

The TOASTMASTER®

Let's Live by the

JANUARY 2001

Golden Rule

20 Ways to Make the World a Better Place



ALSO INSIDE:

Presenting by Gender

•
Watching Our Toastmanners



VIEWPOINT

Check Your Progress

Here it is, the beginning of the year 2001! And if you're a mathematical purist, it's the real Millennium. This is a time to set new goals for ourselves and reaffirm existing ones.

January also marks the halfway point for the club and district year. For club officers, it is time to take your club's pulse and measure your progress toward achieving Distinguished Club status. How many of the 10 Distinguished Club Program goals have you completed? Let's hope you have completed at least 50 percent of the goals your team set for your club.

For district officers, it's time to look at your district's progress, especially related to its standing as a Distinguished District. The question is, how is the district doing in regard to the four main areas used to judge district effectiveness: clubs, members, CTMs and ATMs? District officers, are you halfway toward these goals?

Remember, new clubs and new members mean that more people will reap the benefits of our educational program. Each CTM represents a person who has succeeded in conquering the fear of public speaking. Every ATM is an individual who continues to grow and achieve as a communicator. Toastmasters clubs are in the business of empowering members to succeed. So, when you discuss your club, area, division or district goals with others, keep the meaning of these accomplishments in the forefront. Without member support and each individual's achievement in club building, membership growth or educational completions, we cannot realize our overall mission of making effective communication a worldwide reality.

Each of the Distinguished programs indicates the health status of a club, an area, a division and district. They are the "management tools" we use to measure our progress or regress at the club and district levels. All effective teams periodically evaluate their progress and make course corrections that help ensure that their goals are met.

For example, if your club has fewer than the suggested 20 members, the club should host a membership drive, coordinated by the Vice President Membership and his or her committee. Strive to attract at least one new member each month. As individual members, we should set goals for ourselves as well. Do you want to enhance your basic speaking skills? Then strive to complete two advanced manuals and earn the Advanced Toastmaster Bronze award. Do you want to learn leadership skills? Then the Competent Leader (CL) award should be your goal.

The actions you take as a club or district officer, or as an individual member, translate to your own personal growth and the growth of other members. Don't forget to check your progress toward Distinguished status, so we can help our friends succeed!

JoAnna McWilliams

JoAnna McWilliams, DTM
International President

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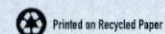
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Contents

January 2001
Volume 67, no. 1

features

8 PRESENTING BY GENDER

Speakers can increase their appeal to audience members of both sexes by fine-tuning four components of their presentations.

By Judith C. Tingley, Ph.D., ATM



16 MINDING OUR TOASTMANNERS

It's easy to become so comfortable with each other that we let our manners slide.

By Dee Dees, DTM



20 TIMING IS EVERYTHING

A properly timed speech is as important to a listener as is article length to a speaker.

By Connie M. McGuire, CTM

24 LET'S LIVE BY THE GOLDEN RULE

20 ways to make the world a better place.

By Victor Parachin

departments

2 VIEWPOINT: Check Your Progress

By International President Jo Anna McWilliams, DTM

4 LETTERS

5 MY TURN: From Stutterer to Speaker

By Charles Marcus

6 CAN WE TALK?: Snack Time: The Hidden Opportunity

By Nancy L. Wright

12 MANNER OF SPEAKING: Stamp Out Sleaze

By Shelia Spencer, ATM-G

15 FOR THE NOVICE: Pick a Topic, Any Topic

By Jeff Waldron, DTM

19 MEMBERSHIP BUILDING: Create a New-Member Orientation Program

By Paul Niser, ATM-B

22 LEADERSHIP: Take the Toastmasters Leadership Challenge

By Darin Smyth, Ph.D., ATM

27 TECH TOPICS: Presenting with the Overhead Projector

By George Torok, CTM

28 IDEA CORNER: Get Caught in a Brainstorm

By Karen Robinson

30 TOPICAL TIPS: New Growth

By Mark Majcher, ATM

31 HALL OF FAME



The Toastmasters Vision:

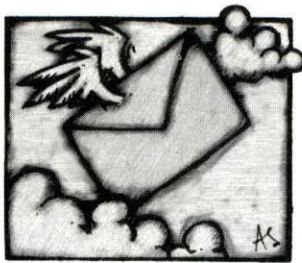
Toastmasters International empowers people to achieve their full potential and realize their dreams. Through our member clubs, people throughout the world can improve their communication and leadership skills, and find the courage to change.

The Toastmasters Mission:

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

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

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



LETTERS

MAKE TOPICS SAFE FOR SPEAKERS AND LISTENERS ALIKE

I wholeheartedly agree with Jim Carmickle ("Make Your Club a Safe Zone," October, 2000) that Toastmasters clubs need to be safe places for people to express themselves. But, I strongly disagree that restricting speakers from certain subjects causes clubs to suffer "because the presentations lack richness, diversity and conviction."

We are a corporate club, and our management restricts us from speaking about controversial subjects such as politics and religion. Our management is concerned that such subjects can cause discord in the club, which in turn can spill into the workplace. This is a legitimate concern: I've known of clubs where a steady diet of political and religious speeches resulted in division and hostility among members, causing them to leave. Such clubs don't understand that they need to be safe places for audiences to listen as well as for speakers to speak.

At our club, we all understand the limitation against controversial speeches, and we generally accept it. We periodically give reminders about the rule and the benefits of it. When someone does break the rule, which has happened only once in the year I've been with the club, we gently correct the speaker in our evaluation. As a result, we've had a wide range of original, eloquent, heartfelt, inspirational and stimulating speeches without having to resort to controversy.

Setting limits on topics doesn't hamper expression or make a club a less safe place for people to express themselves. In fact, people feel more comfortable getting up and speaking when they don't feel obligated to get up on a soapbox or defend their deepest views. Only when a club is a safe place for both the speaker and the listener can communication truly take place.

Matthew Stern, ATM-S • Sage Club 4637-F • Irvine, California

FROM WRITER TO STORYTELLER

As an author I realized a few years ago that I was expected to promote my books to audiences, live or on radio and television. This was a frightening prospect!

I felt a desperate need for training in public speaking. Someone told me about Toastmasters and I gave it a try. The result: My life has changed very much for the better. I made a new group of friends, and their diversity has broadened my life. As a psychologist, I am impressed by the way Toastmasters uses encouragement and gently stated recommendations to help people improve – this is so much more effective than the harsh criticism of academia.

Toastmasters offers a wonderful method of self-improvement. Recently, I became my club's Vice President Public Relations. I joined Toastmasters because of my fear of marketing my books – now I happily market my club!

Dr. Bob Rich, CTM • Lilydale Toastmasters Club 4731-73 • Victoria, Australia

EXPERIENCED MEMBER LEARNS NEW TRICKS

For me, the article "Beat the 80-20 Rule" (September 2000) by Shelia Spencer couldn't have come at a better time. It's very easy to let our enthusiasm for Toastmasters carry us to the brink of burnout.

I started seeing cracks forming in my own club experience earlier this year. Membership in several clubs, a position as club president and a grueling series of manual projects and educational presentations were taking their toll. I needed to make some changes.

Shelia's article tells me I'm on the right track. For example, I'm now assisting with a Speechcraft program – taking her advice to temporarily "play hooky" from most other club responsibilities. Also, she gives a call to members who could be a bit more active. It's been my experience that we get out of our Toastmasters membership we put into it. My most active years in Toastmasters have also been those of my greatest growth as a person, not just as a Toastmaster.

John Fleming, ATM-S • Attitude Boosters 7022-42, Chamber 5594-42 and Rooster Rousers 1774-42 • Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

AIM CAREFULLY

I was astonished to read Mr. Hulen's reaction to Kimberly Porrazzo's article "Achieving Average." First of all, it smacks of censorship to suggest that articles like this should not be published in the magazine. Diverse viewpoints and opinions from all across Toastmasters are to be encouraged, not ridiculed and scoffed at.

Secondly, I believe Mr. Hulen is misinterpreting the article's message. To me, the message is that perfectionism and "paralysis by analysis" often works against being the best. In the words of a prominent philosopher, "virtue is in the middle," not at the extremes where people can "burn out" or not achieve their full potential.

Finally, no one is promoting being a "loser," least of all Ms. Porrazzo, who appears to be very accomplished in her own right. Mr. Hulen has taken the sharp arrows aimed at the target of our educational goals and pointed them at his fellow Toastmasters!

Gerald Yeung, CTM • Daybreakers of Westlake Club 3332-33 • Westlake Village, California



By Charles Marcus, CTM

After a 30-year struggle with stuttering, this Toastmaster cherishes every speaking opportunity.

From Stutterer to Speaker

IN TOASTMASTERS WE LEARN TO STRETCH OUR BOUNDARIES and our comfort zones. For 30 years I had a very limited comfort zone. I allowed my fear of speaking to control my every decision.

My problem started when I was four years old, while spending the day with my parents in a recreational park near our home in Manchester, England. Somehow, in the excitement of the day, I got separated from my parents and was lost all alone in the vast forest. The first couple of hours were fun, but then it started raining and I became scared. I wanted to go home, but I could not find my way out. After wandering aimlessly for what seemed like an eternity, I became very tired and hungry. I found a big tree to shelter me from the rain and cold. When the rescue team eventually found me clinging to a tree, I had been lost for 16 hours.

About a month after the forest incident my parents started to notice a hesitation in my speech and difficulty pronouncing some words. A specialist told my parents that the trauma of my forest incident was the catalyst for what most certainly was a stutter, a disability I would learn a lot about as I grew up.

At school I could not even say my own name during roll call; I would become paralyzed with fear every time I tried to speak. Other kids used to laugh at me and mimic my stuttering.

Despite my stuttering, I went on to a successful career in the hairdressing industry working for the famous Vidal Sassoon Salon in Toronto, Canada. Sassoon's were the first people to see beyond my disability, to give me a chance to prove myself. I even had the honor of meeting Vidal Sassoon when he came to visit the salon in 1973. I will never forget when I heard him speak at our staff meeting. He was so articulate and self-assured and he spoke with such passion.

I eventually moved on from Sassoon's and opened my own hairdressing business that was doing well. In 1986, business pressures and personal problems caused my speech to relapse to the worst it had been since those dark days at school. I could not string two words together. This

was devastating for me and uncomfortable for my clients. My staff was losing faith and confidence in me. Where was my leadership when they needed it?

At this point I finally decided to take control of my speech and to fully accept the responsibility to change my situation. My recovery took two and a half years. I had to adjust to a new way of speaking and thinking, to find my new comfort zone, and to discipline myself to practice for two hours every day to reinforce the teachings of my speech coach, Andrew Bell. There were many setbacks along the way, but I was determined not to be defeated.

I drew tremendous inspiration from Vidal Sassoon during my recovery, remembering his eloquent presentation all those years ago. I also gained strength from the example of another Englishman who overcame tremendous obstacles, including a speech impediment in his youth. He went on to do great things; his name was Winston Churchill.

After my recovery, in 1989, I began a successful career in the sales industry. Today my voice and my speech, which for so many years caused so much pain and sadness, ironically have become my best friends.

I only joined Toastmasters in January 2000. My club members are so supportive and encouraging. I wish I had known about Toastmasters all those years ago when I struggled with stuttering! It would have taken years off my recovery and would have helped me enormously with my self-confidence.

I now look back on my stuttering as a blessing. It taught me to be more respectful of other people with differences and special needs. It has given me patience and has made me appreciate everything I have in life. I take nothing for granted.

I cherish my the opportunity to speak up so much. After all, I have a lot of years to make up for. **T**

Charles Marcus, CTM, is a professional speaker and trainer. He is a member of Podium Club 2303-60 in Toronto, Canada. He can be contacted at charles@cmarcus.com.



CAN WE TALK?

By Nancy L. Wright

Many real-life social situations involve both food and talking. Why not try to harmonize the two?

