AUGUST 1982

The loastmaster uary 25 I ordered 300 #18099 pewter mugs r vases from your company. At that time I w that, e shipped within the week. At the present ti d any of this merchandise at all. asked nally called your customer service represen oruary 23 to ask whether or not the shipme me it had indeed been shipped and that I sh that, (neverarrived,) thin the week. When it failed to arrive. I call investigate, d me he would check out the problem and ca yet of heard from him as yet. n completely sold out of the above items. It that I receive this merchandise sometime t pril, May and June are some of the peak sel r for these items.

The Economics of Writing

Outlook-



Making Effective Communication a Worldwide Reality

It's hard to believe my year as your president is almost over. True, it was an exhausting 12 months, but it was also one of the most exhilarating experiences of my life, and for good reason. I was able to see just how great our organization is — how much it has already helped people all over the world and how others will benefit from our program in the future.

My district travels offered first-hand evidence of how Toastmasters has helped people. Everywhere I went members eagerly told me about the positive influences Toastmasters has had on their lives — how it helped them get promotions, become selfconfident, achieve goals and improve their family lives.

Their enthusiasm and appreciation were infectious. Even I became more inspired than ever before. The civic and corporate leaders with whom I met were also affected. They were impressed with the benefits our clubs could provide, and they immediately made plans to form clubs within their organizations.

One accomplishment this year — one in which we can all take pride — came from our organization's Long Range Planning Committee. The committee, which is chaired by Immediate Past President Patrick Panfile and made up of the executive committee and the executive director, determines the needs, directions and goals of Toastmasters International for the next three to five years.

One of the committee's tasks was to identify and clearly state our organization's purpose. This sounds easy enough, but it wasn't. Composing a brief, general statement encompassing all the benefits and ramifications of the Toastmasters program was almost impossible. But after much work by the committee, the board of directors unanimously adopted our mission statement, which I am proud to present now to you:

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 program.

During the past year we made great progress toward accomplishing this mission. This progress was due in part to our organization's executive officers, directors and World Headquarters' staff. But most of our progress was because of you, the members. Your enthusiasm, dedication, determination to learn and desire to share with others is what makes the Toastmasters program work. And as long as we all continue to learn, enjoy, achieve and share, effective communication *will* indeed become a worldwide reality.

William D. Hamilton International President

William D. Hamilton

TI Officers and Directors

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cover

People who can write clearly and succinctly are treasured in business today, and it's no wonder. Good writers can save businesses time and money. That's why it's important for you to develop good writing skills. In this month's cover story, Yvonne Lewis Day explains how you can improve your writing simply by stripping each sentence to its essential parts, eliminating redundancies, deadwood and roundabout phrases. By following her suggestions you'll be able to write clear, lively reports, letters and speeches with ease — and become a valuable asset to any business.

Published monthly to promote the ideals and goals of Toastmasters International, an organization devoted to helping its members improve their ability to express themselves clearly and concisely, develop and strengthen their leadership and executive potential and achieve whatever self-development goals they may have set for themselves. Toastmasters International is a non-profit, educational organization of Toastmasters clubs throughout the world. The first Toastmasters club was established by Dr. Ralph C. Smedley on October 22, 1924. Toastmasters International was organized October 4, 1930 and incorporated December 19, 1932. This officiate on of Toastmasters of the organization, but responsibility is not assumed for the opinions of authors of other articles. Second class postage paid at Santa Ana, California, and additional mailing office. Copyright 1982 by Toastmasters' and the Toastmasters' and the Toastmasters emblem are registered trademarks of Toastmasters International, Inc. All rights reserved. The name "Toastmasters' and the Toastmasters emblem are registered trademarks of Toastmasters International, Inc. Marca registrada en Mexico. PRINTED IN U.S.A. All correspondence relating to editorial content and non-member subscriptions should be addressed to THE TOASTMASTER' Magazine (ISSN 0040-8263), P.O. Box 10400, Santa Ana, California 92711. Phone (714) 542-6793. All other circulation correspondence should be addressed to THE TOASTMASTER' Membership and Club Records at the same address. Non-member price: \$9.00 per year. Single copy: 75¢.



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Country



Survival Guidelines for the Corporate Nonentities

A tongue-in-cheek look at life at the bottom of the corporate ladder.

by Jack Lewis



uch has been written on the subject of how the \$150,000a-year executives can get more work out of subordinates for less money. However, little practical advice has been

HELP PEOPLE... LEARN, GROW AND ACHIEVE

Toastmasters' '82 Membership Campaign

Bring new members into your Toastmasters club and receive special recognition, awards and prizes!

This contest applies only to individual new members who join existing clubs. New, dual and reinstated members count, but transfer and charter members do not. For the sponsor to receive credit. his or her name and home club number must appear legibly on the Application for Membership (Form 400); no changes may be made after the application is submitted. The new member must join during 1982, and the application must reach World Headquarters no later than December 31. 1982

Complete contest rules can be obtained at no charge from World Headquarters. Request the Annual Membership Program Flyer (1620).

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Are you prepared to handle the speaking situations that come your way — in Toastmasters, on the job and in the community?

Toastmasters' Advanced Communication and Leadership Progam can give you the practical experience you'll need in any of these areas.

The program consists of seven manuals, each dealing with a specific aspect of communications. The newest manual, **The Professional Speaker**, is the most challenging manual Toastmasters has ever produced. You'll also find valuable speaking techniques in **The Entertaining Speaker**, **The Discussion Leader**, **Speaking to Inform**, **Public Relations**, **Specialty Speeches** and **Speeches By Management**.

Select any three manuals at no charge when you submit your CTM application to World Headquarters. Additional manuals are \$1.50 each, plus 20% for postage and handling. California residents add 6% sales tax. advanced for the corporate nonentities whose decision-making powers are restricted to subjects like whether or not to use a staple or paper clip on three pages of correspondence.

The following guidelines are offered in an effort to close this serious information gap.

• Opinions. When asked for an opinion by a member of top management, never interpret the request as an invitation to submit your point of view. Opinions are rendered by company presidents and occassionally by a member of the board of directors. Vice presidents may be permitted impressions or observations. For anyone below this status the magic word is "concurrence."

When asked for an opinion on a subject where the view of one's superior is not known it is well to hedge with some remark like: "After all, we must be guided by good operating procedure."

Normally this will stimulate the chief honcho into giving some clue concerning his or her own attitude toward the subject. At this time it is prudent to look one's superior right in the eye and in a loud, clear voice, reply: "Exactly!".

• **Reports.** All reports of greater than routine nature should be stockpiled and

The realist learns that a generous supply of bread requires large helpings of butter.

turned into the front office between 3:30 and 4:15 each Friday offernoon. Submission at other times will almost certainly insure their return by someone who, in an effort to justify his or her own status in the organization, will suggest a new approach or, at the very least, a superficial rewrite.

The reason for this policy is obvious. Each Friday just prior to quitting time all correspondence for the week is signed and dispatched with only a perfunctory reading. This insures prompt handling without resulting in the chaos generated by several unnecessary trips back to the drawing board.

• Suggestions. If the organization for which you work has a suggestions program, ignore it!

Any proposal designed to improve the operation will be sent to your immediate supervisor for evaluation. There the question will immediately be raised: "If this thing was any good why didn't I already think of it?"

Your superior will then be forced to dredge up some reason to veto the idea before it gets to top management who might question the inefficient manner in which your department has been run for all these years. This, in turn, generates tension and will do little to enhance your standing in the organization.

More constructively, if you think you have a valid idea, don't put it on paper. Put it to use. If you lack authority to do this, bring it up verbally to your superior, but be subtle enough about it so your department head can take part of the credit.

Volunteering Services

• **Troubleshooting.** Every organization has one individual who can be depended upon to resolve complaints from irate customers, coordinate activities at the office picnic, and explain to the office staff what the boss really meant to say when he referred to the typing pool as "that rotating swingers' club."

By allowing yourself to be conned into becoming the office patsy at best you'll become so firmly entrenched in your present job that no one will be able to replace you. At worst, these thankless extra activities will cut so deeply into your time that you may be fired for failing to keep up with the work required by your regular job description.

• Office Gossip. In every office there are a few skeletons stashed away behind one of the corner file cabinets. By keeping your eyes open and your mouth shut you'll acquire the reputation of being the type of person who can be trusted to keep a secret. This will insure a steady flow of juicy information concerning your superiors and coworkers.

When used in a discreet manner, this can be beneficial to your own career and/or social life.

• **Cost-Cutting Programs.** The method used by most companies to cope with a financial squeeze is to issue a flat order to cut expenses in all departments by a fixed percentage. This strategy has the singular effect of permitting areas of marked inefficiency to whittle off the required volume of fat with virtually no ill effects while generating a sizeable flow of blood from areas which have attempted, over the years, to operate with a minimum degree of waste.

If this meat-axe approach is used by the organization for which you work, the adverse effects can be sharply diminished by always leaving enough padding on the operation to compensate for the inevitable cutbacks in the next cost-reduction program.

• Humility. There's an old administrative axiom that states: "Humility may get you into heaven, but it'll never win you a promotion." Until now no one has come up with any solid evidence to dispute this theory.

Enough people in today's business world are maneuvering for an opportunity to cut you down. Don't make it any easier for them by calling attention to your shortcomings.

