



January 1976

toastmaster

Listen Like A Reporter

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



Keep 'Em Out!

The excellent article by Toastmaster Myra Comiskey in the September issue of THE TOASTMASTER (The Feminine Influence: How Important Is It?) reinforced my belief that women should *not* be admitted to Toastmasters clubs.

Her attitude and reasons for joining Toastmasters are exactly what we don't need. She says that a club without women is missing half the population, half the marriages (redundant), and half of all the people who control the money in this world (irrelevant—we're non-profit). We men happen to like it that way and don't miss the other half during a two-hour meeting.

Ms. Comiskey condescendingly admitted, "We (women) make grammatical errors and get scared—just like men." Big deal! She repeatedly used the term "fences" and how they crumble. I prefer to think of "atmosphere" and how a natural atmosphere can be clouded and changed in character when perfume is added. She says, "Women are people, just like men." Yet, when she was Table Topicmaster, by her own admission, she picked topics designed to encourage men to act like women. Women *are* different from men. They have different interests and a different sense of humor. Vive la difference!

She claims women can teach men how *not* to hide their feelings (it's called self-control), how *not* to keep a stiff upper lip (courage), and how *not* to be super-fellows (manly). She wants emotional displays

so we can "communicate on a deeper level." I say we do not need emasculation of Toastmasters.

Dick Reade, DTM, MCP
Setauket, New York

The Great Switch

Recently, some of our more experienced speakers decided they needed a challenge to maintain a high level of interest in our club. We found one solution that we would like to share with other Toastmasters clubs.

It all started when one of our more serious speakers dared a humorous speaker to switch speeches. Each gave the other's speech at the same meeting and the results were shocking. The style was so new to each that it was as though each was giving his "Ice Breaker" again.

I personally guarantee a frightfully enjoyable learning experience. I ought to know. I gave the serious speech!

David J. Rachmiel
Cincinnati, Ohio

More On Time

The special November issue of THE TOASTMASTER on "Time" illustrated quite clearly the old adage that, to get something accomplished, you have to give it to a busy man—a man with many interests—because he has learned how to use time effectively.

We all start each new day with the

same allotment of 24 hours, but some of us don't seem to get the same mileage out of it. Furthermore, through the techniques discussed in the articles, it was implied that the value we place on any of our undertakings can be measured by the amount of time we are willing to devote to its pursuit, no matter what it may be—stamp collecting, reading, exercising, gardening, work, or Toastmasters.

As with the special issue in March on "Leadership," the current issue helped me to focus on subjects we don't normally deal with on a regular basis. Both of these issues offered much food for thought and I am looking forward to your next special issue on "Public Speaking."

Michael L. Wardinski, ATM
Alexandria, Virginia

It Really Works!

I just wanted to let you know that I used Vivian Buchan's "Why-and-Because Method" that appeared in the October issue of THE TOASTMASTER on my last Toastmasters speech and that it was rather successful.

On that particular day, I tied for first place, even though I am the only one in my club who is not a professional in business or a member of the local school system. I just happen to be a housewife and a mother of three.

Thanks for the idea!

Kirsten Dale
Sunnymead, California

"Letters to the Editor" are printed on the basis of their general reader interest and constructive suggestions. If you have something to say that may be of interest to other Toastmasters, send it to us. All letters are subject to editing for reasons of space and clarity and must include the writer's name and address.

TOASTMASTERS INTERNATIONAL is a non-profit, educational organization of Toastmasters clubs throughout the world. First Toastmasters club established October 22, 1924. Toastmasters International was organized October 4, 1930 and incorporated December 19, 1932.

A Toastmasters club is an organized group, meeting regularly, which provides its members a professionally-designed program to improve their abilities in communication and to develop their leadership and executive potential. The club meetings are conducted by the members themselves, in an atmosphere of friendliness and self-improvement. Members have the opportunity to deliver prepared speeches and impromptu talks, learn parliamentary procedure, conference and committee leadership and participation techniques, and then to be evaluated in detail by fellow Toastmasters.

Each club is a member of Toastmasters International. The club and its members receive services, supplies, and continuing guidance from World Headquarters, 2200 N. Grand Ave., Santa Ana, California, U.S.A. 92711.



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Every day of their working lives, news people listen to gather information, get facts straight, sift important data from non-essentials, keep communications lines open, and generate new sources. But if they didn't know how to listen, they couldn't be effective . . . and neither can you. (Cover photo: Los Angeles Times)

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The Power of the Spoken Word

by
George C. Scott, DTM
International President



Have you ever asked yourself why you joined your Toastmasters club? Was it to overcome that fear of speaking before a group of people or just to share in the unique fellowship that the Toastmasters club has to offer? While both are excellent reasons, the majority of people I have talked with during my visits have come up with still another reason. . . . they want to improve their leadership ability by learning how to communicate more effectively.

In today's world, the ability to communicate effectively is vitally important to anyone assuming a position of leadership. Extensive studies are made and an enormous amount of time taken to ensure that what is said is accurate and, more important, that it is understood.

Throughout history, the power of the spoken word has been demonstrated by the likes of Abraham Lincoln, Franklin Roosevelt, and Winston Churchill. What they said—and how they said it—often moved their followers to accomplish much more than they ever thought possible. You can do the same.

Your Toastmasters club provides you with an excellent opportunity to develop these same skills. As a Toastmaster, you learn to develop and organize your thoughts and present them so they are easily understood. You learn to work *with* people, instead of *against* them. Perhaps most important of all, you are provided with excellent leadership development opportunities through various club, area, and district offices. Holding an office gives you an opportunity to develop as a leader the same way giving a talk from the C & L manual helps you develop as a speaker. You learn by doing.

Like a scientist in his laboratory, you can use your club to develop your leadership skills. You can mix, calculate, test and re-test until you come up with the right formula. Leadership—like science—is an ongoing process. But it's also a very satisfying one.

Take advantage of the leadership opportunities offered by your club, area, or district. You'll not only be getting the experience necessary to become an effective leader, but you'll also strengthen your ability to communicate.

Experience and the ability to communicate effectively—that's what will help you realize your true leadership potential. Your Toastmasters club can provide you with both of these self-development opportunities.

Get involved. It's another enjoyable learning occasion. □

Listen Like A Reporter

by
Dolores Spurgeon

Remember playing the "Gossip Game" at parties or in school? Someone starts a story by whispering it to the first person, who passes it on to the next one, and so forth, until the last person reports aloud what he just heard. Usually, there is no resemblance between the first and the last message, and everybody gets a good laugh.

You may also know the parlor story about the hostess who's certain that no one at the party is really listening to anybody else. She passes the hors d'oeuvre tray, murmuring, "These little green things are spiked with strychnine and the open-faced ones are laced with arsenic." And the guests thank her nicely, pick up the little green or open-faced things, and gobble them up.

That's the way many of us listen, unfortunately—with divided attention, a mind that is easily distracted, or concern only for our own side of a communication experience.

Now look at the leads (opening sentences or paragraphs) of the stories on page one of your newspaper. Notice how specific and concise they are. They say something definite, relevant, and timely, quickly engaging our attention.

Reporters accomplish this through productive listening, a key adjunct to intelligent observation and thoughtful research. Every day of their working lives, news people listen to gather information, get facts straight, sift important data from non-essentials, keep commun-



ications lines open, and generate new sources.

If they didn't know how to listen, they couldn't be effective reporters.

Everyone can improve his listening skills by applying the newsgathering approach of professional reporters, as described in these ten steps:

1. *Understand, then inform.* A reporter can't possibly write a clear, concise, informative story unless he understands what's being reported. The lesson for us is: What action was taken? What was decided? What was said? What was the speaker's attitude toward issues or problems discussed? A reporter will not leave the news scene until he is satisfied that he knows these points, especially why, what for, and how come.

Reporters seek this information for their readers, listeners, or viewers, not out of idle curiosity. Thinking of other people's needs and interests clues them to what they should report. The more

people that might be affected by a given piece of news, the more important it is for the significance to be made apparent.

As listeners, even if we are not professional reporters, we can adopt the primary goal of informing others—friends, associates, relatives. It will cause us to listen with a special concern for what to tell somebody else, and we'll be more likely to seek understanding as reporters do.

2. *What's the lead?* Reporters are ever on the alert for the point of it all, the reason why a given statement is being made or a news situation exists. It will be neatly set forth in the lead of each news story and reflected in the accompanying headline. Further developments follow in logical sequence.

This is our clue to listen for the main message of a speaker, the principal action of a meeting, the gist of a report. Then we can supply an appropriate explanation and supporting data.

Think of the most recent speech you've

heard. If you had to summarize it in one sentence, to fit on a postcard, could you do it? Try. When you want to tell family or friend about some very meaningful event in your life, you manage to get to the point, don't you? That's what news writers do all the time, the result of purposeful listening and selective organization.

Non-journalism majors often tell their professors that they value news writing experience because it taught them to get to the point. This lesson is most forcefully learned when a listener knows he must be prepared to tell other people what he has heard. Looking for the "news lead" is the key.

To see how clever you are at this process, try this challenging test: Whenever you hear a speech by a person whose message is reported by the news media, compare your impressions with those given by the news writers. Especially note whether you picked the same "news lead." This is a good exercise in comprehension, and you may sometimes have the satisfaction of feeling that you did a better job of it than the established reporter.

3. *Compare other people's motives.* Is the speaker being informative, or has he an axe to grind? As you listen, consider that each speaker has ideas, convictions, and doubts that are probably different from yours, mine, and everyone else's. Try to see and understand these differences.

Today's young listener might say, "What's the pitch?" or "I don't get his angle," or he may even try to "psych out" the talker. Reporters learn to ask penetrating questions by doing basic homework, thinking of and for their audiences, and weighing the motivations of news sources.

Ron Majers, a former San Francisco Bay Area TV newsman, told a Sigma Delta Chi (Society of Professional Journalists) audience that finding the truth is not as easy as it looks. "One source tells you this, and another source tells you that. Each is speaking from his own stance, and the truth probably lies somewhere in between."

Many prize-winning investigative sto-

ries have been launched simply because an alert reporter wondered, "Why is he taking that stand?"

So, consider people's motivations as you listen.

4. *Concentrate fully on each speaker.* Have you ever tried to carry on a conversation with the mother of a lively child who's in the room at the time? She keeps getting distracted, and this is frustrating for both of you. You wind up deciding there's no use trying to talk intelligently, so you chatter of trivia instead. As a listener, you owe each speaker your undivided attention. Look right at him, show interest, and don't let your mind wander. Be receptive—truly lend your ears.

In her book, "We're Going to Make You a Star," Washington newswoman Sally Quinn says Barbara Walters' success as an interviewer is largely due to her extraordinary talent for listening. Watch her on the Today Show and you'll see what Ms. Quinn means.

Several years ago, I met Ed Montgomery, the Pulitzer Prizewinning San Francisco *Examiner* reporter, when he came to our campus to speak. I still recall what a pleasure it was to talk to him, because he seemed so fascinated with every word I said. I later found out that he wears a hearing aid and has learned to watch people's faces as they speak, a tremendous asset in his work. One has an irresistible urge to tell this man anything and everything, because he's such a flattering audience. It taught me how valuable this simple device of looking at the speaker with frank interest is.

5. *Clear it all up.* If a speaker leaves you mystified, uninformed, or unsatisfied on some point, ask questions that will force clarification. Don't be afraid to do this for fear that (a) the speaker's pride may be hurt, or (b) others in the room may think you're stupid. What good is it for someone to go to all the trouble of addressing an audience if nobody knows what he's talking about? Chances are excellent that other listeners are mystified too and will thank you for generating clarification.

