

The TOASTMASTER®

DECEMBER 2003

SPECIAL ISSUE:

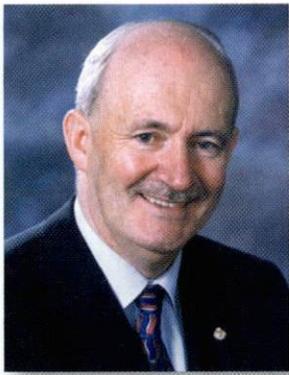
Specialty Speeches –

What to say
at disruptive,
celebratory and
milestone events.



The Eulogy for Princess Diana

More than any other
kind of speech, a
eulogy has potential for
enormous impact.



VIEWPOINT

Want to Make a Difference?

"One person can make a difference, and every person should try."

— JOHN F. KENNEDY

◆ NON-TOASTMASTERS OFTEN ASK ME WHY I STAY IN TOASTMASTERS. BY NOW, THEY say, you must have learned all you need to know. Don't you tire of attending club meetings? It's a good question. Why do so many of us continue as members and officers, serving the organization? The answer is obvious. Those of us who stay know how much our participation has changed our lives for the better, increasing our confidence, building our self-esteem and adding to our emotional intelligence. We joined with a goal of delivering a few speeches, then raised our sights to completing our CTM. Later, maybe, a DTM beckoned. But in addition, many of us stay to help other people achieve their potential and realize their dreams. Even if you only are a member for a short time, you will be changed in some way. Staying longer will change you even more.

Our challenge is to make this wonderful opportunity available to as many people as possible. Since 1924, when Dr. Smedley formed the first Toastmasters club, nearly 4 million people have changed their lives for the better by joining a Toastmasters club. We now have almost 200,000 members, but that leaves millions of people all over the world who would gain tremendously from our programs, if only they knew about us. Particularly, people who think they are not good enough; people who have put a ceiling on their achievements or do not believe their dreams can come true. People like Amos Hart in the movie *Chicago*. Have you seen it? I must say I enjoyed it immensely. In the movie Amos' wife, Roxy, gets on the wrong side of the law, but sings and dances her way to freedom and a successful show-business career. (I guess it's those Irish genes!) Throughout most of the movie, however, Amos hovers in the background, shy, retiring and very unsure of himself and what's going on around him.

But in one very emotional scene toward the end of the movie, he appears alone on stage and sings a heartfelt song called "Mister Cellophane." He sings it for all the shy, unconfident people in the world who could make a lot more of their lives if only they believed they could. "You could look right through me, walk right by me, and never know I'm there," sings Amos about the confident successful people center stage.

Does that ring a bell with you? Were you like Amos before you joined Toastmasters? Do you know somebody like Amos? A friend? A colleague? A family member? By the time you read this, the holidays will be here. You could never give a more life-changing present to anyone than to invite him or her to a Toastmasters meeting. Your friends will thank you, and you will have made a difference in their lives!

Ted Corcoran, DTM
International President

The TOASTMASTER

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The Toastmasters Vision:

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

The Toastmasters Mission:

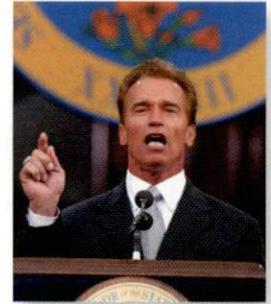
Toastmasters International is the leading movement devoted to making effective oral communication a worldwide reality.

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

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

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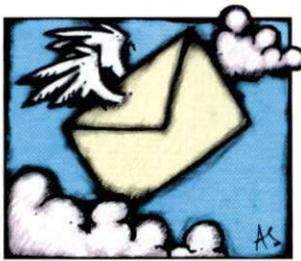


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LETTERS

It's Not the End of the World

I was a finalist in the Interdistrict Speech Contest in Atlanta last August. I walked confidently onto the stage – after all, I had been practicing for months. I began my speech well, but shortly after I started, my mind went blank. I could feel every person in the room willing me on, but it was not to be.

To say I was disappointed would be an understatement. I had trained so hard and come so far. I felt I had let my club and district down, not to mention the audience at the contest.

But these feelings were soon dispelled. As I walked off the stage, the other contestants stood with me as one. These beautiful people dropped down to help a wounded one of their kind. When all I wanted to do was sink into the carpet, they gave me encouragement. They were praying that I would come through this a stronger person. I am happy to say, I have. I have promised myself that I will be back to finish what I started.

After the contest, many people from all over the world gave me words of encouragement. Thank you, to all of you. The support from past International Speech Contest winners was amazing. Thank you gentlemen; you truly are champions.

I sometimes hear people say that when this happens to them, even at club level, they will never have another go at it. Really? What damage has been done? A little pride has been damaged, but that's all. This is what Toastmasters is all about: We learn from the experience and move forward.

The support from fellow Toastmasters will always be there. I am proud to be part of this wonderful organization called Toastmasters International. To quote former U.S. Army General Douglas MacArthur: I will return.

John Reimers, DTM • Otumoetai Club 3511 • Tauranga, New Zealand.

Embellishing Is All Right

Toastmasters are blessed with having members who write informative articles such as July's "Lie, Cheat and Steal your way to Table Topics Success" by Shelia Spencer.

Some Toastmasters probably believe that all Table Topics responses must be 100 percent truthful. But where does it say that a Table Topics speaker is required to tell the truth? All is fair in love and Table Topics. And isn't there a national "Liars Club?"

Learning the patterns of lying, cheating and stealing trains us to recognize untruth and helps us survive in the real world where there is plenty of lying, cheating and stealing. Besides, it is a lot of fun trying to spin the biggest whopper in Table Topics!

Wilbur Smith, ATM-B • San Mateo Club 191 • San Mateo, California

I would like to know how I'm to spend two minutes speaking about something I know nothing about. In my club we were recently asked to speak about a certain country. Most of the countries were very small and I hadn't heard of them. Just how can I make a good Table Topics speech without using my imagination and indeed lying? Most of the speeches in our club that day ended up being very funny, as most of the information was made up.

Emert A. Browning, ATM-B • Lake City Club 748 • Forest Park, Washington

Evaluation Boot Camp

What an informative article by Pam Keyzer in the June 2003 issue! After reading her article about her club's "evaluation boot camp," I decided that our advanced club should do the same thing. Like the boot camp meeting in New York, our results were similar. Everyone who attended had a great time. I got credit for my next High Performance Leadership project and our club signed up several new members.

I want to both thank Pam Keyzer for the excellent article and Toastmasters International for printing it. Articles about successful ideas for presenting educational programs and for building membership should be included more often in the magazine.

Nancy Swartz, DTM • Champion Speakers Club 6143 • Colorado Springs, Colorado

Pushing Elephants Through Straws

Ken Tangen's September article, "How to Push an Elephant Through a Straw," gives invaluable advice on effective communication. He says we should match the right elephant (things to learn) with the right straw (ways to learn) when we speak in private or in public: "Facts need structure, concepts should be illustrated and behaviors must be practiced." This advice is magical enough to make me work diligently toward saying the right thing in the right way in any situation.