• **Cafeteria protocol.** If the organization for which you work fails to provide an

executive dining room, protocol demands that the facility be segregated with regard to rank.

Stated another way, the tables farther away from the entrance are always reserved for the highest rank that will condescend to eat under the same roof with the common troops. A bit closer are the tables for lesser officials, with a diminishing of rank as the seating arrangements approach the serving area.

It is normally not necessary to issue any instructions to insure that this seating plan is accomplished. There is a tacit understanding that top management will eat in the back of the room, free from the risk of having some clod from the shipping department spill chili on the lapels of a \$275 suit. It also insures top management a degree of privacy to discuss important matters like whether or not the new executive vice president is dating his new secretary.

• Serving on Committees. In nearly every large company it's standard operating procedure to take any and all difficult problems that have failed to be resolved by the hierarchy and turn them over to a committee of subordinates for the purpose of study and recommendation.

The theory behind this fascinating administrative buck-passing is that if enough

If you think you have a valid idea, don't put it on paper.

people kick around an idea long enough, some one might miraculously stumble on a solution.

The end result is reams of reports, pointless conversation, bickering among committee members and departmental feuds. Findings, if any, are virtually always ignored by the people who ordered the action.

Don't allow top management to maneuver you into this slot. If your regular duties are so undemanding that you can be chivvied into being a "perennial committee person," the last thing you should do is call this fact to the attention of top management.

Looking Busy

• In-Baskets. The day when a person could impress the boss by having his or her desk clear by 4:30 p.m. is over — probably never to return.

In an era of cost control, job analysis and employee evaluation, the practice of keeping one's work current is a sure-fire method of acquiring some of the work that would normally be done by the individual at the next desk. This will give that individual more time to wander around the office trying to undercut you for the next promotion.

An effective safeguard against encoun-AUGUST 1982



tering this problem is to maintain a full inbasket at all times. This will convince those in charge that you are valiantly striving to overcome the enormous work load even if the bottom 95 percent of the basket is occupied by last year's Sears Roebuck catalog.

• Office Politics. Face the fact that office politics, like the office duplicating machine, is here to stay.

For those who believe in gnomes, elves and leprechauns is the premise that the most effective way to attain promotion is through diligent work habits. The realist learns early in life that a generous supply of bread requires large helpings of butter.

If you disagree with this line of thinking, simply look around at the people who have risen to heights all out of proportion to their abilities simply by making the boss feel important.

• Overtime. It's a statistical fact that most companies require clerical workers to put in extra hours, either at home or at the office, for no compensation other than the dubious gratitude of people who manage to spend their own evenings with their friends or families. This may be mildly rewarding but it's not legal tender at the local grocery store.

It's unfortunate, but true, that the people who dole out these after-hours assignments usually make the selection on a basis of "line of the least resistance." This is to say that the cheerful, easygoing person has a much better chance of being fingered than does the office grouch.

Since being a sorehead tends to discredit an individual all out of proportion to the benefits derived, we would hesitate to recommend avoiding extra work by this method. However, when given an after- hours assignment it's best not to be too agreeable about it unless you are prepared to accept this sort of thing as a permanent diet.

Honorary Titles

• Titles. One of the most popular topmanagement ploys is the practice of bestowing a fancy-sounding title on a worker. Titles go by labels like management trainee, administrative aide, managerial assistant, assistant to the office manager and various other handles. All have one thing in common: They are awarded for the express purpose of placing more responsibility on an individual without giving any more money.

From the standpoint of the run-of-themill office worker who has been awarded a nonpaying title, it is extremely difficult to refuse the "honor" without jeopardizing future status with the firm. Also, titles do carry some fringe benefits, like an advantage when applying for credit or trying to impress someone at a cocktail party.

Since a label like "superintendent of delivery" carries more prestige than the title of "mail person," it is well to accept a title when one is offered it. But accept it in a manner that makes it clear that you consider it only an interim action pending the award of something more tangible at a future date.

• **Final Advice.** It's one of the indisputable facts of life that the ladder of success is easier to climb if a member of your family holds the ladder.

The president's son or daughter may not be a mental giant but no one ever said life is fair. To initiate a grievance because one of the boss' relatives has been moved around you is not only a futile gesture but brands you as an unsophisticated featherbrain who is unfamiliar with the mechanics of modern business.

Accept the fact that nepotism is part of almost every organization and operate in spite of it. If you can't accept this, quit and go into business for yourself.



Jack Lewis is a full-time writer with over 1100 stories and articles in print. For the past nine years he has written a syndicated column which appears in sports and gaming publications. Additionally, he has

written science fictión, men's fiction, articles on gaming and gambling, management and business articles, self-help articles and material concerning contemporary Americana. Mr. Lewis lives in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Eliminating verbiage will save you time and money.



by Yvonne Lewis Day

We can lick gravity, but sometimes the paperwork is overwhelming.

- Wernher von Braun

ost executives in business and government, if cornered, will tell you that writing is one of the most important skills that an ambitious young person can have.

In her column, "Your Money's Worth," financial analyst Sylvia Porter said recently that companies today single out communication skill ahead of production, financial or marketing abilities as the executive talent they value most.

In other words, the person who is able to write simply and clearly is more likely to get the job of his or her choice and to succeed quickly in that position.

People who hate to write, or are afraid to try, often attempt to get by with talk instead. Sometimes this works, but more often than not, oral communication causes problems and wastes time, money and energy.

Why?

8

There are two reasons. One of these concerns what is called "communication efficiency" by those who have a compulsion to make things more complicated than need be. Simply put, the idea is that the accuracy of a spoken message declines as the message is passed from one person to the next.

Any child who has played the game of gossip knows that the statement is true. Learning the truth at such an early age may explain why the child, when grown, demands that everyone put everything "in black and white."

The accuracy of oral communication declines because the average person loses

50 percent of what he hears as soon as he hears it (assuming that a person is listening to begin with). If that were not true, you could repeat verbatim everything that was said to you yesterday.

If you're like the average person, within 48 hours, you will forget an additional 25 percent of what you hear. This means that even when you pay close attention, you will probably remember only one-fourth of what was said to you two days earlier.

This fact is at the basis of the exasper-

The average length of letters can be reduced by 50 percent without any change in meaning.

ated cry, "But I *told* him ... in plain English!" The written word, then, provides an

Accurate account of what is said and done. Not only that, but it allows us also to share knowledge, ideas and feelings with posterity, to say to readers a century from now, "This is the way things are."

The second reason is that people who write poorly often fail in their spoken efforts. Good writing involves logic and discipline. Without these attributes, communication of any sort comes out halfbaked — ill-conceived and ill-expressed.

Writing helps you think. A few courageous souls say bluntly that poor writing is a sign of poor thinking.

Inflation Fighter

There are many other good reasons for

learning to write better, but you've heard them all. Right?

Wrong.

There is one reason that few dare mention at a time when the annual rate of inflation is higher than Lady Astor's eyebrows. That reason is simple economics.

Do you have any idea what it costs the average organization or business today to turn out a single one-page letter or memorandum? Take a guess.

If you guessed any amount under \$7, you are an incurable optimist and there's no hope for you.

According to the National Office Management Association, the cost of producing one typewritten page ranges from \$7 to \$12, depending on the subject matter and the number of managers who have to "sign off" on the correspondence.

In large businesses and in government, the typical letter is written by an underling for someone at a higher level to sign. The signed copy is then reviewed by someone in the next echelon, and perhaps by someone else a notch higher, and so on.

Although many offices are now equipped with word processors that do everything but let out the cat, the time saved in preparing correspondence is not nearly so much as you probably imagine. And from any savings, you must deduct the cost of this sophisticated equipment.

But what if I tell you that the average length of letters and memoranda that you write can be reduced *by at least 50 percent* without any change in meaning.

(I heard that, but I'll tell you anyway.) The length can be reduced by at least half by simply eliminating unnecessary words, roundabout and evasive constructions, and meaningless jargon. Words like

To be perfectly frank, I have been somewhat disappointed with Mr. Finch. He fails to solve various problems that occur without repeated reminders to do so. On several times, I have called him or sent him letters about these problems, but I never received back any reply.

May I call your attention to the fact that I have been buying pewter for my gift shop from your company for nearly a decade now, and up until recently I never had any difficulties with your service at all. However, if such poor service is allowed to continue, I will not hesitate to find a new pewter

Sincerely,

Leslie Farley, Owner Pewter 'N Things

Michael Buckner, President Olde English Pewter Company 18446 Kendall Boulevard Dallas, Texas 80411

Dear Mr. Buckner:

A problem has arisen with your company that I'm sure you'l want to resolve.

loni

This past January 25 I ordered 300 #18099 pewter mugs and 200 #1291 pewter vases from your company. At that time I was told that they would be shipped within the week. At the present, time I have not received any of this merchandise at all.

When I personally called your customer service representative, (asked Don Finch, on February 23 to ask whother or not the shipment had been sent, he told me it had indeed been shipped and that I should be receiving it within the week. When it failed to appive, I called him again. He told me he would check out the problem and call me back. I have not heard from him as yet.

Presently I am completely sold out of the above items. It is very important that I receive this merchandise sometime before March 15, since April, May and June are some of the peak selling months of the year for these items.

It should be pointed out that this isn't the first time, that your company's shipments have been excessively late. I also had a problem with my pre-Christmas shipment. I should have received it in late September. I did not receive it until the middle of November.