One way to make a speaker clear things

up is to say something like: "I don't catch your point about. . . . Could you explain further? or "Do I understand correctly that you think. . . ." (Usually the explanation is much clearer than the original statement.) Or, you could ask, "Is there something I might read that would give me greater understanding of this question? What do you recommend?"

My Bicentennial Committee recently heard a man make a presentation for a program he wanted us to endorse. For 15 or 20 minutes, he spouted high-sounding principles and praise for his project, leaving all of us puzzled over what it actually was. A newswoman in our group asked the questions that forced him to say what he should have said in the first place.

Often a small compliment will pave the way for helpful criticism. ("I liked the way you handled. . . , but I wish you hadn't covered. . . so rapidly.") (Are you going to say more about. . . ?") ("Tell us more about. . . ") Circumstances will dictate whether this defogging should go on during or after the speech.

6. *Take notes, but don't overdo.* Unless you're blessed with a photographic memory, don't count on being able to remember everything you hear. Make note of any points you may not recall after leaving the scene—figures, names, dates, spelling of proper names, apt phrases, special terminology, original conclusions.

"Can't I eliminate listening problems by using a tape recorder, or by taking everything down in shorthand?" you may ask. Yes, you can help yourself with either of these tools, but I believe it's a mistake to depend on them. Use the tape recorder or brief forms of shorthand as back-up insurance, not as substitutes for your own full participation. You won't really know what you've heard unless you involve yourself in the listening process.

But never use a speech or meeting as an opportunity to butt in with personal observation. At a recent writers' conference, some of us were annoyed with a woman who kept interrupting the speaker to tell her own experiences. Finally,

another member said, kindly but firmly, "Save the comments for the coffee break so we can hear everything the speaker has to say."

Too many notes can complicate your goal of being informative. A Stanford professor once said at a summer workshop: "I can always tell which of my workshopers are regular students and which are summer session students. When I walk into the classroom the first day and say 'Good Morning,' the regular students grimace or look blank. The summer session students write it down."

7. *Use references and research to document and explain.* Let live and printed sources help to enhance your understanding of a given subject or field. These are vital aids to the reporter's observations and experience, and we can benefit from using them too. It is usually possible to find one or more experts to consult before or after a meeting or speech. A walk around the reference room of your public library will show the vast number of information sources available to everyone.

Several years ago, the brilliant architect Buckminster Fuller came to San Jose State University as a visiting scholar. One of my students called at his headquarters to ask for an interview for our campus magazine. The receptionist said Mr. Fuller would give time for interviews only to persons who had familiarized themselves with his work. The student got the interview because he had read enough books and magazine articles to be prepared with knowledgeable questions. He produced a fine story and still treasures the memory of meeting this outstanding personality.

8. *Check and doublecheck.* Accuracy is the foremost requisite in a news story. If it isn't correct, what good is it? Anyone who is interested in becoming a skilled listener should emulate the careful reporter and take special pains to be accurate in assessing or recording information.

Most major news media will not use arguable material unless it has been verified by at least two sources. Professional magazine writers acknowledge that they avoid making any general statement that can't be supported by two examples or more. Atlases, encyclopedias, diction-

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aries, history books, and records of all types exist to help us be accurate.

But we must also listen accurately—to hear what another person says, to quote others fairly and completely.

Pretend you're going to have to pass an exam on the talk, conference, discussion, or hearing you'll next attend. Perhaps a friend would be willing to "test" you by asking a few questions on what you both hear. Practice listening to your fellow Toastmasters' talks, TV and radio speeches, church sermons, classroom lectures, and community meetings.

The reporter's rule of thumb regarding accuracy is: "When in doubt, leave it out." That's a good guide for everyone to follow.

9. *Learn how to "turn off" gracefully.* Getting away from the scene is not likely to be difficult at scheduled speeches and meetings, with their programmed starting and stopping times. It can be a problem at informal sessions and interviews, when you could be trapped by persons who love to hear themselves talk. It can also be a problem for program directors whose duties include shepherding visiting speakers.

A reporter can always say he must be off to meet a deadline. The rest of us may have to be creative regarding what to do when confronted with someone how has no terminal facilities. One method might be to say: "This has been just great, but I'm due . . . and I'll be late if I don't go now." Shake hands and exit fast. Another is to tell the speaker that the room must now be vacated for a new group. If you

mean it, suggest a later get-together: "Perhaps we could discuss this further at some convenient time."

10. *Show your appreciation.* Thank anyone who gives you helpful information or whose message inspires you. Let speakers and program arrangers know that you found their presentations worthwhile, that listening to them was beneficial.

Think again of the thousands of conscientious news reporters throughout the land, and ponder how they get their work done. Without careful listening, reporters cannot even begin to meet their writing assignments.

Now consider the difference between the "gossip" players or the party guests at the beginning of this article and successful reporters. The partygoers and other casual audiences feel no obligation to listen to anyone, but reporters know that their work demands responsible attention at all times.

So, learn to listen as reporters do, and help yourself become a better communicator. □

Dolores Spurgeon is a Professor of Journalism, Emeritus, at San Jose State University in San Jose, California. Her reporting, editing, and teaching experiences have kept her in close contact with professional news men and women, both in the print and electronic media. In 1972, Mrs. Spurgeon received the "Outstanding Educator" award, four-year college division, of the California Newspaper Publishers Association.



The 1975 *Reader's Digest*/Boy Scouts of America Public Speaking Contest was a huge success. Thousands of boys and girls throughout America participated, and when it was all over, Explorer Stephen Riddell (above) and Scout William Grisolia (far right) came out on top. The two boys, along with the other finalists from each division, received the ultimate reward when they were given the opportunity to meet Gerald R. Ford. (Michael Kendall, a national semi-finalist is shown with the President.)

Scouts Build With Toastmasters

When I was quite young, I remember hearing the words, "hitch your wagon to a star." One can see in those six little words the summary of human achievement and the everlasting inspiration to the future races of mankind. From Socrates to Edison, every step forward taken by mankind through revolving centuries, every advance by humanity towards the ultimate goal, has been led by some valiant dreamer whose eyes were fixed upon a star. . . . The world today seems blessed by men who do great things, but also by men who merely talk about doing them. It's not the critic that counts. Not the man who points out where the strong man stumbled or where the doer of deeds could have done better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena. . . .

These inspiring words did not come from a government official, a business leader, or even a professional speaker. They came from 19-year old Explorer Stephen M. Riddell, winner of the 1975 *Reader's Digest*/Boy Scouts of America Public Speaking Contest.

Since its inception in 1971, the program has done much to help thousands of boys and girls like Stephen improve their ability to speak before an audience. The entire operation is financed by

Reader's Digest and has, since its beginning, received much support and educational guidance from Toastmasters International and its members.

"We try to tell our young people that they've got to know how to communicate in whatever they plan to do in life," said Zach Hirsch, director of Activities Service for the Boy Scouts of America. "And Toastmasters has been a great help."

According to Hirsch, over 400 speech



Speakers Help

manuals and contest applications are mailed out each February to Scout troops and Explorer posts all across the United States. Any Scout or Explorer may compete in their local council competition and are given the chance to win trophies for the best speech in each division.

The council winners advance to 28 area contests, then to six regional competitions, where six Scouts and six Explorers (one from each region) are picked to compete in the semi-finals at the Boy

Scouts National Office in North Brunswick, New Jersey. Two finalists, as well as the third through sixth place contestants from each division, are then taken to Washington, D.C., for the finals.

All in all, a total of \$9,000 in scholarship money is awarded to the six Scouts and six Explorers who make it to the finals. And all of this, says Hirsch, might not be accomplished if it were not for the Toastmasters and their involvement in the program.

"Toastmasters have been very eager to help," said Hirsch. "In most cases, they (the Toastmasters) run the whole thing. After all, you people are the experts."

In the past, most Toastmasters participating in the contests have confined themselves to the area or regional level, and at the semi-finals and finals as judges. But Mr. Hirsch sees a greater future for Toastmasters with the contest.

"We hope," he said, "that Toastmasters could eventually get involved in all of the local contests. That way, the contestants could all work with the same type of contest judges. But this is really a two-way street. The councils can contact the Toastmasters club or the club can contact the council.

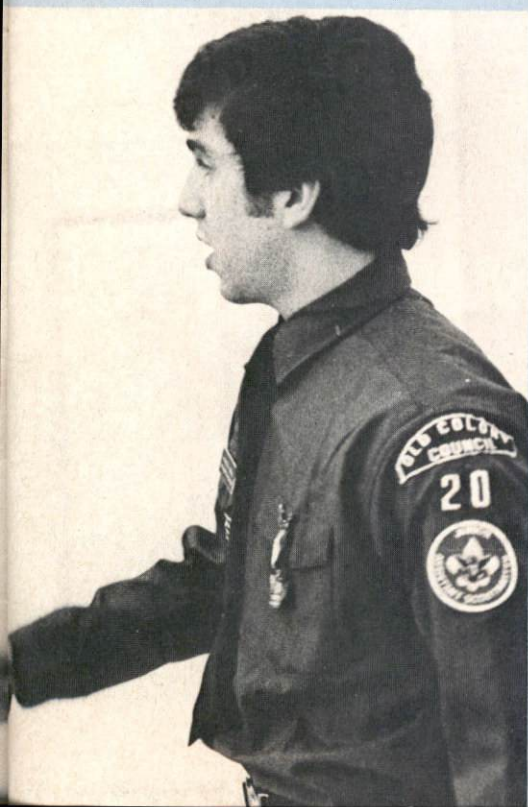
"We are also hoping," Hirsch con-

tinued, "that if a local Toastmasters club judges a council competition and picks the winner, the club will take that winner under their wing and help him along. This is not sponsoring the Scout or Explorer. It's just becoming involved in helping that young person develop his or her ability to communicate."

The finals of the 1976 contest (Spirit of '76—Our Heritage') are scheduled to be held next month in Washington, D.C., but many Toastmasters are already making plans to participate in next year's contest and its subject, "The New Spirit of '76—America's Horizons."

"How involved can a club get in the contest? I guess that depends on the local club," said Hirsch. "Anything that the local club wants to do—and can do—is fine with us."

How can your club get involved in the *Reader's Digest*/Boy Scouts of America Public Speaking Contest? It's easy. Just look up the Boy Scouts of America in your telephone book and tell them you'd like to help. If they're not listed in your area, call their national office or an office in the nearest city. It's a great learning experience for you . . . and for the young people in your community. □

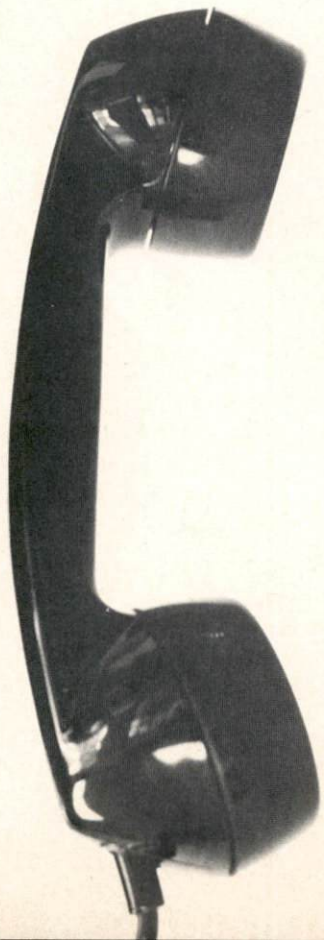


by
BARBARA L. AVERY

You've heard of Lo, the poor Indian? Shake hands with Lola, the poor secretary. Believe me, I've learned to appreciate a phone caller who is concise, organized and courteous—the Toastmaster type. For about three hours a day, I hold a telephone and listen to gentlemen of commerce who are practicing their various maneuvers on me. This sometimes leads me to believe that woman's place is, truly, in the home. Preferably a home without a phone.