Ng Yee Chong, DTM • CPA Advanced Club 5255-51 • Singapore

Listening is Key

Your article, "Listening is the Sincerest Form of Flattery," in the September issue was most enjoyable. Our club meetings often have a "listening challenge" segment where the question "Who said this during the meeting?" is asked of the audience. It is a great way to reinforce our listening skills.

It is so easy to switch off when someone else is speaking (especially if you are scheduled to present a speech). Being a good listener is an important part of communication and one that is often underrated. Congratulations on a wonderful and informative magazine.

Heather Rhead, DTM • Adventurers Club 2572 • Holland Park, Queensland, Australia



The difference between writing and giving a speech.

On Learning Not to Write

◆ TO WRITE OR NOT TO WRITE? FOR A WRITER, THE TOUGHEST lesson of Toastmasters is the importance of *not* writing.

I am a writer who hid for years behind my pen. I didn't *do* talking. I could write myself out of any tough spot – or so I imagined until I had a critical job interview. I had written a great letter; my writing samples were superb. But when hit with a surprise question and a chance to turn that question into a door-opener, this was me: Tongue-tied. Flat-footed. Gotta shout, but no noise. Gotta run, but can't move.

I sabotaged myself. Colleagues, friends and my own inner voice had whispered for years that Toastmasters would help me become comfortable in a public forum. Finally I listened.

In Toastmasters I discovered that “speaking a speech” is not the same as writing one. I could *write* a speech: organization, right words, rhythm, repetition. But until I stood at the podium, I didn't “get it” – that critical difference between writing a speech and giving a speech. Not *delivering*, but *giving*. A speech is a gift. It's not about the giver's brilliance, but about the giver's offer to share something of value.

For my Ice Breaker speech, I wrote out all the words, rehearsed, memorized, reduced the text to notes on cards, and delivered my speech, clutching the lectern tightly and praying for the agony to end and my burning face to cool off. I delivered what I wrote, and it was reasonably well-received. But it was an “out-of-body” experience – somehow I wasn't quite *there* when I was at the lectern. And though I looked at people in the room, I didn't really connect.

For the second speech, I challenged myself to write all the words and to work only from notes. This was a challenge for someone whose M.O. was thinking-by-writing, someone whose thoughts fully form only under the flow of the pen or the clacking of the keyboard. Nevertheless, I went forward and this speech worked much better. I was more relaxed. I felt myself being there. I was aware of the audience. In fact, I left out an entire idea and nobody missed it but me.

For speech No. 3, I didn't plan to write it all out, but when the ideas came tumbling out in complete sentences, I dutifully transcribed them. Not a good move, as I learned at the lectern. When I lost my place briefly, I struggled for

those precise golden gems I'd written down, couldn't recall them, got flustered and entirely lost my train of thought. I was more nervous than with speech No. 2. I resisted the urge to clutch the lectern, but in my head, that's exactly what I was doing.

These experiences have shifted my thinking about writing and speaking. For a writer, at least, it's important *not* to write out the whole speech first. The skills I need to practice are relaxing, listening, relating to the audience, and reaching inside to give voice to my thoughts before I cast them into the concrete of written words. When I start with written words, they become my chains: I either end up reading or woodenly *delivering* a talk, instead of *giving* a speech. The focus becomes me (my words) and not the interaction (the gift) between me and the other people in the room.

Since that realization hit me, I've found both research and expert opinion to back me up. While preparing for speech No. 4, I came across this observation: The content of a speech accounts for only seven percent of the impact on the audience; the rest is voice quality and visual impression. (*The How-To of Great Speaking* by Hal Persons and Lianne Mercer, Bard Productions, 1991.) That's a sobering thought for a writer – that the ele-

gance of the words, the resonance of a phrase, are not the *heart* of the speech.

A professional storyteller I met at a writers' conference is approaching the same question from the other side. Until recently, he rarely wrote out his stories and each telling was different. But now when he wants to add the impact of meticulously selected words, he writes and edits until a story is perfect for its purpose.

It's easier to write it out first, isn't it? a writer asked. No, for me at least, it's harder. Keeping those perfectly chosen words means memorizing the story. And that raises the risk of telling it mechanically, instead of staying natural and tuned to the audience.

To write or not to write? It all depends on you. **T**

“In Toastmasters I discovered that ‘speaking a speech’ is not the same as writing one.”

Shari Dwyer, an independent writer/editor, is a member of the Voices of SHRM (Society for Human Resource Management) club in Alexandria, Virginia.



**Toastmasters evaluate
California Governor
Arnold Schwarzenegger's
inaugural address.**

From Terminator to Community

When California's newly elected Governor Arnold Alois Schwarzenegger took the oath as California's 38th governor on Monday morning, Nov. 17, he commanded an international and celebrity-studded audience, heavy security and a lot of star-gazing attention from people of all sides of the political spectrum.

As movie fans in all parts of the world know, Arnold Schwarzenegger is no ordinary politician, so it was no surprise that his inaugural speech was no ordinary affair. Better known as the Terminator than the Governor, Schwarzenegger has not been known for his diplomacy and eloquence. Yet by most accounts, his speech was well-received and given positive reviews. We asked a few Toastmasters for their evaluations of the governor's speech.

Immediate Past International President Gavin Blakey of Brisbane, Australia, happened to be in California for a Toastmasters Executive Committee meeting and caught the speech on TV. He says: "Arnie terminated his critics by delivering an inspiring speech. His background may be bodybuilding and acting, but clearly, his heart is in the role of governor of California.

"Governor Schwarzenegger spoke from the heart when he vowed 'I feel a great responsibility not to let the people down'. He crafted his speech to highlight the issues he sees as being important to the people of California.

"Every word had been chosen to express how he felt, and to ensure a flow of ideas from one paragraph to the next," Blakey continues. "He used imagery and quotes to add authority to his presentation, citing, for example, President John F. Kennedy's line, 'I am an idealist without illusions.' This was appropriate not only because the late President Kennedy is someone that Schwarzenegger admires, but because of his close family connection. [Schwarzenegger's wife, Maria Shriver, is JFK's niece.]

"He also used the 'rule of three' several times by saying the same thing three different ways to reinforce an idea. For example: 'I am humbled, I am moved and I am honored beyond words.'"

District 33 Governor Debra Ann Ristau of Modesto, California, agrees with Blakey that Gov. Schwarzenegger came across as sincere and eager to make a positive difference for the people of California. "Keeping fanfare to a

minimum, he acknowledged his humble beginnings and a great state that gave him opportunity," she says.

