

TOASTMASTER

NOVEMBER 2006

The Art
of
**Mingling &
Networking**

Let's Take a Meeting:

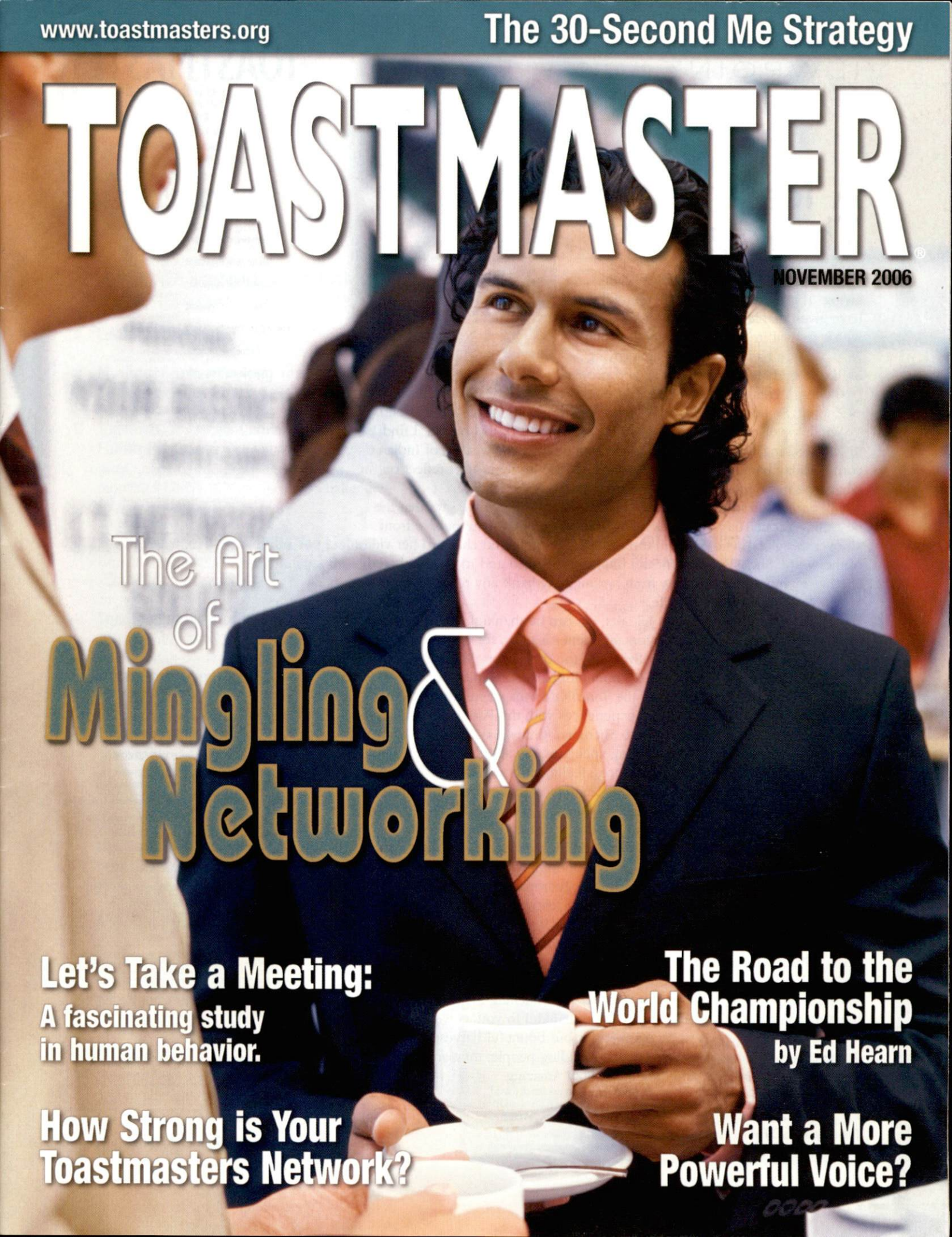
A fascinating study
in human behavior.

**How Strong is Your
Toastmasters Network?**

The Road to the World Championship

by Ed Hearn

**Want a More
Powerful Voice?**



A Toastmasters Thanksgiving

This month, America celebrates Thanksgiving. Throughout history, different cultures have given thanks for a bountiful harvest with a festival in one form or another. Since 1879, Canada has celebrated Thanksgiving on the second Monday of October, and people of Chinese heritage around the world celebrate the harvest festival known as Zhong Qie Jie on the 15th day of the eighth month of the lunar calendar.

While traveling around the United States for most of this month, I find myself thinking of turkeys, stuffing and pumpkin pie. As visions of Indian corn, holiday parades and giant balloons bounce in my head, I reflect on what we can be most thankful for in Toastmasters.

Jill, a friend from my hometown of Cebu City, Philippines, says that the best thing about Toastmasters is being able to meet so many people from all over the globe who have, in turn, touched her life and changed her views of the world. She is grateful for the friendships forged and moments shared. She has memories to withdraw from her memory bank any time she wants to count the treasures in her life.


I could not agree more with Jill. Yes, we can be thankful to Toastmasters for making us better communicators and better leaders, for giving us self-confidence and for changing our lives. But the trigger for all these benefits are the people in Toastmasters, our "bountiful harvest" of members.

In the September 2005 issue of the *Toastmaster* magazine, Beate from Hannover, Germany, wrote of her experiences with the Pudong Toastmasters as she and her husband relocated to Shanghai, China. Says Beate, "Toastmasters to me is not just about giving speeches. It's about finding new friends, sharing cultures and experiences, feeling at home away from home."

In Toastmasters, we become better communicators because of the helpful evaluations we receive from our fellow members. We develop our leadership skills because our fellow members place their trust and confidence in our ability to get things done. We boost our confidence and self-esteem because our fellow members applaud us at every opportunity.

Beyond anything else, it is the people in Toastmasters who matter the most. Always find something positive in your fellow members, because they are the ones we ought to be most thankful for. If your club is in a rut and only five people show up for meetings, be thankful you have those five. They will form the core group that will rebuild your club. If the speeches delivered in your club leave something to be desired, be thankful you now have the opportunity to help your members by coaching them and offering them meaningful evaluations. They will be thankful to you as well.

This Thanksgiving, let us be thankful for our bountiful harvest of Toastmasters members. They are people building people, they are friends helping friends succeed, and they are Simply Amazing!



Johnny Uy, DTM
International President



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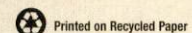
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The Toastmasters Vision:

Toastmasters International empowers people to achieve their full potential and realize their dreams. Through our member clubs, people throughout the world can improve their communication and leadership skills, and find the courage to change.

The Toastmasters Mission:

Toastmasters International is the leading movement devoted to making effective oral communication a worldwide reality.

Through its member clubs, Toastmasters International helps men and women learn the arts of speaking, listening and thinking – vital skills that promote self-actualization, enhance leadership potential, foster human understanding, and contribute to the betterment of mankind.

It is basic to this mission that Toastmasters International continually expand its worldwide network of clubs thereby offering ever-greater numbers of people the opportunity to benefit from its programs.

Hello, China!

I teach public speaking as an adjunct professor at a college. I have been saving the last several months' issues of the *Toastmaster* magazine to bring to my classes for my students.

My daughter, who is a university professor in China where she teaches English, was home for the summer and said she planned to teach storytelling in one of her classes this fall. She saw my recent issue of the magazine with storytelling as a cover story and asked if she could bring the copy with her.

Then she saw the September '05 issue with China on the cover. Could she have that issue too? In fact, could she have all the back issues I had been saving?

Goodbye local college students, hello China! As each new issue arrives, I will send it to her for use in her classes. These magazines are gems of helpful information and how-to's for English and speech majors. Keep up the great international work!

Jeffrey Anderson, CC • Regent Toastmasters Club 7013
Virginia Beach, Virginia

Becoming a Competent Leader

I want to Congratulate Bonnie L. Maidak for two things: for her article "Becoming a new Competent Leader" (September) and for her enthusiasm in becoming the first new Competent Leader in her district. I hope she became the first Competent Leader in the entire Toastmasters world. Her article was really inspiring!

I bought the *Competent Leadership* manual when it came out, and then struggled to find ways to get started on it since its use hadn't taken off in my club. As the VP Education, my goal is to have at least three people started in the new CL manual, including myself. Since our club is short on people and everyone is trying to get speeches in, I'll probably make all CL evaluations written. Now I just need

to find ways to inspire my fellow club members to get started on it!

Thanks to TI for this new leadership manual, and to Bonnie for her inspiring article.

Alex Garcia • Horizon Speakers 4475 • Kalamazoo, Michigan

Popular Laws of Leadership

I just read the excellent article, "Laws for Positive Leadership" in the September issue. It was both enjoyable and provocative.

Being a former U.S. Marine reservist for a number of years, I can relate to opening illustration. And as I am now in leadership as the pastor of a small Baptist church, I also take some admonishment from the article's comment that "A positive leadership style inspires, motivates, energizes, unites, generates loyalty and produces results." I have posted the article's "10 laws" on my wall. Thanks for an excellent and concise piece of writing.

Donald G. Culbertson • Not Your Typical Toastmasters Club 4078
East Providence, RI

I want to tell you how much I enjoyed and benefited from Victor Parachin's article in the September issue, as well as his past articles for the *Toastmaster* magazine.

Whenever I receive the monthly magazine and one of his articles is featured, I always read it first. Mr. Parachin's inspirational message is always very helpful and enjoyable. He writes with clarity, interest and from the heart.

I especially remember one of his articles from the October 2002 issue called "Words That Work Wonders." It helped and inspired me in my ninth manual speech. Thank you for publishing Mr. Parachin's wonderful contributions in the magazine.

Bob Horn • Switch-On Club 4224 • San Jose, California

I have just read "Laws for Positive Leadership." Thank you, Victor, for taking the time to present this inspiring, insightful and useful illumination! I'm in my early 60s and had come across some of the ideas in this article in one form or another, but for some reason this time they inspired me beyond anything I've seen in the past. The ideas are clear, very thoughtful and laid out in a concise way to make them easy to grasp, accessible and therefore very usable. I am greatly inspired to use these leadership laws immediately!

Tom Alvord • Middlesex County Club 8340 • Middlefield, Connecticut



Are You Walking Your Talk?

Some days are meant to be great. February 16, 2000, was one of them, although its greatness was certainly not obvious at first.

I was about to compete at my club's international speech contest. I had a good speech, which I had rehearsed endlessly for two months. I was ready!

As I stood in front of my fellow Toastmasters, I felt a rush of confidence. I uttered my opening sentence flawlessly. However, my second sentence got stuck in my throat. Then... nothing! I drew a complete blank. Unable to remember the slightest detail of my speech – I didn't have notes – I left the room in tears. Humiliated like a diva who just missed her high note, I wanted to crawl into a hole and wait for the end of times.

But this day turned out to be the highlight of my public speaking career! Thanks to this humbling experience, I made three invaluable discoveries that changed my life forever.