But for the present, my place is right outside the cave of my boss. I am the old dragon who must be overcome before the Knight can get into my boss' cave, where the money is.

My boss sits at his desk and reads magazines and rearranges the paper clips. He makes passionate computations on letters I'm planning to file. Occasionally, I get treated to fervid outbursts, such as, "Thirty-two fifty! But at 3000 miles . . ." He slaps one hand to his forehead and makes a fist with the other. He twists miserably in his chair and sighs. He is often oblivious of my presence; if I



slipped a stiletto out of my stocking and danced raffishly round his chair singing *Carmen*, he wouldn't notice.

I don't take his behavior to mean that he is planning to give himself a hole in the head, or that he is planning how he can run off to Tahiti with the elevator girl. What he is planning is how he can make the best possible profit, all things considered. Part of my job as secretary is to arrange things so that my boss will have time and energy to consider all possibilities. He pays me every week with this service in mind. We have a verbal contract which includes the arrangement that he will pay me and I will so order his office life that he will have a chance to think.

Enter the secretive *Mr. Diplomatic Immunity*, on the telephone. He wants to talk to my boss. At this point, I have the temerity to ask him who he is. This is grossly offensive to Mr. Immunity. He doesn't care to use his name lightly, among hirelings.

A Vague Hope

I ask him what he wants to talk to my boss about. Now I've gone *too* far! If he had wanted to discuss his affairs with me, he'd have done so. It's none of my *business* what he wants to say to my boss. The effect of Mr. Immunity's call is to leave me with the vague hope that I haven't refused a man who was going to give us a million-dollar contract, or maybe treated a secret agent coldly when our government *needs* us.

But the point is, Mr. Immunity is not admitted. I explain to him that due to the pressure of time, my boss cannot accept calls until I have a chance to determine if they would interest him. Mr. Immunity, naturally, never heard of such a thing.

Close kin to Mr. Immunity is *Mr. J. Firmly Morningcoat*. This gentleman has made up his mind, nothing is going to stand in his way and he is going to

It Takes Two

prevail. But I conclude from our opening conversation that my boss would not profit from an interview with J. Firmly. "Mr. Morningcoat," I say politely, "Thank you for calling us, but I'm afraid we wouldn't be able to use your service at this time. Thank you for thinking of us, though. Good-bye."

"Good-bye? What do you mean good-bye? I'm not through yet. Listen, I *insist* . . ." J. Firmly gets no further with his insistence than Mr. Immunity gets with his secret mission. The trouble with those two is that they are pouring their energy into impossibilities.

The Decision-Maker

The secret mission of Mr. Immunity might be to suggest something valuable, or he might be trying to sell a tasteful arrangement of cushions and canopy to brighten up a dark corner of the office. We will never find out. And J. Firmly might have a marvellous idea; but it's not for us, and he'd be money ahead if he spent his energies on other prospects. It sounds as if I make a lot of arbitrary decisions. I do. But if your boss were in the diaper rental business, would you let him be confronted with people who want to put merry-go-rounds on top of his trucks, or have his drivers peddle ice-



TO TELEPHONE

cream as a sideline? My belief is that these activities would be an uneconomic use of our resources, and no amount of hauteur of screaming is likely to increase my appreciation.

They're Really Nice

Actually, most men are rather nice on the phone. I'd much rather listen to most men than to most women. For one thing, you can usually hear what a man is saying. Men generally don't think themselves adorable when they have a voice like a dime-store flute. Men usually speak clearly and pleasantly. They say what they mean, in a straightforward manner.

Not many of them are given to high school dramatics. But *Barleywater Bigshot* is. He saw a TV show about an executive and he thinks that to seem too busy to be polite is to be a big man. He has studied his role so that each Bigshot technique has become a fetish. For instance, under no circumstances will he be the first to pick up the phone. Even when he calls us, my boss has to wait on the phone while his secretary gets *Barleywater back* on the phone. And even then that doesn't satisfy a prima donna like him. He has to ham it up. When his secretary tells him that she has Mr. Jones (my

boss), Mr. Bigshot pauses a moment before saying hello. He almost says, "Who?" The idea is, see, he is up to his ears in policy-level decision-making; and for a moment, he just can't remember who a little character like Mr. Jones is.

A few men seem to have the notion that they must invariably seem pressed for time. I've been fascinated by the number of *salesmen* who call for an appointment with my boss, and when I give it to them, tell me that they'll try to fit him in. Just for my own malicious amusement, I sometimes switch the appointment to see what will happen. Here's what happens: He tells me what he's selling. I ask him if he can stop by on Thursday. Thursday? Well, he *might* be able to make it. What time did I have in mind? I ask him if eleven o'clock would be satisfactory. He says, well, he had another appointment but he could shift things around, and he'll be in on Thursday at 11 a.m.

On second thought, I tell him, Thursday seems to be your busy day, so let's make it Friday at two o'clock. All he can do is mumble something in agreement. His whole "line" was invested in the Thursday gambit. The dismal fact is, he does that busy-busy-do-you-a-favor thing on purpose. He thinks you've got to be as smart as he is, to see through a subtle scheme like that.

Oily Words

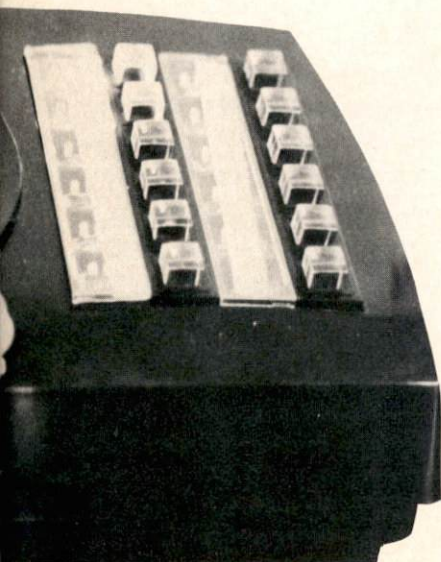
Some men are not rude or troublesome on the phone, but they have a manner that is unsettling. Like *Uncle Unctious*, for instance—he makes any business conversation sound as if he were trying to soothe a volcanic idiot. His words are oiled; I can feel him plotting. When I talk to him, I wonder how he can manage to rub his hands, contemplate his sagacity, and talk to me, all at once. I'm sure he sweats.

Sweet Alec Budvase is another unfor-

tunate. He's always bubbling over with maidenly enthusiasm. He is newsey, agreeable. "Oh, I *know!*" he says. He is genuinely sweet, I think; but I wish he'd conform to business techniques a little better, because I don't like to feel sorry for him.

The worst of the minor offenders is *Poor Paul*. He pleads. "Please. Try to understand. Give me a chance, won't you, Miss?" When I was a few generations younger, I would give Paul my lunch money and spend hours maneuvering to get interviews for him, where the interview would count for something. But I learned. If Paul gets an appointment, he has to call and admit that he has suffered several catastrophies and will be late. He arranges his life so that he will fail, and I am one old dragon who has stopped trying to be Chief Mother Psychiatrist. When Poor Paul pleads with me now, the extent of my kindness is that I don't breathe fire on him or give him a good whack on an appropriate extremity. I just shut my big red eyes till he goes away.

Even *Charlie Godsend* is a relief after Poor Paul. Charlie used to be a barker for a circus. He's got *just* what I need. "Yes,



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sir, little lady, this is *your* lucky day. Why, this Ranky-Tanky little mouse bath here is. . . ."

An actor told me one time that when a crowd is to be suggested on the radio, the director has people stand around and murmur "rutabega, rutabega, rutabega, rutabega." I think it was very clever of someone to think of this device, as I know *Mr. Rutabega* himself and he always seems to be part of an active crowd. While I'm talking to him on the phone, he gives orders to his secretary, clatters his toys around on his desk, and makes fantastic responses to what I'm saying.

"Mr. Rutabega," I say, "You didn't give us our discount last month."

"Not now. Ssh!" says Mr. Rutabega.

"We want our discount, Mr. Rutabega. Will you straighten this out for us?"

"Look under the sink," he says. "Yes, right away. Who did it?"

Maybe, when it comes time to send a man to Mars, they will let us vote on who gets to go. I have two prime candidates for your consideration. One of them is *Mr. Creaking Eros*. The other is the *Innocent Inquirer*. I think we should let them go together; they have a lot in common.

Mr. Eros drags erotics into every conversation. "Umm, honey," he says, "your voice *does* things to me." He thinks we should go out together. He'll show me around. We can do a lot for each other. If I'll play ball with him, he'll make it worth my time. "You're so gor-

geous, baby, I can't keep my mind on my business."

His varicose brain has conceived the idea that he will arouse my romantic passion, and I will help him "get ahead." (Get ahead of my boss, that is.)

The *Innocent Inquirer* has similar ambitions. He's not vulgar, but he wants to steal a march on my boss. He asks "guileless" questions about our business: "How many units does he usually take from Conover's?"

The *Inquirer* does himself a disservice by these tactics, and not just because I either change the subject or else tell him some convenient whopper. By the nature of his questions, which I report to the man who pays my salary, my boss can sometimes figure out what old *Innocent* is afraid of, and so take advantage of a circumstance that we weren't aware of, till *Innocent* put his foot in the phone.

There is one unwelcome caller who has no bad intentions at all. He just has a noticeable bald spot in his fund of general information: He has no comprehension of how a telephone works and views the instrument as an obstacle to communication which must be forcefully overcome. When this gentleman speaks to me, it is as if I had been intimately addressed by a diesel train whistle. My impulse is to fling the phone away and hurl myself under the desk. I don't care what those psychologists say, I think we do have an instinct for self-preservation.

Of course, after I collect myself, I can escape the vocal assault by holding the phone at arm's length. But what about

people who work in the same room with him? They are trapped under a tub, and he is so unconscious of their condition that he doesn't even feel guilty. He feels a little picked-on, as a matter of fact; he doesn't like to talk on the phone. He feels threatened by the phone. It shows, but not on him. His associates bear the scars.

That First Impression

In modern business, the first impression is often created by a telephone conversation. If that impression is really offensive, a man may get no further. He may never get an interview with the person he must see. A secretary to a busy boss must prevent his being molested by energy-consuming blunders. She may assign a caller to this unflattering pigeon-hole just because he is careless of how he sounds.

I want to speak for a moment to the unusual man who doesn't do well on the phone: If you're maddeningly handsome, if your breath is right out of a spring meadow, your shoe heels brand new and you smell like an expensive saddle, these enchantments are all wasted on me. All I have of you is your voice and what you say.

I listen carefully when you speak and, often, I hear not only what you say, but also what you are.

You'll find that the vast majority of secretaries work for a certain boss and are really *for* him. The woman you speak to on the phone has a strong loyalty to another man than you. She's on his side. She's going to give him every pertinent fact about you and your products, if she can learn any of these things.

A telephone conversation is a constructive business effort. You can make it pay if you can envision exactly what is happening, when you speak. Someone is listening. □

When we asked Mrs. Avery for some biographical information, she replied: "Thanks to a kind Providence and thoughtful parents, I was born in Texas. Beyond that, there is nothing remarkable about me, unless you count my relatives. And if you count my relatives, then you're remarkable. My ambitions are to catch up on my ironing and then to go see that young upstart, Alaska."

Taming the Table Topic

by **Frederick W. Mikko**
Club 2765-36

At a bare bones minimum, I estimate there have been at least forty million articles or books written on the subject of how to make a speech. I have no quarrel with either the writers or their works, simply because the authors are probably ten light years ahead of me in intelligence, experience, and platform know-how.