Another California District Governor, Shirley Farrell-Cowles, DTM, of District 4 in Cupertino, says she especially liked Schwarzenegger's phrase that "California is a golden dream by the sea." Moreover, she approves of how the governor "came across as very distinguished and reserved. This is what is expected of a state governor. I'm glad he didn't use any of his actor mannerisms by shouting, throwing his arms in the air or using too much vocal variety. He had a great, strong voice that I'm sure was easily heard by the 7,000 people in the audience."

On the topic of content, Farrell-Cowles says Schwarzenegger "said what we wanted to hear." Past President Blakey agrees and applauds how the governor "referred to recent events like the wild fires that destroyed lives, homes, businesses. He paid tribute to the firefighters, emergency workers, National Guard, law enforcement officials and thousands of volunteers for their bravery. In other words, he shed light on the contribution of others. Furthermore, he endeared himself to his audience by giving them what they wanted to hear – repealing

"Governor Schwarzenegger,

I enjoyed your speech, even though I didn't vote for you. Your vocal variety was good, as was your eye contact. The use of the quotation from John F. Kennedy was excellent, particularly since it came from a Democrat.

I feel that your gestures could have been better, particularly when you were driving home your principle points. Overall, a good speech. I look forward to your next speech -- especially when the going gets rough."

– Toastmaster Joe Madley, Redwood City, California

In terms of delivery, Blakey gives a thumbs up for how the governor "used pace and poise and paused for applause," explaining that Schwarzenegger delivered his speech at a moderate rate so the audience could absorb every word. "He was poised in his delivery – by being composed, self-assured, and confident. He used his strengths – posture from bodybuilding, composure from practicing his lines as an actor, and he was self-assured because he is confident he can make a difference in California."

Any suggestions for improvement? District 4 Governor Farrell-Cowles thinks the governor should have "acknowledged his wife again and thanked his in-laws [the Shrivvers and Kennedys]. I'm sure their influence paid a large part in his election." Toastmaster Joe Madley of Redwood City, California, thinks the governor's use of gestures

"could have been better," especially when emphasizing key points.

Professional speech coach Richard Greene of Beverly Hills, California, author of *Words that Shook the World: 100 Years of Unforgettable Speeches and Events*, says that the governor displayed great "gubernatorial body language, showing strength and leadership. But even one of Hollywood's biggest box-office draws can improve dramatically.

"He, like everyone, needs to really focus on vocal tone, as that conveys as much as 38 percent of the overall impact. It's not his accent – it's the lack of variation and intonation. He needs to add slower, pensive, deeper qualities to his voice, and especially some uplifting, faster-paced highs. He was missing the upward-swinging 'Ask Not' punctuation of his wife's uncle's inaugural address.

"All in all, I'd give him an 8," Greene concludes. "The most [former California Governor] Gray Davis ever mustered was a 6, and George Bush also tends toward 6s these days. In contrast, of course, JFK was almost always between a 9 and a 10, so if [Schwarzenegger] can learn from his family, we might see some fantastic improvement in Governor Terminator."

Past International President Blakey is more forgiving: "Clearly the inauguration speech is a seminal speech for the governor. He knew his speech, he spoke from the heart, but he used TelePrompTers because they were there. My one suggestion for improvement would be for Governor Arnie to draw on his acting experience and learn his lines so well that he won't have to rely on the Teleprompters."

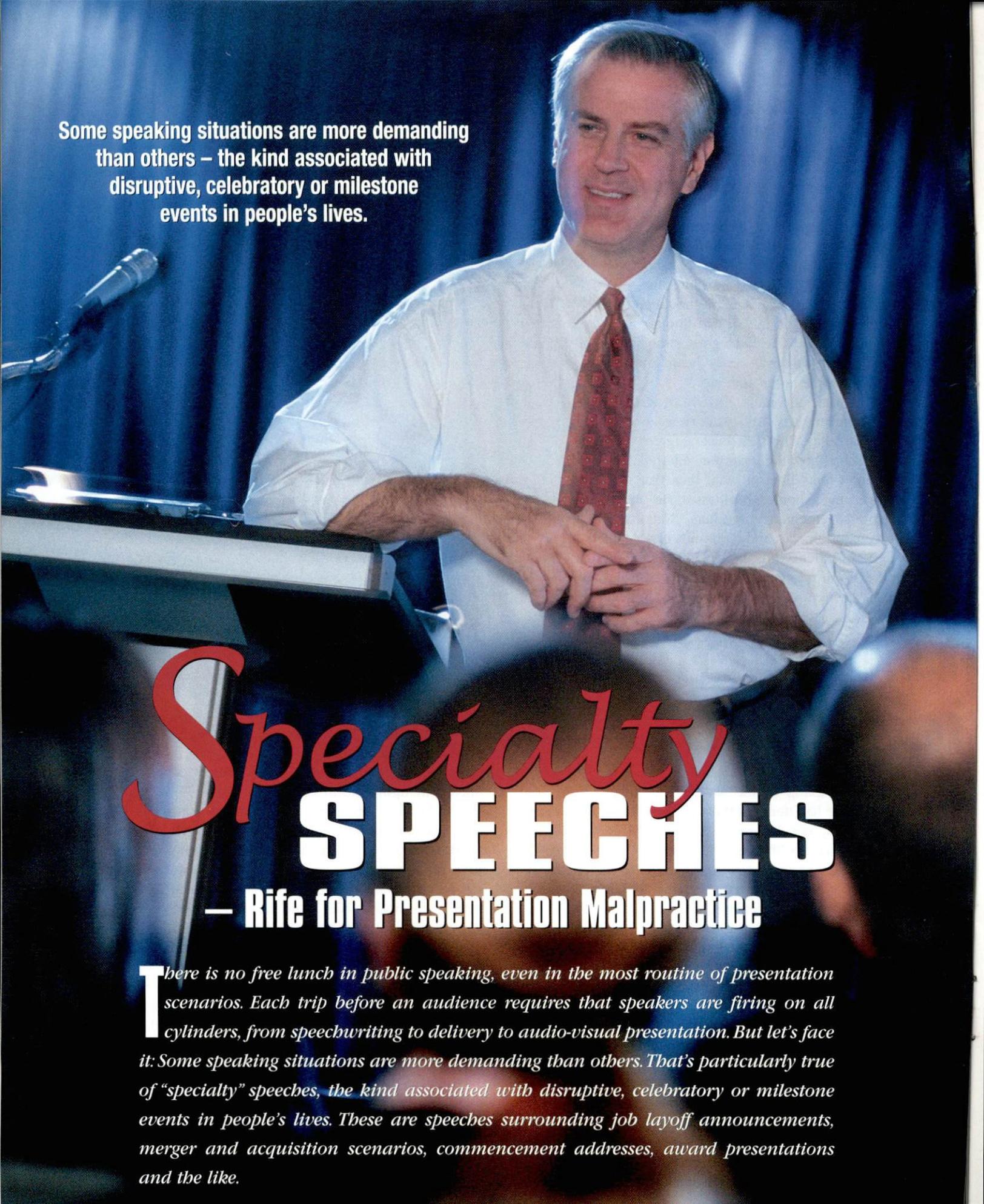
Blakey sums up his impressions about Gov. Schwarzenegger: "After seeing him as an action hero through the light of the movie theater, we're now seeing him in a new light as the governor. The next time he takes action, it will be to make a difference in the lives of Californians." **T**

terminator to icator

the recent tripling of the state vehicle license fee, for example. He has demonstrated his personal commitment to the job by not accepting his \$175,000 annual salary. What audience could argue with that?"