First, I learned that my Toastmasters club was the best place to fail, because my fellow Toastmasters are a compassionate and caring group of people. Indeed, two days after the contest, I found at my door an envelope full of notes. All my club members had written thoughtful words of encouragement such as "Please come back," "I already miss you," "We want you back." Those words touched my heart deeply and healed the pain of my failure.

My second lesson from this unpleasant experience was the discovery of my own resiliency. Even before receiving the notes, I had decided to go back to my club and speak on "What to do when you forget your speech." I had already scheduled this speech for our next meeting. Incidentally, I gave this presentation without any memory blank!

But the third lesson was the most important one: I uncovered my inability

to speak in any situation where I don't "walk my talk."

Walking our talk is directly related to the topic we present. The topic of my contest speech was "Relationships," and more specifically "Commitment." I was speaking to Ken, the boyfriend of the Barbie doll, teasing him about his 40 years of dating Barbie and asking him when he was finally going to propose to her. It was an entertaining and motivational speech about the glory of love and commitment.

However, at the time of this presentation, I had been dating a man for the last two years. Even though I was trying to convince myself – and everyone else – that I was very committed to my boyfriend, deep down I knew I wasn't ready to spend my life with him. So there I was, trying to convince my audience that commitment was a wonderful thing, while in my personal life I was running away from it like a scared chicken.

Unfortunately when our body goes in one direction, and our head in another, the result can be disastrous. In my case, I believe my personal integrity kept me from lying to my audience and... I froze! As public speakers, I am convinced it is essential that our words be in line with our actions, or that we walk our talk. However, this is not always the case.

Some time ago, a friend attended a seminar on "How to get rid of clutter." He found the seminar useful and the presenter very professional. Afterward, he helped the presenter carry her equipment to her car and then his opinion changed. The car was so messy and cluttered that the presenter instantly lost all her credibility.

This anecdote ties into my own situation because I have recently started to take my speaking career more seriously. And I am speaking on... relationships! I now live with a

marvelous man I met six years ago. Our relationship is filled with fun, love and commitment. But like every couple, we sometimes have an argument, the kind of argument where I know I am so right – or so I think – and he is so wrong! Not wanting to budge from our positions, we get stuck for a little while.

Before long, a nagging little voice in my head begins casting brief messages such as "relationship expert," "credibility," and "wanna walk your talk?" Ignoring them at first, I finally give in. Yes, I want to walk my talk! So I start remembering the principles I teach, such as "Do you want to be right or to be happy?" Because I want to be happy, I reluctantly step down from my self-righteous position, I reach out to my spouse and together we resolve the conflict. Each one of those hard-won victories reinforces our relationship and proves that the principles I share during my presentations are worth applying.

Since that fateful contest in 2000, I have been walking my talk. In 2001, I again presented that same speech on commitment at my club's international speech contest, simply hoping to complete it. Not only did I deliver the whole speech without a glitch, but I also won first place. I later placed first at the area level, and I could have won at the division level had the judges not decided to give more points to my fellow contestants!

Life is full of twists and turns. Surprisingly, I learned a lot more by failing in 2000 than by succeeding in 2001. February 16, 2000, turned out to be a great day after all: The day I learned to walk my talk! **T**

Frederique Herel, DTM, is a member of Glen Abbey Club in Oakville, Ontario, Canada. Reach her at www.relationshipsbyfrederique.com.

Editor's Note: Do you have an inspiring story of how the Toastmasters program has helped you? Tell us at letters@toastmasters.org.

Matthew Jones:

Cancer Survivor Fulfills His Dream

By Julie Bawden Davis

After nearly dying in his 20s, this Toastmaster motivates others to conquer life's challenges.



▲ Matthew Jones

Matthew Jones thought he wanted to be a personal fitness trainer – until his senior year of college when his entire perception changed. On September 11, 2002, doctors diagnosed Jones with leukemia, and he spent the next two years battling a cancer that eventually threatened his brain.

“One minute I was a healthy senior in college, and the next I was checking myself into the hospital and getting a bone marrow biopsy,” says Jones, 28, who spent three months in the hospital after the initial diagnosis. “That experience transformed my life. When I came face-to-face with death, I decided that life is too short and precious and that my dream had changed. I wanted to become a professional speaker and turn the cancer into a positive and make a difference in the lives of others.”

When Jones walked out of the hospital determined to become a professional speaker, he headed straight to Toastmasters. “I found the Sunflower club in Topeka [Kansas], which was near the hospital, and attended my first meeting in early 2003,” he says. “That first Toastmasters meeting was so exciting. It was great to go into such a positive atmosphere with people who also wanted to improve their speaking skills.”

Doctors thought Jones’ cancer was in remission, but shortly after joining the Sunflower club, he began feeling sick again. “I relapsed and doctors told me that I needed a bone marrow transplant,” he says. “Before that

could happen, however, I had to undergo more chemotherapy to get the cancer back in remission.”

Over the next year, Jones battled the leukemia, which almost won. He credits Toastmasters and his girlfriend, Ariella Rios, for helping him endure the darkest days of his life and come out a survivor.

“One of my fondest memories is of my hospital stay the second time undergoing chemotherapy and the Sunflower club was having their annual picnic,” he says. “They knew I had meant to attend, so they all came to see me and brought a buffalo burger. Their visit really lifted my spirits. When you’re going through something that difficult, the support of positive people with positive energy is so important. Their taking the time to see me also shows the high caliber of people you find in Toastmasters.”

Jones’ cancer went into remission after that hospital stay and he was able to graduate from college. Soon after, while waiting for a bone marrow transplant, however, he began experiencing severe headaches. Doctors confirmed that the leukemia had returned and spread to the cerebral spinal fluid in his brain.

“Now the cancer was in two different places in my body and one doctor gave me a 10 percent chance of living,” says Jones. “In January 2004, they began chemotherapy again, but on Valentine’s Day [February 14] I slipped into a semi-coma. They pulled Ariella out of the room and said to

call friends and family because they didn't think I was going to make it through the night."

Rios and Jones had started dating six months before he became ill, and she was by his side during the entire illness. "Those were some really difficult days," Rios says. "People were practically digging Matt's grave for him and in many ways the experience was surreal. Looking back on it now, I can see what a miracle it is that he survived."

The only one who isn't surprised that he survived is Jones himself. "I knew that somehow I would live and touch the lives of others in a positive way," says Jones, who had a bone marrow transplant in April 2004 and is now fully recovered. "The recovery process takes time, and I'm still building an immune system, but I'm feeling much better."

Jones had some neurological damage from the coma, and was feeling numb and weak after the transplant, but went straight to Toastmasters for the support he needed.

"I joined a club near the hospital where I had the transplant in August 2004, which helped me to start working once again on becoming a professional speaker," he says. "Becoming involved in such a positive, encouraging atmosphere really built momentum."

As Rios sees it, getting involved with Toastmasters was the best thing her boyfriend could do for himself.

"Toastmasters has given Matt a purpose and provided opportunities for networking and setting goals," she says. "Even when he was very ill and unable to go anywhere, just thinking about the group gave him hope."

Since his transplant, Jones has broadened his speaking experience, talking on a regular basis to a variety of service organizations, nonprofit groups, schools and churches. In July 2005, he and Rios moved across the country to Temecula, California, where he now belongs to the Toast of the Valley Toastmasters club. He also wrote a book about his experience. *Going through Hell? Don't Stop! How to Survive Your Darkest Days*

and Create Your Brightest Future, tells of his experience and how Toastmasters and pursuing his dream of becoming a professional speaker helped him find purpose in his life.

Through his book and his presentations, Jones shares his "Five P's of Success" – Purpose, Passion, Positive Attitude, Perseverance and Personal Empowerment. "Life is not what happens to you, but how you perceive it," he says.

Those watching Jones' career, such as his mentor Les Brown, feel that he's well on his way to reaching his goal and making a difference. "Matthew's level of growth and development during his involvement in Toastmasters has been phenomenal," says Brown, a Toastmasters' Golden Gavel winner, well-known author, speech coach and motivational speaker.

"We all have our challenges, but Matthew is able to leverage his story so that it has value for the audience," says Brown. "He makes them look at their lives in a new light, take ownership and think, what do I have to complain about?"

"What impresses me the most about his progress is his level of connectedness with the audience. Most people speak to impress, but he speaks to connect," Brown continues. "It's a phenomenal task to create an experience for the audience that inspires them from within to go higher. He makes you uncomfortable with who you are so you can make changes."

At the same time, Jones is truly likable, says Jeanne Nelson, a member of the Toast of the Valley Toastmasters. "Besides being a confident speaker, he's a genuinely nice person, who is well liked by members of the club." **T**

Julie Bawden Davis is a freelance writer based in Southern California. Reach her at Julie@juliebawdendavis.com.

Editor's Note: For more information on Matthew Jones' book, *Going Through Hell?*, visit www.matthewdjones.com.



Speaking to the CEO

MICHAEL HINTON

What do tough business audiences want?

Speaking to the CEO tells you what over 50 CEOs, senior executives, management consultants and academics say you must do - and what you mustn't - to succeed in your next business presentation.

The author, Michael Hinton, DTM, is a presentations coach and leader of the business presentation seminar at McGill's International Executive Institute.

"An instant classic, *Speaking to the CEO* is one of the few books on presentation every Toastmaster should read."

Nicholas Waldteufel, DTM, past District 61 Governor

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Business meetings have a life of their own. As long as human beings do business with each other – otherwise known as giving each other the business – there will be meetings. Only once in the annals of free enterprise has a company operated without meetings. The result was an office full of employees wondering why they weren't being invited to meetings and what this portended for their careers. They all went crazy.

Let's Take a Meeting

By John Cadley

The business meeting is a fascinating study in human behavior.

Therefore, there will always be meetings and you will always have to go. Rather than resent this, however, I suggest we see the business meeting as a fascinating study in human behavior, a microcosm of subtle communication in which the true dynamics of a given situation can reveal themselves with crystalline clarity.

In fact – what a coincidence! – here's a meeting now. There's an oblong conference table fringed with gun-metal-gray office chairs. In the corner stands a cart on wheels with coffee carafes marked "Regular," "Decaf" and "Hot Water." In front of them sit small bowls of granulated sugar, pink packets of synthetic sweetener and tea bags, and fanned out in front of them are napkins and spoons – all there to complement the centerpiece on the conference table: a large plate of doughnuts and pastries.

Yes, this is definitely a meeting. Let's stand here behind our one-way mirror and observe. Ah, here comes Pauline. Her clothes represent the formal end of business casual – a crisply pressed navy blue pant suit, matching pumps and a lapel pin bearing the company motto: "The Power of Us." Pauline is carrying a leather-bound writing tablet engraved with her initials, and inside that tablet is a fresh writing pad and a silver Cross pen with a brand new ink cartridge. Without uttering a syllable Pauline has already

told us something: This is her meeting. She is prepared, she is ready – and she is the only one who is here on time.

Pauline puts an agenda sheet in front of each chair. Her computer is already set up to run her PowerPoint presentation. She clicks through a few slides to make sure it's working properly. Pauline has been around too long to have her presentation – or her reputation – torpedoed by a technological glitch.

