

THE ART OF EVALUATION

I. The Thought Process

- Evaluation must add to a speaker's progress, never detract.
- Evaluate technique, not content.
- Every presentation has some positive aspect. Every presentation also has technique that can be improved.
- Effective evaluators listen and watch.

II. The Mechanics

- Before the speech, meet with the speaker to discuss speaking goals and read the speech manual for required objectives.
- During the speech, listen and watch the speaker. Always keep the basics in mind: voice, gestures, eye contact, and organization.
- Take notes during the presentation—do not wait until the speech is over.
- Acknowledge things that were done well as well as offer suggestions for improvement.

III. The Oral Evaluation

- An evaluation is how YOU saw the speech. Another evaluator may perceive the same speech differently.
- Use the speech manual as a general guide, but do not just read the manual back during oral evaluation.
- Be positive, helpful, and gracious. Use positive examples when making suggestions.
- NEVER be destructive or negative. However, do not “whitewash” with only good things to say. Be precise and helpful. Every speaker can improve in some way.
- When you suggest improvements, demonstrate how you would improve the speech.

IV. Follow Up

- If possible, meet with the speaker after the speech to discuss further thoughts. The speaker should leave the meeting with a positive feeling of progress and accomplishment.