

Calibratable Language Module

Objective:

The objective behind calibratable language is to provide consistent, neutral, and unbiased comments for both our scores as well as the competitor. In this module we will discuss what this language looks and sounds like on a scoresheet.

Breakdown: Tone & Connotation

Let's start first by defining what tone & connotation are...

Tone

Definition:

“Expression of the commentator's attitude towards or feelings about the subject matter or audience.”

In this case, the Commentator is us, the Judge or Scorer, and the subject matter and audience, are respectively the Scoresheet and the Competitor.

Connotation

Definition:

“An idea or feeling that word or phrase evokes for the audience, in addition to its literal or primary meaning.”

In this case, our Audience is the Competitor and the connotation is their impression of our comments.

Tone & Connotation are key elements that factor into how we word and discuss what our experience is. When we take care to think about the tone and connotation of our language on the front end, we must sit on the other side of the table and consider how the language we use might be perceived by the Competitor. Language that can be negatively interpreted by the Competitor we will call *Problematic Language*.

Problematic Language

Problematic language can be broken down into the following categories...

Harsh Language

Intrinsically Negative Tone or Connotation

- ❖ Language that tends to present a negative tone or connotation upfront.

- Words:
 - Bad, disgusting, awful, gross, unacceptable, harsh, lacking, poorly ➤
- Phrases:
 - Harsh acidity, really bad balance, unacceptable design, disgusting flavour, didn't work together at all, couldn't taste any of that, lacking theme, poor presentation...

Unsupported Language

Inflationary Positive Tone or Connotation

- ❖ Language that implies that something is greater than what it was; presents a disjointed tone or connotation
 - Words:
 - Best, perfect, awesome, super, flawless, ➤
 - Phrases:
 - Couldn't have been better, the best I've ever had...

Coaching Language

Suggestive Tone or Connotation

- ❖ Language that suggests alternative outcomes for alternative inputs.
 - Phrases:
 - Could have been, should have been, would have been, instead of, rather than, preferred...

Biased Language

Emotional or Impressionary Tone or Connotation

- ❖ Language that leaves an impression of personal preference.
 - Words:
 - like, feel, loved, hated, wanted, preferred ➤
 - Phrases:
 - Wanted this to be, didn't feel like, loved this, really liked, would have rather this...

Rewording Problematic Feedback

Calibrating "human responses" into objective language.

<i>Judges Feedback</i>	<i>Why is this Problematic?</i>	<i>Calibratable Comment</i>
You seemed really nervous at the Judge's Table.	Nervous is our impression of their behaviour and it's not something that we have rules based language to discuss. We want to instead think of the symptom rather than the cause. What were they doing?	Some fumbling with tools and wares during the preparation of the signature beverage. Delivery of the presentation was fast paced and difficult to understand and follow along with.

I didn't feel you were passionate about what you were talking about.	We are making an assumption about the behaviour of the competitor and this is something that we cannot support with rules based language. We want to instead denote what we are looking for and whether or not the competitor met that criteria.	Expression of passion and enthusiasm from the competitor was not apparent. The invitation to feel inspired by the competitors thesis statement was not received.
The ideas you brought up didn't really make any sense.	This feedback isn't constructive; we are providing the competitor material that is not rules based and does not guide them through a deeper understanding of the rules.	There was not a strong correlation between the introductory thesis statement and the ideas discussed in the presentation. Disjointedness between what was explained and what was delivered.
Your low taste scores affected my total impression	This feedback has a negative tone and connotation and does not provide constructive material to guide the competitor to understand the Total Impression Score.	The composite of the taste experience in the espresso course and the flavour experience in the signature beverage course were low; this impacts the total impression score.
I didn't feel taken care of.	This language is biased. . Our impression of being taken care of is not rules based. We want to inform the competitor of what is required of the Attention to Detail score.	Rules based needs were not fulfilled; a napkin for milk course was not provided and water was not poured for my place setting.
Your signature beverage wasn't creative.	This language is harsh and does not provide rules based feedback to support the competitor in understanding the rules.	Methods used in the preparation of the signature beverage did not introduce any new or unique techniques. The correlation between the ingredients used, coffee and the final taste experience was not strong.