As all Toastmasters know, using personal experience is an excellent way to illustrate a point. Blakey points out that "Governor Schwarzenegger did just that by comparing his bodybuilding experience to his role as the new governor, saying, 'I learned something from all those years of training and competing. I learned something from all those sets and reps when I didn't think I could lift another ounce of weight. What I learned is that we are always stronger than we know. California is like that, too. We are stronger than we know. There's a massive weight we must lift off our state.'"

Blakey says the duration of Governor Schwarzenegger's nearly 12-minute speech was "spot on" – not much longer than the time between advertisements on television.... He was able to get his message across to the audience without eating into their valuable time. Audiences prefer a short speech that gets straight to the point."

A man with grey hair, wearing a white dress shirt and a red patterned tie, stands behind a podium. He has his hands clasped in front of him and is looking slightly to the right with a slight smile. The background is a dark blue curtain. A microphone is visible on the podium to the left.

Some speaking situations are more demanding than others – the kind associated with disruptive, celebratory or milestone events in people’s lives.

Specialty SPEECHES

– Rife for Presentation Malpractice

There is no free lunch in public speaking, even in the most routine of presentation scenarios. Each trip before an audience requires that speakers are firing on all cylinders, from speechwriting to delivery to audio-visual presentation. But let’s face it: Some speaking situations are more demanding than others. That’s particularly true of “specialty” speeches, the kind associated with disruptive, celebratory or milestone events in people’s lives. These are speeches surrounding job layoff announcements, merger and acquisition scenarios, commencement addresses, award presentations and the like.

Specialty speeches are loaded with the kind of expectations about what should be said, and how those words should be delivered, that speakers rarely encounter in their workday presentations. Many require speakers to bring a new level of authenticity and emotion to the podium. All demand an intimate understanding of audience expectations and situational speaking protocol.

Speeches Surrounding Change

■ **The art and science of layoff announcements.** Any speaker with a conscience will tell you that telling people they are out of a job is among the hardest speeches they have to make. Communication experts say it's also a specialty speech that's rife with presentation malpractice.

The biggest problem is a predilection for "head" communication at the expense of "heart-level" dialogue. Because the expression of emotion often is frowned on in the boardroom, executives – and their speechwriters – tend to focus exclusively on the business rationale for downsizing. While logical, analytical straight talk about downsizing decisions is important, it's not enough to help departing or surviving employees begin to heal and move forward.

"Managers communicating layoffs are presiding over a funeral, not an MBA class on financial analysis or analytical decision-making," says author David Noer in his book, *Healing the Wounds: Overcoming the Trauma of Layoffs and Revitalizing Downsized Organizations*. "Imagine the outrage and sense of violation survivors would feel if a participant in a wake for a loved one launched into a fact-filled dissertation on actuarial tables, mortality projections and the need for death in order to prevent overpopulation in the world."

Noer writes that at a time when authentic and empathetic communication is desperately needed, what often is delivered is cold and controlled. The effect not only is to make downsized employees feel devalued, but to dull the willingness of surviving employees – many of whom are being asked to grit their teeth and do more with less – to do the heavy lifting for the organization. Noer calls the latter phenomenon "survivor sickness." Without some organizationally-sanctioned outlet to acknowledge and release their feelings, it's hard for survivors to move forward, he says. The result can be a resentful, listless and under-achieving group of survivors. (For an example of how to strike a better balance between heart and head in layoff-related speeches, see the sidebar "All Head, No Heart" on the next page.)

"The biggest problem is a predilection for 'head' communication at the expense of 'heart-level' dialogue."

Effective layoff communications also require more straight talk than many speakers are accustomed to. "Workers in these situations sniff out insincerity or deception pretty fast, and are constantly on guard for any communication from management that sounds disingenuous," says Jane Elmes-Crahall, a professor of communication at Wilkes University in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania.

To ease survivors' minds, leaders like to make assurances – especially following large layoffs – that the cutbacks are "now over" and survivors can breathe easy. But the uncertainty of today's economy and a new competitive climate make that a hollow promise for many organizations. Although the last thing layoff survivors often want to hear is the truth – that it's "never over" and any guarantees of long-term employment are an illusion – it's far better to help them start accepting the need to take individual responsibility for their job security. So what *should* speakers

encourage surviving workers to commit to? For starters, to the type of work they do, to their co-workers and to their customers. But not necessarily to the company.

This need for presentation truth-telling extends to the "why" behind layoff decisions as well. "Management should communicate as much as it can about the rationale for a downsizing decision,

because if they don't fashion that story themselves, employees will fashion it for them," says Fletcher Dean, a professional speechwriter who manages a speechwriting Web site (www.thespeechwriter.com) and e-mail newsletter.

Rehearsal also takes on added importance in these situations, says Lorraine Segil, a professional speaker and former CEO of an aerospace distribution company who's made layoff announcements herself. "These are painful presentations to make, and you have to make sure you get in touch with your own emotions before you speak," Segil says. "The first time you say the words shouldn't be in front of employees. You need to understand the impact it will have on you as the messenger as well."

■ **For better or for worse: Merger and acquisition communication.** While a merger or acquisition doesn't always portend bad news, it does ratchet up anxiety levels among involved parties. As with a downsizing, it's almost impossible to overcommunicate during an impending corporate marriage – employees thirst for information about who's staying and who's going, who has lost power and who has gained, policy or product changes and the like.

All Head, No Heart: Why Layoff Announcements Miss the Mark

Many speakers are conditioned to deliver layoff announcements strictly from the “head,” focusing remarks solely on the business rationale for a downsizing. While that analytical or logical element is important, the message often falls on deaf ears without some “heart level” communication as well, experts say.

According to David Noer, author of the bestselling book, *Healing the Wounds: Overcoming the Trauma of Layoffs and Revitalizing Downsized Organizations*, the typical layoff speech sounds something like this:

“Our ROI has eroded to the point where the security analysts have expressed concern over the value of our stock to stockholders. As you may know, our gross margins also have been declining over the past six quarters and reached a point last quarter where we suffered a pretax loss. The quality indicators we installed last year show that we are not making the gains we had planned, and our revenue per employee has declined. We have no alternative but to implement a downsizing effort at this time...”