Snack Time: The Hidden Opportunity

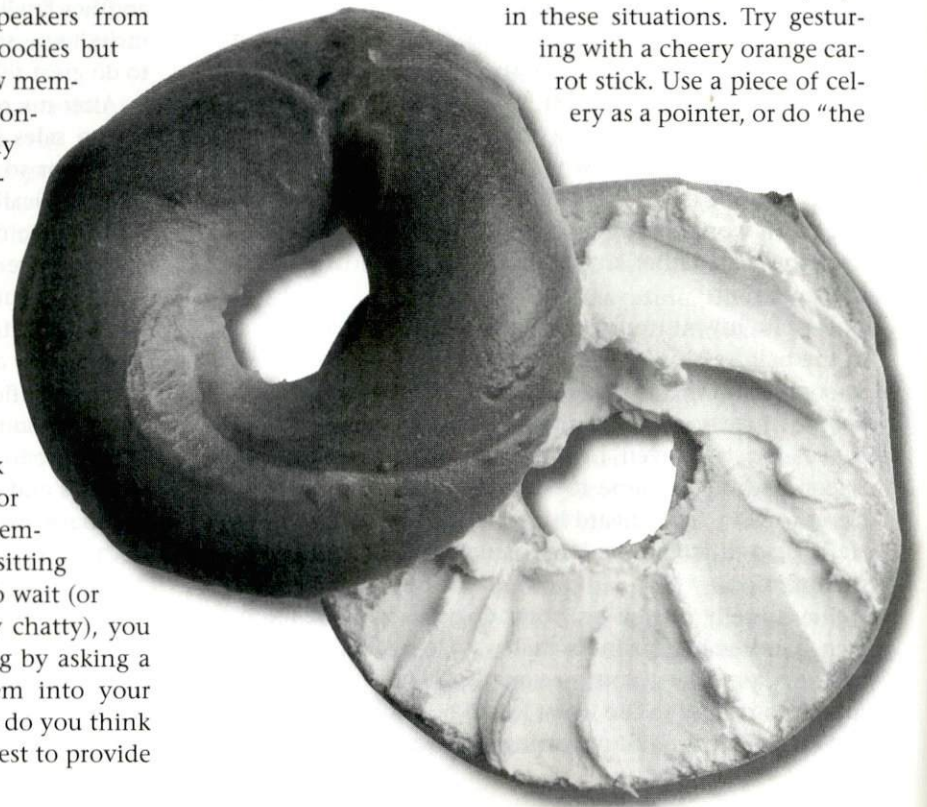
Other than wearing a T-shirt that says "Please excuse me for talking with my mouth full," there's no graceful way to talk while eating. For this reason, it's probably not a good idea to skip meals before attending a club meeting: A ravenous appetite combined with wolfing down a large amount of food make gagging and even choking a distinct possibility. And pity fellow members trying to decode comments coming from a cookie-stuffed mouth! But since many real-life social situations involve both food and talking, why not try to harmonize the two?

Not all club meetings have snack breaks, but for those that do, the breaks offer a hidden opportunity to develop additional communication skills. Where else can you rub elbows with a complete range of speakers from novice to professional, while munching goodies but trying not to spray cracker crumbs on fellow members and guests? It takes a special kind of concentration to listen, eat and appropriately respond to cross conversations while gracefully juggling paper cup, napkin and plate. But if you look at communication as part pantomime, using snack as props, then a standard coffee break can take on exciting new dimensions.

Snack time is probably the social high point of the meeting, but some people have trouble trying to chew and talk at the same time. One possible solution is to stack your plate with snacks, but not eat them – or many of them – while talking to fellow members. Wait to demolish them later, after sitting down, for instance. But if you don't want to wait (or happen to sit next to someone particularly chatty), you can still keep the conversational ball rolling by asking a question right before popping a food item into your mouth. Essay-type questions such as "What do you think about..." or "Tell me about your..." work best to provide

plenty of chewing time in this type of situation. The eternally interesting, "So what brought you to Toastmasters?" not only buys you answering time, but also will tell you much about fellow members. But even if you still get caught with your mouth full, here's where you can get really creative.

Try nodding your head, for instance, instead of answering. Nonverbal communication can be quite effective when your mouth is full. Facial expressions are also good verbal stand-ins. Frowning, rolling your eyes or knitting your eyebrows together as if in deep concentration can buy you more response time. Think about using the food items themselves as props in these situations. Try gesturing with a cheery orange carrot stick. Use a piece of celery as a pointer, or do "the



cookie sweep" by using the cookie to draw a little half circle in the air away from your body, toward theirs, as an effective way to imply that you will be saying something important to them...in just a few seconds. Watch out for those snacks that might get you into trouble, however, unless you enjoy chasing canapé olives across the floor. But even if you do make a social gaffe, such as dropping food or spilling a drink, you can turn it to your advantage by making a joke of it. Nothing will endear you more to others than your own ability to laugh at yourself. And in the spirit of turning lemons into lemonade, personal goofs are great icebreakers, even bringing out the comedian in you – or providing the topic of your next speech.

Any communication is better than none in business situations. Nonverbal responses become even more important during break times because they connect you with others by giving the impression that you are still an active participant in the conversation. You don't want to give the impression that eating is more important than talking to your conversational partner. So making more eye contact with your food than with others is a sure way to end up with egg on your face.

There will always be more opportunities to eat than to mix with others. You won't learn anything from cookies,

but you will benefit from other Toastmasters...if you view them as teachers. Quite often it isn't even necessary to talk to others in order to learn from them. All you have to do is observe. For example, watching a particular person you think does an excellent job of socializing while eating can fine-tune your own interactive skills. Noticing how people enter and exit a conversation can improve your own timing. Observing how others use body language can increase your effectiveness with it. Listening to how others start group discussions can provide important lessons in conversational leadership.

There's really no reason why eating and socializing can't gracefully mix. Take advantage of what the snack table has to offer, but keep in mind that the real treats are the people standing around the table. Food and kinship don't have to be mutually exclusive if you treat snack time as a continuation – rather than an interruption – of the Toastmasters experience. So don't hide out in the restroom during break time. Enjoy the snacks but remember: Whoever has the most cookies – and gestures effectively with them – wins! **T**

Nancy L. Wright is a freelance writer and a member of Clinton Club 7677-31 in Clinton, Massachusetts.

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Presenting By

Gender

Speakers can increase their appeal to audience members of both sexes by fine-tuning four components of their presentations.

The speaker was impeccably groomed; a tall, distinguished-looking man, gray-haired with a mustache, erect posture, dark suit, white shirt and striped tie. His almost military aura led you to expect a salute at any moment. The audience was attentive even before his impressive introduction was read.

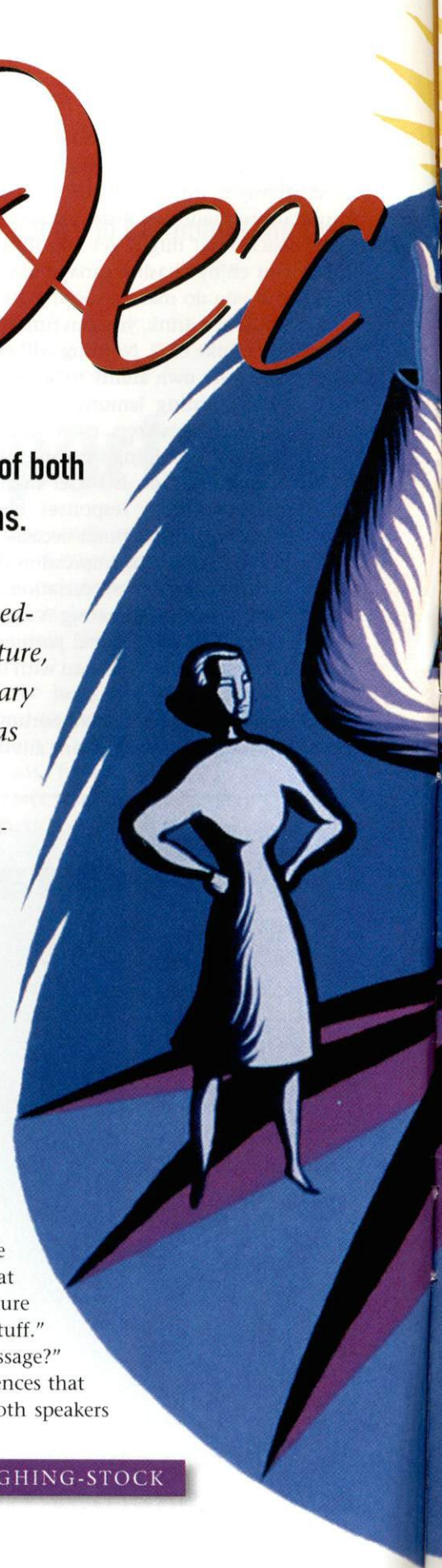
The speaker walked up the short flight of stairs and took command of the podium and the audience with his authoritative opening words, "Red Alert." His message? In life, as in flying fighter jets or shooting guns at a practice range, we should always be in a state of alertness for danger.

Most men in the audience were on the edge of their seats, captured by the speaker's words and topic. Later, standing in line for the ladies' room (there's always a line for the ladies' room), I listened as the women in the audience wondered aloud. "What was he talking about?" "What does shooting guns have to do with life?" "Who wants to be on alert their whole life?" "That was creepy." "I don't get it, and I don't think I want to get it."

The next speaker at this same event was a woman, dressed in soft, flowing gray and pink – skirt, blouse and scarf. Her introduction was brief and low-key. Her speech title? "Rainbows." She glided smoothly to the center of the stage and spoke quietly, but intensely and sincerely: about clouds, rain and rainbows, poetry and beauty in life, about becoming one with the universe, connecting with our fellow beings and loving each other unconditionally.

Although I wasn't hanging around the men's room, I did overhear some of the men talking to each other in the lobby after the woman's speech. "What was that all about?" "I have no idea what her point was." "What was your takeaway? I sure didn't find one for me." "We need some substance, some content, not this airy stuff." One man asked me, "Did you understand what she was saying? What was the message?"

It hit me like a flash! I was seeing the same male-female communication differences that we all know about at work and at home, showing up vividly in presentations. Both speakers



BY JUDITH C. TINGLEY, ATM, PH.D. ■ PHOTOGRAPHY BY LAUGHING-STOCK



presented *as if* their audience were similar to them – *as if* men and women speak the same language and have the same interests. But in fact, most people now know and agree that men and women are profoundly different from one another; not better or worse, just different.

Whether we're speaking to an audience of one or a thousand, the social psychological principles of interpersonal influence are involved. We're most effective when:

- Audience members see us as somewhat similar to them.
- We speak at least some of the language the audience speaks.
- We adapt our introduction, our title, our content and our format to our target audience.

Men and women can increase their appeal as presenters to the opposite sex, without alienating the same sex, by fine-tuning four components of their presentations: introduction, speech title, content and format.

INTRODUCTIONS

As much as you might not like to hear this, women are still perceived as less credible than male presenters, by both women and men. Consequently, when speaking to a primarily male audience, women should *borrow power* and be introduced by a highly credible man.

Write out your introduction and ask your introducer to stick strictly to the script you have written. Fill that introduction with heavy-hitting expertise and credentials, leaving out the personal, the details, the cute, or any self-deprecating humor.

"Dr. Tingley has a Ph.D. from Arizona State University, a Master's from the University of Washington, and her undergraduate degree from the University of Michigan. She is a member and a leader in Toastmasters International, the National Speakers Association, and the American Society for Training and Development. As a published author of four books, Dr. Tingley is highly qualified to talk to us today about her topic "Trade or Self-Publish? What's Best for You?"

By using power and status, women will grab the attention of men immediately, although the women in the audience may be turned off by what they see as boastfulness, a behavior "unbecoming to a lady." Generally, the women can be reengaged later through speech content and format, but if the men don't buy into the woman's credibility right off the bat, they'll be unavailable for the rest of the speech.

If the female presenter's audience is comprised primarily of women, the introduction should still be made by a man. By reducing the number of credentials, and adding some information about family, interests – or even some slight put-down humor to convey to the female audience that this presenter is human, not a superwoman, and similar to them – the women will be engaged.

A man, because of the credibility issue, should also introduce men who are speaking to a gender-mixed audience. However, if the audience is primarily female, or the presenter is a macho kind of guy – for example, a policeman, a military person or a sports figure – he is better off introduced by a woman. She uses an introduction based more on his humanity than his credentials, more on his relationships than achievements. He then becomes more accessible to the women in the audience. More of the men may already know who the speaker is and will be impressed without a heavy-hitting introduction.

It's easier to slide by with our introductions inside than outside of our Toastmasters club because we have established credibility. I suggest that every time you speak, imagine a new audience that doesn't know you. Design your introduction for maximum influence with those strangers.

TITLE

Let me give you a brief quiz. Here are seven speech titles. I'd like you to figure out if the title comes from a male or a female speaker.