I am sure, also, that if any enterprising neophyte Toastmaster studied any one of them, mastered the principles laid down therein, and gave them a clinical work-out before a live audience, he would be in the promised land (or close to it). In addition, his wife and associates would soon be congratulating him and shaking his hand. In no time, he would be running for Congress or the State Legislature.

My remarks in this article, however, are not directed to the enterprising neophyte. They are, rather, directed to those rank-and-file Toastmasters who suffer instant paralysis whenever someone suggests they make an impromptu speech.

I speak from experience, because I was a charter member of that luckless crew, and many other such unfortunates, for some reason, gravitated to our club (Cavalier 2765-36 in Arlington, Virginia). Except for two or three members

who were trained in other clubs, we were a club of cowards.

Although no rule or bylaw was ever invoked, a kind of "sense of the members" prevailed, and few impromptu speeches were suggested or requested at our club meetings.

The two or three brave men in our club who took turns from time to time in making impromptu speeches were, needless to say, given high praise whenever they used their particular talent to fill in for an absent speaker. On the infrequent occasions when they wondered out loud whether anyone would be interested in giving an impromptu, a silence deeper than the grave would descend upon the assembled Cavaliers, and many would even start looking for the exits.

For years we drifted along, content to let the three brave bulls carry the burden of impromptus, with the rest of us fulfilling all our regular duties, such as prepared speeches, Table Topics, evaluations, etc.

But some six months ago, one of the cowards asked for and was granted recognition. He had been doing a lot of thinking, he said, and had come to a conclusion that he felt should be shared with his fellow Cavaliers. Pressed to disclose his important conclusion, he said, "We

all get up here and bang out Table Topics talks with no sweat or real effort. Most of us exceed the minute and a half allotted by some thirty seconds or a minute—and some even by as much as two or three minutes."

"It seems to me," he continued, "that if we can beat our gums up here for two or three minutes on a Table Topic, we should be able to do the same for another minute or so, which means we will be making an impromptu speech out of a Table Topic."

The idea took hold. At our very next meeting, all Table Topic speakers were given the option of speaking for a minute and a half or for as long as they wished.

The results were spectacular. Each one of us was at ease as we slipped smoothly and effortlessly into our talks. Every one of us spoke for at least five minutes, and at the conclusion, we all agreed that impromptu speeches were nothing more than Table Topics beefed-up a little bit.

One of the bonuses of our discovery was that, in an impromptu speech, you could pretty well select your own subject, which made it easier, because you could speak on something you were familiar with. This was altogether different from Table Topics, where the Topic-master could drive a hard-liner your way and you had to handle it "cold turkey."

Another discovery was made regarding the "cold turkey" aspect of Table Topics. We learned that in responding to Table Topics (and inferentially to impromptu speeches), it was a good idea to first discuss the positive side of the subject, then switch over and present the negative side. By then, you have had enough time to reach whatever conclusion you had elected to espouse.

I would like to report that the rejuvenated Cavaliers soared to new heights in the forensic world and that Congressmen and Senators were soon asking them to make speeches on their behalf. In all candor, however, I must say that any change in their output has not been visible to the naked eye. However, one thing has changed. The cowardly Cavalier is a thing of the past in our club . . . and impromptu speeches are as commonplace as taking the roll. □

The Dedicated Toastmaster

Who is he and why
is he hiding?

by

R. Bernard Searle, ATM

A few years ago, I met a man on a busy street in my town. He was the president of the local club. He demanded I do something about his club's declining membership.

"What do you want me to do?" I asked him.

"Build it up!" he replied.

"But why me?" (I was part of the district educational team, but not on the executive.)

"Because," he continued, "You're a *dedicated* Toastmaster."

He concluded by saying that he had other things to do in life. Obviously, the club failed. And ever since then, I've dis-

liked the term "dedicated Toastmaster" for a very good reason.

In every club—in every town—there are too many members who are fully prepared to do everything in their power to leave all the work to the "dedicated Toastmaster." And as long as that happens, we will have too many drop-outs. We will lose those who cannot say "no," who end up doing everything. When they finally say, "Whoa, that's enough," and quit, we will lose those who do nothing, for they will drop out, out of sheer boredom.

The President's theme last year was "Forward from Fifty . . . by Members

in Action." And that meant everyone doing his share by living up to his responsibilities as a member. I remember being a guest at one club during the annual elections. Everyone put his name down for a job, either as an officer or chairman or committee member. And I thought, "Wow, this really is an action club." I learned afterward that no one did anything, nor was he expected to do anything. But volunteering sure was fun.

We are a self-help organization. We depend upon someone, somewhere, to do something for nothing just to keep the ideals and idea going. We wouldn't have joined in the first place if our objectives had not been similar to Dr. Smedley's. The work necessary to perpetuate this great educational system must be borne by all who profit and benefit through membership.

I know . . . how do we get the involvement of everybody? Let's look at our simple division of members . . . the *doers* and the *non-doers*.

A Desperate Search

The doers are desperately in need of leadership training. This applies in every walk of life. There is a frantic search being conducted right now by your company, church, social club, service club, and government for leaders. Why not educate the doers?

By definition, a leader or manager gets things done through other people. He is respected and firm. He is involved and interested. He almost always used to be a doer.

If the doers shared the work load, everyone would have to become involved. Yet many people would rather do any job, no matter how odious, than ask a fellow human for assistance and risk the answer, "No." And we communicate that expectation when we finally do try to make that sale.

"Well, don't forget, Bernie Baby, this is a volunteer organization and we're all volunteers!" How many times have you heard that old excuse? It's not so. We're all people . . . nothing more and nothing less. It's how we try to make the sale that counts.

"Listen, Harry, we'd like someone to give a hand with the formation of a Speechcraft group. Do you think you

could spare us some time?" We've just told Harry that we know he's busy and can't make it. We've invited a negative response.

"John, how about letting your name stand for president this year? The club's in terrible shape and we can't get a full slate of officers." We've just told John that a) he's a last resort, and b) the job is just about impossible anyway.

Ask Yourself

Leadership properly practiced means asking yourself how you'd like to be approached, and then fitting it to the circumstances—*enthusiastically!*

"Hey Harry, it's sure good to see you at the meeting today. Boy, you sure can evaluate. You know what? We should put on a special program on evaluation, with you as the group leader. I think I'll suggest that to the Educational Vice-President. By the way, I'm coordinating the Speechcraft course. We could use your expertise as an evaluator next Thursday . . . or the following week if that would suit you better. We can easily juggle the program to fit."

A pat on the back and an alternative at the point of sale. Most people would respond in the affirmative. The rest either have a legitimate reason and will be good for another time, or they're near death and are in need of resuscitation.

The doers are in an ideal situation in Toastmasters because, at present, we have so many non-doers to practice on! But we need to practice constantly and consciously the art of leadership to become true leaders. We must not be afraid to indicate by words and deeds that we expect affirmative answers.

What to Expect

Consider this: A man will only do that which *he thinks* you expect him to do. Even though you ask him, if he thinks you don't really expect him to perform, chances are that he won't.

The non-doers are in a terrible state; first, because they are part of the ignoble majority, and, second, because most of them are afraid of failure. They're afraid that they cannot perform tasks that are new to them. They're afraid to try. They are in need of leadership, and the main source at the present time is the doers. Every leader was at one time a doer.

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Never appeal to the non-doers for "volunteers," but sincerely appeal to their abilities. Pick a task that suits their skills, so they will have some self-confidence. Ask as if you knew all along that you could depend upon them, and they'll respond positively.

"Forward From Fifty . . . by Members in Action" meant learning new skills and putting them into practice. You had the opportunity of an excellent training program at your last club meeting. How much of it do you remember? How much are you going to put to work at your office, your club, and your home?

Toastmasters International is not World Headquarters. It is not your Officers or Board of Directors. It is not your district team. It is you, and me . . . at the club level.

If we believe in Toastmasters as a force for good through better listening,

thinking, and speaking, then it is up to us to put into practice every skill that we can to get everyone truly involved, not for the sake of Toastmasters International, but for the good of each and every one of us.

For the benefit of all mankind, we must provide leadership by demanding and expecting support, by providing support to our developing leaders, by utilizing the tools made available to us for personal growth through Toastmasters for the benefit of all.

The President's theme this year is "Toastmasters is . . . Dedicated to You." In the final analysis, right here, right now, it is up to you. □

R. Bernard Searle, ATM, was a member of the 1973-75 Toastmasters International Board of Directors.

YOU

are
your best
subject

by Michael W. Fedo

You've listened critically to a few speeches and wonder if you'll be able to successfully hold the attention of an audience yourself. But you'll get your chance; your speech is due next week. You're excited, but that excitement is tempered with a gnawing apprehension. You're asking yourself, "What will I talk about?"

After that first rush of panic, when your mind draws a blank, you run through a mental checklist of topics you hope will be of interest. You may even settle on one or two possibilities. But if you're like thousands of other beginning speakers, chances are you'll completely rule out your best potential topic—yourself.

You are your best speech subject.

How's Your Ego?

Too many speakers, beginning and veteran alike, feel that extended use of the first person in a speech sounds like a monumental ego trip, sure to brand the speaker as a boor.

But consider the consistently high sales of biographical and autobiographical books. Notice how newspaper readers instinctively dwell on feature pages or sports sections. These are the pages of human interest drama, and they rivet readers' attention.

Still, you suggest that you are neither hugely successful nor famous, so why

would anybody be particularly interested in hearing you talk about yourself?

Most casual observers of human society assume that the public is interested in things, ideas, and philosophies. It is, but only as those things, ideas, and philosophies apply to people. And that is the key. Audiences are composed of people with passionate interests in other people. When you are the speaker, the audience is interested in you.

This is an advantage, since you are also interested in yourself. You know more about yourself than any other possible subject. And on this subject, you qualify as an authority.

The approach to consider, then, is to carefully examine your background and experiences, and determine what might be unique about them that could sustain audience attention.

What might seem routine to you may well be the object of intense fascination to others.

A while back, a police officer enrolled in a night class I was teaching at a local community college. This officer had recently been involved in the apprehension of a kidnap suspect, who was taken after exchanging shots with police.

The sergeant would never have spoken about it in class unless I had asked him to.

To him it wasn't unique—it was routine, his job. But the other 25 members of the class were pleased to learn a bit about crime detection, about the quivering in an officer's guts when a dangerous fugitive is firing at him. During the officer's 10-minute talk, a lot of anti-police sentiment among that group of college youngsters was softened, and the sergeant had given his most impressive speech of the term.

It impressed mostly because he had reached back into his own experience and come up with a nugget that no newspaper or television account could capture.

O! Man River

An acquaintance of mine, a house painter by trade, spent his idle moments for over 40 years roaming the shoreline of the Mississippi River near his home, fishing for smallmouth bass. He has studied the structures, checked water temperatures and the speed of the current. His thorough analysis ranks him among the foremost authorities on how to catch smallmouths in the upper reaches of "O! Man River." He's a man sought by noted outdoor writers for national magazines, a man who now addresses church and civic groups, sharing this knowledge which he has routinely gathered over the years.

His passion for the river and the small-

mouth bass overrides his grammatical errors, and though he's not a polished speaker, he commands rapt attention because he talks about what he knows, and most of his anecdotes are personal.

Without any professional help, this man possesses something distinct and unique about himself that others are eager to hear.

In the more than 10 years I have taught speech in colleges and universities, I find my students hopelessly snared by that old elementary school axiom, "Don't talk about yourself too much. Nobody likes a braggart."

Consequently, students seldom mention accomplishments or experiences, no matter how interesting or unique.