Dog Puppies

(a bolt of) lightning (a distance of) ten yards (a) myriad (of) sources (absolute) guarantee (absolutely) essential (absolutely) sure (actual) experience add (an additional) (advance) planning (advance) reservations (advance) warning all meet (together) alongside (of) (already) existing aluminum (metal) (and) moreover (as) for example ask (a question) (as to) whether (as) vet (at a) later (date) (at) (about) at (the) present (time) at (12) noon at (12) midnight at some time (to come) (awkward) predicament (baby) boy was born bald(-headed) (basic) fundamentals blend (together) bouquet (of flowers) (brief) moment burn (down) burn (up) (but) (however) (but) nevertheless came (at a time) when cancel (out) (chief) protagonist climb (up) (close) proximity (close) scrutiny (cold) facts collaborate (together) combine (together) commute (back and forth) (complete) monopoly (completely) destroyed (completely) filled consensus (of opinion) continue (on) (continue to) remain (current) fad (current) trend (currently) being dates (back) (definite) decision descend (down)

(different) kinds (difficult) dilemma (direct) confrontation do (over) (again) drop (down) during (the course of) dwindled (down) each (and every) earlier (in time) either (and/or both) (empty) space (end) result enter (in) equal (to one another) eradicate (completely) (established) fact estimated at (about) estimated (roughly) at (every) now and then (exact) opposites face (up to) (false) pretenses (fellow) classmates few (in number) filled (to capacity) (finally) ended (first) began first (of all) follow (after) for (a period of) 10 days (foreign) imports forever (and ever) (free) gift (free) pass (future) plans gather (together) (general) conclusion (general) custom (general) public (glowing) ember golden (wedding) anniversary (grand) total (guest) speaker had done (previously) (hard) facts heat (up) (hostile) antagonist (hot) water heater I (myself personally) indicted (on a charge) (integral) part introduced (a new) introduced (for the first time) (invited) guests (ir) regardless is (now) pending join (together) (just) exactly (just) recently

by Yvonne Lewis Day

The following is a list of redundancies I've compiled from business and technical writing falling victim to my red ink. The word or words in parentheses should be deleted.

kneel (down) last (of all) lift (up) (local) residents look back (in retrospect) lose (out) (major) breakthrough (mass) media may (possibly) mean it (sincerely) (mental) telepathy merged (together) meshed (together) (midway) between might (possibly) mix (together) (mutual) cooperation my (personal) opinion (native) habitat (natural) instinct never (at any time) never (before) (new) beginning (new) bride (new) construction (new) record (new) recruit no trespassing (allowed) none (at all) (null and) void off (of) (official) business officiated (at the ceremony) (old) adage (old) cliche (old) pioneer (old) proverb (one and the) same (originally) created over (and done with) (over) exaggerate over (with) (pair of) twins (partially) damaged (partially) destroyed (passing) fad (past) experience (past) history (past) memories (past) records permeate (throughout) penetrate (into) (perfect) ideal period (of time) (personal) charm (personal) friendship (personal) opinion (pitch) black pizza (pie)

plan (ahead) (possibly) might postponed (until later) (pre-)plan (pre-)recorded (present) incumbent (private) industry probed (into) proceed (ahead) protest (against) protrude (out) (rate of) speed recur (again) refer (back) reflect (back) repeat (again) reply (back) reported (to the effect) that revert (back) rose (to his feet) (rough) rule of thumb (rustic) (country) (same) (identical) (separate) entities share (together) since (the time when) skipped (over) soaked (to the skin) (specific) example spell out (in detail) stacked (together) start (out) started (off) with (still) persists (still) remains (suddenly) collapsed (suddenly) exploded sufficient (enough) (sum) (total) summer (season) swoop (down) (sworn) affidavits talking (out loud) (temporary) reprieve (therapeutic) treatment (thorough) investigation together (at the same time) (true) facts 2 a.m. (in the morning) undergraduate (student) (underground) subway (unexpected) surprise (unintentional) mistake (usual) custom (when and) if whether (or not) written (down) (young) foal (young) lad

these, which contribute nothing to meaning, are called *clutter*.

Peer over any editor's shoulder and you'll find that we spend 90 percent of our time striking out clutter and rearranging the ideas that are left. We find that the average person who takes pen in hand is like the man who prompted Lincoln to remark: "That fellow can compress the most words into the smallest idea of any man I ever met."

But the problem started long before Lincoln's time. Pliny the Younger, Roman statesman and writer, ended a letter to a friend with this statement: "I apologize for the long letter; I didn't have time to shorten it."

Nineteen centuries later, Sir William Osler, Canadian physician and medical writer, echoed the thought. "It is harder," he said, "to boil down than to write."

The problem is still with us. In a survey of business executives and government officials, conducted by Dr. Fred H. MacIntosh of the University of North Carolina, 179 of the 182 respondents listed "wordiness" as one of the problems with writing today.

It doesn't take a super sleuth to find evidence to support their statement. The opening lines of business letters are choked with unnecessary words: At the present time, we are in the process of accepting applications from interested individuals for the position of senior accountant.

Fourteen of the 21 words in that sentence are unnecessary. If you are accepting applications, it goes without saying that this action is occuring "at the present time." And how many UNinterested individuals do you think would express interest in a job they don't want? For that matter, why mention individuals at all? Who else but a person would submit an application? The implication is that the great apes and other critters need not bother.

Besides increasing length, clutter robs the statement of the warmth and simplicity that characterize good conversation.

If a friend calls and asks what you're doing, would you say "At the present time, I am in the process of viewing television news on the electronic medium known as TV?"

The 21-word sentence, therefore, can be reduced *66 percent* without changing the meaning: We are accepting applications for senior accountant.

Back to Basics

The secret to writing concisely is to strip every sentence to its essential parts. Sydney Smith, English essayist, offered this advice: "When you've finished writing, go through your manuscript and strike out every other word; you have no idea how much vigor it will give to your composition."

Begin by throwing out: (1) redundancies, (2) deadwood and (3) roundabout phrases.

cussette tupes reatainin	ig condensations of best-	selling books:	
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How I Raised Myself from Failure to Success in Selling by Frank Bettger	The Art of Public Speaking by Millard Bennett	The Greatest Salesmar in the World	
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Much of the clutter in writing consists of words that mean essentially the same thing and phrases that make a point that is implicit in what has already been said. The repetition of meaning in this way is called "redundancy."

Fighting redundancy is a little like fighting weeds or the Internal Revenue Service — you're always slightly behind. A Cabinet member speaks of "a hypothetical situation that does not exist," and soon all of America is echoing the phrase.

At his first press conference as secretary of state, Alexander Haig spoke of "careful caution" (which is preferable, I suppose, to careless caution). Within the week I heard a manager at the corner drugstore reprimand a clerk for lack of "careful caution" in handling a prescription request.

Obviously you've never said "I've lost my keys," only to hear someone say, "Where did you lose them?"

Haig's statements at the press conference were so laden with clutter that Time Magazine, in its February 23 issue, accused him of "conducting a terrorist campaign of his own — against the English language."

Secretary Haig is certainly not alone in his "campaign." Our speech and writing are strewn with redundancies. Many of us acquire the nasty habit in childhood when, to achieve a greater emphasis in our sparse vocabulary, we repeat the obvious: "Bang! I killed you dead." The habit is reinforced by listening to adults who never learned to let the obvious speak for itself.

Comedian Dave Gardner points out how insidious the habit is in his satire of Little Bo-Peep who "lost her sheep and couldn't tell where to find them." Says Gardner: "If she lost them, it's only natural that she wouldn't know where to find them." And if she doesn't know where to find them, she'll certainly have to leave them alone. As for wagging their tails behind them, sheep seldom wag their tails anywhere else.

Dumb, you say? Then obviously you've never said, "I've lost my keys," only to hear someone say, "Where did you lose them?" And you probably don't snicker when you pass the pet store that advertises "live pets" (as though there is a store somewhere that sells dead ones).

Stating the obvious is one of the main causes of redundancy. Unless you're from another planet or have sadly lost contact with this one, you know that nothing can be green in size or visible to the ear or large in smell. You know, too, that no man is bald-legged, that no one has a big smile on his foot, and that nothing ever falls to the ground above. Aside from adding clutter, therefore, nothing is gained by saying green in color, visible to the eye, large in size or bald-headed.

Kill Them Dead?

Redundancies also stem from misuse of words that are absolute; that is, words that cannot be compared or modified. "Dead" is an example. One person cannot be deader than another. Similarly, a woman cannot be slightly pregnant. A thing that is endless is without end, period. It cannot be made more endless.

Of the many words that are absolute, one deserves special mention: "unique." The word means "one of a kind." Precious few things in this world are unique. These few things are known as the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. A business lunch is not one of the seven and is not likely to become the eighth wonder unless it consists of Martian rock soup and Venusian fly roast.

Yet in the course of a day you will hear the word applied to anything that is even slightly different. The word is also absurdly modified. To say that one thing is more unique than another is to refute the laws of science. If a thing is one, it cannot be more so. Those who say that this thing is more unique than that compound the absurdity by adding that something else is the most unique of all and that some things are uniquely unique, or (heaven help us) most uniquely unique.