Here’s how Noer says the text might be revised to inject a “heart” emphasis. Starting the message with an acknowledgement of shared pain and a note of empathy, he says, makes anxious or resentful employees more receptive to the “head-level” communication that follows:

“I know you are feeling sad and concerned about your friends who had to leave. I know this because that’s the way I’m feeling too. It is hard to see people who helped build this organization get laid off. I’ve talked to some of you, and I know you’re anxious about your own future and concerned that you may also have to go. I’d like to be able to assure you that won’t happen, but the fact that I can’t foresee the future or honestly make that commitment makes me even sadder. These are tough times and things are not easy for any of us. Ultimately, it will help if we can move the organization to be leaner, more flexible and market-focused. It is helpful to think of the forces that cause us to have to resort to layoffs. Our ROI has eroded to the point...”

(Excerpted with permission from *Healing the Wounds: Overcoming The Trauma of Layoffs and Revitalizing Downsized Organizations*, by David M. Noer, Jossey-Bass Publishers.)

What’s critical is to get the communication strategies of both organizations on the same page regarding the true nature of the transaction. It’s common for purchasing organizations to call the deal an “acquisition,” for instance, while the company being subsumed dubs it a “merger.” While it may seem mere semantics, the two are distinct transactions and should be portrayed as such to audiences, says Segil, who lectures on alliances and mergers at The California Institute of Technology.

“If it is a pure acquisition, but the acquired company insists on calling it a merger, management sets up expectations for democracy among its employees,” Segil says. “But there is no democracy in an acquisition. There is always one controlling culture. While those in the purchased company may have their voices heard, the dominant culture in the controlling company usually wins out. Employees can get terribly demoralized if you set up expectations for democracy and it doesn’t happen.”

Leaders from Hewlett-Packard (HP) and Compaq didn’t pull any punches in their communication tactics as the merger of the two technology giants played out in the courts, Segil says. Both sides were determined to be frank about what the transaction would mean for jobs, and sought to avoid the internal culture clashes experienced by other large mergers. Executives regularly kept employees apprised of merger plans through a combination of presentations media including face-to-face updates, online meetings, phone conferences, Web and intranet postings and broadcast e-mail messages. Management wanted these avenues – designed to accommodate varied communication preferences of the HP and Compaq cultures – to be the first place workers found out about new strategic initiatives or product plans, not through media reports or Internet rumors.

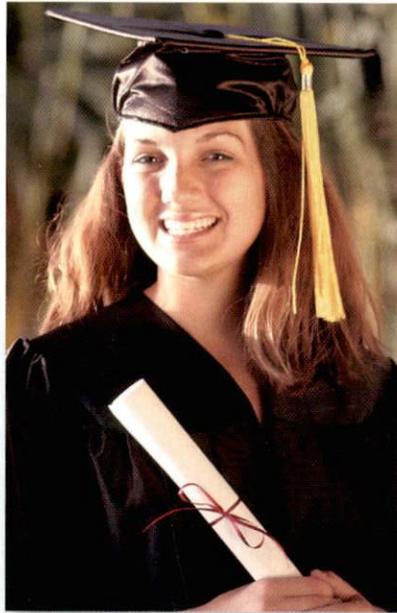
Once HP and Compaq leaders developed a clear vision for the merged organization, they didn’t hesitate to communicate and champion it – even though the deal was held up for months by a divisive proxy battle and legal action. “There was a constant communication to employees that ‘we believe in our position, and this is going to happen as planned,’” Segil says.

Speeches Surrounding Ceremonial Events

■ **They like you, they really do: Receiving and presenting awards.** Accepting an award, whether from your own organization or an external group, would seem straightforward duty. You stroll proudly to the podium, briefly thank the award givers and select others who made it possible, add a compelling personal anecdote and quickly exit stage left.

If only it were so easy, experts say. Accepting an award is like walking a tightrope, says Patricia Fripp, a San Francisco-based speech coach and keynote speaker who’s seen her share of acceptance-speech blunders. “You need to be gracious, grateful and humble, but not so humble or self-deprecating that the audience thinks you are trivializing the honor,” she says.

When one of Fripp's clients was preparing to accept a prestigious award before a large audience, he wanted to bring some humor to the occasion "by saying how desperate the organization must be to give him this award," Fripp says. Although it seemed like a harmless bit of comedy, Fripp told him he'd be insulting the honoring organization and previous winners of the award. "There is a certain prestige in any award, and you don't want to diminish it by being overly modest," she says.



Award honorees also need to avoid the two-headed hydra of predictability ("I never thought I'd be standing up here...") and long-windedness. To sidestep the former, Fripp encourages speakers to use short personal stories. Rather than start with the traditional litany of thank yous, for example, one of her clients began his acceptance of a community service award with an anecdote about how he got started in volunteering – reading to his Alzheimer's-afflicted grandmother in a nursing home. The experience led him to persuade boyhood friends to read to other residents of the home. "Don't worry about being perfect in your remarks," Fripp says. "Do worry about being personal."

There's also a protocol to follow in presenting awards. Mastering details is critical, of course – the correct pronunciation of honorees' names and proper name of the award for starters. But it's also important that what you say about an honoree is so specific that it couldn't be said about anyone else. "Figure out something to say about people that you couldn't read in their curriculum vitae," says Andrew Gilman, president of CommCore Consulting, a Washington, D.C. group that specializes in presentation skills coaching.

That means doing more prep work than simply jotting down a few thoughts over lunch or on the flight to the award ceremony. "If it's important enough for you to be there presenting it, it's important enough for you to give serious forethought and research," says speechwriter Dean.

Other experts caution to avoid false intimacy. If you're presenting an award to a retiring co-worker or associate, for example, don't pretend to have been a close friend or ally if that wasn't the case. If you're intent on including personal stories about the retiree – to add some flesh to the bones of the award – talk to those who knew him best, and attribute your comments to them.

■ **Commencement speeches: Seeing through graduates' eyes.** It's never more important to crawl inside the minds of your audience than when giving commencement speeches. We've all experienced enough speeches that were untethered to graduates' current realities or mindsets

to know the dangers here. Indeed, cartoonist Garry Trudeau says commencement speeches were invented "largely in the belief that outgoing college students should never be released into the world until they have been properly sedated."

But tailoring remarks to commencement audiences is more challenging than many speakers assume – it's graduates out there, of course, but also their families, friends and others. "Finding a speech that speaks to the entire audience, while

"Don't worry about being perfect in your remarks. Do worry about being personal."

doing your part to pay tribute to the real honorees, the graduates, can be frustrating," says Dean. "Finding the right balance of humor, wisdom and brevity is difficult."

What audiences want is for speakers to interpret the event for them. Dean says, and among the best ways to do that is through personal stories. The more speakers can tap into their own graduation experiences and mindsets, and capture the conflicting emotions of vulnerability, melancholy and excitement graduates feel, the more receptive the audience will be. When former U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno gave a commencement speech at Wilkes University, she "was very conversational, and sensitive to the fact that liberal arts students can be more antsy than others about finding good jobs," says Elmes-Crahall, a professor at the school. Novelist Norman Mailer also struck the right tone in his address, she says. "He had spent an entire day in the area to get to know more about the school, and met privately with several dozen students and faculty. What the audience heard was personal, heartfelt and funny. For all of his crustiness, he was wonderful."

