

PRESENTATION SKILLS FOR JUDGING

*Judging is not like other public speaking.
The audience will be looking at the photographs not at you.*

- 1 Make sure you know what is expected of you – marks, awards, timetable, themes etc. Prepare as well as possible and know what you are going to say. (Later on, you may learn to wing it!) Plan brief start and finish remarks. Use notes if you need to and take time to read them before you speak.
- 2 Keep your prologue short but tell them how you approached the job. Make positive comments, if possible, about the general standard. (Judging is a job but it is also a privilege.)
- 3 Be helpful rather than critical. Always start with something good. Be very careful of “beginners” – they may never come back! Make sure they know this is just YOUR opinion, and just because you mark a picture low does not mean it is not a good picture. Handle the photographs with respect.
- 4 Speak at a normal speed, it is easy to rush (gabble) if you are nervous. Remember to breathe. Vary the pace and tonality of your voice. Sound enthusiastic, sound interested.
- 5 Try to avoid physical and verbal mannerisms and repetition. Its nearly impossible but try to avoid clichés and definitive statements. (Seek feedback by taking a friendly observer along to your first couple of Judgings).
- 6 Try to match comments and results. Avoid talking a picture up and marking it down – and vice versa. Try to justify the mark or award you are giving. Fight your personal prejudices and never admit to them unless you are marking high despite them.
- 7 Humour is good but only make jokes if you are good at it. Never make jokes at the photographer’s expense. Avoid ethnic or sexist comments.
- 8 Acknowledge the audience. Try to make occasional eye contact but be careful not to pick on one person, look at everyone. In the main, the audience wants you to succeed and they know that they have a responsibility too.
- 9 Talk to the audience, not the photograph. Be careful when you know the work and/or the photographer.
- 10 Moving about the room can be good if it is possible. Don’t show the back of the prints, and never touch the print surface.
- 11 If you make a mistake or forget something, just admit it and carry on. If you don’t know something, don’t pretend that you do.
- 12 Claim proper expenses PAGB (SPF) Rates – make sure the Club knows in advance.
- 13 Be honest but be kind – you are there to encourage entrants. There is no right or wrong, only your opinion which they may agree with.
- 14 Enjoy the experience! – If they throw things – duck!