Five minutes pass. Pauline straightens the napkins on the refreshment cart, gives a short sigh and looks toward the door. She continues standing. To sit would signal that the meeting has begun, which would be awkward in a room full of empty chairs.

Two more minutes pass. There are hurried footsteps in the hallway. Jack appears at the door. Jack sees the empty chairs and says, "Oh good, I thought I was late." Jack is a multitasker. He has come to the meeting with a laptop under his arm and a cell phone and pager on his belt. Were they all to activate simultaneously he would sound like an air-raid warning.



Being in her perpetual hurried state, she sits quickly at the table, puts on her gold reading glasses and reviews the agenda, giving little grunts of approval at the list of topics. Bonnie is telling everybody: "I'm not a lightweight. I can do this job – even if I don't need it."

And finally there's Bob. Every company has a Bob. He's what's known as a lifer. Bob has been here as long as anybody can remember, always working, billing tons of hours, never takes a sick day, attends all company picnics, parties and dinners, always volunteering for special tasks. The only thing is... no one knows what Bob actually *does*.

Bob is dressed in a short-sleeved dress shirt, neat khaki slacks and tassel loafers. He ambles in with his hands in his pockets. He has no pen, no notepad, no handheld PDA – nothing that would indicate he's going to *learn* something at this meeting. Bob smiles warmly to everyone, sits in his chair and leans back with his hands clasped behind his head in a posture of total poise and confidence. Bob is saying: "I know everything."

There is actually one other attendee, albeit *in absentia* at the present moment. It's Jim, the head of the department and everybody's boss. Jim has indicated that he will "drop in" at some point in the proceedings. Note the choice of words. Jim could have "stopped by" the meeting, "stuck his head in," or even just "swung over." But no – Jim is going to "drop in," which denotes a descent from a higher place and communicates Jim's message loud and clear: "I am God."

As Pauline begins her opening remarks we notice how each participant "takes" a meeting. Bonnie has uncapped her monogrammed Mont Blanc ballpoint to write the date and the names of the attendees in the upper right hand corner of her notepad. Then she has drawn a box around the names and drawn an arrow pointing to the box. As Pauline speaks, Bonnie takes copious notes, underlining, asterisking and circling what she feels is most important, which seems to be virtually everything Pauline says. Indeed, one wonders if Bonnie's intense focus on note-taking is such that she has no idea what Pauline is actually saying.

Across from Bonnie we have Phil, who is having the opposite problem: He is finding it hard to focus on anything except the doughnuts and how much time should elapse before he can reach for another (his first was before the meeting started so it doesn't count).

And then there's Bob, who hasn't moved from his position: chair tilted back, hands still clasped behind his head, a certain smugness that is supposed to look like curiosity. Bob nods approvingly at Pauline, as if she's auditioning.

In the meantime Jack is still multitasking. His eyes drift back and forth between Pauline and his computer screen. Jack's cell phone will ring no less than three times during this meeting. Each time Jack will say, "I'm sorry, I have to take this." He will then leave the meeting, return a few minutes

later, look at his pager and his watch, then return his gaze to Pauline, drumming his fingers on the table and pumping his legs up and down underneath it. Jack needs people to be seeing him as a dedicated professional. He also needs clinical treatment for ADD and obsessive-compulsive disorder.

Pauline is on her tenth PowerPoint slide when Jim "drops in." He slides into a chair in the back and says, "Go ahead, go ahead, don't mind me." Suddenly, Bonnie takes notes even more furiously than before, if that's possible, Jack turns off his cell phone and closes his laptop, Bob tilts his chair forward and actually starts paying attention, and Phil drops the third doughnut he was in the process of grabbing. All eyes are on Pauline, who is unsettled by the sudden attention. She starts speaking a little faster, stumbling over the phrase "tactical strategy" by calling her budgetary guidelines a "tactical tragedy."

Jim has not been in the meeting more than a few minutes when there is a quick knock on the door. One of Jim's assistants pokes her head and says, "Is Jim here?" Pauline

"As long as Jim is in Pauline's meeting, it's not a meeting, it's Jim Central."

stops talking while the assistant whispers something to Jim, receives a whisper back from Jim, nods her head and mouths "Sorry!" as she tiptoes out of the room. This happens several more times – a brand manager, an engineer, a marketing person – all with apologies, hurried whispers and quick exits. But the point is clear: As long as Jim is in Pauline's meeting, it's not a meeting, it's Jim Central.

Jim stays a while longer, nodding his head at some points, knitting his eyebrows at others. When he does leave, it is with a quick smile and a wave, leaving Pauline to wonder what he thought. This is Jim's intention.

Insecure, worried employees are so much easier to control.

The rest of the meeting goes by with each attendee reverting to their pre-Jim behavior. Pauline finally reaches her "Conclusions and Actionables" PowerPoint slide and the meeting is over. Bonnie tucks her notes inside her day planner, where they will remain until she finds them one day and wonders what they're for. Jack folds up his laptop, tucks it under his arm and disappears down the hall with his cell phone pressed tightly to his ear. Phil grabs one more doughnut for the road, and Bob gives Pauline a brotherly thumbs-up.

They file out and Pauline gathers her materials quickly. She is due at another meeting in 15 minutes, someone *else's* meeting. She can't wait – to tilt back and relax, grab the doughnut she didn't get for breakfast, and maybe even catch up on a few e-mails and phone calls. **T**

John Cadley is a freelance writer and advertising executive enjoying meetings in Syracuse, New York.

Why it is more difficult to evaluate than to speak.

How Well Do You Listen?

■ We all have two ears and one mouth. There is significance to that ratio. Have you noticed it is much more difficult to be an evaluator than a speaker? While we are in Toastmasters to develop our speaking skills, we need to also sharpen our listening skills. Here are four suggestions:

Avoid Interrupting

Do you have friends or acquaintances who, when they tell you something, need to start from the very beginning, almost the day they were born? As a listener, have you ever wished you had a green- yellow- red timer and could begin flashing it after the first two minutes? Resist that urge.

When I was a practicing doctor, time was of the essence. I used to interrupt my patients shortly after they began speaking, thinking that I could, by asking pertinent questions, focus on the problem more quickly and save time. I learned at an HMO seminar that doctors usually do not allow their patients to speak for more than a minute before interrupting them.

Studies prove that interrupting patients actually wastes time. Most patients often do not begin by telling you the real reason they came to see you. Interrupting them diverts their attention away from the main problem, resulting in "the doorknob syndrome." After you think you understand the problem and have the solution, as you put your hand on the doorknob to exit, the patient will say, "By the way, doc, could you check this thing on my foot?" Inevitably the body part to be checked requires the removal of some piece of clothing, requiring more time.

The seminar taught that what we should do is listen to the patient with-

out interruption, and when he or she is finished, ask, "Is there anything else you want to tell me?" I found this approach works well not only with patients, but also when I'm faced with a confrontation. By not interrupting, you have earned the right to have your side heard. If your opponent interrupts, you have the right to say, "I listened to you without interruption, now it's your turn to do the same for me." The question at the end, inviting further elaboration, tends to surprise and disarm the opponent.

Listen to What is Not Said

What is *not* said can be important – it's often what people don't want you to know. A used-car salesman will not tell you about all the mishaps the car he's trying to sell you has had. If you are an employer checking out a potential employee's references, listen to what information your sources don't include. It might be important in your assessment of the candidate.

What is not said can also give you a clue as to the speaker's value system. People like to talk about things important to them. If they never talk about some things, such as family, it could be that they want to avoid it or that they don't consider it important.

Listen to Qualified People

Most people have never heard of Rehoboam. Rehoboam was the Biblical King Solomon's son who succeeded him on the throne. As he ascended to the throne, Rehoboam asked two different sets of advisers how he should rule his subjects. One set consisted of young men who grew up with him. They advised him to be even tougher on his subjects than his

father was. The older men suggested that since his father was so hard on his subjects, the son should lighten up and be kind to them. Rehoboam listened to the young unqualified advisers, and with his reign began the decline of the kingdom of Israel.

Over the years I have received unsolicited advice from my colleagues to invest in certain stocks. Whenever I followed these "hot tips" I lost money. I finally came to the conclusion that doctors and nurses are not really qualified to be investment advisers. From then on, I decided that if a colleague recommended a stock to buy, I would stay away from it. I am very grateful for having made that decision, because the last recommendation I received from a colleague was to buy stock in Enron.

Listen to Your Inner Voice


Research studies on sleep have shown that when our brain begins thinking about something, the process continues during sleep. So, when faced with a difficult problem, I defer acting on it until the next day. With situations that incited an angry reaction the day before, my inner voice will tell me that in the correct perspective, I could accept the situation with equanimity and calm down. With knotty problems requiring a decision, when I awaken, my inner voice will tell me what is the right decision. It is a good habit to listen to your inner voice. ■

Patricia Tsang, CL, is a retired physician and former club president of Downtown 65 Toastmasters in San Francisco. She has written articles for *San Francisco Medicine* on integrating Eastern and Western medicine.

By Edward E. Hearn

**Toastmasters' 2006
International Speech
Contest winner shares
how his dream came true.**

The Road to the World Championship



Ed Hearn (left) is congratulated by International President Johnny Uy.

All of us have dreams and goals that we set for ourselves in order to reach higher achievements. From the time I was a child, I always dreamed of standing in front of a large audience and delivering a profound speech. While other kids in my neighborhood practiced dunking a basketball or scoring a touchdown on the football field, I would stand for hours in front of my parents'

bedroom mirror and pretend I was an important politician or criminal attorney delivering a captivating speech.

This dream lived in the back of my mind for many years. And strangely, as I walked onto the stage in Washington, D.C. on Saturday, August 26, 2006, it was as though this childhood dream suddenly burst into reality, and I finally had the opportunity to give the speech I had been waiting to deliver my entire life.

I have often heard it said, "The longest journey begins with a simple step." Approximately one year ago, I stumbled upon an ambition that simply fascinated me – I wanted to earn the title of being the World Champion of Public Speaking. Yet I had no idea how to go about doing so. That is, until I talked to several

members of my Toastmasters club. They told me about the International Speech Contest, and they said it was like the World Series of public speaking, and that it involved not only speakers from the United States, but also speakers from other countries. One friend said, "Ed, if you could manage to win that competition, you

"I finally had the opportunity to give the speech I had been waiting to deliver my entire life."

would put your name on the public speaking map! So why don't you try?"

It's amazing how a dream can become cultivated by just one simple suggestion. What's more amazing is how hard work and dedication to a particular goal can draw help and assistance from a variety of sources.

After pondering the enormous possibilities for failure, I overcame my fears and committed myself to

entering the International Speech Contest. I must admit, I had no grand illusions about winning. I knew there would be many speakers who had far more experience than I, because I had only been a Toastmaster for 18 months and had no real experience competing on such an enormous scale. So I simply resolved that I would do my best and have fun in the process of competing – nothing more, nothing less.

After winning the club and area competitions, I advanced to the division and then district levels. With each victory I learned something that helped me improve my content, structure and overall speech value.

I also met some wonderful fellow Toastmasters who were all very helpful and supportive, despite the competition between us.

