the use of audio equipment and props.

Verify that all contestants understand the rules and timing protocols for their contest and have no questions before they are released from the briefing.