Of course, a memorable line or quote can lift a commencement address as well. Sample actress Meryl Streep's comments at a graduation ceremony of Vassar College, her alma mater: "If you can live with the devil," she told graduates, "then Vassar has not sunk its teeth into you."

Dean says writing on a theme – perseverance, continuous learning, keeping perspective, being true to yourself, civic responsibility – helps to focus your efforts, but also can be predictable. One technique he's used to enliven his approach is to go back over four years and document what has happened during the graduates' time in school. "You can put a humorous twist on events and keep the crowd entertained," he says. "All you need is a segue into the main content." (For an example of how Dean used this technique in a speech, go to www.thespeechwriter.com/speeches/big_rocks.htm). **T**

Dave Zielinski is a freelance writer living in Minneapolis, Minnesota.



By Erik Deckers, CTM

“Every glass during dinner had to be dedicated to someone. It was thought sottish and rude to take wine without this, as if forsooth there was nobody present worth drinking with.”

— LORD HENRY THOMAS COCKBURN

The Toast in History

Burned Bread + Wine + Poison = Toastmasters

What do burned bread, wine and poison have to do with Toastmasters? At first glance, nothing. But that's because you may not understand the sometimes-crucial role toast has played throughout history and its influence on the Toastmasters organization and public speaking in general.

We know toast is nothing more than lightly burned bread – or if you're bad at it, very burned bread. The toast's actual history is unclear; some food historians believe that in 3000 B.C., the Egyptians dried their bread in front of open fires to keep it mold-free longer.

So what's so great about toast? Why didn't we stop toasting bread in 2100 B.C., when the Mesopotamians invented the plastic baggie?

According to English writer Nick Parker, author of *Toast: Homage to a Superfood*, "...a single slice of plain toast is tastier than a single slice of plain bread." This is because "at 154 degrees Celsius, the sugars and starches in the bread start to caramelize, intensifying the flavor."

So what does toast have to do with wine? In the 6th century B.C., the Greeks began the practice of saluting their

friends' health with wine during dinner parties. They did it partly to show they respected and loved their friends, but mostly to show they weren't trying to poison them. (The Greeks had a nasty habit of using poisoned wine to eliminate their enemies, thieves and spouses.)

At dinner parties, the host would pour wine from a shared pitcher and take a drink in front of the guests. Then, if he didn't collapse in a heap, he would raise his glass to his friends and ask them to drink – the first incarnation of our present-day toast.

And since the Romans borrowed everything from the Greeks – including how they dealt with social and political problems – they, too, adopted the practice of toasting.

In fact, the Romans gave us the term "toast." To reduce the acidity of bad wines and make them more pleasant to drink, they dropped toasted bread crumbs into their cups. Eventually the Latin term *tostus*, which means "to dry up" or "scorch," came to refer to the drink itself.

The practice of drinking to one's health eventually made its way to England, where the first recorded toast was at a feast between British King Vortigern and his Saxon allies around 450 A.D. Rowena, the daughter of the Saxon leader Hengist, offered spiced wine to the king, and the words "Louerd King, waes hael!" (Lord King, be of health). Vortigern

was so impressed with Rowena's toast, he married her that night, much to the dismay of Mrs. Vortigern.

Rowena's "waes hael" eventually became the modern wassail, the practice of drinking mulled or spiced wine from a large bowl at Christmas time. However, she also poisoned her new husband. Fortunately the wassail is Rowena's only habit that lasted over the years.

The ritual of drinking to a companion's health evolved over the next 12 centuries, until it became known simply as "toasting" in the 1600s. Remaining true to the Roman custom, partygoers would drop a piece of toast into a shared glass. The last person who drank the wine claimed the toast at the bottom, trying desperately not to think of the backwash.

The 1700s saw the creation of the position of "toast-master." This person was responsible for proposing toasts, announcing other toasts and making sure all toasters were given the chance to make a contribution to the festivities.

By this time, wine drinkers were always toasting to the health of their companions, although unlike their ancient Greek counterparts, they weren't trying to poison anyone. However, the pre-drink well wishes soon became such a strict social obligation that poisoning may have been considered a less painful alternative.

By the early 1800s, toasting was not only fashionable and polite, but refusing to toast or drink with another was considered a grave insult. Lord Henry Thomas Cockburn, Scotland's Solicitor General, wrote in *Memorials of His Time* that the drinking of toasts were "a perfect social tyranny. Every glass during dinner had to be dedicated to someone. It was thought sottish and rude to take wine without this, as if forsooth there was nobody present worth drinking with."

As the ritual of toasting evolved, so did the quality and profundity of the toasts. As a result, the competition between toasters grew. Everyone tried to give the perfect toast, thus earning a reputation for being well-spoken and intelligent.

TI President Ted Corcoran's Favorite Toast

"May there always be work for your hands to do;
May your purse always hold a coin or two;
May the sun always shine on your windowpane;
May a rainbow be certain to follow each rain;
May the hand of a friend always be near you;
May God fill your heart with gladness to cheer you."

—TRADITIONAL IRISH BLESSING

Toasts would cover every possible topic, and any situation, incident or current event was considered fair game. It's during this time that the famous "here's mud in your eye" was delivered to critical acclaim, before being replaced by the much more poetic "through the teeth/over the gums/look out stomach/here it comes."

As we examine toasting history over the last 2,700 years, it's easy to see how it has shaped dining etiquette (it's polite to offer well-wishes before the first drink), public speaking (many acclaimed writers were also notable toast makers and speakers), and even our own Toastmasters meetings. The Toastmaster makes sure everyone has the opportunity to deliver their speech, that speeches cover a variety of topics, and that there's even a sense of friendly competition among the speakers.

At least we hope it's friendly. If you're not sure, don't drink anything offered to you until someone else drinks it first. **T**

Erik Deckers, CTM, is a member of the Warsaw Noon Club in Warsaw, Indiana. He is, among other things, a humor writer, and swears that every bit of this article is true, except the part about the Mesopotamians and plastic baggies.

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**People are interested
in people, not degrees.**

How Interesting Is Your Introduction?

◆ INTRODUCING A SPEAKER IS SOMETHING FEW OF US PREPARE for very well. After all, if we are not giving the presentation, why should we care? For plenty of reasons. Can you recall the last time you watched someone recite a litany of degrees earned, positions held, books written and honors achieved. Remember feeling the audience's unspoken impression at this point? Chances are good it was a unified, "Let's get on with it!"

