



Wolverhampton Speakers Club

Evaluation at WSC

What is evaluation?

Evaluation at WSC is a constructive analysis and assessment of a speaker's speech and its delivery. The evaluation is delivered as a speech in itself to the whole meeting and not just to the speaker.

We should remember that an evaluator's assessment is just that – it is their opinion, and a speaker should receive the evaluation as such.

Purpose of evaluation

- Encourage, not undermine, the speaker
- Give constructive help and advice to the speaker
- Let the speaker know whether to move on to the next exercise or repeat the exercise (with either the same speech or a new one)
- To develop the evaluator's own skills
- To educate the audience

Preparing yourself

Whether it is your very first evaluation, or whether you are already well-practised in the art, you should prepare yourself thoroughly to carry out this important role:

- Be prepared that evaluation requires active listening on your part
- Familiarise yourself with the requirements of the Exercise by reading the appropriate section of the *WSC Guide to Public Speaking*
- Familiarise yourself with the evaluation checklist for the Exercise – we now use evaluation checklists but the previous evaluation sheets are available on the club website should you prefer to use them
- Sit somewhere in the body of the audience rather than at the front – this means that you will be able to judge the speaker's audibility
- Have writing paper, writing implement and a copy of the appropriate checklist in front of you
- If you are not sure, ask an experienced member for guidance before you start

How to evaluate

As the speaker delivers the speech listen actively so that you can follow what is going on while at the same time making notes and picking out quotations or examples for use in your evaluation speech.

It is a good idea to have your note layout prepared in your mind, or pre-drafted on your paper - maybe you could follow the layout of the checklist or something similar – make sure you have somewhere to write down quotations as references to these are very helpful to the speaker.

All the time be looking for good points and where to give advice.

Pay particular attention to:

- The skills required by the exercise as listed on the checklist
- The suitability of the subject for the Exercise
- How the speaker seems to have prepared
- The general delivery of the speech
- Rapport with the audience
- As many of the general speaking techniques as you think appropriate, including eye contact, stance and audibility
- Whether the speaker is using skills from previous Exercises

Delivering the evaluation

Your evaluation is delivered as a speech to the whole club – it is your feedback on your opinion of the speaker’s speech and is meant for both the speaker and the audience. Don’t take too long – 5 minutes is a good maximum.

We expect speakers to have a good speech structure and it is fair and just that those being evaluated should expect evaluators to have a good, clear, structure too. To this end we will follow a standard structure for our evaluations:

Beginning	What you are looking for and give the verdict
Middle	Was the subject suitable for the Exercise? Highlight good points and give examples Give advice, supported by examples
End	Give the speaker suggestions and thank them for the speech

- The verdict comes first and is supported by the rest of your evaluation speech
- Always explain why you have made your comments and give examples to illustrate them
- Demonstrate your examples if you can
- ***We’ve all heard the speech*** – don’t rehash the content: comment on it!
- Give encouragement

What to do

- Be positive and supportive – highlight the good points
- You can also briefly mention previous exercises

What not to do

- Don’t be insensitive and over-critical – you are giving helpful advice, not pulling the speech (or the speaker) apart, so phrase things tactfully
- Don’t give a list of faults – no more than 2 pieces of advice if possible
- Don’t use the words PASS or FAIL – the correct terminology is ‘move on to the next exercise or ‘repeat the exercise’ (with same/different speech)
- Don’t criticise speakers for things they haven’t done yet
- Never mention contests – they are no longer relevant now that we are an independent club