Rules Based Language Word & Phrase Bank

<i>Taste Experience</i>	Harmonious, balanced, unbalanced, disjointed, relationship, supportive, unsupported, dominant, rich, dynamic, muted, stratified, taste experience, homogenous
<i>Tactile/Taste Descriptors</i>	Specificity, generic, singular, flavour experience, tactile experience, articulation

Visual	Glossy, matte, bubbly, off centre, low in the cup, marbling, clarify, definition, colour contrast
Presentation & Professionalism	Cohesive, correlation, wider knowledge, demonstrated, explained, delivered, thesis, customer service, service skills,
Total Impression	Displays, passion, enthusiasm, inspires, role model, composite
Positive	Elevates, heightens, quality, expands, creates, quality
Negative	Low, lesser, brings down, reduces

Further words and phrases to assist

Taste Experience:

Balanced & Harmonious Experience

- **Well-rounded** – flavours complement each other beautifully
- **Seamless** – transitions smoothly from one note to the next
- **Cohesive** – all elements work together in harmony
- **Integrated** – no single aspect overpowers the others
- **Symphonic** – a beautifully layered and orchestrated flavour profile

Unbalanced & Disjointed Experience

- **Chaotic** – flavours clash instead of blending
- **Scattered** – lacking focus or a clear direction
- **Jarring** – unexpected contrasts that disrupt the experience
- **Overwhelming** – one element dominates too aggressively
- **Fragmented** – flavours don't connect or transition smoothly

Relationship Between Flavors

- **Interwoven** – flavours blend seamlessly together
- **Complementary** – one enhances the other without overpowering
- **Contrasting** – intentionally opposing flavours create intrigue
- **Layered** – distinct flavour notes reveal themselves over time
- **Dissonant** – elements don't mesh well, creating an off-putting effect

Supportive vs. Unsupported Flavors

- **Elevating** – secondary notes enhance the main profile
- **Underscored** – background flavours subtly support the main character
- **Anchoring** – base flavours provide depth and stability
- **Hollow** – lacking a foundation, making it feel weak or incomplete
- **Overpowering** – dominant notes overshadow the rest

Dominance & Richness

- **Commanding** – a bold and assertive flavour presence
- **Velvety** – smooth, rich, and luxurious on the palate
- **Resonant** – deep and long-lasting in flavour impact
- **Intense** – highly concentrated and powerful
- **Bold** – strong and unapologetic in its profile

Dynamic vs. Muted Flavour Profiles

- **Expressive** – lively and full of personality
- **Evolving** – changing and developing as you taste
- **Vibrant** – bright, energetic, and exciting
- **Subdued** – gentle and understated
- **Faint** – barely noticeable, requiring close attention

Stratified & Homogeneous Taste Experiences

- **Multi-dimensional** – a journey through different layers of taste
- **Tiered** – distinct flavour levels emerge at different moments
- **Gradient** – a smooth transition from one note to another
- **Uniform** – consistent in flavour throughout
- **Monotone** – lacking variety or contrast

Taste and Tactile:

Specificity vs. Generic Flavour Descriptors

- **Precise** – clear and well-defined in character
- **Nuanced** – subtle, intricate variations in taste
- **Distinct** – unmistakable and easily recognizable
- **Refined** – polished, elegant, and well-developed
- **Complex** – layered with multiple flavours interacting
- **Singular** – one dominant note stands out clearly
- **One-dimensional** – lacking depth or secondary notes
- **Generic** – broad, lacking a specific character
- **Unfocused** – unclear or muddled in taste direction
- **Flat** – dull, lacking contrast or vibrancy

Describing the Flavour Experience

- **Bright & Lively** – crisp, energetic, often with high acidity
- **Rich & Deep** – full-bodied, concentrated

- **Juicy & Vibrant** – fruit-forward, mouthwatering, high in acidity
- **Sweet & Mellow** – smooth, comforting
- **Savory & Umami** – brothy, soy-like, sometimes vegetal
- **Spiced & Warming** – cinnamon, nutmeg, clove, or peppery elements
- **Earthy & Rustic** – deep, grounding, with hints of wood, tobacco, or mushrooms
- **Floral & Delicate** – jasmine, rose, lavender, or chamomile-like notes

Tactile Experience (Mouthfeel & Texture)

- **Silky** – smooth, luxurious, and light on the tongue
- **Velvety** – soft, creamy, and rich in texture
- **Syrupy** – thick and dense, coating the palate
- **Crisp** – clean and refreshing, often linked to acidity
- **Effervescent** – lightly sparkling or tingling on the tongue
- **Creamy** – soft, rounded, and dairy-like in texture
- **Gritty** – slightly rough or grainy texture
- **Astringent** – drying, puckering effect
- **Buttery** – smooth, fatty, and coating
- **Tannic** – drying
- **Waxy** – slightly sticky or film-like on the tongue