Opening comments can play an important role in piquing the audience members' interest, warming them up to the speaker and helping to create the all-important bond between the speaker and the audience. Here are three techniques you can use to engage an audience's attention while adding life and emotion to an introduction:

Link the Speaker and Audience

The age-old advice concerning introductions for speakers has always been to keep them short. But using the "nutshell" approach without proper consideration may cause you to compromise your responsibility as introducer. Instead, carefully consider your role and your objective. Your job is not only to make the speaker's expertise known, but also to rouse interest in hearing the speaker's remarks. Listeners need and want to hear the relevant credentials and prior experiences that uniquely qualify this speaker as the best choice for addressing the topic at hand. So rather than recite a laundry list of accomplishments, point out specific connections between the speaker's past and the audience's motivations for attending the meeting.

Let's say, for example, that you are introducing a physician who will speak to a group of public health officers about domestic violence during pregnancy. When you comb through the physician's background, you find such noteworthy details as her dual residency in obstetrics and psychiatry, and her membership on the state's task force for developing legislative guidelines. These particulars reveal that this physician not only carries a strong background within the topic, but that she cares enough about the issues affecting public health to assist in government policy development. Both these points will build a critical link between the speaker and the audience, and will create positive expectations among the listeners.

Provide Stories Instead of Facts

It's a cruel fact that people generally find a biography that lists numerous degrees and titles to be meaningless and boring. That changes, however, if you can translate the facts into perceptible situations that mean something to the audience. You can accomplish this through a short personal story. Look for an example of how the speaker has earned respect in his field or an experience in which his actions showed knowledge and support for the topic. To find this information, before the event, ask the speaker a few simple questions, such as "How did you get started in this field?" or "What's the oddest thing that's ever happened while you were conducting research?" Simply put, people are interested in people, not degrees, and if you bring out the speaker's human side, his accomplishments will ultimately mean more to the audience.

"If you bring out the speaker's human side, his accomplishments will ultimately mean more to the audience."

Tell Why You Chose the Speaker

One challenge you face during an introduction is broadening the audience's opinion of the speaker, stirring them from neutrality to anticipation – through your personal endorsement. Why was this speaker chosen for this event? If you haven't touched on it already, communicate to the audience why your organization is so pleased to have this particular individual here and willing to present. For example, statements such as "We have chosen this individual based on..." or "The speaker's experience with the topic makes us very pleased she is here today, because..." are good ways to engender feelings of importance and value. The audience, in turn, senses your respect and admiration for the speaker before she has uttered one word. As a result, you help create excitement in both the audience and the speaker, and all you have left to do is clearly pronounce the speaker's name.

Regardless of how easy it may seem to make an introduction, it is those who exert some time and thought that transform their comments into a successful start to any presentation. **T**

Michael McCann is an author of several books on business development and interpersonal communication. He can be reached at Mike@BusinessCafeOnline.com.

How to overcome the awkward Q & A silence.

Any Questions?

◆ “ARE THERE ANY QUESTIONS?” ALL TOO OFTEN WHAT FOLLOWS your speech or presentation is an awkward silence. After presenting a strong program and wrapping up with a powerful close, you may assume that no questions means that everything presented was clearly understood. Or – *gulp!* – that there was no interest in the material.

Often the audience just isn't ready to ask questions; they're still trying to understand the information you presented. Before their listeners have ever had a chance to formulate questions, speakers often have quickly scanned the room for inquiring hands, seen none, thanked everyone for coming and made their exit.

By following the strategies below, you can begin to change these dynamics by allowing your audience more time to compose questions, and to expand their grasp on the material presented.

- **Ask the audience questions.** This allows participants to overcome any hesitation, keeps them alert, and prompts them to ask their own questions. Just be sure to come prepared with a number of questions to ask the audience.
- **Respond to an awkward silence** by saying, “One of the more common questions I get regarding this is...”
- **Surf for greater knowledge** and understanding on a particular topic by asking, “What other thoughts do you have about that?” before moving on to the next topic.
- **Purposefully omit material** you know will evoke certain questions. When the questions are asked, give a prepared answer that appears spontaneous and you will appear very knowledgeable about the topic.
- **Don't call on the first person to raise a hand.** That person is usually eager to challenge you on the topic. By waiting, you increase everyone's thinking time and diffuse potentially hostile responses.
- **Distribute a handout** that provides broad information but lacks details or explanation. Ask participants to study the handout alone or with a partner and to mark areas they don't understand or need further clarification on. Reconvene and begin answering their questions.
- **Choose a random participant** and have him or her ask another participant a question about the topic. That respondent in turn chooses a different participant and asks another question. This continues until every

person has answered a question. This also serves as a good review exercise and gets everybody involved in the process.

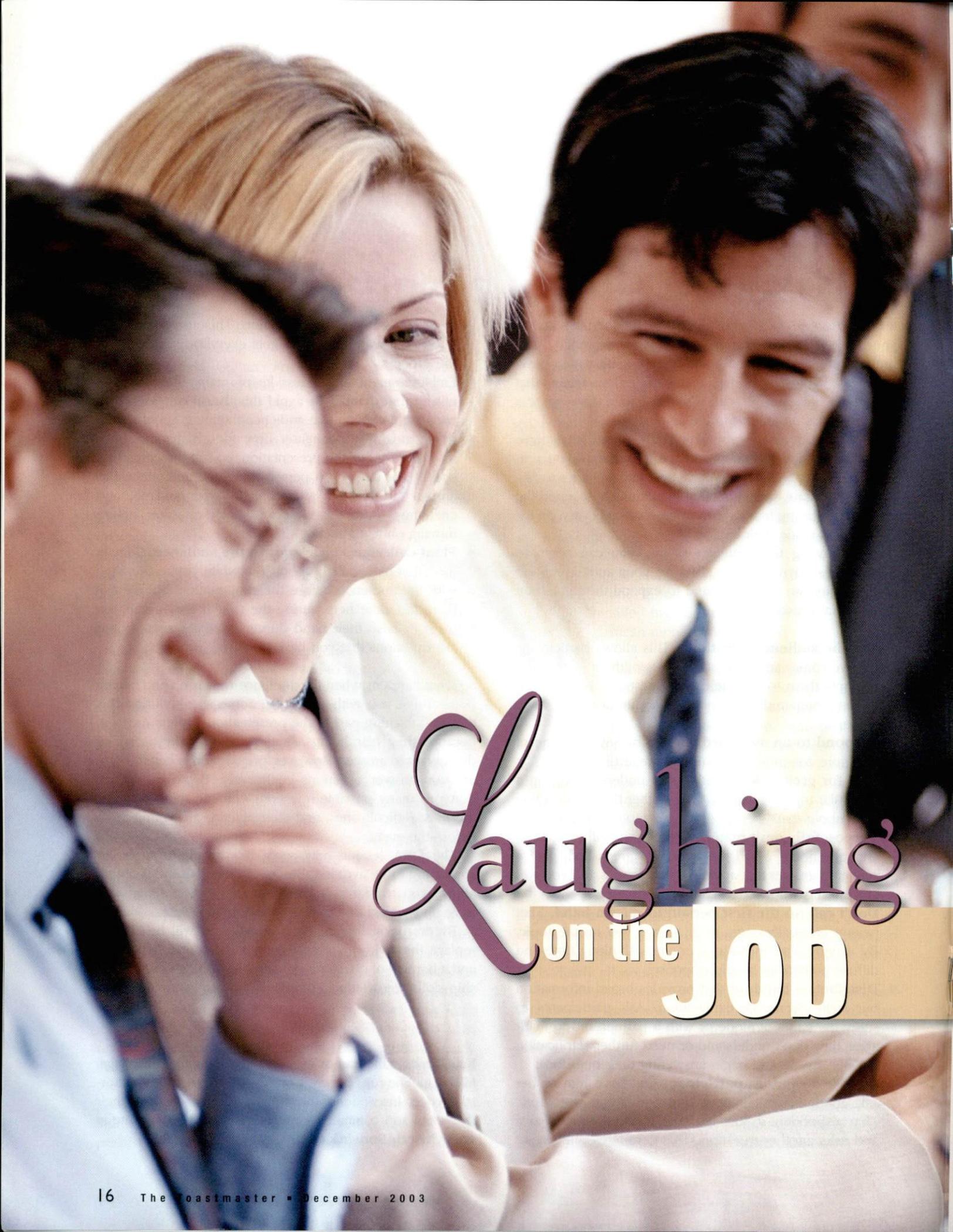
- Embarrassment or shyness keeps many listeners from raising their hands. To avoid this, **hand out 3x5-inch cards** and explain that audience members should write down anything, no matter how foolish the questions may seem. After the presentation, collect the cards in a basket and have each person draw one and attempt to answer the question written on it. Offer guidance and encourage open discussion of each question before moving on to the next.
- **Plant colleagues or friends in the audience.** Contact these people either by phone or while you're mingling with the audience before the presentation. Simply ask them for some help during the talk. If they agree, tell them to raise their hand during the Q&A session and ask questions that you have prepared for them.