" 'As a matter of fact' precedes many a statement that isn't." Mark Twain said that a century ago, yet there are those who persist in using the phrase and dozens of other platitudes that add nothing to their business writing. To begin a statement with "to be honest" implies that you haven't been. The phrase is often used when what is meant is "to be blunt." That, too, is unnecessary. If you write "Get lost, turkey," the reader isn't likely to need an explanation.

Other examples of deadwood include: I might add, it is interesting to note that, it should be pointed out that, it should be remembered that, it is significant that, it is worthy to say that, for your information, I might add, may I say, may I call to your attention, may I take the liberty, permit me to say, with your kind permission.

Simply state the information and let the reader decide whether it is interesting or important. Telling the reader in advance that something is interesting is like telling someone that a joke is really funny — it rarely is.

Deadwood also includes these vague and

meaningless modifiers: appreciably, approximately, comparatively, considerably, definitely, evidently, excessive, fairly, nearly, negligible, rather, reasonably, relatively, significant, somewhat, substantial, sufficient, suitable, undue, various.

The trouble with these words is that they take up space without telling the reader anything. What is a "significant" number? Ten? Fifty? A million? At best, the word leaves the reader wondering whether that "significant" increase in insurance premiums will wipe out his mad money or leave him with a second mortgage on his first-born. Give the reader specific information or admit frankly that you don't know. At worst, the reader will assume the latter, anyway.

Pretentious Phrases

The use of roundabout, evasive expressions is called "circumlocution." A circumlocution is clutter at its worst: a laborious phrase that has pushed out the short words that mean the same thing. These windy phrases are a drag on energy and momentum. Even before John Dean gave us "at this point in time," the average American had stopped saying "now." In its place came "at the present time," "currently" or "presently" (which doesn't mean "now," it means "soon"). None of these are as effective as "now," meaning the immediate moment; or "today,"

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meaning the present; or simply "to be," as in "It is raining." Only a windbag would say, "At the present time, we are experiencing precipitation."

The urge to inflate simple sentences has become an obsession throughout business and the professions. My dentist used to ask, "Does it hurt?" Now he wants to know whether I am experiencing any pain. If I weren't so busy trying to experience respiration (breathe), I could tell him that I "definitely have the sensation of being in an unhealthy condition" (feel sick). Though he does good work, I cannot force myself to say, "The type work performed by him is excellent in nature."

After years of editing and rewriting materials written by executives in business and government (an average of 12,000 pages a year), I still cringe at the sight of an oxygen-deprived sentence like this: "During the period of time in which certain acute emergencies arose so that a crisis situation could be said to obtain, individuals rose to the occasion with singular examples of exemplary behavior toward coworkers of close proximity."

Those 37 words can be reduced to eight: "During emergencies, employees behaved admirably toward their coworkers." That is a 78 percent reduction in copy!

Writing concisely not only saves money (in production costs), but also time. Imagine how much time your reader will save if he has to read only half a page to receive your message instead of two, three, or even six pages. The time saved is even greater if you write a memorandum or letter that will be read by dozens or even hundreds of employees. The following memorandum, written when time and money were at stake, got straight to the point:

> THE WHITE HOUSE TO: John Dean FROM: Charles Colson Now what the hell do I do?

Equally direct are these instructions written by an anonymous (but delightfully original) worker: "In case of fire, stand in the hall and shout, 'Fire!' "

Besides saving time and money, this kind of concise writing helps conserve our dwindling natural resources. Prune your prose this year and save a tree. Get others to help you and save a forest.



Yoonne Lewis Day is a writer, editor, and lecturer with 15 years' experience in business and professional writing. A consultant/ lecturer to business and industry, she has written several handbooks on the

craft of writing and conducts workshops and seminars on the subject for executives in business and government, for office personnel, and for various professional groups. Besides editing or writing more than 500 technical reports, she writes fiction and satire and has just completed her first novel. Cures for the fear of putting your thoughts into words.

CRACKING TIde SPEECHWRITING BLOCK

by Tom Shea

e've all heard of writer's block and painter's block, but whoever heard of speaker's block? Well, regardless of whether you've heard it called that or not, if you're a Toastmaster, you've probably experienced it.

In my first year as a Toastmaster, speeches got easier and easier to make, just as the veteran speakers had predicted they would — up to a point. Then it got harder and harder to give a speech.

Inventing Excuses

For three months it was as hard to prepare and deliver a speech as it had been when I was a complete beginner. During those three months, I didn't make many speeches. When I was scheduled to speak, I usually begged off for one reason or another.

Why? Every time I sat down to write a speech, up popped this big mental block. It was unavoidable. My block was keeping me from speaking about anything else, so in desperation, I gave a speech about my mental block itself. In it I described the anguish I experience and the problems I encounter when preparing and presenting a speech, and the reasons for both. This is the gist of the speech I gave:

I put off actually writing my speech for almost any reason. When the time to write draws near, I begin to do strange things. I read a book or magazine, watch television, eat a meal, eat a snack, load the dishwasher, start an argument with my wife, lay down "just for a few minutes" — anything but write the speech.

When I actually sit down to write, I suffer from mental constipation. Endless AUGUST 1982

internal arguments go on about the best way to start. Nothing is clear about the subject, and I spend a lot of time thinking about how much more time is left in which to write the speech.

One thing I notice when I'm preparing a speech is that I never, never simply consider what I want to say. I immediately begin to evaluate how what I want to say will be received by you — by the audience. There's a certain way I want you to react.

I really want you to be impressed. I want you to think my speech is profound or at least clever. Even as I'm telling you

"When the time to write draws near ... I read, watch television, eat a snack ..."

this, I want you to be impressed with my fearless honesty in exploring my block to communication.

I don't know any way around this desire to impress. Regardless of what I'm doing, I'm always concerned with making a good impression. God forbid anyone should think of me as just some clown! I'd much prefer you thought of me as, say, a tweedy author who puffs thoughtfully on a pipe, or, better yet, as God's gift to oratory.

For just a moment, let's compare the contents of a speech to a handful of gold nuggets. You want to make these nuggets visible and available to your audience. If you set them in your hand, they will naturally arrange themselves — perhaps with the largest nugget in the middle and a cluster of smaller rocks surrounding and highlighting the main one. Then all you need to do is hold them up in a clear light and your job is done. In essence, then, giving a speech, like displaying a handful of gold nuggets, is really simple.

That's not what I do, though. As I practice the speech, I take one of the smaller nuggets and laboriously crochet a huge, complicated doily for the smallest nugget. I intend to display the other rocks, including the main one. But it looks like they'll all require doilies, and by now I'm exhausted and out of time. I tell myself I will do better when I actually present the speech.

Great. It's now the day of the speech, and I really want you to be impressed.

I'm a little nervous at first. I fumble in my pocket and begin slowly to unwrap my first doily. I spend a lot of time showing you the connecting lattices of lace. I want you to fully appreciate the work that went into making it. Remember, I'm showing you something that not just anyone can do!

Finally, when you're just about to lose interest completely, I pluck out the first nugget and show it to you.

By now the green timing light is on, showing me I have only two minutes to go.

I need to rush now. But instead, I panic and forget for an awkward moment which pocket the other doilies and nuggets are in. I tear open a second doily and display the nugget at its center.

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Now I'm out of time, and I haven't even shown you the main nugget. I handle this by telling you there's "much, much more" I could go into if only I had the time.

Finally, I improvise a conclusion that sounds a little inconclusive, and then I sit down.

My evaluator tells me to organize my doilies better and to practice showing them in the mirror.

All that's left now is to explain why I didn't win the Best Speech Award. That's easy. I tell myself that only a rare and special sort of people can really appreciate good doily work anyway, and obviously this group isn't the right sort.

Clearly this is not the best way to do a speech.

The problem with doing such speeches is that they are agonizingly hard to do, and very little communication is in them.

But by writing a speech on this subject, I gained a clear picture of my communications block and exactly how it operated. My question then became, "What's behind the block? What causes it?"

The answer to that was incredibly simple. I was afraid my gold nuggets weren't worth much. If I were sure of their worth I wouldn't need to be so con-

"I really want you to be impressed ... to think my speech is profound or at least clever."

cerned with others' opinions. I wouldn't need to embellish my ideas to make them more impressive.

You see, I've lived with my thoughts constantly for years, and I know most of my thoughts are not brilliant. They are common knowledge. In fact, they are trite — probably nothing most people don't already know.

Many of my thoughts are repetitious. My wife has heard my stories more than once, for instance.

I didn't want you, my audience, to know these things about me, so I developed this fantastic expertise at doily-making and pretended to more brilliance and profundity than I have.

Important Lesson

The above speech easily won the Best Speech Award for that day. My communications block had been broken apart. But more importantly, I had learned some important lessons that have served me well at other times when I'm having problems preparing speeches.

Here are the steps I devised to overcome my communications block. Next time you find yourself putting off preparing a speech, I recommend you do the following:

• Write a speech about it, even if you

never intend to give the speech. Francis Bacon once wrote, "Writing maketh an exact man." Even if you think you know what's stopping you, take 10 or 15 minutes to detail exactly how the self-thwarting mechanism operates.

• For a boost to your self-confidence, read Emerson's classic essay on self-reliance. "Insist on yourself, never imitate," he wrote more than 100 years ago. "Trust thyself: every heart vibrates to that iron string (of divine inspiration)." And even more emphatically: "Speak what you think today in hard words and tomorrow speak what tomorrow thinks in hard words again, though it contradict everything you said today."