1. Faith Never Shrinks in Hot Water
2. Discovering Our Gifts
3. The Ten-Second Law
4. Little Bits of Wisdom
5. Producing Pollyanna Power
6. The "Five S Principle": Smart Salespeople Serve and Secure Success
7. The Manager as Coach

As you've probably guessed, 1,2, 4 and 5 are titles of speeches given by women, and 3, 6 and 7 are those given by men. Here's how 1 and 7 could be changed to be more appealing to the opposite sex: "Tackling the Tough Times – with Faith" or "The Coaching Relationship – Manager as Partner."

I have no idea what these speeches are actually about in content. But what I do know is that the title alone may generate some initial resistance on the part of audience members who might be thinking, "What do I want little bits of wisdom for? I have a lot already," (men) or "Now I have to listen to 10,000 sports stories. I don't want to" (women).

Research tells us that men are interested in talking and hearing about business, money and sports, and women are interested in people, feelings and relationships. Women, of course, can be interested in politics or baseball, and men can certainly be entertained by stories

about feelings and relationships, but both still want to be served up some of their own primary-interest content.

Create a title that is neutral in terms of implied gender content, but potentially intriguing in terms of interest. Here are some gender-neutral, but engaging titles.

- Building a Strength Bank
- Challenged to Win
- Going Global? Stop Here First
- The Clock Keeps Ticking

CONTENT

An experienced male trainer recently spoke on business topics to a primarily female group. He used many examples of men as leaders. Women who were mentioned were always in support roles – nurturing wives, helpful assistants, caring daughters. His main metaphors and stories came from the world of sports and the military.

Was this man intentionally speaking "male" to a female audience? Of course not. But most of his women listeners didn't connect with the speaker or the topics. The opportunity for influence was lost.

If you are a man speaking about a "male" topic, include information related to women's interests. Incorporate strong female "characters" in your stories or use examples of women who demonstrate how they've used your message. For example, an actual woman who is a physician or nurse, saying she's on "Red Alert" when she's in the hospital environment, being even more careful than usual not to bring in or transfer any germs to or between her patients. Or quote a female member of a parent group who talks about the need to be on constant "Red Alert" when swimming pools and small children are in close proximity.

Similarly, if you're a woman speaking on a primarily "female" topic, such as feelings and relationships, use examples from business or sports to make some of your points. Use a successful professional basketball or baseball team to exemplify the synergy created by team players connecting and supporting each other. Or mention the euphoria among an entrepreneurial group, working long and hard on an interesting project in unique connection with each other – and maybe the universe as well. In this way, the audience will not only see you as similar to them, if they're the opposite sex as well as the same sex, but they'll hear you speak their language.

FORMAT

We know that in general, men communicate to solve a problem or fix an issue and women communicate to understand or to be understood. Women consistently state a preference for an interactive presentation format. They like opportunities to discuss a topic with each other, to answer questions, to participate in small-group activities. They enjoy being asked for their opinion, their perspective about an issue. A caveat: Be prepared to use a

variety of attention-grabbing means of getting the audience back together once you've split them up. In my experience, women don't like to stop their discussions!

Men can demonstrate that they take women seriously by avoiding the "expert talking-head" syndrome. Using demonstrations, role-plays, applicable humor and demonstrating that you understand and value women in your content and format will increase your effectiveness.

When women are speaking to men, the best way to start is to tell them what you're going to tell them. Get to the point quickly, being specific and quantitative. "In the next 30 minutes, you'll learn five quick tips for increasing your income as an insurance agent by increasing your influence with women."

Once you've established a clear structure and outcome, then you can tell a story, go off on a brief tangent, or even talk about connecting with the universe,

as long as you quickly segue back to Tip #1, 2 and 3. Although men do enjoy interaction and we know that participation increases retention, often they'd rather have "just the facts, Ma'am."

Can you do a good job as a presenter without this fine tuning? Certainly. But these adaptations to the men and women in your audience – in the introduction, the title, the content and the format – will increase *your* influence and *their* receptivity to your message. **1**

Judith C. Tingley, ATM, Ph.D., is a member of Park Central Club 3527-3 in Phoenix, Arizona. Judith is a coach, speaker, trainer and the author of *GenderFlex™: Men and Women Speaking Each Other's Language at Work* (AMACOM, 1994) and co-author of *GenderSell™: How to Sell to the Opposite Sex* (Simon and Schuster, 1999). Visit her Web site www.gendersell.com.

A Good Toastmaster is Easy to Find!

By Craig Harrison, DTM

Manuals have been written about how to be a good Toastmaster in clubs, at contests and within districts. We read, practice and are continuously improving as communicators and leaders in our Toastmasters environment. As I travel the world, I constantly meet strangers who turn out to be Toastmasters. It's not because they greet me with "Mr. Toastmaster, fellow Toastmasters and welcome guests" or reflexively applaud in airports, train stations, conferences, meetings or worship when others speak. It is because of their values, the way they carry themselves, and their can-do spirit. Here's a travel guide to help you identify Toastmasters wherever you find yourself.

GOOD TOASTMASTERS:

- **Spread recognition around.** They've received their fair share of attention but prefer to recognize others for their achievements. They exemplify the notion that it is better to give than to receive. Often in a business meeting or at a conference, I'll see a participant excel at this activity. Invariably I find out that she or he is a Toastmaster!
- **Help others feel better about themselves.** Good Toastmasters know that a kind or encouraging word, a show of support or a private vote of confidence can mean the world to someone. It becomes second nature for them to nurture others, whether strangers in conversation, colleagues at work, or young people they meet through family and friends.
- **Jump in when needed.** They see the need and fill it. Good Toastmasters don't wait to be asked or told what to do; they take the initiative at work, in transit or at home. Look around. The people biased toward action, who are doing instead of watching, are Toastmasters!
- **Come prepared in any situation.** Good Toastmasters are in full command of their faculties and can follow agendas while also deviating from them as the occasion warrants. Good Toastmasters carry these skills wherever they go. They're resourceful and adeptly apply their communication and leadership skills wherever they're needed.
- **Can ad-lib adeptly.** Good Toastmasters don't need a script to know what to say, what to do and how to act. They rely on their instincts, honed at Toastmasters meetings and events. Good Toastmasters live "in the moment."

Of course, there's one more reason good Toastmasters are easy to find: They're the ones wearing their Toastmaster pin! So remember, your club experience helps you stand out from the crowd, whether at work, in family situations or even on vacation. The skills and confidence you've gained are portable; they go where you go and can be drawn upon at any time. Meanwhile, keep your eyes and ears open for fellow members. You'll find them wherever you go! **1**

Craig Harrison, DTM, is a professional speaker, member of ProToasties Club 7146-4 in San Mateo, California and, as a good Toastmaster, visits new clubs wherever he travels, domestically and internationally.



MANNER OF SPEAKING

By Shelia Spencer, ATM-G

Appropriate humor involves
creativity tempered by discretion.

Stamp Out Sleaze!

A successful Humorous Speech Contest is tough to beat on the entertainment scale. Audience members giddily await the beginning of the program; the contestants are warming up their voices, flexing their muscles and preparing their props so that a marvelous spectacle of entertainment and enthusiasm can be shared. The room is electrified with anticipation.

The first contestant steps onto the podium. He smiles with confidence. He proudly releases his opening line... and mouths drop open in shock. Did we hear him correctly? Has he really chosen to use this topic, these phrases, and this type of comedy as the springboard for his presentation? We came here for a Toastmasters Humorous Speech Contest, but the person at the microphone has made a critical misjudgment, and the material he is unfolding never should have been brought into this environment. The entire celebration has taken an unfortunate and unpleasant turn.

How did this happen? As a Toastmaster, I've always heard the emphasis on choosing appropriate material and language. It is repeatedly suggested that I avoid such topics as religion, politics and sex, unless I have the ability to address them tactfully and respectfully. My goal is to create a rapport with the audience, so I would never stoop to bait, ridicule or insult them, even in jest. My phrasing needs to be careful and respectful as well; not a single objectionable word should pass my lips during my allotted speaking time. If anyone is to be the butt of my humor, it should be myself.

Hasn't that contestant been told the same suggestions? How could he have ignored them in a club contest? And,

if he already presented this material at his club, didn't someone approach him afterward to explain that his "humor" was inappropriate? How did this entry manage to appear on the program at any level of competition?

In the answer to the first question, it is possible that an individual member may be attempting humor for the first time in a Toastmasters club environment. He or she may be unaware of our position regarding appropriateness of language or subject matter. The individual's understanding of the elements of humorous speaking may be based

on exposure to popular sitcoms, stand-up comedians or the jokes that circulate around the office water cooler. This may simply be an innocent mistake – the first time it happens.

However, if a speech containing inappropriate language or material is entered in a competition beyond the club level, several people need to be educated about what is required for an "appropriate" humorous speech. The contestant's mentor and Vice President Education, the contest chair and all of the judges need to be aware what makes a speech acceptable for presentation within a Toastmasters environment. Without this

awareness, the entire Toastmasters program suffers.

"I may not be able to define it, but I know what it is when I see it," is a common response to both pornography and inappropriate humor. How can we define what makes a speech appropriate for a Toastmasters audience?

First, I would say that if your material or language might offend your spouse or grandmother, it probably will offend many Toastmasters as well. Keep in mind that many Toastmasters events are attended by nonmembers, including the spouses and children of other contestants and dis-

"Speakers need to be aware of what distinguishes Toastmasters humor from other types of comedy."

strict dignitaries. Do not expose these audience members to material you would keep from your own children.

Does your humor single out a specific type of person for ridicule? Toastmasters are a diverse group. Remember, even if you are only ridiculing left-handed Tibetan vegetarians, you still run the risk of alienating some audience members.

Speakers need to be aware of what distinguishes Toastmasters humor from other types of comedy. A stand-up comedian may base his whole career on harsh language, derogatory observations, verbal abuse of his audience and shockingly rude behavior. He may break all the rules of etiquette and make millions of dollars in the process. He may be sued for slander on the same day that he receives an international award for his X-rated comedy. That's entertainment, but it's not for Toastmasters.

In our organization, we need to eliminate objectionable words and material. After our mentor advises us of this and we return to our speech notes, we need to start crossing out line after line. What do we have left? Is it still a perfectly coherent and entertaining speech? I hope so! Isn't it great that all we needed to do was eliminate a couple of terms and rephrase some descriptive references? We now have an effective, inoffensive presentation that we can deliver with confidence. If this is your result, then pat yourself on the back and thank your mentor for clarifying a simple, but important, concept for you.

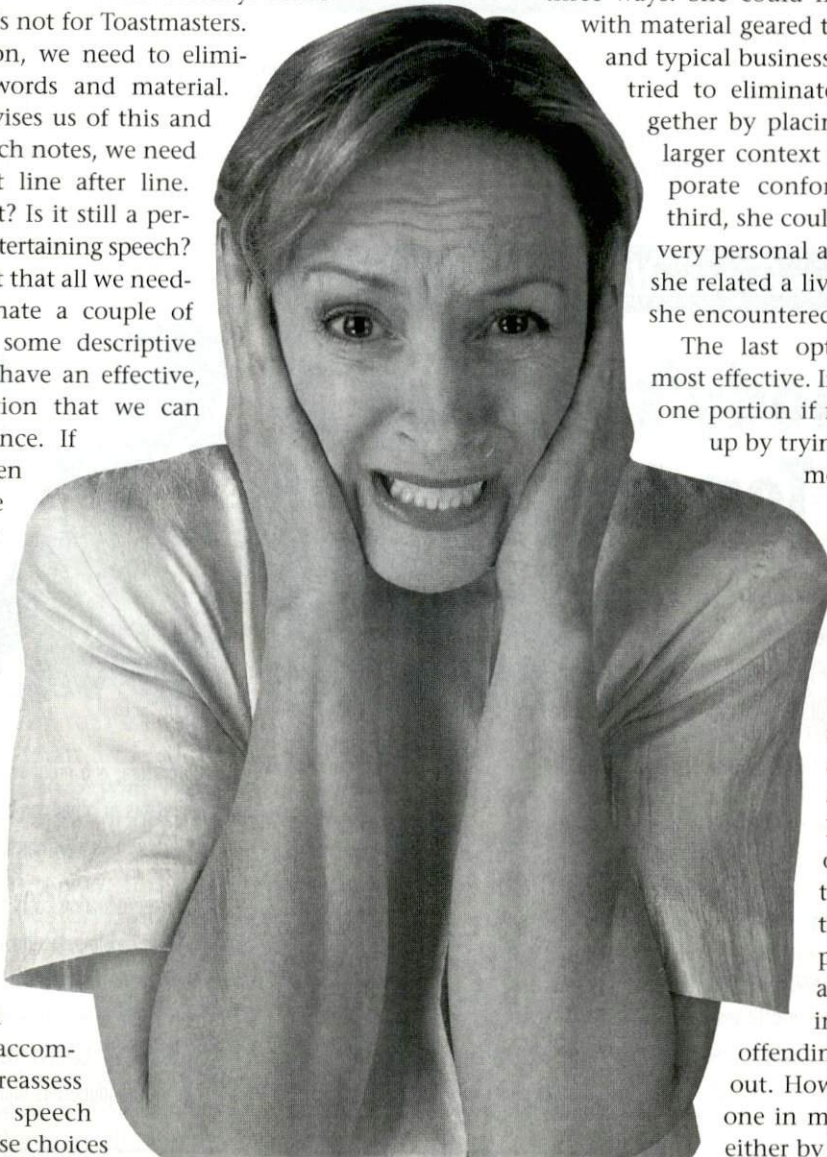
However, if we find that our "humorous speech" has now been reduced to meaningless filler, with nothing funny left to tell, we need to educate ourselves on where to find appropriate humor. This is a serious challenge and will take some time to accomplish. We need to reassess our choices about speech material. Many of these choices

were made when we assumed that everything inspiring our own laughter would be equally funny for general audiences.

