

## CONTEST –ACTION OF WORDS

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It was one of those regular meetings of our club and all the experienced members were very excited when they heard the word CONTEST. Our President said that we need to start to prepare for Season 1 and for our club Maiden Contest.

I thought that, all new members in the town, would get to observe and learn the tricks of the trade. I did not realise that you can learn to swim while you are in water and do not have to sit on the bank to observe and acquire skills.

When dates for the contest were announced subsequently, I had mixed feelings and reactions. With the Contest, round the corner, there were ah's and oh's in the air. I could not understand if they represented excitement or anxiety.

As an infant in the world of Toastmasters, it was indeed my first time with the contest. I felt like a student who quickly called my mentor to get her thoughts on should I? am I eligible? what is this? how does it work? and many more FAQ's (frequently asked questions) I suppose. My mentor, gave me a thumb's up instantly and put me into a much more accelerated thought process.

Contest, a test for content is what I thought earlier, I now have redefined it as common test. Please do not be mistaken that, this is like any other common test. Let me tell you why I say this.

On the advice of my mentor, I let my mind wander all over the World. I let it go to places like a lost person around 100 paths. Didn't know what to think and how to start. As many experienced people say, thoughts eat your mind, but as the clouds start to get clear in your thoughts, you then get some clarity in your mind. Pathway to identify the topic or topics that you can write your script on is where I first landed.

Content writing is easy for some of the contestants. People like me struggle to write unless it is an experience from my life and my story. In my words, it is rather a test for Communication and Content. Making it a good one for contest is a huge responsibility. Conversion of the content driven, to a story with effective communication is the formula for a good speech. A twist of just one aspect and you give it a new life. A transformation of your thought, breathes new dimensions to the existing. The surprise sentence of my story telling was about one element of life. Revelation for me to say this story, came in the form of a message from a kid who changed my thinking and living life.

Finally, the day arrived. I could get a place because my content driven script, was converted to a powerful communication test. The last statement, an element of surprise, was what culminated and touched everyone's heart. This communication process was received by my audience exactly the same way that I felt and regarded.

Second position is what fell into my lap as an amateur with effective communication and concrete content. My vision about the Contest changed all together as a **Common** test as it is **Communication** and **Content** put together to reach out to audience with conviction.