I have never read that essay without being inspired. It's a good idea to collect a small trove of those readings that most inspire you.

• For the difficulty of the moment, find the largest nugget — the central point of the speech — and state it as clearly as possible.

If you're like me, you may have to force yourself to come to the main point. For this I recommend two methods that are unfailing, even if they are a bit ruthless.

First, write a 60-second commercial for your main point. Pretend you're an advertiser who's spending \$30,000 to air his oneminute television ad during prime time.

Not enough time to get your point across? Don't believe it. Aren't you more eloquent than any two dozen washday detergents?

Second, pretend you're a television reporter sitting in the audience and you have just heard yourself deliver the speech on which you're currently working. In a few minutes you must go on camera and file a 30-second report on the speech you've just heard.

What the heck! Ham this up a bit. I recommend you give yourself a rave review. If you can fill in the blanks of the following two sentences, you've got the largest gold nugget in the palm of your hand:

"In a rousing and original speech before a local Toastmasters club today, Mr. (or Ms.) ______ emphatically made the point that ______.

The usually staid crowd of experienced speakers leapt to its feet and applauded and cheered thunderously as the speaker returned again and again to his main theme, which was that ______

Once you've managed to state the main point that clearly, your speech is more than half written.



Tom Shea has been a member of Jetstream Toastmasters Club 2624-4 at Moffett Field Naval Air Station, California, for four years. He is a copy editor for InfoWorld, a newsweekly for users of small computers. How to handle those people who habitually sidetrack the conversation.

KEEPING DERA/LEURS ON THE TRACK

by Lo-Ann Zhora Trembley

ne afternoon, Elizabeth Johnson went down to the mailroom to straighten out what seemed like a minor problem.

"Mildred," she said to the mailroom supervisor, "there seems to have been a foul-up in sending out those division reports I brought down to you over a week ago. Some of the people didn't get theirs until two days after the meeting. What went wrong"?

"What a lovely scarf!" Mildred exclaimed. "You certainly do have an eye for just the right touch. Excuse me, but I've got to run. Personnel just called about these forms; they want them right away. But it was nice seeing you." With those words, Mildred was gone, and Elizabeth Johnson was left alone.

Later that day, Ted Roberts was on the phone with one of the firm's major suppliers. "We're still waiting for delivery of that shipment which was due on the tenth," Ted said.

"Well, you know how it goes," replied the voice on the other end of the line. "Say, Ted, how's your golf game? Been out lately? I've been having some trouble with hooking on the fourteenth tee since they redesigned the back nine. I was wondering if you'd been having the same problem."

"Not really, Charlie," Ted said. "I haven't had much of a chance to get out lately."

"Say, that's too bad, " Charlie offered. "We'll have to get together for a game real soon. Nice talking to you, Ted."

The click of the receiver and the buzz of the dial tone came over the line before Ted could say anything more.

At a meeting that afternoon, Elizabeth Johnson and Ted Roberts encountered the same frustrating experience. One of the participants in their meeting was continually "being reminded of a story." After a while the other participants found themselves asking, "Just what were we discussing anyway?"

All three of these incidents are examples

Once one person is allowed to tell stories, others will believe they may do so, too.

of encounters with deraileurs, — persons who habitually sidetrack the conversation, sending it off on confusing tangents. For those on receiving ends of such conversations, the typical results are initial befuddlement and, later, the feeling of "having been had."

Different Motives

People who make a habit of derailing conversations may or may not be doing it intentionally. They may be acting out of the belief that unpleasant topics or points of contention should be avoided at all costs, or that politeness dictates any discussion be maintained at a light and superficial level. On the other hand, they may have unconscious motives: the desire to get off the hook, the need to control others by manipulating them into the position of a captive audience, or the secret satisfaction of getting the better of an unwitting opponent.

Trying to communicate with a deraileur is frustrating, but it is possible.

The first step is to determine the importance of the exchange. In a social setting — a cocktail party, for instance — the deraileur is often regarded as an entertaining diversion. Even when the entertainment turns into irritation, at least it's possible to discreetly excuse yourself from the deraileur's chatter. In the work environment, however, such an option is often neither available nor desirable. If the situation calls for serious decision making or action, the deraileur becomes an irritating impediment to progress.

A down-to-business conversation is like a train traveling on a track, coming from one point and going on to the next until it reaches its destination. Deraileurs are saboteurs who misdirect the train or send it onto a sidetrack, sometimes destroying the line completely if allowed to continue unchecked. In a committee, one single deraileur can make an entire roomful of persons so dispirited that they gradually retreat in defeat. ("What's the use? We're not getting anywhere with this!")

Books in Brief

• **COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY** — By Arnold "Nick" Carter. Methods of coping with nervousness, fear and other emotions that can interfere with effective communication.

• A MASTER GUIDE TO PUBLIC SPEAKING — By Robert L. Montgomery. An expert with vast experience as a speaker reveals the inside secrets of the most successful speechmakers. A must for beginning and advanced speakers. (B-5)

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If you find yourself in conversation with a deraileur and don't want to digress from the topic, start sounding like a broken record. Repeat, and keep on repeating *in the same words*, the point under discussion. By keeping yourself focused this way, the deraileur can't untrack the conversation.

Finding his or her efforts frustrated, the deraileur may become indignant and accusatory ("You are an uncaring, insensitive person!"). Don't fall for it. Derailing is a disguised form of aggression. It is a power play to keep attention upon oneself, to block direct confrontation over issues, and to baffle and befuddle others. But as long as you keep repeating yourself, the deraileur will learn you will not be sidetracked.

So be prepared. If the issue you're dealing with is important enough for you to want to find a resolution, it's also important enough to make you stick to your guns.

Group Action

In a group where a known deraileur is present, it's often a good idea to state at the outset, "We will not adjourn until we have reached a resolution." The whole group will be more willing to squelch

Deraileurs believe unpleasant topics should be avoided.

derailing if they know everyone present will waste time and energy if the derailing is permitted to go on.

Derailing can become contagious. Once one person is allowed to begin telling stories about what happened to Aunt Sally on her vacation to Yellowstone, others will feel invited to do the same. Be ready to politely but firmly say, "Why don't you save that for after the meeting? Right now, we're dealing with..." and then move on to the next contributor.

Deraileurs can drive you crazy, if you let them. They assume you're too polite to point out, even indirectly, how they are rudely monopolizing your time, energy and attention with their disconnected ramblings. They assume they'll be able to distract and divert their listeners from their objectives and, by the sheer quantity and persistence of their talking, carry the day.

But deraileurs can be prevented from accomplishing their mission. It's always possible to get the discussion back on track and keep it there if you're willing to be just as persistent as the deraileur and as focused as the deraileur is fragmented.

Lo-Ann Zhora Trembley is a writer in Burlington, Wisconsin. She and her husband also conduct communication workshops for social, civic and business groups.

Photo courtesy of the National Archive

FREDERICK DOUGLASS: THE OR ATOR'S OR ATOR

How a renowned humanitarian and orator succeeded in inspiring and motivating his audience.

by Everett J. Freeman

rederick Douglass was one of the world's finest orators. While he was certainly a gifted individual, Douglass owes much of his success as a public speaker to employing many of the techniques used by Toastmasters around the world today: vocal variety, colorful language, humor, daring, caring and animation. Between 1845 and 1895, the year he died, Frederick Douglass was the most popular and respected orator of African descent in the world. And although Douglass became a noted editor, advisor to United States' presidents and minister to Haiti, he is remembered best for his fiery and thunderous oratory. Douglass, as a public speaker, was an orator's orator who

Without it . .

You're just another face in the crowd!

used to the fullest the techniques of effective speaking.

Douglass was a master of inflection and vocal variety. He delivered his speeches with all the virtuosity of a concert performer. Each speech resembled a fine musical score, having its distinct yet interwoven movements. Often Douglass would begin speaking in a conversational tone, serenading the frequently hostile listeners. Then, coming directly to the point, he would recount in swift succession the horrors of involuntary servitude, raising and lowering his voice, his speed and his rhythm with studied control.

The finale of a Douglass speech was nothing short of a sound spectacular in which he used an array of vocal tones, mood changes, pauses, whispers and shouts to drive to a dramatic end. Commenting on Douglass' speaking style, a reporter for the Salem Register noted in 1842: "The most wonderful performance of the evening was the address of Frederick Douglass, himself a slave only four years ago!... He seemed to move the audience at his will, and they at times would hang upon his lips with staring eyes and open mouths, as eager to catch every word as any 'sea of upturned faces' that ever rolled at the feet of Everett or Webster, to revel in their classic eloquence."

Douglass was able to blend colorful language much in the way that Georgia

O'Keeffe has excelled in the use and combinations of pastels. Consider, for example, this vintage Douglass from a speech he delivered in August 1857: "Those who profess to favor freedom yet depreciate agitation are men who want crops without plowing up the ground; they want rain without thunder and lightning. They want the ocean without the awful roar of its many waters. Power concedes nothing without demand. It never did, and it never will." Such a precision of language and power of thought characterized Douglass' writings and speeches. He made judicious use of what we Toastmasters call word pictures.