What makes for effective Toastmasters humor? First, it should be universal. I heard a very funny speech about the frustrations of dealing with makeup and pantyhose before going to work in the morning. Did I laugh? Absolutely, and so did most of the other women in the room. But half of the audience was left out. There was nothing embarrassing about this speech, nothing that aroused negative feelings. But the speaker failed to include humor that would appeal to the men at the gathering.

This speaker could have solved her problems in one of three ways. She could have balanced her speech with material geared to men's struggle with ties and typical business attire. Or she could have tried to eliminate gender references altogether by placing the entire speech in a larger context (i.e. the pressures of corporate conformity on everyone). Or third, she could have made the speech a very personal and specific one, in which she related a lively series of mishaps that she encountered on one unlucky day.

The last option would probably be most effective. If I start by addressing only one portion of my audience, then follow up by trying to address all other segments of my audience individually, I'll probably exhaust my audience and myself – and still manage to accidentally exclude someone. That's why a speech about Christmas would start to lose its focus if I attempt to give equal attention to Hanukkah, Kwanzaa and several other significant celebrations. So this time, even though I may avoid the pitfall of offending my audience with what I put in, I still run the risk of offending them with what I leave out. How do I make sure that no one in my audience feels isolated, either by ridicule or by exclusion?



Simple. Bring your speech down to the individual level. Talk about your specific experience when you were rushing to catch a plane, or got caught up in a bureaucratic nightmare. If there has to be a target for the humor, let it be yourself. You will find that the most powerful humor is based on letting the audience see your vulnerable and human side, then allowing them to empathize with you.

While the specific details may be unique to you as a parent, a Baptist, a music teacher or a dyslexic, the emotions generated by your experiences will be universal. Your diverse audience will laugh with delight as they remember their own panic or embarrassment in comparable situations; they'll be relieved to hear that you've been there too. The emotions, not the details, are what unify us.

Laughter at the expense of other people is divisive and destructive. Laughter at our common human experience is inclusive, and inclusive laughter is life-affirming. Your

audience will use laughter to cheer for you and for themselves, to celebrate our amazing ability to triumph over the challenges of life. By hearing and identifying with the speaker who shares candid, self-effacing personal stories, the audience can empathize with past failure or mishap and with the strength of character that inspires and enables us to "laugh about it later."

This is the most satisfying humor of all, and mastering it will not only increase your chances of winning the next Humorous Speech Contest; it will elevate your entire outlook on life's daily challenges. With that in mind, it's time for us to sharpen our wits and our pencils so that this year's Humorous Speech Contest will be memorable for us all, for all the right reasons! **T**

"Laughter at the expense of other people is divisive and destructive. Laughter at our common human experience is inclusive."

Shelia Spencer, ATM-6, of Elmhurst, New York, is the Public Relations Officer for District 46 and is a member of Synchronicity Club 4221, Excelsior Club 94, and Midtown Club 4722, all in that district.

Dynamic video is excellent publicity tool

Everybody's Talking About Toastmasters

Looking for an innovative way to publicize Toastmasters? Consider the video *Everybody's Talking About Toastmasters*. This fast-paced 12-minute publicity tool is perfect for Toastmasters wishing to:

- ❖ promote their own club
- ❖ build a new club
- ❖ orient new members
- ❖ energize current members.

Just as the name implies, *Everybody's Talking About Toastmasters* showcases enthusiastic testimonials—everyone from managers, engineers and other professional people like yourself, as well

as from Anita Perez Ferguson, President of the National Women's Political Caucus, and best selling authors Les Brown, Tom Peters and Harvey Mackay. The video also features brief explanations of typical meeting activities, including:

- ❖ Table Topics
- ❖ Prepared speeches, and
- ❖ Evaluations

—making it perfect to show to prospective club charter members when it isn't possible to hold a demonstration meeting. And here's another idea:

Sending a copy of *Everybody's Talking About Toastmasters*, along with some helpful Toastmasters



literature, is a great way to reach busy personnel directors or other corporate leaders interested in starting a club within their company

Since production costs for *Everybody's Talking About Toastmasters* have been covered by contributions to The Ralph C. Smedley Memorial Fund, the video is available for the highly affordable price of \$6. Contact the Orders Department at World Headquarters and ask for a copy today!

By Jeff Waldron, DTM



Be ready for your next call to the lectern.

Pick a Topic, Any Topic

HOW MANY TIMES HAVE YOU HEARD SOMEONE SAY, "GEE, I can't think of a topic for my next speech?" It's quite a common problem, particularly for new members. At first the choices may come easy – you give a presentation about

your hobbies, your job, perhaps a few societal concerns – but then the well dries up. A friend offers you a few suggestions, but you're not comfortable with them. That's all right. Keep in mind that a successful presentation is one that you can deliver with sincerity. Good speakers are made, not born. With a few exceptions, this is true. It's also true that picking a good topic can be a learned skill. Rule number one, of course, is to suit your topic to the audience. A speech on urban demographics will not go over well with a group of chemists. Let's assume that for now, your presentations will be limited to Toastmasters meetings. Other audiences will come at a later date. Always keep in mind that regardless of the topic, your speech should fit a particular manual project.

The "seeds" or the ideas for a speech need not be as elusive as a winning lotto ticket. The next time someone approaches you for a speech, you can be ready to go. Here's how:

1 Have a Master List. Start a file of speech ideas. Every time a subject pops into your head, write it down. Some of them will be silly, a lot of them will be rejected later on, but keep the list active. Once a week, or as often as you feel you need to, review this master list. This will keep the "possible candidates" fresh in your mind so that you will be constantly on the lookout for source material. For example, while reading the evening paper you spot an article on laser surgery. This could fit in nicely with a talk on medical breakthroughs, which happens to be on your master list. If you have a problem creating a master list, simply take a minute to consider your sources. These sources are all around you – television, news, documen-

taries, magazines, a book you just finished, radio talk shows, the Internet, even people talking around you. Become an active listener and the ideas will materialize.

2 Be Flexible. Don't limit yourself to speech topics that are trendy or in vogue. If you can make the topic interesting and can deliver it with pizzazz, go for it. People get tired of hearing different versions of the same old themes. Topics such as gun control, the right to life and the environment certainly warrant our attention, but they can be overdone too.

"Always keep in mind that regardless of the topic, your speech should fit a particular manual project."


3 Gather Information. Quite often you may reject a topic on your list for no other reason than that you have failed to expand on it, to research it. Keep your master list healthy by collecting information to back up those topics. Write things down. I don't trust my grocery list to memory, so why should I commit topic research to it? Always have a pen and paper nearby.

4 Get Advice. Your fellow Toastmasters will be happy to help out. Perhaps one of them has a master list available for loan. Get together with a few of them for coffee after a meeting, and you won't go home empty-handed.

Once you have a respectable list of speech topics, act on it. Be ready for your next call to the lectern. My personal policy is to always have one speech ready to go, a second one "in the works," and a third ready to begin composing. A lot of my topics never get used, so adding new ones to the list becomes an ongoing process. It's a process that, like becoming a better Toastmaster, is both enjoyable and rewarding. **T**

Jeff Waldron, DTM, was a member of Superior Speakers Club 8161-6 in Ontario, Canada.

It's easy to become so comfortable with each other



*T*oastmasters are 99 percent kind, compassionate and supportive people. And in my club, we can carry those nines way out there! But sometimes we forget ourselves and, by not paying attention, do something that may cause hurt feelings at worst, or confusion at best. Or perhaps it's our failure to do something that causes problems. It's easy to become so comfortable with each other that we let our manners slide. But when guests or new members are present, it's important that we help them feel like a part of the group right away. Here are some occurrences I've noticed in my club as well as in others I've visited, that could cause discomfort to a new member or guest.

INCONSISTENT APPLAUSE

In our club recently, a functionary was introduced at the beginning of the meeting to explain his duties. As soon as he stood up, and before saying a word, there was applause. After he finished speaking, there was more applause. The next person, a fairly new member, was called upon to explain her duty and was not applauded before or after speaking. Then the next functionary was called upon – applause again – and everyone who followed was applauded. It would be sad if the

Winding Our Toast

BY DEE DEES, DTM ■ PHOTOGRAPHY BY



ther that we let our manners slide.

one person – especially a new member – felt slighted. The key is consistency.

GOOD TOASTMANNERS: Set some guidelines for when to applaud and when not to, and leave it to the person in control of the meeting, whether it be the President, Toastmaster or General Evaluator, to lead the applause at the appropriate time. A guideline for when to applaud might be:

- If a person is coming to the front of the room to speak, applaud as she walks up and continue until she reaches the point from which she'll be speaking. And, of course, also applaud when she finishes and returns to her seat.
- If a person is speaking from his seat (Table Topics, functionary reports, etc.) do *not* applaud as he stands to speak, but do applaud when he finishes. But again, the important thing is to be consistent in whatever method you choose, so no one feels slighted.

UNIQUE CLUB CUSTOMS

A new member got up to give an Icebreaker. When she was finished, she received a standing ovation. The next two speakers were long-time members, and although they each gave a wonderful presentation, they did not receive standing ovations. Now, anyone who has been a member of our club for a while knows that our club gives a standing ovation to *all* Icebreaker speakers, just for having the courage to get up and speak! But in the audience that night were a couple of new members and several guests. Our actions, without explanation, may have given the impression that we liked the Icebreaker speech more than the other two, or that we

stmanners

BY MARK M. LAWRENCE

were being unfair in giving one speaker more recognition than the others.

GOOD TOASTMANNERS: If your club has similar customs that members all understand, but guests may not, be sure to explain the purpose behind them. We now announce that a standing ovation is to congratulate the Icebreaker speaker for his or her courage, and it is seen as an act of encouragement. Make sure everyone understands the purpose behind your club's unique customs.

RESPECT OTHERS' RELIGIOUS BELIEFS

This has caused some discussion in Toastmasters throughout the last few years. Many clubs open their meetings with a prayer. Others use an inspirational saying, word of wisdom, or something similar. A club should decide by a vote of the membership how to begin a meeting. If a prayer is the method of choice, then respect for the beliefs of others has to be a two-way street. The member who says his rights are being violated by having to listen to a prayer is not respecting the rights of the one who prays. However, the person giving the prayer also should understand that others in the audience (whether member or guest) might not believe as he does.

GOOD TOASTMANNERS: When giving a prayer, try to refrain from using terms that may offend those who have different beliefs. If you feel strongly that you should end a prayer with "In Jesus' name..." for instance, say it silently, before the final Amen. However, if you are the one who is offended by such phrases or prayers, this is the time to respect the belief of the one praying. You don't need to believe the same or agree with the religion, but show tolerance. Toastmasters is a worldwide organization, and members from many cultures may end up in the same club. Let's learn from, rather than challenge, one another.

OFF-COLOR JOKES

The Internet has put thousands of jokes literally at our fingertips. Many are very funny, but not all are suited for retelling in a Toastmasters club. Many years ago, our club lost a potential member because of an off-color joke and some risqué side remarks during our meeting. I could see in her eyes that she would not be back. She joined another club the following week.

