

# Wolverhampton Speakers Club

## Evaluation At WSC



I'm going to evaluate you, Dave

Oh dear!

Don't worry, it's painless!



'Evaluation' sounds a bit like an exam, so why is it painless?

Evaluation at WSC is a **constructive** analysis and assessment of a speaker's speech and its delivery. The evaluator briefly comments on the speech (subject, structure etc) and on the speaking itself. Each exercise in the WSC *Guide to Public Speaking* has it's own criteria for success and these are what are evaluated. As our exercises are progressive and build upon one another the criteria for previous exercises should also be covered.

The evaluation is **itself a speech delivered to the whole meeting** and not just to the speaker and it is one of the ways we all learn more about speaking.



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

## What's The Purpose?

Evaluations have a number of purposes:

- 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

So if you are called upon to be an evaluator please bear all of these in mind - you have a big responsibility to both the speaker and to the club and you should always be sensitive without being too lenient.

## 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 by understanding 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* and any relevant documents from the club website.
- Always use one of our pre-prepared evaluation checklists rather than trying to remember things.
- Familiarise yourself with the evaluation checklist for the exercise - these are available as downloads from the club website.
- Have writing paper, writing implement and a copy of the appropriate checklist in front of you. You could tick things off on the checklist to help you as you go along.
- If you are only just starting out with evaluation and you are not sure, ask an experienced member for guidance before you start.



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 - but make sure that you have a clear view of the speaker

## 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's a **'listen - see - write'** task for you.

Have the appropriate evaluation sheet as a guide. You could just use this sheet, but it is a good idea to have your note layout prepared and pre-drafted on your paper - make sure you have somewhere to write down quotations, as references to these are very helpful to the speaker and the audience.

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

Remember that 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.**

Address your evaluation speech to the audience and not the speaker you are evaluating

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 should follow a standard structure for our evaluations:

### Beginning

- What you are looking for and give the verdict
  - *The verdict comes here and is supported by the rest of your evaluation speech*

### 'Middle

- Was the subject suitable for the Exercise?
- Highlight good points and give examples
- Give advice, supported by examples
  - *Always explain why you have made your comments and give examples to illustrate them*
  - *Demonstrate your examples if you can*

### End

- Give the speaker any suggestions you think necessary and thank them for the speech
  - *Give encouragement*

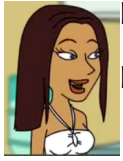


**We've all heard the speech!** Don't rehash the content - just comment on it or use it to give examples!

That's a really good point Dave!  
Now let's give a few tips on good practice ...



## What To Do



**DO** be positive and supportive.

**DO** also briefly mention previous exercises if it's relevant.

## 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 in exercises they haven't covered yet.

**DON'T** be too critical about the timing of the speech - 5 to 8 minutes is just a guide

**DON'T** mention contests – they are no longer relevant now that we are an independent club and don't compete against other speakers clubs.