Laughed at Himself

Coupled with his facility for language, Douglass had a knack for making himself seem unimportant while at the same time getting his listeners to like him enough to hear what he had to say. He used humor! Indeed, Douglass used humor as his most effective weapon in disarming hostile audiences. Usually Douglass made himself the subject of humor through harmless selfdeprecation — poking fun at his nose, his 6-foot frame or his unruly hair. His speeches were models of how one creates laughter through personal put-downs.

Take, for instance, his 1847 farewell address to the British people. In that speech Douglass quipped: "Never had I a day's schooling in my life; all that I have of education I have stolen." Later in the speech Douglass confessed with his characteristic humor "... we do not have black paupers in America; we leave pauperism to be fostered and taken care of by white people. Not that I intend any disrespect to my audience in making this statement — I can assure you I am in no way prejudiced against color."

Douglass was venturesomely bold in thought and action; he was a lion of courage and mettle. He waited for no individual to take command. He was always at the head of the light brigade. That he rallied against slavery in an age when others thought the institution permanent personifies the kind of daring, challenging spirit in Douglass.

More than once Douglass found himself not only having to defend himself verbally, but also physically. Mobs would discharge firecrackers, throw cayenne pepper, stones, garbage and rotten eggs at him. On one particular occasion, Douglass had to defend himself against a club-swinging attacker, which prompted an observer to say that Douglass fought like a "trained pugilist." Nevertheless, Douglass didn't let threats of physcial violence inhibit his public speaking career. If anything, Douglass regarded the threats and the violence as concrete evidence that the cause for which he fought was a righteous one.

There was an area in which Douglass' unmatched nerve and brazenness attained colossal dimensions. Douglass dared to use speaking as a form of oratorial shock treatment. He used the speaker's platform to awaken, challenge, provoke, dare and inspire, as well as to entertain. Douglass boldly took on controversial issues and presented them to his listeners with adventuresome originality.

For instance, on the nation's seventysixth anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, Douglass shocked the country with his famous speech, "What, to the American Slave, Is Your Fourth of July?" In that speech, Douglass said in part: "What, to the American slave, is your Fourth of July? I answer, a day that reveals to him, more than all other days in the year, the gross injustice and cruelty to which he is the constant victim.

'To him, your celebration is a sham; your boasted liberty, an unholy license; your national greatness, swelling vanity; your sounds of rejoicing, empty and heartless; your denunciation of tyrants, brassfronted impudence; your shouts of liberty and equality, hollow mockery. Your prayers and hymns, your sermons and thanksgivings, with all your religious parade and solemnity, are to him mere bombast, fraud, deception, impiety and hypocrisy — a thin veil to cover up crimes which would disgrace a nation of savages. There is not a nation on the earth guilty of practices more shocking and bloody than are the people of the United States, at this very hour.'

The Need for Action

At heart, Douglass' daring was rooted in a basic idea which Toastmasters follows. Douglass saw communication as the link to the vital expression of leadership; he believed the speaker must provide leadership from the platform — that communication and leadership are intertwined. On this matter Douglass was very clear: "Action! Action, not criticism, is the plain duty of the hour. Words are now useful only as they stimulate to blows. The office of speech now is only to point out when, where and how to strike to the best advantage."

To be sure, Douglass included in his speeches, as we at Toastmasters do, the challenge to his listeners to become active. Douglass dared his listeners to rise to the call for creative, imaginative leadership.

While Douglass certainly did not hesitate to fire a strident volley of rebuke at his listeners where he thought it necessary, it would be wrong to leave the impression that Douglass engaged in oratorial wickedness. Douglass harbored no malice and reproached those who did. Indeed, Douglass rode the jet streams of moral integrity at all times, matching his sense of daring with a profound sense of caring.

Perhaps the most sanguine illustration of Douglass' magnanimity was when, as an internationally known and respected humanitarian, he returned to the plantation of his childhood to visit his former master, Thomas Auld. Auld was near death and the conversation between the former slave and former master was warm and dignified. Auld spoke: "I always thought, though, that you were too smart to be a slave, and had I been in your place, I should have done as you did." To this Douglass replied: "Captain Auld, I did not run away from you, but from slavery. It was not that I loved Caesar less, but Rome more."

Cavett Robert, speaking at the 1978 Toastmasters Convention in Vancouver, noted that the worst thing for a speaker to do is to pretend to be a big shot. Douglass never tried. Although Douglass was usually the principal speaker when he was listed on a program, he never acted like a pompous, overbearing expert. After each speech he would spend a considerable amount of time shaking hands with wellwishers and kibitzing with the plain folk. No dirt farmer or coal miner received second-class treatment from Douglass. Douglass succeeded at being his own, lovable self by not trying to be anyone else. He also brought into his relations with others an endearing quality of empathy. He showed other people that he

"...Power concedes nothing without demand. It never did and it never will."

was concerned about their problems, and this capacity for selflessness made him a pippin.

Douglass' caring extended into one other area that deserves mention. He cared about himself. Specifically, Douglass cared about improving himself as a speaker and as a human being. Douglass not only taught himself to read and write — no small feat — but he also taught himself to play the fiddle. He made continuous preparation his watchword. He refused to permit himself to be lulled into a false sense of accomplishment; he insisted on growing.

Welcomed Criticism

Did Douglass make mistakes? Yes. What the philosopher Friedrich Nietesche, Douglass' contemporary, said of all mankind was also true of Frederick Douglass. He was "human, all too human." More than once, Douglass lost his place during the delivery of a speech, made a needless digression, uttered the hideous "ah." Fortunately, Douglass never gave up trying to improve himself. He solicited constructive criticism of his speech and writing from friends; he was always glad to have audience evaluation of his delivery, voice and manner. To be sure, Douglass succeeded, in spite of his shortcomings, because he cared enough to try.

Douglass bestowed upon each speech all the energies of his mind and body. Every Douglass speech was a rhapsody of language and motion. If Douglass was speaking about something an Englishman from Yorkshire had said, he would assume the man's posture and launch into a spirited impersonation of the fellow. When Douglass spoke about the agonies of a slave, he would contort his face as if in pain. He had a built-in stage presence that permeated his very being. Douglass was the consummate actor both on and off the stage. Indeed, Douglass' joy for animation was so great that when he fell to his knees, the victim of a fatal heart attack on February 20, 1895, his wife thought at

first he was merely mimicking one of the speakers on the platform with him at that day's meeting of the National Council of Women. He wasn't. Douglass passed away without regaining consciousness.

Fate would have it that Frederick Douglass should live and die before Toastmasters International was founded.

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Everett J. Freeman is founder and past president of Twentyfirst Century Club 2876-46. He teaches labor studies at Rutgers University.

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Increase your learning abilities by using these proven mental tools.

HOW TO REMEMBER... ANYTHING!

by William D. Hersey

ords, Words, words... Images, images, images... From all directions we are bombarded with an explosion of information from trade magazines, books, seminars, films, reports. Useful, most of it, but how can we possibly absorb even a small portion of it?

Well, there *is* a breakthrough — a simple learning skill you can employ not only to retain information but also to gain the time for assimilating it. A few time-tested mental tools can help you enlarge your potential far beyond the commonly accepted 10 percent retention of the information that comes your way. I like to call this memory system "new leverage for learning."

Any good tool provides leverage enabling us to do something we could not do without it. A pair of pliers adds leverage to the muscles of the hand and, without increasing their inherent strength, adds power to accomplish a task. A pair of glasses takes residual visual power and magnifies and focuses it — making it possible for the wearer to gain access to new information by reading. The glasses do not create a *permanent* increase in inherent visual power, but they do give leverage when needed.

A book, one of the oldest tools for learning, holds information in an organized "print" form so the mind of the reader may ponder and absorb the contents. It also provides the means for repeated exposure to the information.

When you see someone reading a book you do not assume that he or she is studying printing, bookbinding or papermaking. Those skills have been combined into a tool to permit repeated exposure to another's thought until it becomes part of our own knowledge. The tools of leveraged learning take this process an important and indispensable step further and *provide the means and the time* to rehearse new information until it becomes thoroughly assimilated into the existing body of dependably available information.

Psychologists have known for a hundred years that, when repetition is necessary for learning, the spacing out of that repetition promotes more permanent learning with less effort. While this spaced rehearsal promotes easier and more permanent learning, there has not been a practical way to permit it. There just is not time to get back to the book or the notes frequently enough to use this vital procedure to its maximum effectiveness in reinforcing retention. Dealers in recording cassettes have attempted, with some success, to promote learning in otherwise unproductive time with exhortations such as "Make your car a classroom; learn a language (or a business skill) as you drive!"

Leveraged learning provides for the use of simple, tested methods as tools to hold new information firmly and completely in the mind *so that it can be reviewed frequently and faultlessly* until it is permanently stored in the body of dependably available useful knowledge.

How We Learn

Let us consider the principles of retention, the tools that can be constructed based on these principles, and the leverage they supply in the learning process.

The first principle operates naturally when we see in new information meaning that can be readily associated with what we already know. This is true of a great deal of business-related knowledge. At other times we can *add* meaning to enable us to remember temporarily, and therefore review frequently, pertinent new information that requires repetition for thorough absorption.

For example, consider six rules for getting along with people. Use their *names*, *listen*, show *interest*, make them feel *important*, *smile*, and encourage them to *talk*.

It would seem at first glance that anyone could remember these six pointers, but the temporary memory is under constant pressure to be used for something else. If we really want to *implant* these rules in our thought to the extent that they will actually bring about a change in our established habits, they must be pondered often enough to establish them in our permanent subconscious body of knowledge.