Several years ago, when I was teaching at a small college in southern Ohio, a young man gave a rather mundane presentation about baseball. His speech was encyclopedic, filled with data and statistics. He traced the history of the game thoroughly, but without flair. Anyone could have gotten the same information from any reference text.

Later, we discovered that this young man was a professional baseball player himself, called up to the big leagues late in the preceding season. In his first game he hit a home run off Warren Spahn, one of the game's greatest hurlers.

Unforgettable

What audience could have been bored by an account of a star-struck 19-year-old stepping to the plate to face a legendary figure? What did the boy feel like? Did his heart thunder in his throat? Did his tongue feel thick and dry? Were his fingers moist as he tensely gripped the bat? And could he have described the elation of connecting bat to ball, sensing the solid, clean ripple clear down to his elbows, then the exuberance of watching the ball clear the fence? This was something no kid could ever forget. Neither, I might add, would an audience.

A few years later, while teaching in Wisconsin, a young man gave a camera demonstration. He revealed equipment that led all of us to suspect that he was a professional. He spoke in technical terms about f-stops, light meters, lens sizes,

and explained how to get the most out of the sophisticated array of material he had assembled. A fine approach for a photo club, but he was way over the heads of his audience.

We were to find out later that this fellow worked as a freelance advertising photographer. He was only 23 years old, but a current issue of *Life* magazine carried on its back cover an advertising display that he designed for a major soft drink company.

None of us listening that morning would have thought him blowing his own horn too loudly if he had recounted his experiences in freelance advertising. We'd have been curious about how he achieved success so early in life, how he started in his career, what pitfalls he stumbled into. What suggestions might he offer to aspiring photo buffs? We heard none of this during his delivery.

Each of these two speakers had arresting experiences in his background, but failed to utilize them. The ballplayer later told me, "I'm just an ordinary guy who happens to play ball. The rest of the group would have thought I was a pompous windbag."

"Nonsense," I answered. "The members of your audience have an innate curiosity about speakers and are always aroused when made privy to personal anecdotes."

Most of us don't know famous people, so we can't tell stories to regale and enlighten our audiences. We have to rely on ourselves, who we are, and the experiences unique to us. All too often, we consider these experiences dull and ordinary. They're not.

The Speech Fabric

The routines of our existence may seem dull to us, but to others they may represent glamour, adventure, wisdom. And of such fabrics are memorable speeches woven. Within each speaker is a wellspring of experience upon which to draw—if not the central speech topic, certainly an enlivening anecdote or two.

Do not belittle yourself like the elderly woman who came to me one evening after an adult class and said she'd have to drop the course. "I have nothing to talk about," she shyly complained.

The woman was in her middle 50s and

What's in a meaningful evaluation?

To effectively evaluate someone else, you need to know the principles yourself. Here are some Toastmasters materials you should have on hand in your club meetings, both to remind yourself of what to evaluate on, and to give to a fellow member who needs practice in one of these areas.

- **Pointers on Speech Making (107)** 20 cents
- **How to Put Vocal Variety in Your Speech (109)** 20 cents
- **How to Use Gestures (110)** 20 cents
- **Introducing the Speaker (111)** 20 cents
- **Humor Handbook (1192)** \$1.10

Ask your educational vice-president about these materials or check the Toastmasters Catalog for further details.

felt slightly intimidated about returning to pick up the education she'd abandoned more than 30 years ago.

After some gentle prodding, I found out the lady had 1) caught a greased pig at a county fair; 2) been elected mayor of a small township twenty years before anyone heard of the feminist movement; and 3) raised three fine sons and donated a kidney to one of them. I stopped her right there. "You have material rich enough to put into a book," I said, "let alone give a handful of speeches this term."

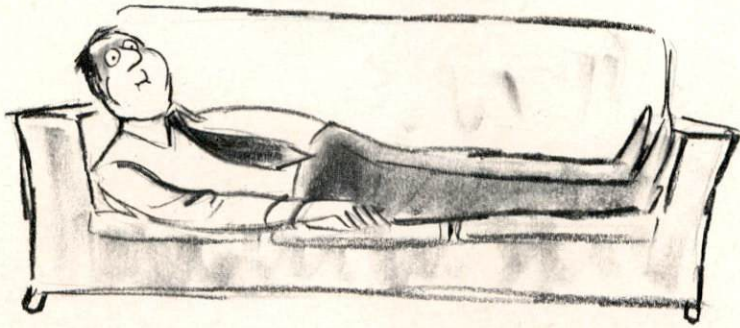
She had failed to see how her own life was anything other than ordinary and uninteresting.

When fledgling speakers come to me, inquiring with some anguish, "What can I talk about?" I'm seldom facetious when I tell them, "Yourself." Most of the time it's the best advice I can offer. □

Michael W. Fedo is a speech instructor at North Hennepin State Community College in Brooklyn Park, Minnesota. He is also a freelance writer, specializing in travel and education.

It's All Right -- He's Only Breathing

by Bruce Anderson



"Oh, I didn't know Bob was sick," I remarked to Bob's wife as she let me in the door. He was lying flat on his back on the couch.

"He's not sick," she replied with an amused smile. "Only breathing."

"I hope it's not fatal," I quipped, as the gulp of his inhaled breath filled the room.

Just then, Bob stuck his tongue straight out, so it pointed in my direction as I stood over the couch. "OK, it was a bad joke," I admitted. "What's the matter with you, anyway?"

"That's one of my tongue exercises," he replied enthusiastically. "I've been reading Dr. Bradam's book on proper speaking, and I found that I've been doing it all wrong. That's been the problem with my speeches lately."

That's not the only problem, I thought to myself.

Bob continued: "Did you know that we don't breathe with our lungs?" I hadn't really thought about it and said so. "Nobody does," he said, getting up from the couch. "People don't think about their breathing when they speak, and so they're not very effective. Now, watch me."

Fascinated, I watched as Bob's jaw dropped open and he placed his hands on his hips. Then he took a deep breath. "Notice how my shoulders and ribs don't

lift up. That's the way you're supposed to inhale—with your diaphragm," he gasped, indicating his waist with his right hand. "Too many speakers heave their whole chest up when they breathe, and only the upper part of the lungs fills up with air. A speaker has got to breathe from the waist, so he has a good supply of air to use."

"My old drill sergeant used to stick his chest out when he breathed," I countered, "and he didn't seem to have much difficulty being heard."

"I'll bet his face turned purple, too," Bob said. "The key to good breathing is to relax everything but the upper diaphragm. You've got to hold your chest up in a comfortable position and then relax your shoulders, neck, throat, . . . everything. Here, you try it."

Forcing me to stand up straight, which was something new for me, Bob lifted my arms until they were straight out from my sides. "Take a deep breath and notice the position of your ribcage," he said. "Now, hold your ribs in the same position, and drop your arms and relax your shoulders." I did so and was surprised to learn how relaxed I could be while my chest was still in the raised position. "Let the air out and keep your chest up. That's the way you should carry your ribs all the time."

That's pretty neat, I thought, as I went

back to my usual slouch. "Now that I'm an expert on breathing," I said, "what about your tongue exercises?"

"That's all part of relaxation. A speaker has to relax his jaw, throat, and tongue if he's going to breathe and speak properly. I do these exercises every day to stretch my tongue and get it under control."

Controlling his tongue will really take some doing, I thought wryly. Bob started lapping the air with his tongue, just like a cat. "I hope you don't practice these exercises on the subway," I kidded.

"Not unless I'm running behind schedule," he said, apparently ignoring the sarcasm in my voice. "Here, try this one." Bob opened his mouth wide and stuck his tongue straight out as far as it would go, just as he had been doing when I first walked in. Then he pulled it back in and placed the tip behind his front teeth, first the upper and then the lower teeth, while he stretched the middle of his tongue out as far as it would go.

"That doesn't look very relaxing to me," I said.

"Oh, it's great for flexibility. The tip of the tongue is the most important part of a speaker's articulation. A lot of people tense up the back part of their tongues, and that tires out the vocal cords and blocks the free flow of air to the lungs."

"You've sure learned a lot from that book," I said. "Do you really think it will improve your speaking?"

"It has already. I can make my voice sound richer, and I don't slur my words like I used to."

"What did you say?" I asked with a devilish grin. "I couldn't understand you."

"I said they've made me a judge at next week's speech contest, where you're scheduled to speak. I'll be paying close attention to your breathing."

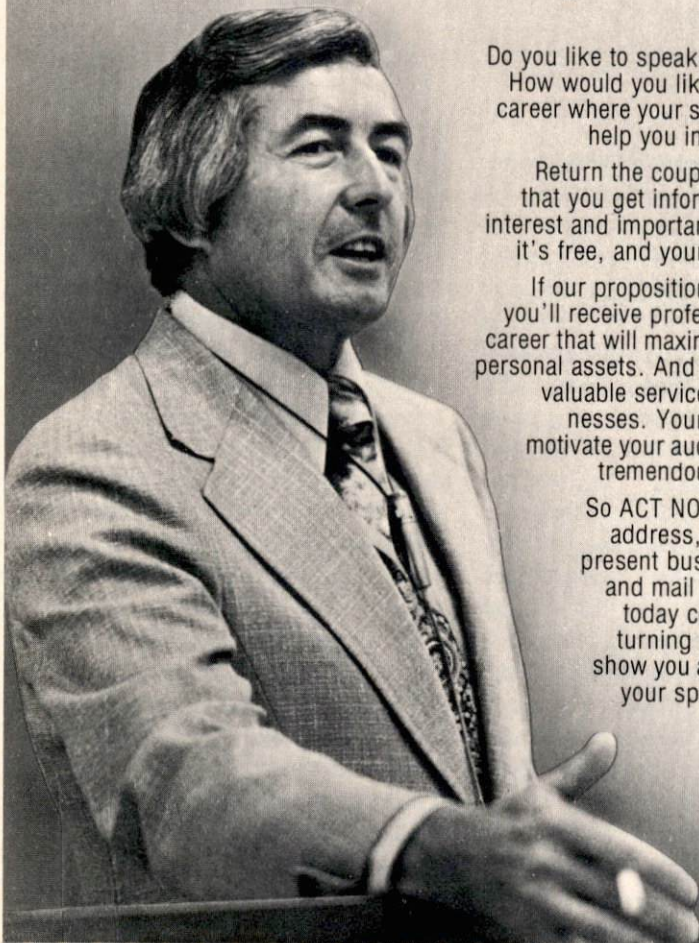
"Maybe I'd better borrow Dr. Bradam's book from you. I'm beginning to see the importance of good breathing."

"You'll have to wait until Saturday," Bob concluded. "Tomorrow, I'm reading the chapter on lip exercises."

"Lip exercises?" I muttered, as I walked toward the door. □

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HERE'S YOUR SPEECH TOPIC

"The Business of America . . ." will be the sixth in a series of nine topics to be covered by those participating in the American Issues Forum.

Scheduled to run from February 8 through March 6, "The Business of America . . ." will examine the American free enterprise system—how it works and where it fails. The four weeks have been divided into the following subjects:

Feb. 8—Feb. 14: Private Enterprise in the Marketplace. At the very center of the American economic system is the belief in free enterprise—the business equivalent of the frontiersman's rugged individualism. How free—or private—is most enterprise today? In pursuing profit, does business give the consumer a fair deal? What benefits does free enterprise bring us today?

Feb. 15—Feb. 21: Empire Building: Cornering the Market. How competitive are most American industries today? Does large scale technology and advertising make competition obsolete? How easy is it for new firms to enter the market? Whose empire are we a part of?

