

SAMPLE - APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS
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INFORMATION, FEES AND TO APPLY TO BE A CONTESTANT

GENERAL INFORMATION

NY Senior America gives honor to women who have reached the “Age of Elegance.” It is a search for the gracious lady who best exemplifies the dignity, maturity and inner beauty of all Senior Americans. The attributes and qualities being sought in Ms Senior America, as an inspiring role model for all Seniors, are:

- A Respected Title Holder and Public Relations Representative of Senior America and sponsors
- Talented, intelligent and enthusiastic
- Great Communicator / courage of her convictions
- Leader with experience and presence
- Inner Beauty - Personal pride in overall appearance / attractive
- Outgoing personality

Scoring System

Contestants are scored in 4 weighted categories:

Interview and Talent, 30% each

Evening Gown and Philosophy of Life, 20% each.

Each contestant is given a raw score in each category from 1 to 10 with 10 being the highest. A tabulator applies the weighting factors. **Each contestant competes against herself rather than being compared to other contestants.** Thus, the criterion for each contestant is to score her relative to the best a judge can imagine she could be in that category. For example, if you have been playing the piano for one year, you will be judged based on what would be expected. If you play on a five year level you will be given more points. If you play on a 6 month level you will be given fewer points.

More than one contestant may receive the same score in any particular category, and each category is judged independently. Scorecards will be picked up after each category is completed to facilitate tallying.

The Judges' Chairperson computes each contestant's score and assesses a penalty to the weighted score of -3 points per judge to a contestant who exceeds the time limit set in the Talent presentation and -2 points per judge in the Philosophy of Life. In case of a tie, the highest Interview score wins. Contestants are cautioned to be very careful to respect the time limits. If still tied, Talent, then Philosophy of Life, then Evening Gown scores are used as tiebreakers in that order.

The Interview

The Judges' panel will meet with each contestant for a private, timed interview of 5 minutes (duration is the same for each contestant). The purpose is to evaluate the qualities and attributes (listed above) that a contestant offers to the role of Ms. New York Senior America. A basic tool for conducting the interview is the contestant's application, which is provided to the Judges in advance. The Judges may ask for bio amplification or ask questions that reveal the contestant's sense of values, or require her to express feelings, defend beliefs, speculate, evaluate or analyze. There will not be any questions on religion or politics.

As Ms. New York Senior America this may happen on a TV interview so contestants should be prepared. Some examples of Interview Questions are as follows:

- Who, living today, would you ask to dinner? Why?
- Your greatest strength and weakness/ why?
- Words of wisdom you would give to teens?
- Accomplishment you are most proud of / why?
- What would you like to be remembered for?

The Judges evaluate the Interview based on the qualities/attributes of Ms. New York Senior America including the following:

Overall, first impression
Personal appearance / style
Personality / Intelligence
Validated opinions
Speech, vocabulary and grammar
Responses to the questions
Emotional control

Talent Presentation

Contestants display a variety of talents (vocal, dance, instrumentals, drama and hobbies to name a few). Talent is a vehicle by which the Judges can discern and measure a contestant's commitment and discipline to her stage performance. Each contestant performs up to a 2 minute 45 second talent presentation (may be shorter, not longer). The Judges' Chairperson will time the presentation and assign penalty points to ensure fairness to all contestants. Extensions for applause breaks or technical difficulties will not be penalized. The talent presentation should be in good taste, reflect the "Age of Elegance" and be presented with dignity and style (in content and costume). It should not be offensive to any audience.

The Judges score Talent based on the following:

- Technical skill level (difficulty, level of achievement, execution, technique)
- Judges will consider: was I entertained, would I like to see it again
- Stage presence (on stage personality)
- Total (costume, props, voice, choreography)
- Entertainment value and ability to adapt to various environments (small stage, no microphone, etc.). This may be difficult to determine but consider that Ms. New York Senior America must be able to adapt to a variety of situations to be a great role model.

Talent Information

Time Limit: A 2 minute 45 second time limit is placed on your talent presentation. If you exceed this limit you will be penalized. You need not use all of the allotted time, but you cannot exceed the 2:45 limit. Time runs from the moment your music, routine, act, etc starts (following your introduction) until your music, routine, act, etc ends. It does not include stagehands setting up, or walking onto the stage or exiting the stage.

Talent Selections: In making your choice of talent presentation, ask yourself whether or not your choice is “portable” and suitable for all audiences. Will you be able to perform it in Showcases? You may not use fire, animals, excessive props or other people. There are three exceptions: guide dogs for the blind, one accompanist playing one instrument and a partner for ballroom dancers (restrictions apply). Lip-synching is permitted as part of a routine, but the fact must be clearly stated in your introduction.

Music: You cannot use any music owned by Disney. If you are singing to recorded tracks they cannot have any “backing tracks” (back up singers) on the track. Only one contestant can sign or dance to any particular song. The first contestant to submit a particular piece which is otherwise acceptable will be permitted to use it.

Props: Anything that is too large for you to carry by yourself is a “stage set” and not permitted. The exceptions are a table or chairs that a stagehand will set. Videos as part of your presentation are not allowed. A piano can be provided if available at the venue otherwise we will try to make other arrangements.

Evening Gown

Ms. New York Senior America believes that clothes (or price tag!) do not make the woman but rather the woman makes the clothes. Poise and grace enhance the gown. The Evening Gown and Philosophy of Life are combined.

The Judges evaluate the Evening Gown presentation based on the following:

- Overall, first impression / attractive
- Sense of confidence
- Personality and stage presence
- Poise, grace and posture
- Appropriate of Ms. New York Senior America

Philosophy of Life

True beauty is a matter of insight as well as eyesight. The character of Ms. New York Senior America should itself be beautiful and admired. The Philosophy of Life should embody the beliefs that she feels have been her guiding principles and will lead others to success in daily living with its happiness and tribulations. It is not a bio of life history. The Philosophy of Life must be stated on stage within 35 seconds. Penalty points will be assigned for violations. Extensions for applause breaks for technical difficulties will not be penalized.

The Judges evaluate the Philosophy of Life presentation based on the following:

- Unique, personal and from the heart
- Ability to memorize / deliver a short oration
- Beneficial and inspirational words of wisdom
- Poise and delivery