A simple way of adding meaning is to rearrange the initial letters of the key underlined words to spell the words "list in." The term "list in" then can be used to jog the memory often enough to permit the establishment of these rules in the mind to the extent that they will influence behavior. This use of initials is called a "power pack" because it enables the individual to pack the power of the new information into the dependably available permanent memory.

When the rules for a procedure must be remembered in a definite order, we can frequently use a "shoehorn sentence" to ease the information into the mind. "Every Good Boy Does Fine" is a "shoehorn sentence" for the lines on the musical staff. Notice that the sentence has nothing to do with the subject matter. The psychologist calls this device a "mediator," in the same

Sometimes we can add meaning to enable us to remember temporarily.

way that a shoehorn is a mediator between the foot and the shoe.

Here is a business-related example. The key words in a professional seven-step sales procedure for handling a customer's objections are: "Listen, sell, confirm, question, answer, confirm, close." The initial letters are "LSCQACC." If the salesman constructs his own individual shoehorn sentence he can review this procedure mentally, frequently and faultlessly, and in otherwise unproductive time, until it becomes part of his useful knowledge.

A seemingly logical shoehorn sentence

might be, "Listen sincerely, closely question, and collect cash," but it can be as far afield as "Love some chick quietly after church closes." The device works best when the individual constructs his own sentence, *one that is helpful to him.* Somehow we feel that a memory tool or device must have some logical relationship to the subject matter. Yet it seldom does.

Mental Pictures

The use of pictorial clues, arranged in an easily remembered sequence, is one of the oldest, most reliable, and most versatile methods for providing the repetition that will permanently implant knowledge in the mental organization or body of thought.

Here is how this principle could be applied to remembering the seven clue words in the sales sequence for handling an objection. See your picture for the first word, "listen,"off to your left. Visualize your picture for "sell" in front of you, your picture for "confirm" to your right, your picture for "question" behind you, your picture for "answer" under your feet, your picture for "confirm" on your head, and your picture for "close" across your chest. If you set up specific pictorial clues in sequence such as this or any pattern that you can easily remember, you can then review the information quickly, easily and often. I have repeated the phrase, "your picture," seven times to emphasize that your own visualization for any concept is



unique. There is no standard except for your thought. Never tell anyone the visual aids you are using. In the privacy of your own mind, anything is acceptable between consenting brain waves.

These three methods: the power pack, the shoehorn sentence and the visual review, are not "gimmicks," "crutches" or "tricks." They are tools for thinking, for pondering, not parroting, and their use provides for accurate and complete review of pertinent information in otherwise wasted or unproductive time. They will bring about the systematic transfer of information from the mere "grasp" of the temporary memory to permanent integration into the total, useful mental organization called the permanent memory.

The temporary memory may be likened to a sponge. When a sponge is saturated, the fluid begins to evaporate immediately unless it is squeezed into a container for permanent storage. Similarly the temporary memory may be saturated with new information. If it is not transferred to the "bucket" of the permanent memory it will either evaporate or the pressure to use the sponge of the temporary memory for something else will cause the previous information to go down the drain. However, we can soak up and save any amount of fluid with the same sponge if we have a container into which to squeeze and store its contents. How can this be done systematically with the temporary memory?

We can learn a lesson from the way in which we build our physical bodies. The digestive system has a limited temporary capacity for processing food. We cannot eat all our food for a week on Sunday. The food must be divided into meals, and the meals divided into mouthfuls to introduce them to the start of the digestive system. The food must be chewed enough to be swallowed. Then our conscious processing stops and the automatic digestive system takes over, building a physical body adequate to the usual demands upon it.

Similarly, if you will "chew" and review an appropriate amount of new information for about 12 spaced-out repetitions, the mental digestive system will build its strength into your permanent, dependable body of knowledge. You must organize and divide new information into appropriate portions for mental meals - probably not more than 20 points at a time. Then, remind yourself to feed your mind with a quick mental review of your current learning project every time you feed your body. This mealtime review can be done in less than a minute. Within four days, you will find that this "overlearning" has made the knowledge permanent.

These methods facilitate six steps in learning: motivation, organization, concentration, reaction, repetition, cognition.

The learning takes place on:

• The "hot stove" level — learning from one experience.

• The "rote level" — repetition of numbers, letters, data.





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Develop Your Leadership Potential

Do you have what it takes to be a leader? You probably have the potential, because leadership ability is learned — we're not born with it.

Would you like to turn this potential into a proven skill that can directly benefit your professional life? One of the best ways you can do this is by organizing a new Toastmasters club. As a club builder, you'll gain valuable leadership training and experience. You can also receive recognition as a sponsor or mentor, as well as credit toward your DTM.

New club opportunities are everywhere. For information on how to find them and turn them into strong new clubs, contact World Headquarters or your district governor. • The "associative level" — the deliberate association of new information with something we already know. This level is used extensively by students and memory entertainers to cram the temporary memory with information for shortterm use. Emphasis on this level, however impressive, makes it only a "parrot perch" unless the information is processed by purposeful pondering to the final productive level.

• The "cognitive level" — this is the practical level of useful understanding.

Practical Application

Now that we have established the basic methods of adding leverage to learning and have indicated their place in the accepted steps and levels of learning, let us see exactly how they can be applied to printed matter and to seminars, with particular emphasis on their usefulness for more effective listening. The steps may be summarized in the power pack "SUE HIP MR."

Skim — In reading, skim the book or article quickly to learn the contents and find what is new and important to you. Underline key words or sentences as

you read.

Express the thought of each paragraph in your own words. Pausing to do this will

You must organize and divide new information into mental meals.

halve learning time by insuring assimilation as you go.

Headline — Make a headline word for each significant point.

Initial — Set down the initials of the headlines. Can they be arranged in a power pack or shoehorn sentence? If not, picture the key points and set them up in a visual pattern. Memorize a significant number of key point headlines. Review them until they are definitely stored in your mind.

These same steps, with some modification, can be used to survive a seminar and to make yourself impressive in any listening situation. In the seminar, treat the printed material as above. Take very few notes of the verbal material. Jot down headline words for the main point. *Review them promptly.* Read them over several times as the session progresses and then, during the break or as time permits, convert them to mental meals. This last step may be delayed, but the visual review will give you the prompt short-term rehearsal that every authority in the field of learning agrees is vital.

Here is how to practice the pictorial method. Each day for five days practice memorizing seven headlines from the news, associating them with the pictorial clues around your body as illustrated earlier. Then you are ready to set up one of the oldest and best systems in the world. Take an imaginary walk through your house and list five objects in each of four rooms. Practice memorizing 20 headlines a day for-just three days, associating them with your list. By then you will know your house list thoroughly and have it ready for lifetime use. It will take you about three minutes to create your list and five minutes a day to practice the associations.

Now for the big pay-off. As you *listen* to a newscast, practice putting down 10 headlines on your house list. There are usually 10 subjects in a five-minute news program. You will quickly become proficient. Then, the next time someone says something to you, *listen* and then play it all back. Say, "If I understand you correctly, there are seven points we have to consider." But be sure to review what was said — for your own comprehension — before you comment on it.

Word Associations

Other storage systems can be built on association words rhyming with the numbers such as "Gun, shoe, tree, door," and so on. Or you can use nouns based on the alphabet, "Ape, bee, sea, deed, eel, fox." Any pattern you can easily remember including the golf course — can be used as a series of "easels" on which to display the headline clues that make frequent review possible.

The systematic mastery of new, pertinent, business-related information opens up vast possibilities for increased personal profit. Many executives have told me that if they come away from a seminar with just one or two good ideas, they consider it worth the cost. This may be an unwitting admission that they cannot remember more than two or three new ideas. I suggest that leveraged learning will increase the amount of useful information that can be brought back to affect the famous "bottom line." Leveraged learning can make tested professional business procedures an immediate and useful part of business practice. It can stop the waste of money on speakers whose ideas are excellent but whose hearers have never been trained to remember those ideas well enough to put them into effect.

We perform a major part of our work through electric power, yet we do not "generate" it. We can rotate a magnet through the existing magnetic field of the earth and collect and channel the electricity generated by cutting the lines of magnetic force. I suggest that a few simple "mental magnets" circulated through the field of knowledge can demonstrate that knowledge not only *is* power but that there is a vast amount of it readily available if we use tested methods for accumulating, retaining, and using it. ●

Reprinted with permission from the May 1982 issue of THE ROTARIAN, the official publication of Rotary International.

Speakers Forum

The Duties of the Master of Ceremonies

Q I'm going to be the master of ceremonies for my colleague's retirement dinner. What are my responsibilities? Do I have to entertain everyone? I'm not good at telling jokes.

As master of ceremonies, your main duties are to see that the evening's program runs smoothly and ends on time. Being a comedian is not a requirement. If you're not comfortable telling jokes, then don't tell them.

Your job begins several days before the dinner, overseeing the room setup and arranging the evening's program. If any speeches or gifts will be presented, you'll need a head table to provide a fixed location from which the presentations can be made. Discuss head table arrangements with the party committee chair and note who will be seated at the table. Make certain these people are notified. You should also arrange for a microphone for the head table.