After consistent victories, I found myself in the regional finals, facing winners from the various states in Region V. I suddenly knew why the International Speech Contest is such a coveted title. Each speaker at the regional level was simply fantastic! And all of my fears about failure were profoundly reinforced as I listened to

some of the finest speeches I had ever heard in my life. Yet, at the conclusion of the competition, I was awarded first place and headed to the competition finals in Washington, D.C.

Daunted by the challenges of tackling the World Championship of Public Speaking, I realized I needed a coach. I took the liberty to call Darren LaCroix, the 2001 world champion. I had seen Darren's picture many times on the back of the *Toastmaster* magazine and listened to many of this training CDs. Darren gave me some key suggestions and directed me to several articles he had written to help speakers craft a winning speech. I read them all in record time but knew I needed day-to-day coaching to help me meet the challenge of winning in the final round.

Then, out of the clear blue sky, I received a phone call. It was from a fellow Toastmaster named Bill Funchion. Bill explained that he was a speech professor at Waubonsie Community College in Aurora, Illinois, and that he was impressed with my speaking abilities after hearing me in the District 30 finals. He simply said, "Ed, I'd like to help you become the World Champion, if you're interested." Needless to say, I was very interested! Thus, "Old Bill" (as he is fondly referred to on campus) and his speech class at Waubonsie College spent six weeks listening to my speech, dissecting it intensely, and giving me constructive feedback. They even took the time to record a video of each speech, along with the evaluation sessions, and download the information on a DVD so I could watch and evaluate myself after each practice session.

This training gave me the edge I desperately needed to compete on the World Championship level. But I still had one problem. Every speech I practiced with Bill and his class seemed "flat" and uninspiring. Something was missing, and I couldn't seem to come up with any exciting ideas for new material.


One evening, following a long and somewhat frustrating practice session, I received a suggestion that

changed everything. Nancy Calabrese, one of the team members who had been videotaping each training session, came over to me and said, "Ed, just stop for a minute and ask yourself what it is you *really* want to say to that international audience in August? What is your real life passion? What is the one simple message that you want everyone there to know, beyond a shadow of a doubt? When you come up with an answer to those questions, that'll be the speech you need to give."

Later on that night, while I lay in bed thinking about what I really wanted to say, the idea came to me. I thought, *Everybody has problems in life. But the real key to life is not crying over your problems. The key to life is overcoming problems, and bouncing back from them!* And suddenly I said aloud, "That's it! That's my speech – Bouncing Back!" Indeed, that speech catapulted me to the championship!

Now that the event is over, I can look back on the International Speech Contest and smile. In many respects, I am still overwhelmed by the reality that I won. The countless

hours of preparation, the anxiety about competing, the fear of failure and the sheer enormity of the World Championship came down to hearing the Toastmaster say those immortal words – "And now, the moment we have all been waiting for. The 2006 World Champion of Public Speaking is – Edward Hearn." My life has not been the same since!

To be honest, I have still not come down from the tremendous high of winning the World Championship. But one thing is certain, as a result of competing in the International Speech Contest, I have discovered the importance of taking on challenges, pursuing bigger dreams as a speaker and bouncing back from the adversities of life. However, the greatest lesson I learned is that in Toastmasters, as in life, you never truly know what things you can accomplish until you develop the courage to try! 

Edward E. Hearn is a member of Bold Literary Talkers club in Chicago Illinois. A criminal defense lawyer and minister, he can be reached at eehassoc@aol.com.

Advice From a Champion...

What are your plans for the future?

I intend to transition into the full-time pursuit of a speaking career. I want to focus on motivating youth and young adults on college campuses, assist people in career development and goal setting, as well as work within the criminal justice system (in jails, prisons, etc.) helping those who are finishing periods of incarceration find a new career path and integrate back into society.

What advice would you give to aspiring speech contestants?

"Practice, practice, practice"! Find local Toastmaster clubs and ask for permission to deliver a speech. As my friend Darren LaCroix says, "stage time is the key."

The greatest advice I've ever received was to "remember the power of a story." Its amazing how people connect with an interesting or humorous story. Thus, I'd advise anyone to listen to as many stories as possible, and develop the art of conveying stories to the audience.

Editor's Note: Interested in becoming the next World Champion? Then you'd better know the contest rules. You'll find them on the TI Web site at www.toastmasters.org.

How Strong is Your Toastmasters Network?

By Renate Zorn, DTM

Your fellow Toastmasters have the power to change your life for the better, and in countless ways.

When Dara Eisner decided on a solo trip to the Middle East, a friend suggested she look up some Toastmasters there. A fellow club member, with the help of people she'd met through the Toastmasters newsgroup [alt.org.toastmasters], put her in contact with a Toastmasters member in a Dubai club.

"As I stepped out of the airport in Dubai, there wasn't a woman anywhere to be seen. I looked around at all the strangely attired men, none of whom would even look at me, and thought... Oh My God! What have I done? I found a phone and called the number I'd been given and arranged to meet Samir, a local Toastmaster. From that moment on, I felt as though I was with family. I got to see and do all the things that I had on my list and Samir smoothed the way. He

gave advice, drove me around and made introductions to other Toastmasters throughout the UAE and Oman. The month flew by. I never felt like a lone woman in a foreign country."

That's just one example of what Toastmasters can do for you... if you let it. While joining Toastmasters is one of the very best ways to improve your public speaking and presentation skills, if you're merely attending meetings and giving speeches, you're not getting even a fraction of the other

benefits available to you. The Toastmasters network, that is all those other fellow Toastmasters in your club, area, district and around the world, has the power to change your life for the better, and in countless ways.

Timothy Burger joined Toastmasters a year or so after being downsized out of his information technology management job at Nortel. *"I wish I'd joined Toastmasters while I was still working there,"* he says, *"I never realized how confined my business network had become. By far the majority of my contacts were past and present Nortel employees. Through Toastmasters I've met a remarkable variety of people, and they were always willing to help."*

The Better (Toastmasters) Way

Our Toastmasters network has three huge advantages over many other clubs and organizations.

First and foremost, by the time we make the decision to join Toastmasters, we've figured out that we aren't perfect, and that we need help from others in reaching our goals. That's a fairly major realization that seems to make us more willing to help others. I've belonged to many clubs and professional associations over the years, and nowhere is the membership as open, friendly, helpful and supportive as it is in Toastmasters. In my club, someone is always there to offer help and usually even before I can ask. Sometimes I think Toastmasters have a burning need to "fix" things for others.

Second, there is the incredible diversity within our membership. Our organization includes people of every



age, nationality, ethnic group, professional designation and educational background – most quite different from ourselves. The academics call these people “boundary spanners” because they allow us entrance to domains that might otherwise be closed off to us. They give us access to new people, information and systems, both in our business and in the world around us.

Finally, networking is not the first order of business in Toastmasters. While saying that we have better networking opportunities because we’re not there to network may seem a bit strange, it’s actually quite logical. In general, we’re more likely to want to do business with and help people we know and trust. Because we’re all together for a shared purpose, learning, growing and getting to know each other without that pressure to make referrals, it’s actually easier to find common ground and build relationships. Then, when someone does need help or information, the foundation of trust is already there.

All You Have to Do is Ask

If I wrote down all the ways people in Toastmasters have come through for me over the years, it would be a pretty long list. In addition to the very helpful feedback on speeches, my fellow Toastmasters have provided

leads, opportunities, friendship, support, laughter, contacts, references, advice, encouragement and yes, even a lecture or two. Your Toastmasters friends can do the same for you.

So, how strong is *your* Toastmasters network? How much do you really know about your fellow Toastmasters? What do you know about where they work, who they know and what kinds of things interest them? What do they know about you? Do you share details about your life? Do you ask how things are going with others? How can we help if we don’t know what you need?

You Can Make it Happen

If your Toastmasters network isn’t delivering the kind of support that Dara and Tim describe at the beginning of this article, consider the following suggestions for better Toastmasters networking:

- Don’t just go to meetings, give speeches and leave. Stay a while. If your club members get together for coffee or a drink after the meeting, try to join them at least some of the time.
- Make an effort to get to know more people in your club. Sit at a different table, help a guest during the break and volunteer to fill meeting roles.

- Get involved in your club, area and district. Do something that shows off your skills. People are much more likely to notice and remember you if you’re an organizer, officer, contestant or workshop presenter.

- Find something in Toastmasters you’d like to learn and ask for help. Always wanted to be a conference workshop presenter? Dreamed of winning a speech contest? Wanted to speak at the Toastmasters International Convention? Your fellow Toastmasters can help make it happen.

- Most clubs, areas and divisions have “wise men” (or women). These are the people in Toastmasters who have “been there, done that.” Anything you need to know, they have the answer, or know who does. Find out who they are and get to know them. Talk to them about what you’d like to accomplish and request their guidance. They’re just waiting to be asked. **T**

Renate Zorn, DTM, is the coordinator of the District 60 Toastmasters Speakers Bureau and author of *“The Woman in the Red Dress and Nine Other Secrets of Networking Success.”* Contact Renate at rz@renatezorn.com.

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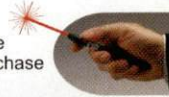
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The Art of Mingling & Networking

By Katherine Meeks

Being a Toastmaster involves more than being able to make a formal speech. How we communicate **informally** at events is equally important to both our business and social connections. In fact, grasping the art of mingling may be a bigger key to our overall success in life than giving speeches. That is why there is always an opportunity to mingle informally with other Toastmasters before, after or during a break in the planned events of the evening.

Do you avoid occasions where you think you may not know many – or any – of the people? Do you tend to speak only to those you already know or wait for an introduction? If so, you may be holding yourself back from some interesting and beneficial opportunities. Consider that you may also deprive others as well: meeting you would be interesting and beneficial for them; your interests and your businesses may mesh – indeed, the fact that you are both attending the same event suggests this is probable.

But for many of us, it's not so easy.

As a speech coach for diplomats, I receive invitations from clients to their diplomatic receptions, usually on a country's national holiday. I used to dread these affairs, wondering what in the world I was going to say to people I didn't know and presumably had nothing in common with. "I'm Kathy Meeks, who the #S% are you?" was clearly inappropriate, although it accurately reflected my panicked thoughts. More suave approaches did not immediately occur to me.

However, at the last event I attended (after a few years of this), I suddenly realized I had no qualms anymore about approaching and mingling with strangers at events. It had even become fun.

Make the best of informal speaking opportunities in social settings.

For one thing, I realized that everyone can be affected by this nervousness. Diplomats, like the rest of us, can feel ill at ease at special events. They often attend with a colleague from the same consulate and end up talking to each other a good portion of the time. So, even diplomats – people who presumably socialize for a living – can be stiff and uncomfortable and not always know the right thing to say. I noticed people are glad when others take the initiative.

