

Rules for a Great Awards Dinner

These rules are written from the point of view of your audience member, who you presumably would like to stay, happily, until the end of the evening.

- ◆ **Let them eat first! People are hungry.**
- ◆ **Keep it short—they're digesting... they ate before you started talking.**
- ◆ **Hold the applause. No one wants to clap for 400 people. And by "400," I mean "3 or more."**
- ◆ **Be relevant. Acceptance speeches are boring unless they're gossip or relevant.**
- ◆ **Test your stories. Decades-old funny stories ... aren't.**
- ◆ **Don't give us organizational history unless we care.**
- ◆ **Be specific. Don't just say someone's "a great person."**
- ◆ **Thank people directly and let the audience watch (if you must thank them individually at all).**
- ◆ **Don't cry on stage. We're not your therapist.**
- ◆ **Be authentic! People will like you better.**