Articulation of Flavour & Texture

- **Expressive** – flavours are clearly pronounced and well-structured
- **Well-defined** – easy to distinguish individual notes
- **Layered** – flavours emerge gradually, revealing depth
- **Evolving** – changing in complexity over time
- **Seamless** – flavours transition smoothly from one to the next
- **Rounded** – balanced, with no harsh edges
- **Jagged** – sharp, contrasting, or unblended flavours
- **Linear** – flavours follow a clear progression without surprises
- **Unfolding** – revealing itself in stages

Surface / Milk:

Surface Texture & Finish

- **Glossy** – smooth, reflective sheen
- **Matte** – dull, non-reflective
- **Silky** – fine, smooth texture
- **Velvety** – soft, uniform micro foam
- **Bubbly** – visible air pockets
- **Foamy** – light, airy bubbles
- **Marbled** – swirled patterns
- **Mottled** – uneven colour patches
- **Dense** – compact, tight bubbles
- **Sharp** – crisp, well-defined edges

Presentation & Professionalism:

Structure & Delivery - Cohesive, Well-structured, Engaging, Seamless, Polished, Refined, Fluent, Confident, Clear, Articulate

Knowledge & Expertise - Demonstrated, Explained, Delivered, Illustrated, Showcased, Wider knowledge, Well-researched, Informed, Insightful, Comprehensive

Connection & Communication - Engaging, Authentic, Charismatic, Persuasive, Compelling, Personable, Approachable, Warm, Interactive, Inviting

Service & Hospitality - Customer-focused, Attentive, Service-oriented, Gracious, Welcoming, Professional, Polite, Efficient, Courteous, Adaptable

Thematic & Conceptual Execution - Thesis, Concept-driven, Thoughtful, Innovative, Consistent, Purposeful, Well-integrated, Memorable, Narrative-driven, Visionary

Total impression:

Presence & Impact – Commanding, confident, captivating, engaging, inspiring, memorable, authentic, charismatic, dynamic, resonant.

Passion & Enthusiasm – Displays, expresses, radiates, emphasizes, inspires, driven, energetic, dedicated, committed, wholehearted.

Professionalism & Role Model Qualities – Role model, mentor-like, influential, respectable, well-rounded, graceful under pressure, composed, approachable, humble, encouraging.

Overall Performance & Cohesion – Composite, well-executed, flawless, seamless, thoughtful, polished, comprehensive, balanced, integrated, refined.

Statements:

- **Exceptional craftsmanship** and attention to detail.
- A **confident and professional** presentation.
- You showcased a **deep understanding** of your coffee and its complexities.
- A truly **memorable** and **well-executed** performance.
- Your passion for coffee was **evident** in every step.
- Your precision and consistency were **outstanding**.
- A **seamless workflow** with great attention to detail.
- You demonstrated **excellent technique** and control.
- A **unique and refreshing** approach to a coffee presentation.
- Your signature drink was **inventive and thoughtfully crafted**.
- You brought a **fresh perspective** to the competition format.
- The combination of flavours was **unexpected yet harmonious**.
- You pushed the boundaries with an **innovative** and **well-balanced** creation.
- You explained your process with **confidence and clarity**.
- Your storytelling was **engaging** and **insightful**.
- A **charismatic and well-paced** presentation.
- Your passion and expertise were **evident** in every word.

Positive words related to **growth, improvement, and excellence:**

Elevates, heightens, enhances, enriches, refines, strengthens, amplifies, improves, empowers, inspires.

Quality, excellence, mastery, precision, finesse, sophistication, brilliance, innovation, craftsmanship, distinction.

Expands, broadens, deepens, extends, advances, progresses, develops, evolves, transforms, flourishes.

Creates, generates, cultivates, fosters, builds, establishes, pioneers, innovates, initiates, shapes.

negative words related to **decline, reduction, and weakness:**

Low, lesser, weak, lacking, deficient.

Brings down, diminishes, depletes, weakens, undermines, suppresses, dulls, flattens, detracts, stifles.

Reduces, minimizes, limits, restricts, contracts, erodes, disrupts, hinders, obstructs, degrades.