Here are some other things I've learned:

- **A person standing alone, or a couple not actively engaged in conversation are good places to start.** Worried about an opening line? Try "My name is _____." Smile and stick out your hand. The other person will do the same. Even if you stop here, the other person will usually pick up the ball.
- **Another place to start a conversation is in the food line, at the hors d'oeuvres table or buffet, or when you are seated near someone.** What to talk about? Start with what linguists call the "here and now." This means basically what is in front of you and the other person at this moment. That means the food ("Have you tried this?" "Is it spicy?" "Do you know what it's called?"), the weather, the venue, the entertainment, the speeches, the view, something going on with the city you're in. These are all good starts.
- **You may also approach a small group.** With a small group, stand in a noncommittal way on the periphery occupying yourself with your drink or food, as if you just happened to be standing there. Listen and then move closer. You will be able to tell by the body language if they are engaged in a closed conversation (they don't eventually



open toward you at all), in which case you should move on. If not, continue to listen for a while, show interest in the conversation, and at some point make a relevant remark, or better yet, ask a relevant question. Most likely at some point the group will regroup into new formations and conversations, and you will have a chance to follow up with those you found interesting.

■ **You can ask about the other person's connection to the individual or organization hosting the event.** ("How did you get interested in Toastmasters?" "Do you work for the Hungarian Consulate?") You can ask about the person's career. A good follow-up question to that is, "How did you become interested in that?" or "How did you find your way into that field?"

■ **Try to find something in common.** "Oh, you're a college teacher? My daughter is attending Baruch College. Do you know it?"

■ **Be pleasant and curious.** Ask questions but try not to pry or interrogate. Try complimenting the other person on something he or she is wearing or ask a question about it.

■ **Avoid negative comments or topics with people you don't know well.** Complaining and negativity make a bad first impression. Moreover, a snide remark about the food, the ice sculpture or the entertainment can backfire when it turns out you are talking to the person who recommended the caterer or the sister of the entertainer. On the other hand, shared adversity (a bottleneck, a misadjusted microphone or some planning oversight) can be a topic to bond on, if you approach it in a good-natured way.

■ At large social events, such as diplomatic receptions and conferences, many people are not only socializing, but

also working – networking and making important contacts. Therefore **it's important for both you and the other person to move on after a short conversation.**

Watch body language. Don't glue yourself to one person. An unspoken convention is a time limit of about five minutes on conversations. You can extend this time limit if you are talking about something that is of strong interest to both of you, but be careful even then, and be very aware of body language. To disengage, after about five minutes, or when there is a pause in the conversation, you can say something like, "It's been nice talking to you," and then move on with a smile. You can make a perfunctory comment about getting food or drink, but this is not often necessary. Everyone realizes that people are there to network and mingle. If you really seem to have a lot in common, you can agree to meet up later at the event to talk a little more.

■ **Bring a number of business cards, whether the event is social or business or a combination of both.** Exchanging business cards is common and it is easy to follow up later by phone or by e-mail. An exchange of business cards also facilitates name recall, and jogs your memory as to their connection. If someone doesn't have a card, you can always write the person's name and connection on the back of one of yours. If someone offers you a card, you don't have to reciprocate – just say apologetically that you don't have any on you at the moment. These exchanges are polite gestures, which may or may not be followed up.

Mingling and networking create new connections and new possibilities. This is what communication skills are about. Keep in mind that even if a connection is not followed up, an exchange can still have an important effect. I have heard people recall something that was said at an event years earlier by a person they had never seen again.

Whether it's an idea, a job lead, a new way of looking at something, a social connection or even just an interesting or pleasant moment, it's worth it. It could be a piece of news – I've shared information about Toastmasters at other events, and people were grateful. Even if none of the above occur (which is sometimes the case) it's still worthwhile as an attempt to hone your mingling and networking skills. Pretty soon you will be the one smoothing the way for those who feel less confident in this area, smoothing over others' faux pas (believe it or not, I once did that for a diplomat!), and giving others tips and encouragement.

By honing your networking skills, you pull others in a circle of connection as well as enlarge your own life – both in Toastmasters and outside. **T**

Katherine Meeks, is a freelance communication consultant and speech coach who lives in New York city. She welcomes your comments at katherine.meeks@verizon.net.

When Networking Isn't Working...

By Craig Harrison, DTM

Use Your Toastmasters Training

I attend a variety of networking events and marvel at the basic and banal mistakes I see would-be networkers making. If only they would join Toastmasters.

Professional networking is about meeting new people, letting them meet you, and prospecting for sales, contracts, clients and more. Effective networking expands your circle of contacts, and by extension, your sphere of influence. Ineffective networking tires you out and discourages you by its lack of productivity. Worse yet, you can actually leave a bad impression with strangers. With practice and know-how your Toastmasters training gives you the edge in networking situations. But before you congratulate yourself, beware the following networking mistakes:

Poor networkers...

■ **Mumble!** A mumble is a speaking stumble. People mumble their names, their occupation and their titles all the time. Your name is irrelevant if we can't hear it. You've been saying your name all your life so you may be bored with it, yet we may hear it only once. State your name clearly, slowly and in a way others can repeat and remember it. It's your lifeline to contact. Take care in stating it.

Eight mistakes networkers make.

■ **Fail to emphasize the benefits of what they do.**

Remarkably, too many salespeople still focus on the features of their products and services instead of the end results. Customers buy benefits, solutions and outcomes. Speak their language by focusing on what you can do *for them*, not what *you* can do or how you do it. Example: Project managers help companies save time and money (two benefits) through expertly managing projects and people (features).

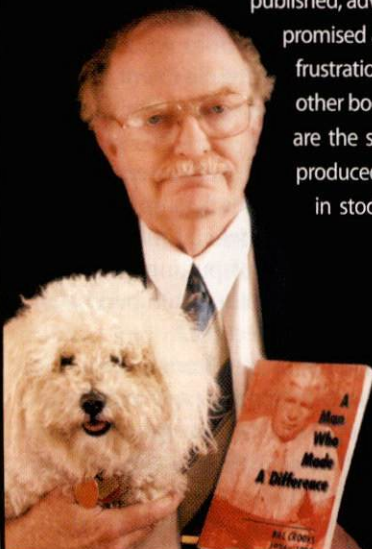


■ **Are stuck in a monotone delivery.** If you can't convey your qualifications, passion and your product or service's

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Networking From A to Z

- A**rrive early for best results.
- B**e a good listener.
- C**learly enunciate (your name, your words, your sentences).
- D**on't interrupt.
- E**xude confidence in your communication and how you carry yourself.
- F**ocus on your conversational partner (not those around him or her).
- G**ather information about your conversational partner.
- H**elp your listener remember you by what you say and how you say it.
- I**nquire about them. It's all about them.
- J**ump-start conversations with questions, compliments or provocative statements.
- K**now how you can best help others.
- L**isten actively (through the use of using gestures, facial expressions, body language).
- M**ake and keep eye contact.
- N**ever crowd your networking associates...respect their personal space.
- O**pen-ended questions generate valuable insights.
- P**resentation skills matter! Polish yours.
- Q**uestions keep your dialog going. When it stalls, ask more.
- R**espect others' goals by fostering their success as well as your own.
- S**tudy non-verbal cues of your listener: do they agree, care, understand?
- T**able Topics help sharpen your small-talk and impromptu speaking skills. Participate!
- U**ncover their burdens, pain or problems that you can solve.
- V**alue their time by not monopolizing it.
- W**rite a thank-you note or e-mail to follow up with strangers you meet.
- X** is a variable whose value is unknown. Get to know others to appreciate their true value.
- Y**ou are unique. Showcase your uniqueness through your style, what you say and do.
- Z**zzzz. What they'll do if you can't keep 'em awake with mutually beneficial conversation!

viability in 30 seconds, you've lost the opportunity. Use vocal variety, intonation and enthusiasm to speak confidently about yourself, your products and services.

- **'Spiel' too long.** Networking is not speechmaking. You can't recite a resumé, tell your life story or otherwise drone on. Aimless rambling suggests you're not a focused professional. Showcase your communication skills by introducing yourself succinctly and asking precise questions to glean a few details about the other person. Keep it short and sweet! Think: *Very short Table Topic*.
- **Get lost in mixed messages.** Is there is an inconsistency between what you say and what you do? Your card may say one thing about you, your clothing suggests something else and your language and vocabulary further confounds strangers in pinpointing who you are, what you are about and your competency level. Strive to send consistent mes-

sages verbally, non-verbally, and in your collateral materials and correspondence. When everything works together, the sum is greater than its parts.

- **Neglect to mind their manners.** Bad networkers can't make small talk, don't show an ability to exchange pleasantries, and they interrupt others. Can you gracefully engage and disengage from conversations? Are your questions intrusive and your answers curt? Are you showing proper respect for the stranger you've just met, or are you singing opera? If so, your tune is painfully familiar: It's "Me-Me-Me-Me-Me!"
- **Sling slang.** Many networkers profess to have excellent communication skills yet use slang or mispronounce big words when little words are better. Beware the use of contractions, excessive acronyms and name-dropping. Don't tell us what you're *gonna* do! I would like to hear what you are *going to* do instead.
- **Disrespect the Tao of Networking.** People who are friendly to those they believe can help them, yet rude to those they believe can't help them, disrespect networking. I've heard people disparage the last person they met while conversing with me. I hesitated to let them go for fear of what they would say about me to the next person! That's antithetical to the spirit of networking and is simply rude.
One networker took my card and, in front of me, wrote the letter A on it, and boasted he was "putting me in his A list." Let's just say he was clearly the biggest A I met that night! Learn from the Japanese culture, which respects the business card as an extension of the individual it represents. Don't write on it in front of others, read and react to it with proper respect, and yours will be similarly received.

A Word About Networking and Club Meeting Etiquette

Over my dozen-plus years in Toastmasters, I've witnessed a number of members join clubs *solely* for purposes of networking and building their business from within Toastmasters clubs. They are blatant in their intent to turn club members into customers and clients. This casts a pall over the club experience.

There is a hierarchy of purpose in Toastmasters that places improving communication and leadership skills at the top. Building healthy, mutually beneficial relationships can also occur over time, but beware of putting your business before the needs and desires of other members, and especially of overtly selling from the lectern.

Nobody wants to be pressured to buy from a club member. We're there in a non-threatening environment to learn, be vulnerable and support each other emotionally. Be tasteful about promoting your business, or prospecting for customers and clients in Toastmasters meetings, and always defer to the wishes of your clubmates. ■

Craig Harrison, DTM, of Berkeley, California, can be contacted at www.ExpressionsOfExcellence.com.

Planning for the Future

The Board of Directors met in August during the International Convention in Washington, D.C. The Board made the following decisions to ensure the continued progress and growth of the organization:

Board Action:

- Reviewed the current club-officer training programs and made several recommendations for the 2007-2008 materials.
- Discussed distance learning options within Toastmasters to improve training quality and participation. Instructed World Headquarters to explore technology applications consistent with the Toastmasters mission and vision.
- Reviewed and approved a plan for WHQ staff to develop tools and resources to assist districts in improving their conferences.
- Reviewed and approved the reformation plans for Districts 46 and 47, which will result in a final district split effective July 1, 2008.
- Approved guidelines for sponsorship of district events to include speakers and related product sales. Made changes to policies and procedures affecting fundraising and district fiscal management.
- Prepared the wording on a proposal to remove the dues structure from the Bylaws of Toastmasters International and place it in policy. If approved, this will allow for smaller, incremental dues increases in the future, rather than large, lump-sum increases that occur periodically. This proposal is a result of requests by the membership made during the last dues increase to simplify the process of increasing dues. This proposal will be voted on by delegates at the 2007

Annual Business Meeting at TI's International Convention in Phoenix, Arizona, next August.