GOOD TOASTMANNERS: Before telling a joke, consider not just whether it is funny, but whether it is appropriate for everyone. This should apply whether or not guests are present.

PUBLIC DISAGREEMENTS

Since we are such a diverse group of people, we will not always agree on how something should be done, or with what another member may be saying. But letting a discussion turn into an argument can make others in the room uncomfortable. And guests may decide that this is not the club for them after all. They may join another club, or they may have the mistaken impression that this is how Toastmasters are. This is not the kind of "Moment of Truth" we want our guests to take away with them!

GOOD TOASTMANNERS: If the discussion is getting out of hand during the business portion of the meeting, a good knowledge of parliamentary procedure can help keep things moving smoothly. If you strongly disagree on a personal level with what someone is saying, hold your thoughts and comments until after the meeting. Then, if you feel you must, talk privately with the other person.

*"Make
sure everyone
understands the
purpose behind
your club's unique
customs."*

THE IGNORED GUEST

Members of small clubs often wonder why a guest never returns to join. I have visited clubs where no one knew who I was, and though a few members may have said "Hello," that was about the extent of their interaction with me. It's difficult enough for most people to walk into a room full of strangers; having everyone act indifferently to their presence is a guarantee they will not return.

GOOD TOASTMANNERS: Even more important than greeting guests before the meeting is making them feel welcome throughout the entire meeting. Ask them if they want to participate in Table Topics. Have someone sit next to them to explain what's happening during the meeting. And ask them to join when the meeting is over. Make every guest – or even a member who is returning after a long absence – feel wanted and needed.

Toastmasters International has so much to offer to so many people. It would be a shame if an isolated, ill-thought-out incident caused someone to walk away from a meeting without ever knowing how much he or she could have gained from involvement. Let's all put on our best "company manners" for every meeting. This will entice our members to come back and our guests to join such a positive club.

Dee Dees, DTM. is a past International Director and a member of Gilbert Club 499-3 in Gilbert, Arizona.

By Paul Niser, ATM-B



Create a New-Member Orientation Program

MANY CLUBS FAIL TO PUT IN PLACE PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS THE needs of new members. I've talked with Toastmasters who become frustrated when new members drop out after only a few months. When I ask them about what type of training

or information they provide to their members, the answer is usually "whatever they ask about."

As a new Toastmaster, I couldn't wait to start participating in the club, yet I felt overwhelmed by all the customs, acronyms and roles. I figured the manual everyone talked about would have the answers, but my Vice President Education informed me it would be a week or so before my Toastmasters material arrived. Fortunately, my club created a packet containing general information about the Toastmasters experience. It wasn't specific to new members, but it answered many of my initial concerns.

Almost all new members enter Toastmasters with dozens of questions about our great organization. What is your club doing to address these needs and questions? To take advantage of new members' enthusiasm, provide them with information as soon as they join the club. Many clubs have mentoring programs to provide a one-on-one environment for members to learn. A simple way to create a successful mentoring program in your club is to use the *Club Mentor Program Kit* from Toastmasters International (Catalog No. 1163, \$7.95 plus shipping). The kit contains everything you need to orient and assign mentors to 20 new members. Mentoring is extremely effective and is a major factor in the success of a new member. However, it is not perfect. Sometimes mentor/mentee relationships don't work out – a mentor may not follow up on his responsibilities, or a club may lack enough interested people to serve as mentors. After four years of Toastmasters membership, I saw the need for a way to complement a mentor program by providing information to new members in a concise format to help them start off on the right foot. I developed an orientation program that has had a tremendous impact in my club and, I believe, can make a difference in yours.

A new-member orientation program is simple to administer and takes very little time to put together and implement. The *New Member Orientation Kit for Clubs* (Catalog No. 1162, \$5.00 plus shipping) contains information and handouts to help you orient five new mem-

bers. Materials include orientation guidelines, an induction ceremony script and copies of The Icebreaker speech guidelines. The orientation should go something like this: When members join, the Vice President

Education forwards these members' contact information to the orientation coordinator. The orientation coordinator could also serve as the mentoring coordinator. The orientation coordinator should call the new member to schedule a time to meet with him or her. (Try to call, rather than e-mail. E-mail is not personal enough to provide the Toastmasters touch.)

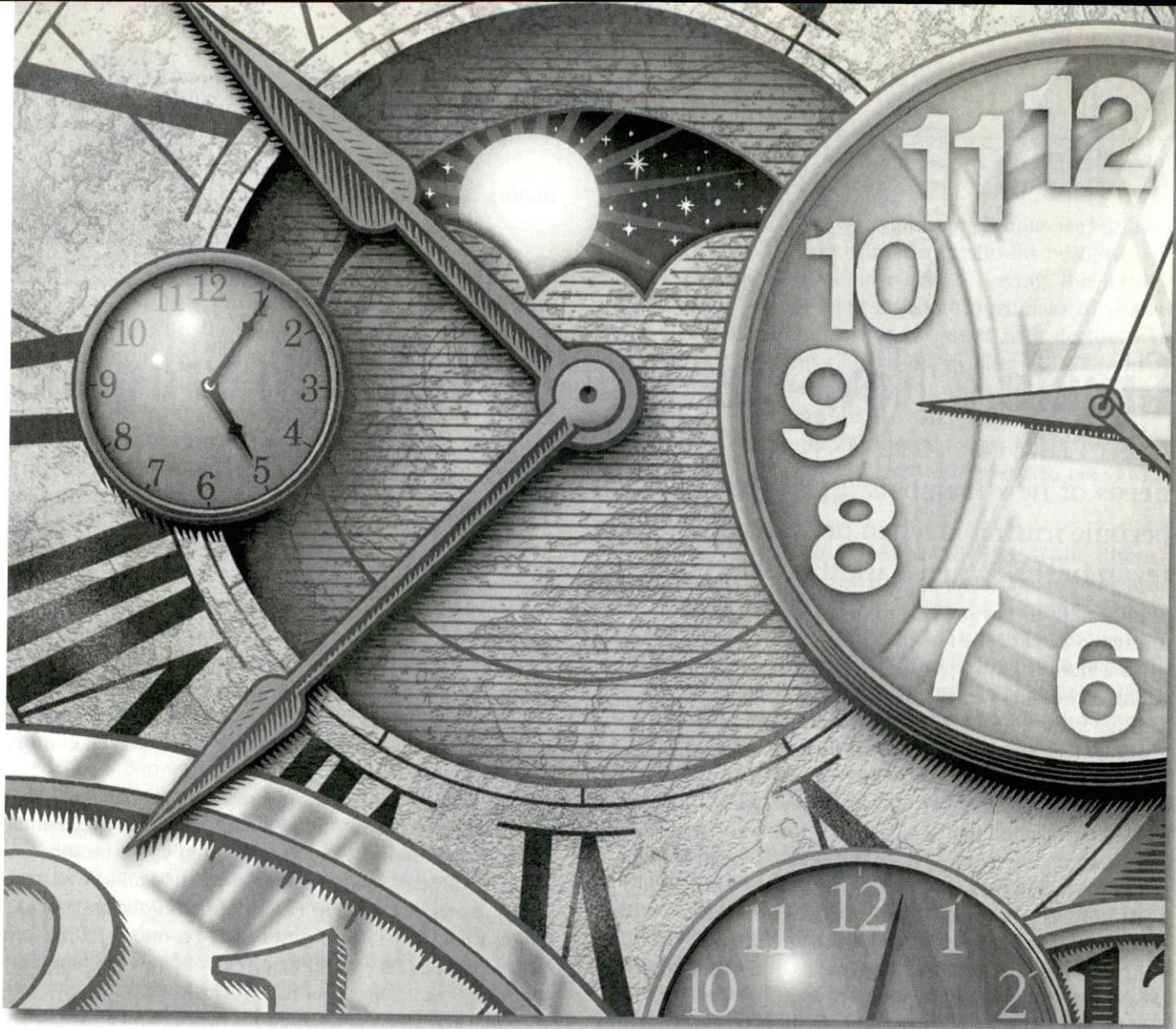
If possible, the orientation should be scheduled 45 minutes before the start of the next club meeting. By scheduling the orientation before the meeting, you'll be sure the member comes back and can immediately take advantage of the material covered. The orientation should last no longer than 30 to 45 minutes. One-on-one meetings are most effective, but depending on how many new members you have, a small group of five would work.

When starting the orientation, break the ice with some small talk. Discover why these new members joined Toastmasters, explain the intent of the orientation program and review a list of frequently asked questions. The idea is to provide lots of basic information without drowning them in details. Be sure to cover areas not included in the Communication and Leadership manual, such as club customs and procedures.

Wrap up the session by asking participants what they're hoping to get out of their membership, and then try to help them establish some goals. Write down whatever they say and pass the information along to the Vice President Education. The VPE can use the information to help develop and track the new members' progress.

A few months after my club began the orientation sessions, we noticed a dramatic improvement in new-member involvement and interest. New members were speaking more frequently than before and were more willing to take risks. An orientation program is excellent alone or tied into an existing mentoring program. **1**

Paul Niser, ATM-B, is a member of TMS of Lincoln Park Club 7880-30 in Chicago, Illinois.



By Connie M. McGuire, CTM

Timing is Everything

As the president of our Toastmasters club, I was often asked by guests, "Why do you worry so much about how long somebody talks or doesn't talk? I thought you were trying to encourage people to speak in public? It seems as if now you're telling them to shut up?"

A properly timed speech is as important to a listener as is article length to a reader.

If you think about it, time is a big part of our lives. We all have the same amount of time: 24 hours a day, seven days a week and 365 days a year. The difference is how we choose to use it. Oh sure, jobs and family obligations consume a large portion of our time. But even those categories offer some degree of choice. You may decide to work longer hours to make more money or to earn the next promotion. You may choose to spend some time taking your child to music lessons or a sporting event because you want her to expand her talents or just enjoy the game. We all have a degree of discretionary time, those precious hours when we can decide what to do or not to do.

How often have you found yourself saying, "I wish I could do this or that, but I don't have time?" What you're really saying is "I don't choose to use my time allotment to do this or that right now." Instead, you want to do something else.

If you don't think time is important, consider that athletes win or lose races by fractions of seconds. Races are often decided by a photo finish. And the last time you went to the doctor, how long did you have to wait because the office overbooked the patient load? How about your performance evaluation or compensation review? Is it acceptable for your boss to be late with these?

As public speakers, we want to respect the preciousness time holds for our audience. Let me tell you how important time was for me over a six-day period. I started out late and never seemed able to catch up.

Several months ago, a colleague and I were scheduled to attend a training conference from Saturday to Thursday. Mechanical problems caused us to miss our connecting flight, even though the plane left almost 45 minutes later than scheduled. We both arrived late, missing the keynote speaker we wanted to hear on Saturday. Unfortunately, this seemed to set the tone for the rest of the week.

We each had a long list of vendors to visit and presentations to attend. We looked forward to these unique opportunities to hear and speak with leading experts in our field. The expo staff did a terrific job planning and organizing the events. Unfortunately, the speakers didn't read the plan.

Each speaker was scheduled to talk for 45 minutes, giving audience members a 15-minute break to get to the next event. Time and time again, I found myself in the same dilemma. Speaker overload! They tried to cover too much material in a short time, had mechanical difficulties or just seemed to enjoy the sound of their own voices. I kept thinking they needed to join Toastmasters and learn how to properly time their presentations.

When a speech was too long, it put the audience in a predicament. I call it the "crossroads of rudeness." Should they be rude and walk out before the speaker finished? Or is it more impolite to walk into the next session late? Have you ever sat restlessly in your seat, checking your watch every five minutes while the speaker kept going on and on, thinking, "When is this going to end?"

I found listening to these presentations very stressful because I like to sit near the front. There was no way to inconspicuously get up and walk out. So I sat squirming in my chair, checking my watch, waiting for the end to come. After that incident, I decided to sit toward the back. If I needed to be rude and leave early, I could blame the speaker. If she could not time her presentation correctly or allow for mishaps, I reasoned, she shouldn't expect the audience to suffer.

"Out of respect for the audience, if you say you will speak for 30 minutes, speak for 30 minutes – not for 45, not for 15."

A friend experienced a similar situation with a college professor. She took a four-hour night class. Most instructors schedule breaks after two hours – but not this one! He kept promising a break if they could just "hang in there for a few more minutes." Unfortunately, his definition of "a few more minutes" was more like a few more hours. When they did manage to get a break, he'd want them back in five minutes. He consistently kept them 10 to 15 minutes after class, which resulted in many having to walk to far corners of dark parking lots. After a few weeks, the students became so annoyed, they set their own schedule, arriving just as class began and leaving when it was scheduled to be over, whether or not the professor was finished.

