

“Being Contest Ready” by Anthony A. Hermes (12-05-09)

1. Decide to be a contestant, then sign up. Step up and deliver the message.
 - You AND your club must be in good standing and must be eligible.
2. Prepare well and do your best.
 - Darren LaCroix - "I knew I was not the most talented; not the best speaker in the world. But, I thought, I can be the best prepared. This is not about you – it's about the audience."
 - Figure out where your "sweet spot" is for practice - a point where you have enough practice to know the speech, but not too much that you feel frozen into one sequence of words.
 - Document and study feedback from others.
 - Tweak every word and get it right on paper.
 - Practice with the contest environment – timing lights, microphone, stage, and do some recording of yourself.
 - Decide ahead of time what lines of your speech you can cut out IF you run out of time.
 - For the contest, think not in terms of judges, but in terms of the ballot.
 - Watch and study your past contest DVDs if you have any.
 - Smile.
 - Much can be learned from past winners. Watch DVDs of past contests, but beware - it can be tempting to measure yourself against them.
 - Colin William, DTM and 2008 World Championships finalist - "And on the day...Have fun! Drink plenty of water to avoid dry mouth. Figure out how you're going to make sure your energy level is high right when it's your turn to speak, watch and enjoy the other speakers. Don't worry about speaking order - it's more mythology than reality (it's not irrelevant, but its effect is very inconsistent)."
3. Contests are great for the Contestants, Organizers, Clubs, and the Audience.
 - Tremendous personal growth for Contestants and Organizers.
 - Tremendous learning for Club Members and the Audience.
 - Contests are held twice per year. The Spring Contest season will begin in 2010.
 - Club contests will be held in February, Area Contests in March, and Division Contests in April.
 - District contests will be held at the Spring 2010 Conference in Boerne, TX, the weekend of April 30 - May 1.
4. For more great information, go to:

www.tmd55.org (click on Contests)

www.tm.drcolin.net (click on any of Dr. Colin William's great information)

For complete rules and information, see:

[Speech Contest Rulebook 2010 For International, Evaluation, Humorous, Table Topics, and Tall Tales Speech Contests \(see the \[tmd55.org\]\(http://tmd55.org\) website\)](#)

Eligibility for International Speech Contest:

A. To be eligible to compete at any level of the International Speech Contest, an individual must:

1. Be a member in good standing of the club in which he or she is competing. The club also must be in good standing. A new, dual, or reinstated member must have dues and membership application current with World Headquarters.
2. Have completed at least six manual speeches in the *Competent Communication* manual prior to the club contest. However, a charter member of a club chartered since the previous July 1 is permitted to compete without having completed six manual speeches in the *Competent Communication* manual. The club must be officially chartered before the area contest.
3. Maintain eligibility at all levels of any contest. If at any level it is discovered that a contestant was ineligible to compete at any previous level, the contestant must be disqualified even if the ineligibility is not discovered until a later level and has been corrected.

B. The following are ineligible to compete in this contest:

Incumbent international officers and directors; region advisors or region advisor applicants; district officers (governor, any lieutenant governor, secretary, treasurer, public relations officer, division governor, or area governor) whose terms expire June 30; international officer and director candidates; immediate past district governors; district officers or announced candidates for the term beginning the upcoming July 1; presenters of educational sessions at the area, division, and/or district event at which the contest will be held; presenters of educational sessions at the International Convention. An individual is not permitted to be a judge at any level for a contest in which they are still competing.

C. The winner of the contest finals held each August during the International Convention is not eligible to compete again.

Speech Content for International Speech Contest:

Every participant must present an entirely new and different speech for the International contest than given in any International speech contest since January 1 of that same year. Up to and including the semi-final contest, contestants are permitted to use the same speech, but are not required to do so.