For more information, please visit the Toastmasters International Web site. Information on the proposals will also be included in the proxy mailing sent to all club presidents on March 31, 2007.

- Identified ways to improve the process for nominating international officers. These include providing enhanced guidelines to nominating-committee members, encouraging the committee to proactively seek qualified candidates and to begin the process earlier. These improvements also apply to nominating committees at club and district levels.
- Discussed how to maximize opportunities involving Toastmasters clubs in corporate settings.

- Discussed the challenges and opportunities associated with the organization's growth. Approved the hiring of a consultant to review TI's governance structure and processes in order to improve support to clubs throughout the world.

- Reviewed a proposal to develop a new youth market program and recommended approval of a pilot program, with funds not to exceed \$150,000 (From the Smedley Memorial Fund).

- Reviewed a policy involving reimbursement for district officers and speech contestants to ensure that all officers and contestants, no matter where they come from, are treated equally in terms of financial reimbursement.

- Reviewed and approved a request from District 60 to begin the process of reformation.

▼ **The Board of Directors met at the International Convention in Washington, D.C. in August.**



The 30-Second Me Strategy

By Nannette Potter

Create a dynamic first impression with your own brief commercial.



Hello, I'm Jane Doe. I think of myself as the Lone Ranger because I come to the rescue of first-time home buyers and make their dreams come true. I'm on the board of directors for a local finance association and I volunteer as a tax preparer for a local nonprofit organization. I'm currently in transition and looking for opportunities where I can use my talents and abilities. Do you know of anyone who is looking for someone with my qualifications? If not, could you contact me if you hear of any job opportunities in the mortgage field?

We've all gone through tough job interviews. Minutes tick by while waiting in the reception area. Your adrenaline starts pumping, the heart starts racing and you can't seem to say one coherent sentence as you greet the interviewer. The 30-Second Me Strategy will transform you from an unprepared, self-conscious, awkward interviewee into a witty, self-assured job hunter who expects the unexpected.

Market Yourself

People have short attention spans. American advertisers spend thousands of dollars on a 30-second television commercial. In that time frame, the product must be introduced, the message clear and succinct, and viewers should be enticed to buy the product. Just as advertisers take the time to develop their products, so should the job hunter. When seeking employment, job hunters become their own product. And every great

product deserves its own marketing campaign.

Traditional resumés aren't enough to secure a job. In today's fast-paced global economy, the best jobs are obtained by who you know and what you know. "It's not just job seeking, but job keeping," says Karen Graff of Personalized Info-Media, Inc., a public relations firm in California. "As we transition from one job to the next, promoting, marketing and reinventing ourselves is a matter of survival."

This applies to self-promotion within a company and for success in general. Take Madonna for example. The Material Girl's first album was released in 1983. Since then, she has continued to record award-winning music and become a successful writer and actress. She has spent considerable time and money to reinvent and market herself. Like Madonna, your personal marketing campaign must include a plan to showcase your strengths, skills and abilities.

Creating a dynamic first impression by developing a 30-second sound bite about who you are and what you can offer is the key to landing a job or impressing that strategic networking contact. By developing your own "commercial" to sell yourself, you'll come across as prepared, assertive and memorable.

Start with the Basics

First impressions start with a smile, a handshake and a self-introduction. When developing a marketing campaign, the packaging is just as important as the message. In this case,

Don't Leave Home Without It

The 30-Second Me Strategy has been an integral part of Raymond Willet's job-hunting arsenal for the past decade. His work as a technical writer has been fraught with company downsizing. "I'm a writer – not a speaker. Using the 30-Second Me Strategy helps me organize my thoughts and forces me to practice being comfortable with conveying my message," he says.

His message has evolved into a number of different sound bites that he can deploy for any given situation. "I have a basic sound bite that tells someone who I am and what I'm looking for." He also uses a more casual version for networking purposes.

Willet takes advantage of industry buzzwords and phrases that are meant to catch the listener's attention. This strategy promotes conversation, he says. "Two-way communication is the key." Willet's advice to job hunters: "Project yourself with enthusiasm and positive attitude."

"The 30-Second Me Strategy is useful in every situation, from job hunting to dating," says Jeff Schanbacher, a community outreach worker who has taught this strategy to hundreds of job hunters. "It's difficult for people to talk about themselves. This compels people to compress their skills, abilities and personality into a brief sound bite."

As you become more comfortable with the process, you will begin to expand your sound bites to cover numerous situations. Always focus on your strengths. For instance, never say, "I'm not really good with computers, but..." If you're not comfortable with computers, then take a computer class, but don't include negative information in your sound bite.

you're the product. Assess yourself. Are you projecting the image you want to convey? Are you wearing appropriate attire to the interview? Is your handshake strong and sure? Are you speaking too softly or too loudly? Begin with, "Hello, I'm Jane Doe," include the all-important handshake – and don't forget to smile!

The Hook

The goal of the 30-Second Me Strategy is to engage the listener. You can do this effectively by eliciting a question. Once the listener does this, you're engaged in conversation rather than a forced, structured interview.

The icebreaker question is invariably, "Tell me a little bit about yourself." Do you usually go into a recitation of your resumé or talk about your personal life? What if you had a hook, such as, "I consider myself the Lone Ranger." Would this elicit interest from an interviewer? You bet it would, especially if you were in the finance industry. This particular hook was actually used by an executive at a chamber of commerce event to

generate interest in the expansion of her mortgage brokerage business. What hook could you use?

The hook has to reflect your personality. If you feel uncomfortable with a catchy phrase, something more sedate will work. Other examples of the hook are:

- *"I'm into making silk purses out of sow's ears."* – from a PR Executive.
- *"I help save hundreds of lives a month."* – from a police department dispatcher.
- *"I resolve conflict and save consumers hundreds of dollars a day."* – from a customer service representative.

What Makes You Unique?

We often define ourselves by our job duties rather than our talents and abilities. Take a piece of paper and list your accomplishments, successes and awards. Think beyond your occupation and include hobbies and volunteer work. Have you been recognized for your work on special projects? Have you earned

awards in Toastmasters or other organizations?

Remember, you're in control of your own sound bite. If you were interrupted, what would you want the interviewer to remember most about you? So, convey the most important facts first.

Be Assertive, Not Grandiose

Like any competent sales person, you should close your interview with a call to action. In this case, ask for the job, or, if you're in a networking situation, ask if the other person knows of anyone needing someone with your skills and abilities. If you're like most people, this will be the most uncomfortable part of your "commercial."

Don't make the mistake of waiting for the interviewer to take the initiative. This is where your hard work pays off. You've done your homework and you know, without a doubt, what you have to offer the company!

Write Your Script

Before each job interview, write down your 30-second sales pitch. This will allow you to experiment with key words or phrases, determine what strengths you want to feature during the interview and increase your confidence and sense of empowerment. You may need to write more than one version for different situations or job opportunities. Remember to keep it simple and succinct.

The Dress Rehearsal

Can you articulate your sound bite in a concise, memorable presentation without sounding rehearsed? Practice. The key to sounding natural is to be prepared, memorize key words or phrases and stay in conversation mode. "This strategy demonstrates a positive mental attitude. Positive attitudes equal memorable interviews," Graff says. You'll have confidence as you use every opportunity to market yourself and land that crucial job interview. And most importantly, have fun! 🎉

Nannette Potter is a freelance writer residing in Clovis, California.



Want a More **Powerful** Voice?

By Judi M. Bailey

Learn to project better by reading out loud.

Is your stomach running on a treadmill when you listen to yourself on tape? Are you leery of reading the evaluations from your latest speech? Does your voice make you appear unsure and timid – even mousey?

You're not alone. According to Barbie Scott, certified and licensed speech pathologist and voice coach in Portland, Oregon, approximately 25 percent of adults are dissatisfied with the sound of their voices.

Some individuals need specialized help from a voice coach, but I suggest you try this simple solution first: read out loud. This exercise can help you become more comfortable – and happier with – your voice, since its unfamiliarity is often the crux of the problem. Strength, range and clarity increase as comfort with your vocalizations grow. And a special benefit: enjoying your voice adds positively to what you think about yourself.

"It's always a revelation to my students to hear their voices and see their body language when taped," says Art Moyer, communications instructor at Stark State College in Canton, Ohio. "Most people don't know what their voice is like, which is where reading out loud can help."

This technique gave me the boost I needed to feel confident and comfortable with my voice. Previously, my voice vibrated, my hands shook and I made little eye contact when speaking. During my talks, even front-row listeners fell asleep. I had grown to hate the noise that stumbled out of my throat; it sounded congested, whiny and weak.

When I began to read out loud, I selected my favorite motivational book and started reading to myself. At first it proved to be a timid effort, but in time my performance became stronger. I enunciated a great deal more and my volume expanded. I added listening to audio tapes about proper speech and paying more attention to speakers whose deliveries interested me the most. One tape I often listened to was "Image and Self-Projection" by speaker Dr. Julie White.

Gradually, I applied the parts I liked to my own reading.

Ineffective Communication

I used to have poor projection. Friends frequently asked me to repeat myself and audiences hollered, "We can't hear you!" I had a terrible time bringing up issues at staff meetings and in the professional organizations I belonged to. My poor vocal image drove me into the center of self-consciousness. I was reluctant to contact clients and offer new ideas to top-level management. As a result, I missed productivity quotas more often than not. It was definitely time to speak up.

Speech pathologist Barbara Scott says the two most common complaints she hears regard a troubling nasal sound and an inability to project. She's worked with a number of trial lawyers who describe problems such as judges being unable to hear them. Others talk too fast. A radio news reporter Scott helped was aware that he talked too fast and was difficult to understand on the air. The reporter needed to pace himself and take the time to enunciate.

Another common fault is called *uptalk*, raising the pitch at the end of a sentence as if asking a question. To avoid this, Scott teaches clients to make a "declarative drop" at the end of each sentence.

Another problem is the lack of inflection. According to renowned communication psychologist Dr. Lillian Glass, poor communication skills like this often leads to misunderstanding. "People misinterpret your meaning," the Beverly Hills-based speech coach says, "especially in relationships. If you don't speak with emotions and you say something like, 'I was really angry,' the other person is likely to believe you weren't that angry. If you tell someone, 'I love you' with little expression or fluctuation in your voice, the other person is likely to think, 'No he doesn't.'"

Assessing your own voice

Consider what you don't like about how you talk. Do you sound tinny? Raspy? Are you a dull monotone? Do you speak too fast? Too slowly? Fall into uptalk too frequently?

“If you want to be a competent communicator, you need to learn how others perceive you.”

Use your dissatisfaction as a guidepost to becoming stronger vocally.

