

## TOEFL SPEAKING SECTION CHECKLIST

The TOEFL exam speaking tasks can be a bit tricky if you don't know what you need to do (or not do). I've come across many students who had intended to reach their target score of 26+ in the speaking section but received 22,23 or 24 as their score in the speaking section. They are then curious about what went wrong and why they weren't able to achieve their goal for the speaking section and I usually ask them the following questions from my TOEFL Speaking Section Checklist:

- Did you answer the questions directly, just as they are being asked?

A LOOOOOT of students like to dance around the answers for the speaking tasks. They do not answer the questions directly, instead they get caught up with talking about things or using words that are not directly related to the question asked. It is extremely important to answer the questions directly and completely so that you can get the highest score possible on this section of the exam.

- Are you using correct grammar?

If you are not using correct grammar you can't expect to get a 26+ in the speaking section of the exam. Grammar fits under the umbrella of "language use" in the rubric. If your grammar usage is incorrect your score will likely be low because of it. So practice grammar points and improve your grammar usage.

- In Task 2, did you STATE the person's opinion and give the reasons why they hold that opinion?

Many students take up too much time talking about the reading passage/campus announcement or campus change in task 2, it is not NECESSARY! Your focus should be on the opinion of the speaker and your answer should 100% consist of this opinion.

- In Task 4, are you giving good, clear examples of the topic and summarizing the lecture?

Some test takers seem to be confused by task 4. To be clear, task 4 usually asks you to explain the concept of the lecture by using the examples given in the lecture. Therefore, you are going to explain the concept of the lecture by using the examples mentioned. This requires you to listen very closely to what's said in the audio. You need to know what the concept is and then listen for the examples given. Be sure to take notes while you're listening.

- Are you speaking too quickly which results in your words being misunderstood?

Speak at a normal pace for the speaking section. Don't speak too fast, that will lower your chances for being understood clearly. Be sure to pronounce your words correctly and take natural pauses when necessary.

- ❑ Are you using the preparation time wisely?

This 15-30 seconds of preparation time is probably the most crucial point of the speaking section. Using this time wisely will help to structure what you want to say in your response for tasks 1-4. Understanding the question being asked and being able to structure your answer based around that question is very important. Making "short-handed notes" will most definitely help you have time in the speaking section. Any questions?



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