Since retirement dinner programs usually consist of business associates and relatives' remarks about the guest of honor, make a list of the important people who will be attending—visiting dignitaries, people from other companies, other retirees, the guest of honor's family, etc. — and ask them if they would like to make a presentation. (You'll also want to mention these important people in your introductory remarks, even if they will not be making presentations.) Instruct each program participant to keep his or her speech short — between two and five minutes.

The evening of the dinner, verify the arrival of each important person on your list. Some of those scheduled to attend may not show, so you'll have to adjust your introductions or program schedule accordingly.

It's not necessary for you to address the group before dinner, and do not try to speak while the dinner is being served. The noise and confusion will only drown your words. Begin the program after the dinner tables have been cleared.

Your opening remarks should include an AUGUST 1982 introduction of those at the head table and the important people in the audience, and a few comments on the purpose of the gathering. If you do choose to tell a few jokes, now is the time to tell them; just be sure they are suitable for the occasion.

Proceed with the presentations from the people in the audience, then follow with the presentations by the people at the head table. Never ask, "Is there anyone else who would like to make a few comments about Joe?" It's embarrassing if no one responds. Worse yet, if you get a flood of responses you'll lose control of the program.

When all of the presentations have been made, introduce the guest of honor. When he or she concludes his or her remarks, you may add a few personal comments of your own. In your closing, be sure to thank the committee that arranged the evening. If the bar is open or dancing has been arranged, mention this, too.

As long as you're prepared, your job as master of ceremonies will be fun!

Contributed by Sam Alfano, DTM, a member of Santa Barbara Club 5-33 in Santa Barbara, California.

Tips for Selecting Speech Contest Winners

What are the requirements for being a speech contest judge? How should a judge select speech contest winners?

A To be a competent judge, you yourself must first be a competent speaker and evaluator. You should have completed at least six manual speeches and have evaluated several speakers in your own club. If you haven't done both of these, then you are not qualified to be a judge.

As judge, your task is twofold: to analyze each speech and, more importantly, to rate the speakers in order of finish. I've developed a system that enables me to do both quickly and efficiently. I assign point values to the elements of a good speech (content, delivery and language) and rate each speaker according to his or her performance in each of these areas.

Since content is the most important ele-

ment of a speech, I allot it 50 points. When judging content, I look at speech development (Did it have a logical opening and closing? Was the theme clearly stated? Did the body reinforce the theme?), effectiveness (Did the speech accomplish its purpose?) and value (Did the speech offer new information or viewpoints or did it merely rehash an old subject?).

I allow 30 points for delivery, which I distribute between physical presentation (Were gestures and props used effectively?) and voice (Did the speaker vary his or her pitch and tone to enhance the speech?). I allot 20 points for language, considering appropriateness (Did the speaker use foul or questionable language?) and grammar (Did the speaker use poor grammar? Were any words mispronounced?).

After each speaker's presentation, I consider each speech element, award it the appropriate number of points, then total the points. The better the speech, the more points the speaker receives. When I've heard all of the speakers, I determine the ranking.

You may discover you need a base from which to work when rating speakers. I usually rate the first speaker between 80 and 90 points, then judge the others above or below this number, depending upon their performance.

You should practice judging before you serve as an official judge in a speech contest. The best way to practice is to attend speech contests and judge the participants yourself, then compare your list of winners with that of the official judges. At first you may not agree with the judges, but gradually your judging skills will increase. You'll also find the experience will make you a better speaker, since your awareness of the qualities of a good speech has increased!

Contributed by Nate Parries, DTM. Mr. Parries is a member of Forest City Club 1185-10 in Cleveland, Ohio, and is a member of the board of directors of Toastmasters International.

Send your questions to Toastmasters International, Publications Department, P.O. Box 10400, Santa Ana, CA 92711, Attention: Speakers Forum. Please send your name, address, and club and district numbers with your question. — Ed.

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2250-F University Club La Verne, CA — Fri., 6:30 p.m., University of La Verne, President's Dining Room, 1950 Third Street.

4842-F Seal Beach Speech Bums Seal Beach, CA — Tues., noon, Rockwell International, 2201 Seal Beach Blvd., Bldg. 81.

1681-1 Kal Kan Vernon, CA — Thurs., 7 a.m., Kal Kan, 3376 E. 44th St. (587-3663).

4847-1 Hughes Culver City, CA — Thurs., 12:15 p.m., Hughes Helicopters & Hughes Aircraft, Centenella and Teale (670-7942).

4859-2 Harborview Seattle, WA — Thurs., noon, Harborview Medical Center, 325 Ninth Ave. (223-3143). 4861-3 Winds of Fortune

Tucson, AZ — Wed., 7 a.m., First Federal Savings, 6235 East Broadway, 6th Fl. (747-0591).

4848-4 Zilog-Cution Campbell, CA — Thurs., noon, Zilog Corp., 1315 Dell Ave., Bldg. A (370-8093).

4851-4 WIT San Jose, CA — 2nd & 4th Fri., 7 p.m., All State Savings & Loans, 2830 Alum Rock (736-2284).

4860-4 San Pedro Squares

San Jose, CA — 2nd & 4th Tues., 5 p.m., Laundry Works Restaurant, San Pedro & St. John Sts. (275-7571).

4850-8 UMR

Rolla, MO — Wed., 2:30 p.m., University of Missouri-Rolla, Rm. G-4, Wilson Library (364-8635)

4849-11 Federal Speakeasy

Louisville, KY — 2nd & 4th Wed., 11:30 a.m., U.S. Courthouse, 601 W. Broadway (582-5304).

4866-13 NTA Monroeville, PA — 2nd & 4th Wed., 6:30 p.m., Holiday Inn, 2750 Mosside Blvd. (256-3047).

4844-14 La Grange La Grange, GA — 2nd & 4th Thurs., 7 p.m., Western Sizzling, Vernon St. (637-4685).

4845-14 Piedmont

Atlanta, GA — 2nd & 4th Thurs., noon, Arby's, Inc., 1 Piedmont Center, Suite 400 (262-2729).

4865-14 Clayton County

Jonesboro, GA — Mon., 7 a.m., Holiday Inn, 6288 Old Dixie Hwy. (997-7323).

4846-15 Hill Climbers

Hill AFB, UT — Wed., bi-weekly, 11:30 a.m., Base Restaurant (West Area), Bldg. 1294 (777-4205).

4853-26 Triskelion

Englewood, CO — Tues., 4:10 p.m., Stone & Webster Engineering Corp., 7501 E. Marin Dr., Greenwood Plaza (770-7700).

4855-26 Stearns-Roger

Denver, CO — Wed., 5:30 p.m., Stearns-Roger Co., 4500 Cherry Creek Dr. (696-2374).

4868-30 Deerbrook Park

Deerfield, IL — Tues., 7 p.m., Deerfield Public Library, 920 Waukegan Rd. (831-2508).

4871-30 Orland Park

Orland Park, IL — Mon., 8 p.m., United Savings & Loan Bldg., Community Room, 15100 La Grange Rd. (448-2093).

4854-36 Union Wesley

Washington, D.C. — 1st & 3rd Sat., 4 p.m., Union Wesley AME Church, 1860 Michigan Ave., N.E. (927-9041).

4857-36 Arlington Annex

Washington, D.C. — 2nd & 4th Thurs., 11:30 a.m., Headquarters Marine Corps, Arlington Annex (694-2267).

4862-36 Waldorf

White Plains, MD — 1st & 3rd Tues., 7:30 a.m., Southern Maryland Electric Co-op Bldg., U.S. Route 301 (645-8379).

4867-37 Twilight

New Bern, NC — Tues., 7 p.m., Berne Restaurant, 2900 Neuse Blvd. (637-3111).

4840-42 The Enterprisers

Edmonton, Alta., Can — Mon., 12:05 p.m., Convention Inn, 103 St. & Calgary Trail (437-0166).

4834-43 Sundown

Vicksburg, MS — Mon., 6 p.m., Western Sizzlin', Old Hwy. 80 E. (638-5289).

4864-46 Woodbridge

Iselin, NJ — 1st & 3rd Mon., 6:45 p.m., Iselin Library, 1081 Green St. (548-7617).

4841-47 727

Winter Park, FL — Mon., 7:27 a.m., Sheraton Inn, 736 Lee Rd. (841-6714).

4858-52 Educator

Los Angeles, CA — 2nd & 4th Thurs., 6:35 a.m., Los Angeles Unified School Dist., 450 N. Grand Ave., Rm. C-2 (625-6040).

4839-54 Aurora Lights

Aurora, IL — 1st & 4th Sun., 6 p.m., Main Baptist Church, 814 E. Galena Blvd. (436-7544).

4856-61 National Defense Headquarters

Ottawa, Ont., Can — Wed., noon, National Defense Headquarters, 101 Colonel By Drive (745-0915).

4843-63 Clinch River

Oak Ridge, TN — Tues., noon, Clinch River Project Office (576-6066).

4852-64 Centurion Speakers Brandon, Man., Can. — Wed., 7 p.m., Manitoba Provincial Bldg., 340 Ninth St. (727-7239).

4870-70 Macquarie H.P.

North Ryde, N.S.W., Aust — Thurs., 6 p.m., Hewlett Packard Aust. Ltd. 17-23 Talavera Rd. (887-1611).

4863-U Kwanza Kenya

Nairobi, Kenya — Mon., 12:30 p.m., Intercontinental Hotel (582161).

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