The flip side of this problem, not speaking long enough, is just as bad. This happens more often than we think, but it isn't as obvious. Ending too soon can make your audience feel shortchanged or leave them confused and wondering.

Imagine paying \$500 to attend a day-long seminar and after five hours the speaker ends it. On one hand, you might be happy for the extra free time, but if it happens consistently you might be concerned that you aren't getting your money's worth. On one occasion, my company paid a vendor for five days of training. But he consistently ended the sessions at noon. When I approached him, he admitted to wanting to catch an earlier flight to beat Friday night traffic. He was callous and cavalier and didn't seem to understand my financial concerns. He finally agreed to adjust the bill and I ended the relationship on the spot.

We've all been in situations beyond our control. I may have a flat tire on the way to a seminar, or you may get out of class considerably earlier than your carpool buddy does. You may have to sit and waste time when you could be doing something more important. But as speakers, we need to minimize these risks for our audiences. As Toastmasters, we are trying to help people learn the value of properly timing their presentations. Out of respect for the audience, if you say you will speak for 30 minutes, speak for 30 minutes – not for 45, not for 15. If you fear running short, have some extra material available, or allow for a question-and-answer period.

A properly timed speech is as important to a listener as is article length to a reader. So be prepared, do your homework and your audience will love you! **T**

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Connie McGuire, CTM, is a member of Rent-A-Toast Club 8399-8 in St. Louis, Missouri.



**Become the leader of
your own destiny.**

Take the Toastmasters Leadership Challenge

If you want to succeed in life, you need to develop leadership skills to reach your goals. Where can you develop those skills? In Toastmasters!

Leadership skills are gained by practicing and by working with others who have the skills you wish to develop. Within Toastmasters, you can do that in many different ways:

■ **Participate in the Leadership Track.** Every time you stand up and speak, you are leading. When you've conquered your initial reservations about public speaking, you may want to serve as a club officer. After you've achieved your CTM award, set your sights on the Competent Leader (CL) or Advanced Leader (AL) awards, and develop skills in planning, training, motivating and managing. You can even become a district officer and further enhance these skills, or you can participate in the High Performance Leadership program (Catalog No. 262) in which you conduct a leadership project of your choice. (See the TI Website for more information on this program).

■ **Become a Club Officer.** Every facet of running a club is relevant in the workplace. The club president leads, and empowers, the club members. The Vice President Education facilitates educational growth and empowers members to stretch and advance. The Vice President Membership encourages and recruits club visitors.

In fact, if there is an area in which you need to grow in your personal or professional life, there is sure to be a leadership position within your club that can help you develop the appropriate skills.

■ **Complete an Advanced Manual.** The advanced manuals offer some of the best training available within Toastmasters.

Once you have completed your CTM, you have built your foundation as a speaker and leader. But don't stop there! It's now time to build a house on top of that foundation.

The advanced manuals help you define your communication and leadership style even further. When you select your manual, you are, in effect, choosing what areas of specialization you want to pursue. Do you want to learn more about storytelling? Informative or persuasive speaking? Interpretive reading? Speaking on television? It's all here for you to learn!

■ **Become a Mentor to a New Club Member.** Mentoring is a form of leadership, which includes listening, teaching and empowering. By becoming a mentor, you are passing on to others what has already been passed onto you. You are identifying yourself as a leader.

The person you mentor will look to you as a leader. This will reinforce your own self-image as a leader. Every time you assist someone else, you are reinforcing your own skills as well.

■ **Give a Success/Leadership Module, or a Success/Communication Module.** The Success/Leadership series helps participants to improve management and leadership skills, conduct meetings, motivate and inspire others, and build teams. By leading a Success/Leadership Module, you are not only practicing leadership, you are reinforcing your own knowledge base in each of these areas.

■ **Help with an Area, Division or District Event.** This can include any of the following:

- ▶ Youth Leadership Training
- ▶ Speechcraft
- ▶ Leadership Breakfast
- ▶ Officer Training
- ▶ Area, Division or District Conference

Every time you participate or help in an area or district event, you are surrounding yourself with able and distinguished leaders. Toastmasters with an ATM or DTM have gained leadership skills by practicing in each of the above areas.

By working closely with these trained leaders, you will gain management and leadership skills.

■ **Help Build a New Club, or Rebuild a Small Club.** Building a club is an accelerated course in leadership. It is a leadership challenge in which you can apply all of your leadership skills. There are three steps to building or rebuilding a club: publicity, membership and leadership.

1 **Publicity** – Building a club is like building a small business. In this case, Toastmasters provides the basic structure to make the business (your club) a success. This begins with a good publicity plan.

2 **Membership** – You will learn all facets of public relations by building your club's membership base. This includes greeting and orienting guests – skills that will help you in any line of work.

3 **Leadership** – This means empowering, mentoring and leading the new members you've helped bring in.

Take the Toastmasters challenge! Choose two items from the above list to complete during the next year. Choose challenges that match the leadership skills you need to develop. With each success, choose a new challenge, one that will help you to stretch further as a leader.

Leadership is the ultimate form of personal growth. So, take the Toastmasters challenge and become the leader of your own destiny! **1**

Darin Smyth, Ph.D., ATM, is a former member of Redwood Ramblers Club 8203-4 in Santa Cruz, California.

You may be the one in charge – but you could be a poor leader.

Leadership Myths

By Gregory P. Smith

Leadership is one of the most popular business concepts, but it may be the least understood. Leadership is about getting things done and helping people reach their potential. Many organizations fail because they follow old-fashioned and outdated leadership concepts – they practice leadership mythology. A myth is something that is false, but believed to be true. As in many things in life, several myths surround the concept and practice of leadership. Unfortunately, these myths often prevent the most qualified people from rising to the top. By listing these leadership myths, I hope to dispel many false beliefs.

MYTH 1 – Leadership is a rare ability given to only a few. Many people still assume leaders are born, not made. This can't be further from the truth. However, like most skills, learning takes time, training and lots of trial by error. The key ingredient is a sense of purpose. Good leaders chart a course and provide direction.

MYTH 2 – Leaders are charismatic. While some leaders are charismatic, most are not. Some of the world's most famous leaders had warts – some sort of shortcoming or personality defect. In a leadership role, people skills are very important, more important than technical skills. However, the best leaders are those who work toward a goal. Your cause, purpose and mission in life will make you charismatic – not the other way around.

MYTH 3 – The person with the highest position or title is the leader. Ideally, the senior person in the business should be a good leader. However, authentic leadership is not based on position or rank. It is based on action, performance, ability and effectiveness. We all know people in leadership roles who did more to demoralize

employees and destroy the business than anything else. The best companies strive to develop and create as many leaders as possible. W.L. Gore & Associates, makers of GoreTex™ and other products, have a unique approach to leadership. This company practices natural leadership, "leadership by followship." It doesn't appoint any leaders, but instead lets the true leaders surface to the top. People naturally gravitate to those they want to follow and work with. There are no limiting job descriptions or job titles and few rules and regulations. If a person comes up with a new product idea, he or she puts a team together of people who have the desire and knowledge to make the idea work.

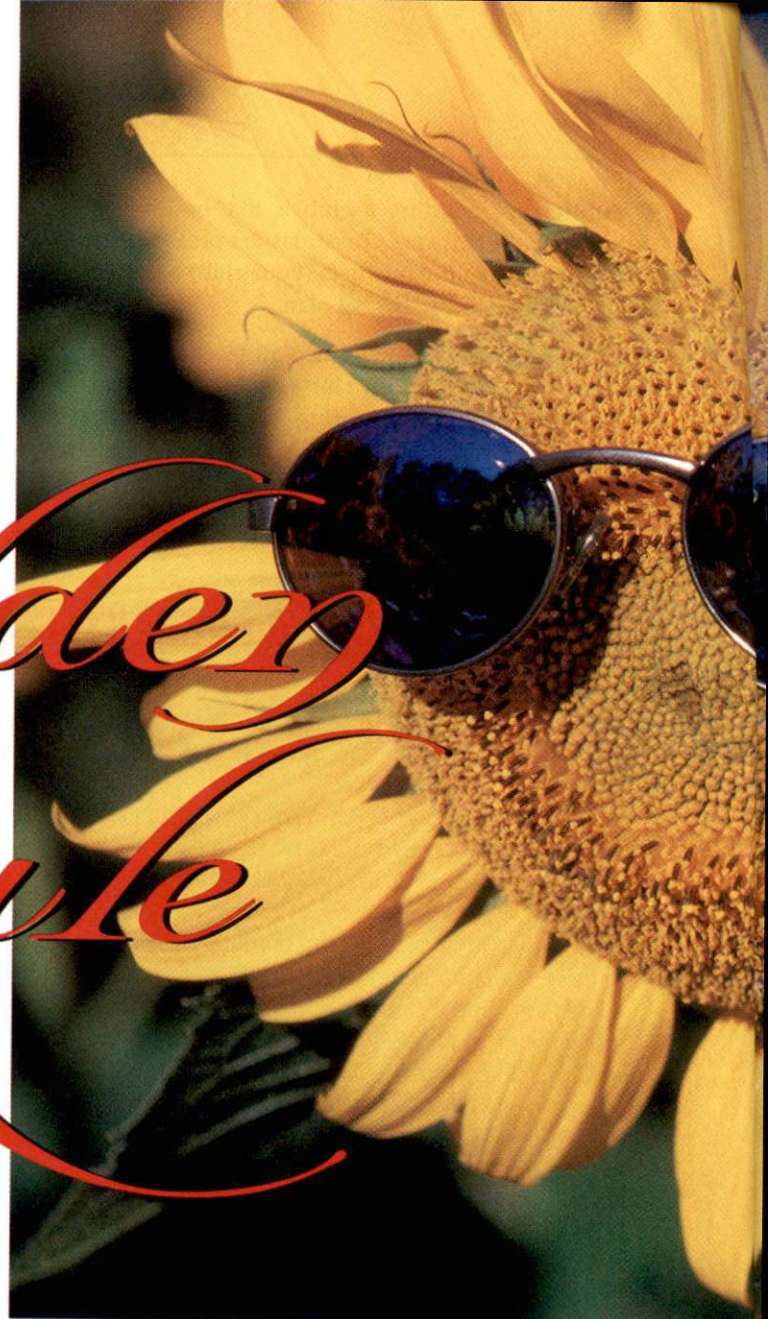
MYTH 4 – Effective leadership is based on control, coercion and manipulation. Leadership is about the future, not the past. Business consultant Joel Barker once said, "A leader is someone you would follow to a place you would not go to by yourself." Good leaders gain followers out of respect for their ability to achieve a goal and because people can relate to their vision or goal. Good leaders help other people become better. And in the workplace they create an environment that attracts, keeps and motivates employees.

MYTH 5 – Good leaders are more educated than other people. Academic degrees indicate you have a good education, they don't necessarily prove you are a good leader. When it comes to leadership, experience is the best teacher. **1**

Gregory P. Smith is a speaker and leader of an organization called Chart Your Course International, in Conyers, Georgia. Contact him at greg@chartcourse.com or at www.chartcourse.com.

Let's Live by the

Golden Rule



The greatest use of our life is to spend it for something that outlasts it," advised psychologist William James. By that, James meant all of us should live and act in ways that bless, inspire and uplift others. We should use our talents, skills and personality to leave the world a better place than we found it. Here are 20 ways we can make the world a better place:

1 *Pass it on.* If we receive a kindness from someone, the best way to 'repay' it is to pass it on to someone else. Consider this example from a California woman: "Forty years ago, I was a poor student working my way through the University of California at Berkeley. I didn't have enough money to pay for my laboratory fees for the courses I needed to take. A counselor for young adults at a community church loaned me the money I needed to stay in school. I kept track of the amount, and when I got a job, I tried to repay her. The woman said simply, 'I didn't miss it. Just pass it on.' That has been my motto ever since. Passing it on is the best way to repay a kindness."

2 *Write an ethical will.* A will should not simply be about material wealth. Consider writing an ethical or spiritual "will" in which you leave behind some important life lessons. Consider this example of such a "will" written by Rabbi Moses Yehoshua Zelig Hakohen, a religious leader in Latvia during the 1800s. Here is some of the spiritual wealth he bequeathed to his children and grandchildren:

- Ask for forgiveness from every person and be forgiving of everyone, both in speech and in deed.
- Prepare yourself in the morning to serve the Creator.
- Train yourself in the habit of balance, expecting equal amounts of criticism and praise, sadness and joy, pain and pleasure.
- Avoid listening to any obscene speech.