Feb. 22—Feb. 28: Subsidizing and Regulating: Controlling the Economy. The government of business has become the business of government. When does government control become interference in free enterprise? When does business interfere with free government? Does regulation set standards only big firms can meet? What has government support done to our nations of competition, the market place, free enterprise?

Feb. 29—Mar. 6: Selling the Consumer. What America makes, America must market. For this reason, the search for new ways of packaging, promoting, and selling products has assumed a decisive place in the American economic system. To what degree do advertising, merchandising and public relations determine our taste and influence our goals? Is advertising a strong educational force or do we tend to ignore it?

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Decision-Making Aspects of the Planning Function

The ability to make a decision—and make the right decision—is an important part of every manager's job. But what is the "right" decision?

Decision-making, which can be defined as making a choice between two or more alternatives, is at the core of planning. Managers often see decision-making as their primary job, because they must constantly decide what is to be done, by whom, where, and how.

This definition has the advantages of being brief and focusing attention on the essential element of decision-making—making a choice. However, to really grasp the nature of decision-making, one must understand that making a choice is only one of several sequential steps that must occur as part of an intellectual process. These steps include

1. Becoming aware that a decision must be made
2. Defining the problem
3. Analyzing available information
4. Developing relevant alternative solutions
5. Choosing the alternative
6. Converting the chosen alternative into action, or execution of the decision. (This step is not technically a part of the decision-making process, but attention must be given to it if management decisions are to be effective.)

The most difficult step in decision-

making, in many cases, is being aware that a decision needs to be made. An effective manager must be sensitive to situations in his area of responsibility that do not meet standards and expectations. This sensitivity can be termed perceptual skill, and it enables the manager to collect and interpret cues from his surroundings. When no triggering cues are picked up by the manager, no decisions will be made. The manager with limited perceptual skills goes along, oblivious to potential problems until they blossom into full-bloomed crises. This sort of manager lives his life reacting instead of acting. Perceptual skills cannot really be taught by textbook and lecture. They are developed through experience and are thus one of the main reasons that managers usually become more effective with experience.

The effective manager must also be able to distinguish between cause and symptom. As in medicine, failure to make this distinction will inevitably lead to a relapse. Defining the real problem is not always an easy task, because what appears to be the problem might only be a symptom. For example, a supervisor might believe he is confronted with a problem of conflicting personalities when two workers are continually bickering and cannot get along with each other. Upon checking into this problem, the supervisor might find that the real problem is that he has never clearly outlined

the functions and duties of each worker, specifying where their duties begin and end. Therefore, what appeared to be a problem of personality conflict was actually a problem of organization.

The Definition

Defining a problem is usually a time-consuming task, but it is time well spent. There is no need for a manager to go any further in the decision-making process until the problem has been clearly defined, because nothing is as frustrating as the right solution to the wrong problem. A simple, but effective, way of getting behind the symptom and to the underlying problem is to ask *why*? Thus, the crucial step in decision-making is an awareness of the real problem which requires a decision.

After the problem—and not just the symptoms—has been defined, and there is reasonable assurance that its satisfactory solution will provide a means to a desired end, the manager can take the next step in decision-making—analyzing available information. This means assembling the facts that are *relevant* to the decision which must be made. Judgment must be used in deciding what information is to be used as well as in what information is available. Great care must be exercised to be as fair and objective as possible in gathering and examining the facts that are used in making a decision.

The most difficult "facts" to deal

by Beaufort B. Longest, Jr., PhD

with are the intangible factors which may be involved and which can play a significant role. These intangible factors are such things as reputation, morale, discipline, and personal biases. It is difficult to be as specific about these facts as about those which are subject to physical measurement of some form. Nevertheless, they must be considered in the decision-making process.

In many situations, it is necessary to ferret out the facts which are relevant. However, the manager should also realize that many decisions can be based on information already at hand.

A Course of Action

First, there are those problems that clearly fall within the scope of existing policies. One of the major functions of a policy is to provide a predetermined course of action, or, in other words, a solution to problems that keep demanding a decision over and over again.

Secondly, there are many problems that fall within the decision-maker's range of experience and, therefore, do not require that acquisition of additional information. The manager may possess, as the result of prior experience and training, the factual information and conceptualizations necessary to resolve the question and make a decision. The ability to synthesize past experiences so that they form a cohesive network of information that can be used in solving current problems is an important reason for em-

phasizing past experience as a factor in the selection of managers.

The quality of decisions is directly proportional to the number of *relevant* facts that are gathered and analyzed in reaching a decision. Judgment is required in determining when additional facts are needed and whether it is advisable to make a decision even though all necessary facts have not been acquired or analyzed.

Having defined the problem and analyzed the available information, the decision-maker's next step is to search for and develop alternative courses of action. One simple rule should guide the decision-maker in this step: The greater the number of alternatives considered, the greater the chance of selecting a satisfactory one.

Finding the "Best"

The decision-maker should not always think in terms of "one best solution." More realistically, problems have several solutions which have both positive and negative characteristics. The task is to develop as many satisfactory solutions as possible, and then choose from these the one which seems "best."

It is during this step in the decision-making process that creative and innovative solutions to problems come into being. Logic and experience play major roles in idea generation, but imagination can also have a significant contribution. The use of imagination, or creative



thinking, is of great assistance in all functions of management, but it is particularly valuable in the development of relevant alternatives from which the decision-maker can exercise choice.

Creative Solutions

A key thing to remember is that creativity is latent within all of us. Ordinary people, under the proper circumstances, may create new solutions to problems. These proper circumstances include being able to work in an atmosphere of freedom, trust, and security.

The creative process itself can be viewed as a series of steps, including

1. Personal need
2. Preparation
3. Incubation and illumination
4. Verification.

The fact that a personal need to think creatively must exist emphasizes the individual aspect of the creative thinking process. It also implies that there must be a motivating force to initiate the creative thought process. This motivation may be a need of self-expression or as the result of an externally-imposed problem situation.

Contrary to what many people believe, very few creative ideas come as a "bolt out of the blue." Rather, they usually grow out of an intensive period of *preparation*, during which the decision-maker becomes saturated with information and makes a concerted effort to perceive new and meaningful relationships. To a large extent, the originality of ideas depends upon the number of avenues explored and the extent to which all possible interrelationships and solutions are considered. This preparation step represents the "work" of the creative process.

It is possible for an original solution to a problem to be found quickly as the result of a brief period of analysis. Sometimes this is necessary. However, there is a real need for the concept of *incubation*, a period of mulling the problem over, sometimes consciously and sometimes completely unaware of the thinking process. The value of the period of incubation lies in the fact that a more fully developed idea or more fully illuminated idea may result.

The story of Archimedes' discovery

that his body displaced its own volume in water is a good example of illumination. You may recall that Archimedes was sitting in his bath tub pondering a problem which King Hiero had given him when he made his famous discovery. He was trying to figure out a way to determine if a goldsmith had used all the gold he claimed to have used in making a new crown. The king suspected that some alloy had been added by the goldsmith, permitting him to keep some of the gold for himself. Archimedes' illumination provided a way to solve this problem. It turned out that the goldsmith had alloyed the gold with baser metals and he was executed.

It is helpful to set a deadline so that problems do not go unsolved for unduly long periods of time, with the excuse that the problem solver is incubating the problem in hopes of an illumination. However, it is true that a period of incubation is usually necessary for truly original solutions to be developed.

Verification

The final step in the creative thinking process is *verification*. When a solution is first envisioned, especially through the insight of illumination, it is unusual for it to be in a polished and final form. The verification step in the creative process is a period of refining an idea, of changing it and improving it. In effect, it represents the difference between an idea and a creative thought that can be implemented.

The foregoing discussion of the creative process emphasizes the individual's role in creativity, especially in regard to illumination. However, it should be pointed out that often the creative process is stimulated by group effort. This is the underlying basis for brainstorming as an effective method of solving problems.

Relying upon the creative process, experience, and logic, the decision-maker should try to visualize as many different solutions to a particular problem as possible, because this increases the chance of selecting a good alternative.

After the decision-making manager has developed and evaluated the alternatives, he must select that alternative

which he thinks is best. Although the manager can seek the assistance of specialized personnel and various decision-making aids (such as mathematical models), the choice is his alone. If the other steps in the decision-making process have been properly carried out, the manager will usually have to choose from several alternatives.

One choice that is always available is to do nothing. This should be the most carefully considered choice of all. The decision-maker should visualize the consequences which will result from taking no action. Only if the consequences of the decision to take no action are the most desirable should it be selected as the course of action. The manager should never view the "no action" decision lightly or feel that things will remain unchanged as a result of it. After all, something necessitated the need for the decision-making process to take place.

Making the correct choice is not easy. Management decisions tend to be grey, rather than black or white. They are usually made in context of a constantly-changing environment, which means that the correct choice now may not remain the most desirable choice.

There are several bases upon which the choice can be made. Among them: experience, intuition, advice from others, experimentation, and scientific decision-making. The whole process of the choice is to select the alternative that has the greatest amount of desired and least amount of undesired consequences.

Negative Factors

Making the best choice is not easy, even when all the bases suggested above are taken into account. Aside from the element of change, which will affect any decision that is made, there is the problem of incomplete and unavailable information. Personal prejudice and bias on the part of the manager can cripple his effectiveness as a decision-maker, by forcing him to choose an alternative that fits some preconceived notion.

The largest stumbling block to making a choice among alternatives is indecisiveness. Many times this stems from feelings of personal inadequacy and insecurity, and these feelings are rein-

forced by pressure from superiors in the organization. The opposite situation can exist and be just as detrimental to the effectiveness of the decision-maker. This is impulsiveness, or a tendency to jump headlong into a situation without considering all factors. It is not uncommon for a young, inexperienced manager to be impulsive in his first decisions, but if enough of them turn out to be wrong, he may end up being indecisive. In both cases, he is of little value to his company.

The Three Questions

There is no simple way to assure that decisions will be sound ones. However, if the manager will stop and ask himself three questions about the decision he is about to make, he can improve the quality of his decisions considerably.

First, he should ask himself whether or not the decision contributes to the attainment of stated objectives. This implies that the decision is but a means to an end—an end that has been clearly thought out and stated in the form of an objective. If a potential solution does not support stated objectives, it should not be adopted.

Secondly, the decision-maker should ask himself whether or not the decision represents a high degree of economic effectiveness. In other words, does the proposed solution make maximum use of available resources? There may be times, of course, when economics should not be used as a criterion for decision-making, such as in a hospital, where quality considerations are so important. Usually, however, the economic consideration is a useful guideline.

Finally, the decision-maker should ask himself whether or not a potential solution is feasible. In answering this question, the decision-maker must think in the very practical terms of how a particular decision will be implemented in view of the resources which are available to him.

These considerations do not guarantee that the best decision—or even a good decision—will be made. They do increase the chances for a good decision and are, thus, worth the effort.

The process of converting the selected decision into action is not technically a step in the decision-making process.

However, the manager will be evaluated more on the outcome of his decision than on the decisions themselves.

The manager must live with his decisions. He must also view each decision as part of a continuum. Once a decision is made and implemented, it will lead to other situations which require decisions. The good manager will use his experience with executing decisions as a means of self-evaluation and self-improvement. He will learn from his mistakes and his successes. The important point is that a decision, from the manager's point of view, is not really complete until it has been executed and then finally appraised.

Decision-making, as the process of making a choice between two or more

alternatives, is at the core of the management function of planning. If a manager follows the systematic approach to decision-making outlined in this article, he will improve his chances of making better decisions.

Many factors enter into decision-making, including, experience, intuition, advice from others, experimentation, and scientific decision-making. The effective manager will take advantage of all of these aids, because decision-making is such a vital part of his job. □

Dr. Beaufort B. Longest, Jr., is an assistant professor in the Institute of Health Administration at Georgia State University.

