

The A.R.T.S. of Evaluation

By: Nancy Bateman, DTM and Chris Wright, ATMS/CL

From the time you joined your first Toastmasters club you were already a fully qualified evaluator! That's right! Everyone with an opinion, a voice and a heart is a qualified evaluator.

Have you wondered why some people actually volunteer to give evaluations? Perhaps you have wondered how some people can consistently give eloquent evaluations in your club meetings? Have you wanted to learn the tricks of the trade so you can be a good coach to your fellow club members? Once you've learned the ARTS of evaluation, you will find evaluating fun!

Analysis – When you look at the judging form for evaluation, you will see that a significant portion of the judging criteria is for analysis. You are already good at analysis because you know: what you like and don't like; if you can follow the speech as it is delivered; if it had gestures which enhanced or detracted from the delivery; and you (and only you!) know if the speech had an impact on you.

Recommendations – The power of your analysis is displayed in your recommendations. Focus on the delivery (not content) of the speech and ask yourself, "What are the top two things to encourage this speaker to change before they give this speech again?" See how quickly your analysis has paid off? Recommendations are another large part of the judging criteria.

Technique – When you deliver your evaluation speech, your empathy for the speaker and the positive way you present your ideas (opinions) about what they might change in their presentation. First provide praise for things well done and relay the impact the speech had on you. Then you present only one or two recommendations for change. Each recommendation should be designed as an opportunity for something positive to add to their speech delivery and either demonstrated or illustrated. By praising first and stating your recommendations positively, you will help the speaker be receptive to your ideas. Then close with a final affirmation of something the speaker did particularly well.

"Nobody cares how much you know, until they know how much you care."

Theodore Roosevelt



Nancy Bateman & Chris Wright donned their berets and picked up paint brushes to deliver the ARTS of Evaluation at the Toastmasters Leadership & Learning Institute, January 27th - (Photo courtesy of the District 50 Photographer)

Summarize – Before concluding your oral evaluation, briefly summarize your praises and recommendations.

This general format is called the **sandwich technique** because you sandwich the recommendations between the praise. Some Toastmasters use the 3-2-1 formula (3 praises, 2 recommendations and 1 - superb praise) and others use the acronym GIFT (Good things, Ideas for change, Fantastic part, Thank the speaker). By doing this, you can connect to the content, the speaker, and the audience... and achieve your ultimate goal: to gently encourage the speaker to develop a better delivery.

See – it's that easy! You are already qualified, and now with your ace Analysis, positive Recommendations, empathic Technique and encompassing Summary you are gifted in the ARTS of evaluation.

Nancy is the current District 50 Evaluation champion and has taken top honors in Table Topics, too; Chris has taken top honors in District 50 in Tall Tales and Humorous Speech. Both know constructive and artful evaluations have been key to their success in Toastmasters and in life.

**Article was provided for our publication by Nancy Bateman, DTM and our own club member, Chris Wright ATMS/CL. This article can also be seen in the District 50 Newsletter -Volume 1 Number 5 - February, 2007.