The most effective way to analyze your voice is to record yourself talking. Professional speakers and voice coaches advocate this technique. Most of us will balk – we just hate that machine that highlights our deficiencies! However, if you want to be a competent communicator, you need to learn how others perceive you.

Begin by recording for just a couple of minutes and stop. Don't play back the tape at this point. Later – in two seconds, minutes or days – read again, perhaps in a different room, or talk casually into the microphone. Again, don't listen to yourself until you are ready. Add material as many times as you feel is necessary to make a good assessment. Remind yourself you're doing this so your voice can work *for* you, rather than against you.

When you have finished, rewind, relax and listen. Attempt to be as impartial as possible, as if you are listening to someone else talk. Keep in mind that audio and visual taping tends to exaggerate our flaws. Replay portions you have questions about and take notes about what you observe.

A variation on this exercise is to read out loud to another person, then have him or her write down how well you did on the traits you are assessing. Or simply have the recorder ready when a friend comes over. Tape while you and your friend simply chat. (But make sure he or she is aware of what you are doing!)

You don't have to start by using a tape recorder. I didn't. But I already knew two specific purposes – projecting my voice and becoming comfortable hearing myself speak.

Here are some elements of voice to observe in yourself:

- Rate or speed
- Monotone
- Loudness
- Throat constriction
- Uptalk
- Mumbling
- Word emphasis
- Enthusiasm
- Strain

Techniques and Triumphs

Choose a book, magazine or any material that's uplifting, so you can couple reading out loud with positive thinking. Read something that rejuvenates you, wakes you up, makes you feel alive. And make sure you are comfortable where you are sitting.

Experts state that breathing is the core of public speaking. To learn abdominal breathing, take a slow deep breath, hold it for a couple of seconds, then exhale by blowing through a tiny opening you make in your mouth (as if you were stifling a yawn), allowing your cheeks to puff out. This opens your throat wider, allowing your tone to lower and making you sound more authoritative.

When you use this breathing exercise a couple of times, or for three or four breaths, you'll find your throat clearer and more relaxed and your voice timbre somewhat lower and deeper, which in most cultures implies authority.

Then pick up your material and just read. Don't expect big changes right away, just keep reading out

loud. You don't have to alter anything at this point. Instead, concentrate on attaining more comfort with the sound of your voice. Just read 10 to 15 minutes each day or as often as you can.

Those of you who are comfortable with how you sound can jump right into the next step. If you know your speaking snags, begin reading aloud trying to project the way you'd like to sound.

The problem I attacked with reading audibly was simply a lack of confidence that was very “visible” in my language. I spoke softly, slowly and, as a result of tight throat muscles, I slid from word to word, mumbling.

At first I practiced reading out loud regularly with a slight increase in volume and assertiveness. Then I thought, “Let's go all the way,” and I added to this routine reading more forcibly during the last five minutes. After I was comfortable projecting my voice across the room, I pretended someone was listening to me down the hall...then in the kitchen...then in the living room....

Some voice pathologists disagree with this technique, claiming that it can be harmful to the vocal cords to raise your voice more than what's natural for you. Be careful not to shout or strain to amplify your voice. Your new vocal prescription needs to be taken by the teaspoon, not by the cup. I worked with careful planning to push my volume up a single notch. And it took time to build my new vocal valor. You know the old saying, “act yourself into good thinking.” We can speak our way into good talking.

As I listened to people talk, I found more aspects I wanted to emulate. Practicing qualities such as articulation, emphasis of significant words, flexible rate of speech and pausing heightened the drama of my presentations.

If reading out loud is difficult or even counterproductive, your best bet is to consult with a speech pathologist or voice coach (often one and the same). These specialists can help you determine your weakest verbal features and, through education and exercises, guide you into a more productive pattern of communication. Scott says many of her clients need to come only three or four times, others require 15 or 20 sessions.

You'll begin to realize that some of the new behaviors you're practicing will pop up in a presentation or slip into social and business conversations. As you change how you speak, you will feel your confidence soar.

By reading out loud to yourself, you can change the negative patterns that build a barrier between you and your goals. And with your new and improved vocal image, you'll have greater success in your career and become more effective with family, friends and acquaintances. **T**

Judi M. Bailey is a writer and counselor living in Lakewood, Ohio. By reading out loud, Judi has gained enough self-confidence to be comfortable socially and to develop a successful public speaking career.

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Written By

BO BENNETT

Have you been promised success if you follow a few quick and dirty “rules” or “secrets” of success? Are you tired of irrelevant analogies that do nothing for you but make you feel inadequate? Have you had enough of highly metaphysical concepts and not enough practical solutions? Have you had your fill of grossly exaggerated claims that try to trick you into thinking success is easy? Are you all “affirmationed” out? You're not alone.

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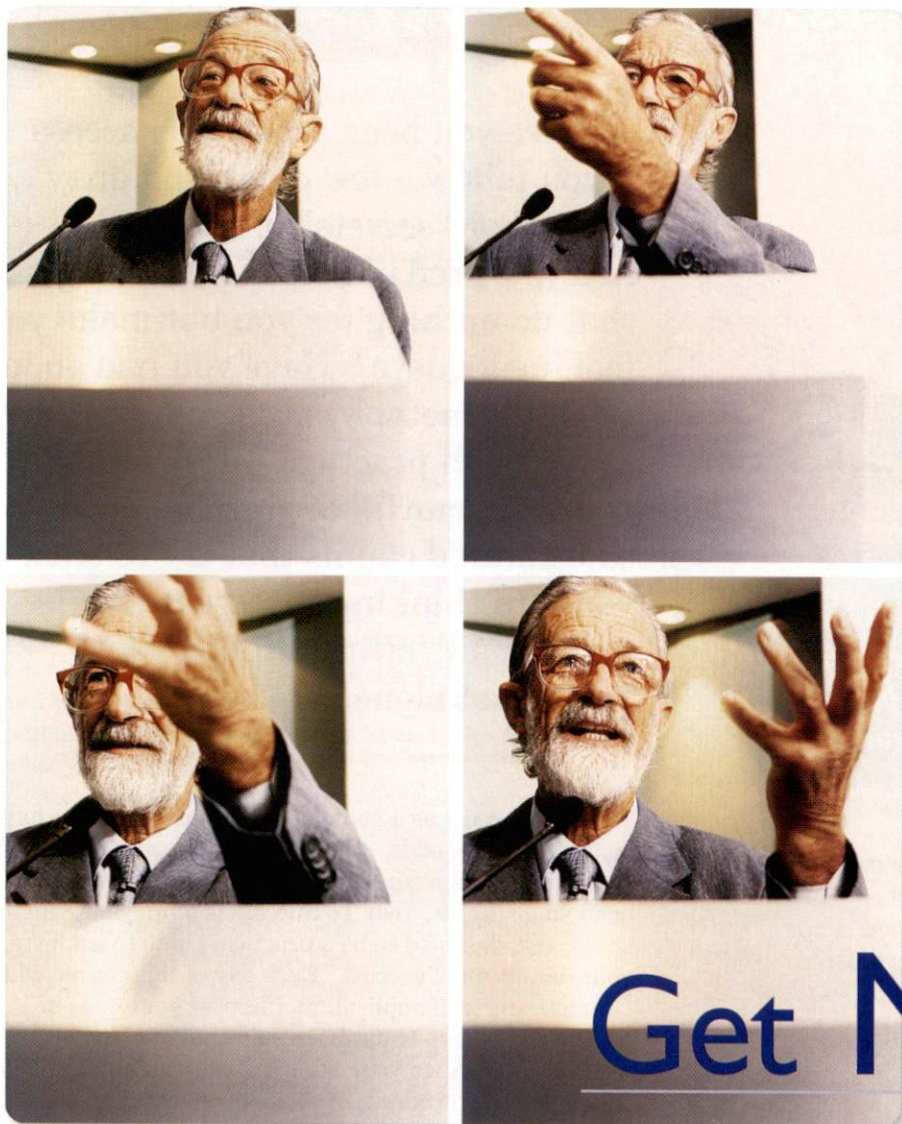
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About Bo Bennett, DTM

Bo Bennett is a distinguished Toastmaster, business man, author, programmer, philanthropist, martial artist, motivational speaker, amateur comedian, and most of all a husband and a father devoted to improving the lives of others. Since age 10, Bo has started several companies and sold them anywhere from \$1 to \$20,000,000.00. Today, Bo remains active President of Archieboy Holdings, LLC. and CEO of Boston Datacenters, Inc. Bo is also the creator of FreeToastHost.org, the Toastmasters service that currently provides free websites for more than 2000 Toastmasters clubs around the world.



When it comes to success, there are no shortcuts.



Looking for ways to incorporate gestures and movement into your speeches?

Get Moving!

The human body contains more than 700 muscles, but some of us use only a few as we stand stiffly in front of an audience gripping the lectern. Too often we fall into the trap of poring over dictionaries and thesauri or spending hours online, looking for the perfect word or phrase to get our points across. But we often forget to include gestures and movements that are ideally suited to illustrate what we want to say.

The newest member of our club reminded me of how important it is to “get moving.” I watched her jog up to the lectern, shake the Toastmaster’s hand and begin her Ice Breaker speech, titled “Katie on the Run,” effectively grabbing the attention of her audience before uttering a single word. Her choice was effec-

tive and economical, communicating her passion for running marathons without speaking.

When another member of our club wanted to demonstrate a simple recipe, he dispensed with the actual ingredients, pantomimed chopping onions and tomatoes, grating cheese then rolling the ingredients into

invisible flour tortillas to create wraps. *Voilà!* He had created a mouth-watering experience for his audience with absolutely no mess.

Looking for ways to incorporate gestures and movement into your speeches? Here are a few simple suggestions:

Telling a story? After you’ve written your speech, highlight the action verbs. Look for opportunities to underscore your message with movement, just as Katie did when she jogged just a few steps to the lectern.

What emotion do you want to convey? Using only your facial muscles, you can communicate an incredible array. Psychologist Paul Ekman has identified more than 10,000 possible configurations; 3,000 of those have

meanings most of us can understand. Watch the faces of people around you. What is your mother trying to tell you when she purses her lips? For inspiration, take a look at *The Human Face*, a BBC documentary narrated by John Cleese of Monty Python fame, now available on DVD.

When you read, pay close attention to the techniques fiction writers use. Charles Dickens is a master of the art of assigning just a few specific gestures and facial expressions to his characters, then having his characters repeat them whenever they appear in a scene. You can use the same technique to make the characters in your speeches come alive. What happens to your son's eyebrows, nostrils and mouth when you tell him he can't borrow the car? What does he do with his hands?

Remember that certain facial expressions allow us to speak a practically universal language. In *A Natural History of Love*, Diane Ackerman reminds us that a flirtatious woman lifts her eyebrows a little and flashes the man she's attracted to an eager, wide-eyed look, then shyly turns her head away. She might giggle, grin or even bury her face in her hands so he won't know she's blushing.

You can see how to enliven your speeches by experimenting in front of a mirror. Use your eyes and fore-

head to communicate displeasure or disapproval. Use your lips and mouth to flirt. Communicate impatience without using words.