Time's Almost Up!



Don't forget that all applications for the 1975 Sharing Membership Opportunities Program must be mailed now! December new member applications (Form No. 400) must reach World Headquarters no later than January 8, 1976, and credit must be claimed by the Sharing Membership Opportunities sponsor by January 31, 1976.

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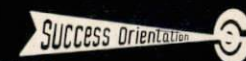
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the action people

Food for Thought

Cooking up new ideas may not be food for thought, but it did prove to be an excellent way of publicizing the most recent club officer election in the Elmgrove Club 2356-65, in Rochester, New York.

Like many other clubs, the Elmgrove Club had experienced some difficulty in getting their officer installation photos printed in their company publication . . . that is, until they came up with this photo idea.

"We of the Elmwood Club are a 'closed' club," says Harold B. Roth, the club's administrative vice-president, "in that we are sponsored by Eastman Kodak and the company's security requires that we remain closed. Thanks to this different approach we took, the photo appeared in our company publication, along with an appropriate item covering the election." (Shown are, from left to right: Harold Roth; Byron Buell, educational vice-president; John Hagin, president; Rick Feldt, secretary; and Don Allen, sergeant at arms. □

She's a Toastmaster

Florence Schow is an 85-year old widow, and like millions of other elderly people throughout the United States, she is confined to a convalescent center—not by desire, but out of necessity. But there is something that separates Florence from all the other people her age . . . Florence Schow is a Toastmaster.

Florence is a member of the Faribault Club 372-6, which meets weekly at the Rice County Courthouse in Faribault, Minnesota. And, according to President Eugene M. Stinson, she has won every award the club has to offer its members.

"When Florence joined our organization over a year ago," said Stinson, "I was curious as to her motivation for joining. 'As long as I can remember,' she told me, 'while read-



ing about Toastmasters meetings in our local newspaper and hearing of them over the radio station, I secretly wished that Toastmasters would admit women to membership in its clubs. When I learned, very much to my surprise, that the local club had decided to admit women, I was very happy to have the opportunity to become a member. I visited the club once with a very dear friend who is a member and joined a short time later. I have been very happy, and others in the club have given me so much encouragement. It's been just wonderful, and I have enjoyed it very much. It is a wonderful and worthwhile group with which to grow and develop our ability to communicate.' "

But, because of Florence's convalescence, says President Stinson, she has had to miss a great many of the club's meetings.

"Florence is recuperating from hip surgery as a result of a fall she took this past summer," says Stinson. "So, in recognition of her keen interest and loyalty to the principles to which Toastmasters subscribes, the local club taped their first meeting of the fall term and presented it to her as encouragement for her continued interest in our

organization.' "

We join the Faribault Club 372 in saluting Florence Schow . . . a real Toastmaster. □

"Voice of America"

A report on Toastmasters International, with specific reference to a club sponsored by The Coca-Cola Company (310 North Club 2195-14) in Atlanta, Georgia, was recently broadcast on "Voice of America."

The report, which was written by Allison Yeh (a former employee of The Coca-Cola Company) and broadcast worldwide in Chinese on the shortwave band, detailed the history and purpose of Toastmasters International and the format of club meetings.

It said that many corporations have recognized the benefits of Toastmasters training for their employees and noted that The Coca-Cola Company sponsors a Toastmasters club. The reports concluded by describing the communication and leadership benefits each member receives from his Toastmasters club.

Excellent publicity . . . and an excellent way to spread the word about Toastmasters! □

Speaking In Public Terrify You ...

Take Heart!

by Sandra Zummo

Have you ever wondered how some Toastmasters clubs get the publicity they need to attract new members? Here's an example of how the Staten Island Club 2536-46 in Staten Island, New York, did it.

They asked a reporter from a local newspaper to come to one of their club meetings and, as a result, the following article appeared in the October 19, 1975, edition of the Staten Island Sunday Advance. If they can do it . . . so can you!

"What kind of 'fun' assignment is this?" I wondered as I crumbled the note from my editor, asking me to attend a meeting of the Toastmasters club.

"How much fun can a person have listening to a bunch of mini-Georgie Jessels learn how to deliver after-dinner oneliners?" An added horror was the thought that in a Bicentennial-conscious time, their quips would in some way be tied to things patriotic. How quaint; colonial mother-in-law jokes.

I didn't really want to go to the El-Sal that evening, but after speaking to Toastmasters President John MacEachin over the telephone, I felt obliged to attend, especially since he assured me that the group was not what it seemed.

Still apprehensive, I entered the Great Kills restaurant promising myself that I would leave at the first Early-American Women's Lib rib.

But ten minutes into the meeting, I

realized that the joke was on me. For whatever else it is, the Toastmasters club is not a laughing matter.

The group, part of an international organization founded 50 years ago by Dr. Ralph C. Smedley, is concerned with improving man's ability to communicate his ideas. And though its name seems to imply something in a more light-hearted vein, Toastmasters is, in essence, a training ground for public speakers, preparing people to successfully assume leadership positions in their communities and giving business and professional people the confidence and verbal ability needed to sell ideas in a competitive market.

Learning by Doing

Smedley, who is perhaps better known for his work in organizing YMCA programs throughout the country, believed in the self-help principles of "learning by doing and improving through practice and criticism," principles strictly adhered to by the 24-member Island group.

"We all need to train our ability more acutely to present our ideas in a short, concise format with adequate support for what we say," explains MacEachin, who helped organize the chapter in 1972.

According to the president, there is a "large challenge" on the Island for Toastmasters to attract the people who really need its services.

"The people who really need what we can give are those who have put themselves in the forefront by assuming leadership roles. Many are well-intentioned,

but they just don't know how to organize. Poorly planned programs eventually lose membership," the soft-spoken Toastmaster points out.

Though the organization's thrust is towards allowing members to work out their problems through practice and a give and take of ideas and experiences between fellow Toastmasters, Smedley found that members were asking for materials to give guidance in specific areas, so he developed a series of "courses" designed to do just that.

There is one course entitled, "Listening to Learn," another giving instruction in speech evaluation, and one specifically designed to aid chairmen.

This guide provides simplified explanations for following Roberts Rules of Order, discusses the best way to organize materials and the proper way to conduct a meeting. Attendance at one Toastmasters meeting would probably provide the fledging chairman with almost as much information.

The Toastmaster for the evening calls the meeting to order on time and, through his opening remarks, sets the tone for what is to follow. Everything is done smoothly, efficiently, formally, not with the formality that breeds snobbishness, but that which allows for getting down to business with a minimum of delay.

In fact, one of the most interesting things about Toastmasters, or about the Island chapter at any rate, is the fact that though it is far from being a "social"

group and takes its work very seriously, there is an air of friendship and congeniality at meetings which extends beyond the members and touches their guests as well.

Visitors to the Tuesday night gatherings are not only warmly welcomed and introduced to the membership, but they are invited to participate in the evening's program. This consists of three or four prepared speeches by specific members (done on a rotating basis) and Table Topics, the impromptu portion of the meeting which allows all present to deliver a one to two minute extemporaneous talk on the topic of the evening.

The "Ah" Bell

New York City's fiscal crisis was the subject chosen by Table Topicsmaster John Caruso, the evening this reporter attended. And though she was duly invited to respond to a question following his introductory remarks, she declined, partly because of long-standing ignorance about numbers that can't be counted on the fingers of one hand, but mostly out of fear of the dreaded "ah" bell.

The "ah" bell is a miniature gong which is rung each time a speaker uses "ah" as a conjunction between words or sentences. At the end of the evening, the person having uttered the most ahs is "awarded" the bell and must keep it for the two weeks preceding the next meeting.

In addition to having an "ah" counter, each meeting employs, on a rotating basis, a timekeeper to indicate when the allotted time for a given speech has expired and a general evaluator, who presents his critical impressions of the entire meeting, from the conduct of the evening's Toastmaster (chairman), through critiques of each speaker—member or guest.

This evaluation is one of the most valuable features of a Toastmasters evening. Gestures and mannerisms are noted, the opening remarks in speeches are examined, voice control and conviction are considered. The evaluation goes right to the core, with no holds barred, and yet there is no animosity among members.

"We chop each other up," admits Toastmaster Mel Scalici, "but it's all

for the betterment of the other person."

Scalici, of Jomel Silversmiths and Jewelers in Stapleton, joined the group three years ago, hoping to overcome the nerves which caused him to become tongue-tied whenever he had to converse with more than one or two people.

"Now I can get up before groups and speak about my work," the silversmith beams, "It's good public relations, and, as an active member in community affairs, I can express my views better and influence people to my way of thinking."

George Boelger is another Toastmaster who can't say enough about the organization's merits.

Boelger, an insurance broker, was active in the Conservative Party on the Island, but nerves caused him to stutter a great deal.

"I never spoke up because I was too embarrassed," he remembers. "Just having to say my name, my palms would sweat and I wanted to run out the door. It's humiliating and it's something you suffer alone."

A Good Place

A chance meeting with MacEachin introduced the 48-year old widower to the Toastmasters program. "I didn't want to go at first and was reluctant even as I was driving there. Then, when I walked into the room I felt a warmth from the members and knew it was a good place for me."

And it was, because exactly one year after joining Toastmasters, in 1974, Boelger ran for the Assembly in the 61st district.

"I would never have run for anything before I joined," the mild-mannered Boelger admits. "I must have had the confidence all the while, but there was a barrier that nullified that confidence."

Though many people leave the group when they realize their immediate goals, some remain active members for years.

Others, like Lou Wein, leave, but visit meetings from time to time.

Wein, an assistant to Mayor Beame and head of the Mayor's Task Force for Emergency Preparedness, aided Canio Paine, founder of the Island chapter, in attracting the initial membership to the group.

"I was willing to help, but it wasn't

until I saw what they were doing that I really became excited about it," says Wein, who served as chapter-president before MacEachin.

As Beame's director of Federal Relations, Wein has dealt with senior officials in government and was a consultant to former President Nixon. He believes that Toastmasters' value lies in allowing you to see how you are perceived by others and, by affording members the opportunity to learn through practice, it helps them to learn about themselves and realize their full potential.

For Employees Only

A number of private industries, notably Exxon, Eastman Kodak and Equitable Life Insurance, have closed clubs for employees only, and, in the light of their success, Wein is trying to get Toastmasters developed as a training program in municipal government agencies.

During his term as president, Wein was also anxious to have women admitted to Toastmasters membership.

"There is room here for the development of more Toastmasters clubs," he insists, stating that as a program in communication and leadership, Toastmasters is a valuable educational tool for both men and women.

MacEachin agrees with his assessment, adding that the present group would provide assistance in the formation and organization of other chapters on the Island.

In spite of the success stories it has spawned, Toastmasters has not been all things to all people and many have abandoned the program after a few visits.

"Some people just cannot cross the super-ego line and admit that there can be anything wrong with the manner in which they speak," offers MacEachin. "Others may have found the program too demanding, and still others may have been under the impression that they were going to become after-dinner speakers and learn how to tell jokes."

Hopefully, those who have left have not experienced the churning stomach, sweaty palms and nervous stammer of the novice speaker. If they have, they are probably reconsidering the Toastmasters bill of goods. And it's a safe bet they're not laughing now. □

To Debate or Not to Debate

by

**Ronald E. Oest
Club 1675-33**

Our club recently accepted the challenge of participating in an area debate, and because Eye Openers 1675-33, Lancaster, California, is an active club, most of our members were eager to be a part of the club's two-man debate team. Consequently, we were faced with the task of developing a process of elimination. But, to make things worse, time was against us—we had to accomplish this during a single club meeting. Here's how, by taking advantage of Toastmasters International's debate manual and adding a bit of Toastmasters ingenuity and imagination, we put together a very successful "Debate-Off."