BY VICTOR M. PARACHIN ■ P



- Write down all the miraculous and wondrous occurrences that happen to you.

3 Leave footprints behind. As we walk through life, we leave all sorts of footprints. Some are quite visible – diplomas earned, degrees received, jobs held, awards won, status attained, etc. Work at leaving behind less visible but more enduring footprints such as help given, kindness extended, forgiveness offered, love shared.

4 Be compassionate. Compassion means we are moved by the struggles, suffering and fears of others. Whenever you see someone struggling with life, respond in some way. Even a small act can make a big difference.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY DG GRAPHICS

5 Drive “friendly.” Make a habit of letting other cars into your traffic lane. Be patient with people crossing busy intersections. Give a cyclist or jogger a break. Help a stranded motorist.

6 Take good care of your partner. “Our partner is a flower,” notes Thich Nhat Hanh in his book, *Touching Peace: Practicing the Art of Mindful Loving*. “If we take care of her well, she will grow beautifully. If we take care of her poorly, she will wither. To help a flower grow well, we must understand her nature. How much water does she need? How much sunshine?”

7 Smile more often. “The poorest way to face life is to face it with a sneer,” observed Theodore Roosevelt. Day by day, try greeting everyone you meet with a smile – family, friends, colleagues and strangers.

8 Practice charity. Designate a percentage of your income for charitable causes. Some people write one large check per year to a favorite charity while others give smaller amounts weekly or monthly. When a child comes to your door representing his or her school, Boy Scout or Girl Guide troop, be courteous and make at least a small purchase. Most of us can spend \$4 or \$5 this way. Such purchases are often the sole way organizations dedicated to serving youth generate the income they need. Be guided by this wisdom from Jack Kornfield, author of *Buddha’s Little Instruction Book*: “In business, reinvest a portion of all you make, keep a portion for your use, save a portion for those in need.”

9 Forgive someone. It’s impossible to get through life without being hurt by someone. Rather than harbor a grudge and nurse resentment, let it go. Forgive those who hurt you. Forgiveness ends quarrels, eases pain, restores peace and promotes inner health.

10 Apologize when you’re wrong. Although Mstislav Rostropovich, former director of the National Symphony in Washington, D.C., has received many honors for his musical gifts, he says “the greatest achievement in my life is that I can apologize to someone I have wronged. I can bow my head and ask for forgiveness. I think everyone should learn to do this, everyone should realize that, far from humiliating, it elevates the soul.”

11 Be open to ways of helping the needy. While shopping at a supermarket, Carol Porter and her mother spied a dumpster filled with edible produce. When Carol’s mother asked the manager if she could recover the food

to feed hungry children, the manager agreed – and Kid-Care Inc. was born. Today, nearly a decade later, Carol and her husband prepare more than 18,000 meals a month for hungry children in Houston, Texas. Their mission is clear, says Carol: “Ending hunger among children in Houston and empowering other communities throughout the country to duplicate the program.”

12 *Just be there.* When someone is going through a hard time or experiencing a tragedy, just being there can be a tremendous source of hope and encouragement. Comfort a grieving friend. Visit the sick or hospitalized. Hold the hand of someone who is weeping.

13 *Have good manners.* Caring, courtesy and thoughtfulness seem to be in decline these days. Defy that trend by sending thank-you notes for kindnesses received. Use the words ‘please’ and ‘thank you’ frequently in your speech.

14 *Live by the golden rule.* One of the most effective ways of living in harmony with others and promoting peace is to live by the golden rule – “Do to others what you would have them do to you.” (Matthew 7:12)

15 *Return curtness with kindness.* “Kindness is the golden chain by which society is bound together,” observed Goethe. The world is well supplied with rude people. Whenever you experience rudeness from another person, resist the temptation to respond in a similar way. Rather return curtness with kindness. You will feel better and, possibly, have a positive impact upon the other person.

16 *Triumph over tragedy.* Be larger than what comes tumbling over you. Rise to the challenge and overcome. Keep in mind the profound insight from Helen Keller, who was blind and deaf. “Although the world is full of suffering, it is also full of the overcoming of it,” she wrote. When you triumph over tragedy you not only make your own life better but indirectly improve the lives of others. Your example will inspire them to face their tragedies with greater courage and hope.

17 *Make your love felt.* Do not only speak your love, but also show it. Shower not only family and close friends with your love, but let the showering splash on others – neighbors, colleagues and even strangers. “Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment, or the

smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around,” writes Leo Buscaglia in his book *Born For Love*. “It’s overwhelming to consider the continuous opportunities there are to make our love felt,” he adds.

18 *Be a friend in deed.* A few years ago, I heard of Marion Crawford who was described as one of the nation’s most dedicated volunteers. This 73-year-old great-grandmother woke up at 5 each morning and drove to the homes of several elderly neighbors in her hometown of East Arlington, Vermont. There she helped them bathe and shower as well as prepare breakfast. “Older people like to remain in their own homes,” Crawford said. “I saw a need to help some of them.” After doing her morning work, she returned home for lunch, but then she spent her afternoons with the same seniors, doing their laundry, vacuuming their homes, buying their groceries or taking them to medical appointments. Later, after spending part of the evening with her husband, Walter, Crawford began baking bread. “I do about 100 loaves at a time,” she said. “The next day, I take them to the people I visit.” Crawford’s philosophy of life was simple and practical: “We only pass this way once, and while we’re here, we should do all the good we can.”

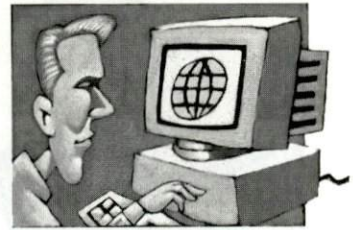
19 *Be someone’s cheerleader.* Every person can benefit by having a cheerleader in life, someone who clearly and consistently conveys this important message – You can do it! As someone’s cheerleader, you’ll empower that person to be more creative, to try harder and to overcome feelings of inadequacy.

20 *Develop a life philosophy.* Many people just drift through life without clear goals and objectives. Those who leave the world a better place follow a philosophy, which not only guides but also drives them. A simple philosophy about life will help you focus your energies. A good example comes from John Wesley, founder of Methodism and the man who transformed British religious and social society in the 18th century. His philosophy is still good today. He advised:

*Do all the good you can,
By all the means you can,
In all the ways you can,
In all the places you can,
At all the times you can,
To all the people you can,
As long as ever you can.*

1

Victor M. Parachin is a freelance writer and longtime contributor to *The Toastmaster* living in Tulsa, Oklahoma.



By George Torok, CTM

Tips on Presenting with the Overhead Projector

1 Stand on the "right" side. If you are right-handed, the overhead projector should be on your right as you face the audience. If you are left-handed, the projector should be on your left. This way, you will find it easier to change the transparencies without looking and feeling clumsy.

2 Position the screen to one side, (left or right per above) if you can move it. Place it so you can stand in the center without blocking anyone's view. You are the show. You, not the screen, should be center stage.

3 Protect audience members' eyes from blinding white light. This can happen as you change slides. The bright light draws and tires viewers' eyes. Avoid this common error by turning off the projector before you remove the slide – then turn it on after you place the next slide. You can achieve the same effect by covering the light with a hood or covering the glass with an oversized piece of paper between slide changes. I prefer to turn it on and off. This reminds the audience that you are the show and the overhead is just an aid.

4 Use frames. The frames block excess light from leaking around the edge of the slide. You can use cardboard frames or clear sleeves with fold-out flaps. I prefer the sleeves because the sleeves take up less room in my briefcase and protect the slide from smudges.

5 Test your text for size and legibility by placing your slide on the floor. Stand up and try to read it. If you can read it on the floor, then your audience will be able to read it on the screen. I try to use 40-point font size – but never smaller than 24. Use sans-serif font (e.g. Helvetica) for your titles to catch attention and serif (e.g. Times Roman) for the points to make it easier to read. Be careful with italics. They catch attention but are hard to read.

6 Follow the 7x7 rule. List a maximum of seven points on a slide with no more than seven words per point. Less is better.

7 Stand and talk to the audience. They need to look you in the eye. Do not talk to the screen or turn your back to the audience. Check the screen by glancing over your shoulder. If you need to point to your slide or read it – do it at the projector. This keeps you talking to the audience.

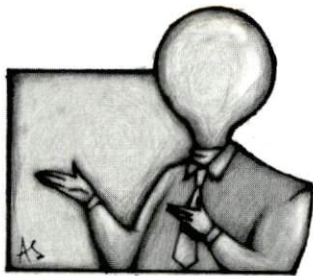
8 Use a cartoon to inject humor into a dry topic. The cartoon must relate to the topic. Photocopy the cartoon as big as possible onto a transparency. Always read it for your audience. Pause after you read the punch line to give them time to think and react. To help them laugh – smile and look at them expectantly.

9 Use a computer graphics program such as Microsoft PowerPoint to design and print your transparencies. Never do it by hand. Maintain a consistent look from slide to slide. It does not have to be snappy – but it must be clean and professional looking.

10 Be prepared. Always check the equipment and room before you present. Advise the facilities coordinator how you want it set up. Then arrive early so you can test and make any changes. Practice turning the projector on and off. Try the switch for the second bulb. Focus before you start. Put your busiest slide on before anyone arrives; then walk around the room to test for readability. T

"You are the show. You, not the screen, should be center stage."

George Torok, CTM, is a member of Skyway Club 3301-60 in Burlington, Ontario, Canada. He presents keynotes and seminars on Power Presentations.



IDEA CORNER

By Karen Robinson

Get Caught In a Brainstorm

Want to bring a torrential shower of ideas to your club? You can do it with a brainstorm! Brainstorming is a creative ritual advertising executives have been practicing for years. In a brainstorm, almost anything goes – no idea is too crazy, and you never know where one simple notion may lead.

In fact, many of the cleverest slogans and creative commercials are the result of brainstorming. It's literally the building of an idea, placing thoughts on new thoughts, to develop a creative solution. And it's fun!

So how can brainstorming be harnessed to make a Toastmasters club and its meetings great? It's simple. Here's how:

■ **Preparation Before The Storm:** You'll need a few supplies before you begin your brainstorm. Have on hand:

- ▶ **An oversized writing pad, chalkboard or other erasable writing board** – Writing pads are generally preferred because you can tear off the pages and tape them to the wall for reference. Whatever you choose to use, be sure it's large enough for the group to see clearly.
- ▶ **Colored pens or chalk** – Use bright or dark colors that can be read from a distance. Colors such as purple, red and bright blue are fun to use and match the festivity of the occasion.
- ▶ **Timer** – Sometimes brainstorms can become so energized, everyone loses track of time. A timer ensures that other meeting business gets taken care of. Generally, brainstorms last from 30 minutes to an hour. This allows time for the group to get warmed up, but doesn't completely drain members' energy.
- ▶ **Toastmasters brochures, motivational books, magazines** – Any of these materials can spark an idea. Have each club member bring a supply.

- ▶ **Dictionaries and thesauruses** – Have several copies available, the thicker the better.
- ▶ **Toys – Yes, toys!** A soft ball that can be tossed around, a miniature car, a doll – they all magically bring out the kid in us and open our minds. It's hard to be too serious when you're playing with a toy. The group may find it awkward at first, so make a game out of it.

Put all the toys in a bag and have each person blindly pick from it. The idea is to loosen up the group and get everyone laughing.

Another fun idea with toys that helps discourage any negativity in a brainstorm is to give each member a foam ball. Whenever a member of the group slips with a negative comment, such as "That will never work" or "That's a silly idea," group members are allowed to pummel that member with their foam balls. It's a humorous and harmless way to enforce the number one rule of brainstorming: No negativity allowed!

■ **The Forecast:** Once you have your brainstorming tools, make sure you have a specific objective in mind. Write down the purpose of the brainstorm large enough for everyone to read and post it on a wall. It's important to keep the objective focused on one single goal at a time.



This helps to avoid cluttering the process and keeps the session on target. An example of an effective brainstorming objective might be, "Create a fun, spirited name for our club that entices new members and reflects our club's personality." Or, "Develop 10 ways to promote our club in the community." Be sure everyone agrees on the objective before you start.