Good speeches evoke sensory experiences for the audience. Look for opportunities to communicate how food tastes and smells. Did you tear up, choke or gulp water when your in-laws took you out for spicy Mexican food? Giving a speech about a trip you've taken? Recreate the ambient air temperature. Shiver as you invite your audience aboard the early morning ferry across Washington's Puget Sound. Pull your imaginary collar up, cross your arms or blow on your fingers to stay warm. Taking them on a trip down the Baja peninsula in a hot, overcrowded bus? Fan yourself or run an index finger along the neck of your T-shirt to cool off.

Dare to exaggerate. Select a few of your favorite movies and fast forward to the most dramatic scenes. Watch for the facial expressions and gestures that evoke surprise, tenderness and horror. Notice the differences between screwball comedies, horror films, mysteries and melodramas. Buy a ticket to a local theater and pay close attention to the way actors use gestures and conduct their business on stage. In the play *Saturday, Sunday, Monday*, an Italian housewife com-

municates volumes about her relationships with family and friends and her anger at her husband just by the way she serves the pasta.

Juxtapose your body type with gestures that are uncharacteristic. If you are 6'4", mimic the delicate Victorian heroine who raises a wrist to her forehead and swoons.

Expand your repertoire. One useful reference is *Field Guide to Gestures* by Nancy Armstrong and Melissa Wagner. Want to illustrate how you felt when your boss offered you a fruit basket instead of paying you for working all weekend? Try the "whoop-tee-do" by twirling your forefinger next to your head, a gesture that signals a sarcastic response to disappointment.

Next time you give a speech, ask your evaluator to give you feedback on your gestures and facial expressions. Did they evoke emotion? Amuse the audience? Distract from the points you were trying to make?

Encourage your club to experiment. Instead of choosing a Word of the Day, try introducing a Gesture of the Day during Table Topics.

Get moving. Used judiciously, gestures can improve even the most carefully constructed, eloquent speech. **T**

Nowell King, ATMB, is a member of Cascade Club 566 in Eugene, Oregon.



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DTM

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

Gregg W. Van Citters 416-F, Pasadena, California
 Rae Lise De Ley 3069-U, Anchorage, Alaska
 Samuel Jones 585-U, Shanghai, China
 Craig P. Berg 2545-2, Seattle, Washington
 Taylor Greene 4723-2, Bellevue, Washington
 Carolyn E. Taylor 3572-4, Saratoga, California
 Gretchen Coons 2342-6, Saint Paul, Minnesota
 Jody Schmidt 8665-7, Portland, Oregon
 Ronald C. Hughes 6023-11, Avon, Indiana
 Karen L. Miller 6754-11, Bloomington, Indiana
 Jennie Bender 7187-12, Corona, California
 LaQuita Heard-Nortey 2490-14, East Point, Georgia
 Vanessa J. Roberts 8661-14, Columbus, Georgia
 Wiline J. Stevenson 4884-16, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
 Daphne E. Hamilton-Nagorsen 3169-21, Vancouver, Canada
 John Wayne 8237-21, Vancouver, Canada
 Judy A. Rose 2199-22, Branson, Missouri
 Roger Giddan 4137-25, Lewisville, Texas
 John Barksdale 5349-26, Denver, Colorado
 Claudia M. Scott 4506-28, Detroit, Michigan
 Emil Stempel 169-30, Lake Zurich, Illinois
 Henry E. Hunter 384-33, Edwards AFB, California

Sharon K. Stull 4057-33, Simi Valley, California
 Sherrie V. Parker 9324-33, Las Vegas, Nevada
 David C. Dopkins 2780-35, Reedsburg, Wisconsin
 Barbara N. Walters 744718-36, Rockville, Maryland
 J. Cain Leonard 1737-37, Lincolnton, North Carolina
 Elizabeth C. Simon 5620-37, Cary, North Carolina
 Thomas J. Hand 1108-40, Dayton, Ohio
 Carl W. Day 4041-40, Fairborn, Ohio
 Richard A. Myers 1319-42, Calgary, Canada
 Danie Hardie 8090-42, Edmonton, Canada
 David Fredrick Allen 1327-44, San Angelo, Texas
 John Deysher 5521-46, New York, New York
 George Taylor 1600-47, Nassau, Bahamas
 Robert Donenfeld 6045-47, Kissimmee, Florida
 Steven J. Choby 9352-47, Sarasota, Florida
 Michael J. Lamothe 2200-56, Houston, Texas
 Shari LeDonne Frisinger 7610-56, Pearland, Texas
 Ronald S. Carino 4582-57, Pleasanton, California
 Patricia A. Henley 3170-58, North Charleston, South Carolina
 Stephen K. Wood 807878-60, Toronto, Canada
 Vita Lewis 6596-61, Pierrefonds, Canada
 Christine Thibault 7701-61, Montreal, Canada
 Mary F. White 6822-66, Norfolk, Virginia
 Olwyn Williamson 3814-69, Bundaberg, Australia
 Edger du Bois 4831-70, Dapto, Australia
 Edger du Bois 7519-70, Wollongong, Australia
 Judith Ann Clark 9827-70, Cessnock, Australia
 Trish M. Williamson 585057-72, New Plymouth Taranaki, New Zealand
 Karin Cremer 9652-74, Umhlanga, South Africa
 Fe Necesario 8584-75, Cebu City, Philippines
 Koji Kodama 6321-76, Tokyo, Japan
 Gitarani Ponnuchamy 6181-79, Manama, Bahrain
 Lalith Kahatapitiya 614737-82, Katunayake, Sri Lanka

45 YEAR

Toast Breakers 3389-33, Modesto, California
 Seven A M 3391-58, Columbia, South Carolina

40 YEAR

Greater Bossier 2251-50, Bossier City, Louisiana
 Exec TM 3622-52, Glendale, California
 Calliope Club 3510-59, Orleans, France
 Blacksburg 3351-66, Blacksburg, Virginia
 Newcastle 1121-70, Mayfield, Australia

35 YEAR

Aesop's Fables 2591-39, Sacramento, California
 Lower Waikato 3157-72, Waikato, New Zealand
 Brussels 3286-59, 1000 Brussels, Belgium
 Stuttgart Intl 3658-59, Stuttgart, Germany
 Ross Labs 3912-40, Columbus, Ohio
 Caterpillar Employees 79-54, East Peoria, Illinois

30 YEAR

Mesa Messengers 691-F, Costa Mesa, California
 MBL 2616-46, Rutherford, New Jersey
 Delta 3372-39, Stockton, California
 Green Valley 3582-03, Green Valley, Arizona
 Speakeasy 642-77, Stennis Space Center, Mississippi
 Greenlight-Old Town 886-27, Alexandria, Virginia

25 YEAR

Eclectic Dialectics 3828-F, Cerritos, California
 Quicksilver Express 2008-25, Fort Worth, Texas
 Sinulog 2395-75, Cebu City, Philippines
 Baldwin Day Breakers 4734-77, Fairhope, Alabama
 Boston West 4735-31, Needham, Massachusetts
 GPC-KPI 4737-19, Muscatine, Iowa
 Mornington Peninsula 4738-73, Mornington, Australia
 Sea-Masters 4739-02, Seatac, Washington

20 YEAR

Mutually Speaking 4297-10, Cleveland, Ohio
 Windsor 6416-28, Windsor, Canada
 Bethune-Cookman College 6418-47, Daytona Beach, Florida
 Dynamic Dora Creek 6419-70, Eraring, Australia
 Coshocton 6420-40, Coshocton, Ohio
 Columbian 6421-07, St Helens, Oregon
 Nortel Ottawa 6425-61, Ottawa, Canada
 Palmetto Baptist Medical Center Columbia 6426-58, Columbia, South Carolina
 Alamo Heights 6427-55, San Antonio, Texas
 City Of Perth 6428-73, Perth, Australia
 Northwest Arkansas 6431-43, Springdale, Arkansas
 Noosa 6433-69, Noosaville, Australia
 Ag Lib 6434-42, Edmonton, Canada
 Dynamic Speakers 6435-81, Port-Of-Spain, Trinidad,
 Fabulous Facilitators 6436-42, Edmonton, Canada
 Intangible Assets 6441-52, Los Angeles, California
 Leading Edge 710-01, Long Beach, California

Anniversaries

November 2006

65 YEAR

King Boreas 208-06, Saint Paul, Minnesota

60 YEAR

Grand Rapids 404-62, Grand Rapids, Michigan
 Oregon 424-07, Portland, Oregon
 Boot Hill 429-78, Billings, Montana

55 YEAR

Evergreen 973-21, Vancouver, Canada
 State Farm Windjammers 995-54, Bloomington, Illinois

50 YEAR

Aquinas 2159-40, Urbana, Ohio
 Venio Dictum 2170-64, Winnipeg, Canada
 Daybreak 2228-26, Denver, Colorado

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- December 15-17, 2006 Denver
- February 23-25, 2007 Orlando
- April 20-22, 2007 Las Vegas
- June 22-24, 2007 Atlanta

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From the desk of Darren LaCroix



Dear Fellow Toastmaster:

Why did you join Toastmasters? What did you want to get out of joining?

I came to Toastmasters in 1992 shy, lacking confidence, and no talent. Thanks to Toastmasters, I was able to quit my day job of 11 years to become a full-time, professional speaker. Some say I am "lucky." Lucky? I'm just a guy who used *the tool* of Toastmasters better than most. Toastmasters gave me a place to practice, mentors pointed me in the right direction, and I was willing to fail.

Give me just 12 hours and I will knock 12 years off of your learning curve. Darrenteed.

In preparing for the World Championship Contest I studied 10 years of championship videos (90 world-class speeches), practiced at 22 clubs, got 141 written evaluations, and video-taped myself every chance I could. I also went to the previous World Champions and became a "sponge." Their insight changed the way I presented forever. Do you think their insight could help you? Absolutely!

My speaking and comedy mentors have condensed decades of humor & speaking experience into this **proven, simple, and step-by-step system**. How would you like to learn in just 12 hours what it took us years to learn? You can. Decades of knowledge. A lifetime of value.

You'll get: **2 DVDs • 18 Audio discs • 1 Data disc • My book.** Everything we wish someone told us.

What fellow Toastmasters have said:

"They are the best, most detailed, and most easily understood programs on public speaking that I have seen."

-Michael Erwine, Eaton Rapids, MI

"I was able to take a good Area Contest winning speech, add humor and turn it into a great Division Contest winning speech."

-Mark Perew, Huntington Beach, CA

"I've listened to those audio programs more than twenty times each...After the contest, one of the audience came to me and said, 'I saw your improvement and you are totally different!!!'"

-Hubert, Taiwan

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Stage time, stage time, stage time,

Darren

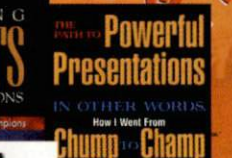
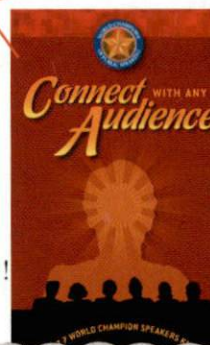
Darren LaCroix, 2001 World Champion of Public Speaking

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