A list of resolutions was distributed to each member at the meeting, before the scheduled debates. All members were told they would be defending either the "pro" or "con" of one of these resolutions and that this would be determined the day of the Debate-Off. This meant that each interested member would prepare two arguments for each resolution. The resolutions themselves were general and topical in nature, so that this preparation was not particularly difficult or time-consuming.

The first order of business on the day of the Debate-Off was a simple drawing, wherein each member was assigned the

"pro" or "con" side of one of the resolutions. The debates followed the "one-on-one" format, with a three-minute presentation by the "pro" speaker, followed by a three-minute presentation by the "con" speaker. Each was then allowed one and one-half minutes for rebuttal.

The resulting program was, in every way, worthy of the Toastmasters tradition. It was at all times lively and fast-paced, with speakers changing frequently. Everyone was able to participate, and each person was given four and one-half minutes of speaking time. While the rebuttal portion of each debate was, for the most part, impromptu, enough of the formal debate procedure was maintained to give everyone a feel for debates.

After all the debates were completed, everyone cast his votes for the two best debaters, and the two receiving the most votes became members of our debate team. But there's more. At the conclusion of the program, it was unanimously decided that this format should be repeated in the near future.

How about your club? Could you use a new programming idea? If so, try holding a "Debate-Off." It's a great learning experience . . . and a very enjoyable one. □

What's the Secret?

by

**Pat Young
Club 2297-18**

Public speakers are often asked, "What's the secret of speaking to large groups?" The answer is simple and is one that you can learn to use. Just reduce the size of the group to one friend.

If you feel comfortable talking to one friend, then you can speak to large groups, which merely consist of a lot of friends. As you speak on a one-to-one basis, you will become more natural and your words will flow more easily.

To personalize your speech, try to develop good eye contact with those in the audience. Look directly into their eyes as you make your point. Aimless gazing over heads or down at the floor will not stimulate the audience. If a good speaker gets his listeners involved by commanding their attention, he will sel-

dom have anyone fall asleep in the audience.

Feedback and response from your audience will tell you how you're doing. If they are sitting on the edge of their chairs with the body leaning forward, then you are doing very well. Body language also indicates things such as boredom, restlessness, and negative reactions to your ideas. At times such as these, you need to insert humor or, possibly, should be winding up your speech with a conclusion.

With practice, you can become confident when you speak to larger groups. Try to keep it on the one-to-one basis and you'll find that you will not feel as nervous as you did before. But remember, there will always be a certain amount of nervousness. After all, it will help keep you on your toes. □

books books books

A look at two books that will go a long way toward helping you improve the overall quality of your next speech.

Podium Humor, by James C. Humes. Harper and Row, 1975, \$9.95. *Not available from Toastmasters International.*

If you're ready to graduate from jokes humor in your speaking, *Podium Humor* by James C. Humes will help you along the way.

After devoting nearly seventy pages to explaining how to put a humorous story together and tailor it for your particular speaking situation, former Washington speech-writer Humes supplies more than 600 stories, indexed by topic and situation, which can provide the basis for effective podium humor.

Each of the stories follows a simple pattern of humor: pump up the story like a balloon, and then puncture it with the punch line. Add to that the opening lead in, also supplied by the author, and you are ready to develop these ideas to suit your own speaking requirements and style. Humes gives a variety of examples and proven methods for making the stories sound fresh and original. This book is a good starter for building some humor into nearly any speech. □

Robert J. Stoffel, ATM, a member of Plus Factor Club 1229-8 in St. Louis, sent us a review of a book he believes every Toastmaster should read. Mr. Stoffel is a landscape architect and a technical writer for the City of St. Louis.

Troubled Talk, by Alfred Fleishman. Available from the International Society for General Semantics, P.O. Box 2469, San Francisco, CA 94126. 80 pages, \$2.75 plus 30 cents postage.

Words are the tools of every Toastmaster. Like any tool, they can be beneficial, or they can be useless or even harmful, depending on how they are used. We should all take a closer look at our own "language habits."

Human communication can become

more effective when there is an understanding of the importance of words upon human emotions and behavior. How we use words and what words we use can alter the communication process.

While good communication involves talking, talking does not always result in good communication. If we can understand how good communication works, we have a chance to overcome bad language habits. Most of us have acquired six common bad language habits: (1) we do not listen, (2) we interrupt others, (3) we impose our views on others, (4) we consider the word as the thing, (5) we resort to name calling, and (6) we know all about everything.

Are you self-centered, narrow-minded, egotistical, conceited, opinionated—and still a nice guy? Yes, we all are, to a degree. To recognize this fact and control these emotions make for better communication.

To improve our language habits, one of the first things we must do is to quit acting like members of a debating society almost every time we get into a discussion. An open-minded approach enables us to critically analyze our everyday thinking, talking, and behaving.

Your personal attitude can also be a cause of faulty communication. What we want and what we get are two different things. Idealism, on a limited basis, can survive in an imperfect world, but failure to accept something other than perfection leads to frustration. If this frustration can not be handled properly, a person becomes demoralized. This mental state can destroy labor-management relations, marriages, and friendships.

To claim that our truth is the only truth leads, at the very least, to "troubled talk." It is almost certain to foul up our communication. We as Toastmasters must all evaluate ourselves and our fellow man with deep understanding and compassion if we expect to be good communicators. This is the theme of the book *Troubled Talk*, which I feel should be required reading for all Toastmasters. □

hall of fame

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Congratulations to these Toastmasters who have received the Distinguished Toastmaster certificate, Toastmasters International's highest member recognition.

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2043-F ORANGE COUNTY LOS PADRINOS
Orange County, CA—Thurs., 7:00 p.m., Casa Sofia, 13187 Harbor Blvd. (541-0305). Sponsored by Los Padrinos Club 2110-F.

3820-F EAST SAN BERNADINO
San Bernadino, CA—Fri., 7:00 p.m., Mickey D's Village, Waterman & Crosstown Frwy. (888-4360). Sponsored by Arrowhead Club 788-F.

1870-4 GENTLE GIANTS
San Jose, CA—Wed., 7:30 p.m., Bank of America, 5th Floor, 101 Park Plaza Center (277-7022).

3824-4 DLI
Monterey, CA—Mon., 11:30 a.m., Presidio of Monterey Officers Club, Bldg. 531, Stillwell Ave. (242-8757). Sponsored by Naval Postgraduate School Club 2032-4.

106-18 COASTMASTERS
Curtis Bay, MD—Thurs., 4:30 p.m., BOQ U.S. Coast Guard Yard (284-9295). Sponsored by Kritikos Club 1686-18.

1395-30 FILMS-PACKAGING
Chicago, IL—Mon., 5:00 p.m., Union Carbide Corp., Films—Packaging Div., 6733 W. 65th St. (496-5711).

891-36 MILPERCEN
Alexandria, VA—Tues., 12 Noon, Room 3N20 Hoffman II, 200 Stovall St. (325-9438).

69-38 CATALYTIC, INC.
Philadelphia, PA—Monday 12:00 p.m., 11th Floor, Conference Room, Centre Square, 1500 Market St. (864-8401).

1941-40 ANDERSON HILLS
Cincinnati, OH—Tues., 7:30 p.m., Mt. Washington Presbyterian Church, 6474 Beechmont Ave. (232-4914). Sponsored by Seven Hills Club 1578-40.

3735-43 SOUTHWEST
Little Rock, AR—Fri., 12 Noon, Southwest Holiday Inn, New Benton Highway (569-2481). Sponsored by Hi-Noon Club 2217-43.

2772-46 TOASTMASTERS OF SOUTHDOLD TOWNSHIP
Southold, NY—Fri., 7:30 p.m., Southold Firehouse, Main Rd., Southold (734-6753).

206-47 TIP & RING
Miami, FL—Tues., 5:30 p.m., Conference Room, Southern Bell Tel & Tel, 666 NW 79th Ave. (263-3609). Sponsored by Greater Miami Club 2216-47.

1616-47 WINTER PARK VANGUARD'S
Winter Park, FL—Tues., 7:30 p.m., Winter Park Library, S. Interlachen Ave. (876-2741).

2537-47 MERRITT ISLAND
Merritt Island, FL—Wed., 6:30 p.m., Western Sizzling Steak House, 155 E. Merritt Island Causeway (452-3854). Sponsored by Richard B. Battin.

2938-47 LUNCH BREAK
Fort Myers, FL—Wed., 12 Noon, Ft. Myers Country Club, McGregor Blvd. (694-3966). Sponsored by Fort Myers Club 1702-47.

166-52 FLOOD CONTROL DISTRICT
Los Angeles, CA—Wed., 12 Noon, L.A. Flood Control District, 2250 Alcazar St. (221-0978).

2468-56 SUNRISE
Houston, TX—Mon., 6:45 a.m., Holiday Inn West, 9799 Katy Freeway (497-0992). Sponsored by Daybreakers Club 839-56.

2836-62 FARM BUREAU
Lansing, MI—Mon., 7:00 a.m., Michigan Farm Bureau, 7373 W. Saginaw Hwy. (485-8121, Ext. 210).

2763-69 SUNSHINE COAST
Alexandra Headlands, Queensland, Australia—Tues., 7:30 p.m., Chifley's Hotel (458-318). Sponsored by Media-Mix Club 2509-69.

1763-72 U.E.B. AUCKLAND
Auckland, New Zealand—Wed., 5:45 p.m., U.E.B. Industries, Ltd., Short Street, Auckland (Auckland 33-212). Sponsored by Akarana Club 3398-72.

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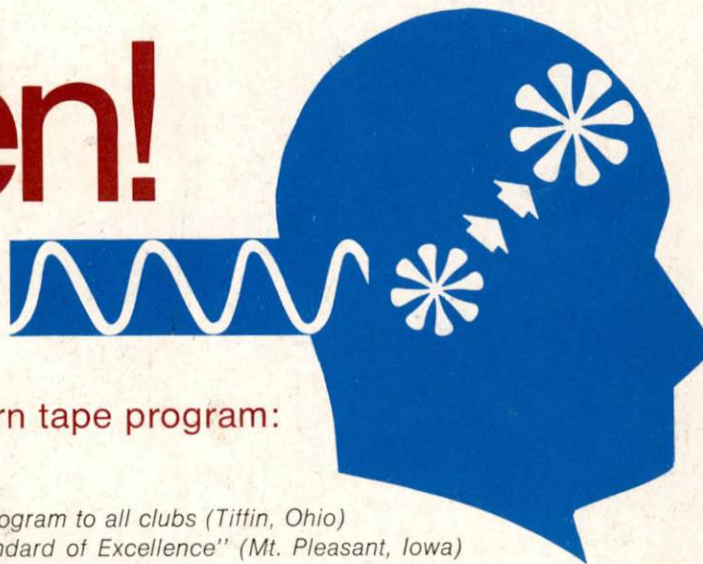
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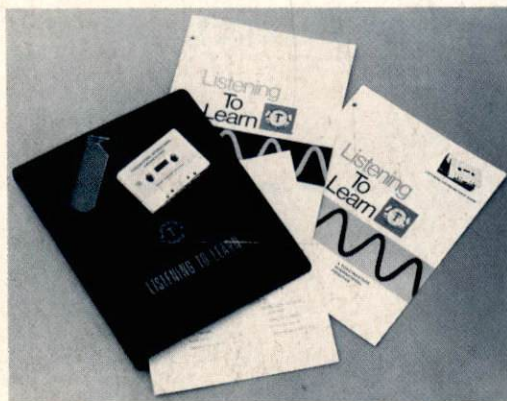
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