■ **Sprinkling of Ideas:** Now that everyone has a toy in hand and knows the objective, the only other thing you need is that first drop of an idea. To get everyone involved from the start, go around the room and ask for one word from each person in the group. It doesn't even have to pertain to the objective at hand, all you need is a word. Write down each word for everyone to see. When each person in the group has contributed, then it is time to ask for ideas.

■ **The Brainstorm:** Get ready for the downpour. Write as quickly as you can the ideas being shouted out. You might want to designate a "helper" who can jot down everyone's ideas while you move around the room encouraging participation.

What if the group gets stalled? Try these techniques to get things going again: Review the words and ideas the group has already generated to spark new thoughts. Have members look up words you've written and read definitions and synonyms out loud; they may trigger an idea. Or, look through the literature you have on hand for snips of ideas.

The brainstorm is over when the group agrees on an idea or the timer goes off. Don't worry if time runs out before you're done. Sometimes it takes two brainstorming sessions to get an idea that meets your objective — one session to get ideas out in the open, and another to whittle them down to the precise one you want.

To get your club jump-started, here are a few topics that can benefit from a brainstorming session:

■ **Name your club** – Club #345 is nice for administrative purposes, but it's not easy to remember and doesn't give new members a sense of the club's personality. Get a brainstorm going and see where it leads you.

■ **Special events** – There seems to be something to celebrate each month, be it a holiday or a member's club anniversary or birthday. Brainstorm creative ways to celebrate these events at your club meetings.

■ **Contests** – Nothing motivates people like a lively contest. Put your heads together to develop a fun program to measure members' progress.

Whatever your club chooses as its objective, always keep in mind that there are no right or wrong answers in a brainstorm. After all, the most important objective of a brainstorm is to have fun!

Karen Robinson is a freelance writer and public relations manager in Southern California.

Keep Creativity Flowing

By Karen Robinson

Sometimes what seems to be the craziest of ideas is the best idea.

To get your brainstorm on the right track, read the following instructions out loud to club members or, better yet, make copies for everyone and have members read them out loud.

- **Shout out your ideas** – This is no time to be formal. Keep those ideas coming and shout 'em out!
- **Everything goes** – Put no limitations on the group. You never know where an idea may lead.
- **No negatives** – Don't edit yourself or others. Every idea in a brainstorm is a good one!
- **Encourage wild ideas** – Put your inhibitions aside. Sometimes what seems to be the craziest of ideas is the best idea.
- **Build on the wildest ideas and see where they go** – Brainstorming is an exploration, so don't be afraid to go on this fun adventure of the mind.
- **Think teamwork** – Remember that a good brainstorm is a group effort, not a competition.
- **Focus on the quantity of ideas** – In a brainstorm, if you throw enough ideas out into the open, eventually one is going to stick.
- **Don't focus on the quality of ideas** – Silly answers, outlandish words, crazy ideas – they should all be welcome.
- **Have fun** – Laughing is definitely allowed.
- **Remember to bring an umbrella** – you are going to get pummeled with ideas!



Toastmasters Share Their Lessons Learned

New Growth

Why wait for spring to see blossoms of new growth? We as Toastmasters can set goals any time during the year. All it takes is careful planning and dedicated persistence – persistence such as that displayed by the athletes in last year's Olympics, who strive year-round toward their goal of taking home a gold medal.

Inspired by these athletes, let us as Toastmasters also develop a passion – to become physically, mentally and emotionally “up” for all our performances at the lectern.

■ Club anniversary celebrations don't need to be “black tie” events. Clubs often feel they must celebrate with an expensive meal, and as a result many members don't participate. Grand River Toastmasters in Cambridge, Ontario, Canada, recently celebrated its 15th anniversary with a potluck dinner – on the normal meeting night. The only cost involved was for the meal. Forty-two people attended.

We were honored by the presence of all our governors – district, division and area. The speakers weren't high-profile guests who would incur expensive costs, but instead they were our own members doing something special. One brave member gave her Icebreaker speech and another presented his 10th and final speech toward earning the CTM award. The final presenter was a 26-year Toastmaster veteran who presented a humorous outline of the club's history. The district governor thrilled the CTM recipient with an uplifting evaluation. Overall, the evening was a resounding success, and nearly all the club's members were there to enjoy it.

JEAN MCALLISTER, DTM • COLLINGWOOD, ONTARIO, CANADA

■ After completing six speeches from my advanced manuals on my way to an ATM-B, I borrowed two different manuals from a fellow Toastmaster to see if the speeches in those manuals would be to my liking. I have found that many people stop progressing after completing their CTMs because the advanced manuals they had chosen weren't on topics they were interested in.

MARK SCHLINK, CTM • SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA

■ As one not blessed with a powerful voice, I have learned the importance of speaking clearly.

I have found that well-enunciated speech penetrates like a bullet through background noise and hits the target – the listener's eardrums – over greater distances, whereas louder but less-clear speech is diffused like a hail of shotgun pellets and disappears into the environmental buzz!

When commencing your speech (without the assistance of a microphone), adjust your vocal volume to the prevailing conditions by focusing briefly on the person in the back row, as if you and he were engaged in a conversation. Thereafter, while moving your eye contact around to include the entire audience, revert periodically to your “back-row friend” to check his attitude. If he still looks comfortable and interested, you're winning.

TONY VAN DER WATT, ATM-B • PRETORIA, SOUTH AFRICA

■ I have been compiling my own list of tips since joining Toastmasters in 1988, and I share them when possible. Recently, our Toastmasters club got its own Web site – www.highnoononline.org, which includes a page with tips.

I have learned the value of reading Web site material provided by Toastmasters International, and I encourage other Toastmasters to discover for themselves how helpful reading – and repeatedly re-reading – this material can be. Reading adds to the repertoire of information we may need tomorrow, for instance, in performing a particular duty or presenting a speech at our clubs. In re-reading, we frequently grasp something new that we had not noticed or understood when reading the same words before.

CARLETON L. WILLIAMS, DTM • FAYETTEVILLE, GEORGIA

Share with us that favorite tip, strategy or action that has made you a more effective communicator. Entries may be edited for clarity and length.

Send to: Mark Majcher
“Topical Tips”
1255 Walnut Court
Rockledge, FL 32955
or e-mail: majcher@spacey.net



The following listings are arranged in numerical order by district and club number.

DTM

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

Wayne R. Rivers 5448-2
 Steve Lockwood 591-6
 Gary Anthony Schmidt 3964-7
 Shelia Eure 2250-12
 John H. Plunkett 2526-14
 Judy Gwynn-Williams 1288-21
 Aref Dajani 3349-27
 Leora M. Motley 9807-27
 Samuel J. Russell 665-30
 Arlene M. Holt 6936-39
 Robert L. Marchant 7943-47
 Kelvin Kok Kah Keong 5679-51
 Johannes Spreen 5239-62
 Tannis Gordon 3207-64
 Paul H. Jantz 2455-68
 Richard Knopp 695-72
 Joanne Leamy 1923-72
 Andrew Day 3830-72
 Mike Kunz 6336-72
 Anna Footer 5029-73

Anniversaries

OCTOBER

75 years

Anaheim 2-F

60 years

Mankato 175-6

55 years

Vancouver 353-7

50 years

McKeesport 901-13
 Hub 924-41

45 years

Kent Evening 1994-2
 Sunrise 160-9

Desert Professional Speakers
 1969-12
 Timberline 1965-26
 New York 1949-46
 Great Fort Lauderdale 2004-27

40 years

Revelliers 1796-24
 Greater Communicators 2114-24
 Delaware County 3204-38
 Yawn Patrol 1187-41
 Lakeland 2262-47

35 years

Executive 408-10
 Red Bank 2091-58
 Epsom 2487-71

30 years

Missicroix 2813-6
 Greenfield 53-11
 Tampa Noonshiners 3909-47
 Black Walnut 3320-60

25 years

San Marcos 2504-5
 Westinghouse Motivators 3689-18

20 years

Wallmasters International 4428-7
 HP Speakeasies 4427-15
 Bemidji Area 1640-20
 Westminster Communicators
 899-26
 Dale Electric Nooners 3424-41
 Northern Marin 166-57
 Chinatown 4426-75

Ralph C. Smedley Memorial Fund

Associate

District 73 Toastmasters, in memory of Jim Dinan, DTM, District 73 Governor 1994-95
 Abby L. Ross, ATM-S, on the occasions of her 50th birthday and achieving her ATM-S

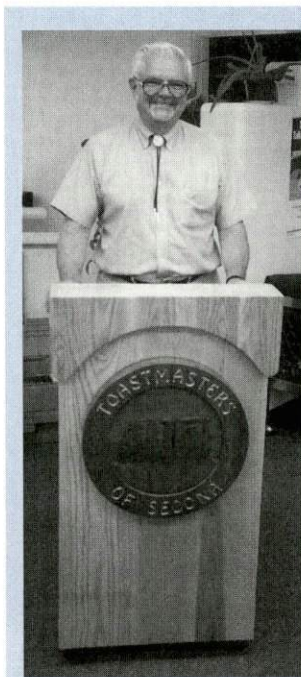
Contributing Club

Pipstone Creek Toastmasters Club
 No. 9091-42, in memory of
 Mabel Barker

Contributor

Past International Director Ron Harger, DTM, and Lois Harger, DTM, District 22 Lt. Governor Education & Training, in memory of Hugh Burgay, DTM, International Director 1979-81
 Past International President A. Edward Bick, DTM, and Jennifer Bick, in memory of Hugh Burgay, DTM, International Director 1979-81
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 Lori-Nan Mihaley, in memory of Hugh Burgay, DTM, International Director 1979-81
 Ray Crozier and Kay Crozier, in memory of Hugh Burgay, DTM, International Director 1979-81
 Past District 28 Governor Ellwyn Albee, DTM, and Past District

28 Governor Marilyn S. Albee, DTM, in memory of Judson A. Fisher, DTM
 Meigs Glidewell, in memory of Hugh Burgay, DTM, International Director 1979-81
 Past International Director Bruce W. Trippet, DTM, and Rebekka Trippet, in memory of Lorin Pollman, DTM
 Donald H. Lamore, CTM
 District 28 Toastmasters, in memory of Judson Fisher, DTM, District 28 Governor 1961-62
 Dr. Thomas Davis and Ruth Davis, in memory of Hugh Burgay, DTM, International Director 1979-81
 Jane L. Vanderlaan, in memory of Hugh Burgay, DTM, International Director 1979-81
 John H. Meisch and Katherine L. Meisch, in memory of Hugh Burgay, DTM, International Director 1979-81



The Perfect Gift

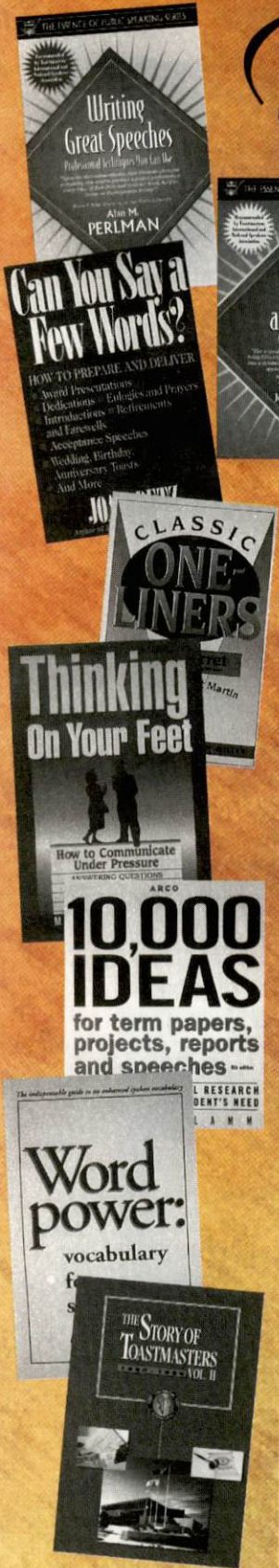
Bruce Bond, CTM, a member of Toastmasters of Sedona Club 4459-3, is quite an artist. Earlier this year, he presented his club with a solid-ash lectern, complete with a handcarved redwood Toastmasters seal and a custom-fitted cover to protect the lectern when it's not in use. During this six-month long project, Bond kept his creation a secret. He presented his gift of appreciation, saying he expected the lectern to outlast him in the club. Many of his fellow club

members were moved to tears and he received a standing ovation for his craftsmanship and generosity.

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