

Evaluating Evaluations

The principal part of the General Evaluator's role is to evaluate the other evaluations that have been given during the course of a Toastmasters meeting.

That can present the General Evaluator, particularly if he or she is new to the role, with some difficulty because, unlike a speech, there are no set objectives against which to evaluate an evaluation.

There is guidance in the form of the Evaluation Contest Judge's Ballot, but I have never found the judging criteria easy to remember during a regular Toastmasters meeting. Because of that, I developed an evaluation model that I found easier to remember and apply to evaluations – **ASORI**.

ASORI sums up the five components that I believe to be crucial in giving an effective evaluation. They are

- **A**nalysis
- **S**pecific Examples
- **O**wnership
- **R**ecommendations
- **I**nspiration

On the next page I give some more explanation of these components and how I apply them to an evaluation.

One point to note; ASORI is concerned only with the content of the evaluation. It does not address the pre-speech contact between the evaluator and the speaker, nor does it address the structure of the evaluation speech. These are matters of process and delivery, not content. However, I feel that to get the content right, the process has to be effective and that right content will go a long way towards creating an effective delivery.

I have found ASORI useful in evaluating evaluations. If it works for you – great! If it doesn't, please think about what you feel makes an effective evaluation and create your own model. Then share it.

ASORI – A model for evaluating evaluations

A Analysis

Did the evaluator analyse the speech? Or just summarise it?
An effective evaluation identifies those parts of the speech that the evaluator felt to be particularly effective (or weak). It does not just repeat the speech.

For example, “John’s use of humour was particularly effective” or “Jill’s use of descriptive language brought the scene to life”

S Specific examples to justify the analysis

Did the evaluator give specific examples to back up the analysis.
For example, “His description of jumping out of the plane had me chuckling” or “Her use of ‘crystal-clear cataract’ was so much more effective than ‘waterfall’”

O Ownership of the evaluation by the evaluator

Did the evaluator display ownership of his or her reaction to the speech. It is not necessary to use the classic – and clichéd – phrase, “my opinion”. I believe that “It’s only my opinion” devalues the evaluator and the evaluation. But phrases such as “I thought” or “I felt” used throughout the evaluation demonstrate that the evaluator is describing a personal reaction.

R Recommendations

Did the evaluator make specific recommendations to the speaker? How well did the evaluator demonstrate how to put the recommendations into effect?

I Inspiration

How well did the evaluation leave the speaker more knowledgeable, more confident and more willing to prepare and deliver the next speech? Was the balance of

commendation and recommendation right? Did the evaluation end with encouragement?