So what happens when the audience warms up and begins bombarding you with questions? Some speakers find this the most exciting part of the presentation. Others dread it, because they fear being asked something they can't or don't want to answer. However, preparation is key to helping you answer questions confidently. Begin by writing down as many possible questions you can think of, even the most difficult ones, and then practice answering them before the event.

The Q&A session may seem like an afterthought, or something to be avoided. But it is in fact a useful tool that allows you to clarify information the audience may not have understood and to repeat important points.

By practicing the strategies above, you will be able to replace the awkward silence with a show of eager hands and a barrage of questions, meanwhile honing your leadership skills, knowledge, credibility and professionalism. **T**

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Laughing on the Job

In addition to a great resume and superior references, you might want to pack a little humor along on your next job interview.

From first impressions to the so-called daily grind, professionals are finding that the use of humor can perform workplace wonders. It may aid communication, establish empathy, diffuse tough situations and even build the bottom line.

Studies show that humor may increase productivity on the job. Research by Lee Berk, a medical researcher in humor and laughter, shows that good-natured or mirthful laughter can:

- Increase the immune system's activity.
- Decrease stress hormones, which constrict blood vessels and suppress immune activity.
- Increase the antibody immunoglobulin A, which protects the upper-respiratory tract.

"Who wouldn't want that kind of benefit?" says Dr. Berk, an assistant professor of family medicine at the Susan Samueli Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine at the University of California, Irvine. Dr. Berk co-authored an extensive study on laughter with Stanley Tan while at California's Loma Linda University School of Medicine.

Their study shows that if you're using or experiencing positive humor, the whole brain is involved, not just one side, and that there's more coordination between both sides. "As a result of using humor, we experience the diminishment of classical stress," he says. "When one utilizes humor, it makes you less on edge, lowers your blood pressure and your heart rate and allows you to think more clearly."

When you experience or use good-natured humor, "your biology has changed. Your stress hormones have been lowered and your immune system optimized," says Dr. Berk.

The use of humor can perform workplace wonders.

"Using humor and laughter in our work environment counters all the negative effects of that environment."

Positive humor, as opposed to negative or mean-spirited joking, is beneficial in the workplace for other reasons. From job interviews to daily interactions, using humor can enhance career success. Here's why:

Humor Shows You're Easy to Work With

Job candidates worry that they won't seem serious enough during interviews. But coming across as easy to work with is important as well, and humor can aid in this impression.

As a hiring manager in the corporate workplace, Lou Heckler, a professional speaker and humorist in Gainesville, Florida, says he often was asked if candidates he interviewed seemed easy to work with. This quality "is definitely a factor" in hiring decisions, he says.

Candidates have plenty of opportunities to show an appropriate sense of humor during the interview process. For instance, when glitches arise, such as long waits, postponed meetings or misplaced resumes, the ability to relax, laugh appropriately and "go with the flow" will help you to be perceived as flexible.

Naturally, avoid all sexist, racist, crude and mean-spirited overtones when using humor. Others' reactions are the best gauge of whether humor works, and if there's a question about whether a remark is appropriate, it usually isn't.

Further, during an interview you can learn whether an employer encourages humor, says Heckler. Evidence of humor – or the lack of it – should be apparent, including posted cartoons, slogans and pictures, and how employees treat each other.

This humor should be lighthearted. As Heckler notes, "I can work for someone for a short period of time with a sense of fear, but not for a long period."

Humor Makes You Likeable

As a freelance advertising copywriter based in Carlsbad, California, Jill Easton often meets with new clients to pitch business. "You can walk into a business situation with the best plans, the most professional presentations," she says. "The decision about whether to hire you boils down to whether they like you or not."

Easton learned this early in her career while working in New York as a junior copywriter. The agency sent her to Dallas to make a presentation to a beverage company. The storyboard – a visual depiction of the ad campaign – showed musical lyrics and dancers in the ad, which she duly described to the client's decision-makers.

"We're not going to spend \$100,000 unless we know what it sounds like," one executive responded. So she belted out the song. He then said, "I'm not going to spend \$100,000 unless I know what the dancing looks like." "So I danced around in my Evan Picone suit and did 'shuffle off to Buffalo' and the 'Suzy Q' around the conference room," Easton says. She landed the account.

Later, Easton was interviewing for a job in New York when she met an interviewer who took a dislike to her California background. Finally, Easton told him in a lighthearted tone: "I'm not blonde. I'm a brunette. I've never

surfing a day in my life. I won't eat tofu or sprouts." The humor helped break the ice. She was later offered the job.

Easton says hilarious behind-the-scenes stories help put other participants in business meetings at ease. One story describes how, while filming a commercial at the San Diego Wild Animal Park, she and the crew on a flatbed truck were charged by two rhinos. Their handlers told the frightened crew the rhinos were "just playing." Meanwhile, an emu put its head over a fence and bit Easton's head. "This isn't in my job description," she said repeatedly.

Humor Improves Creativity and Lowers Stress

Laughter reduces stress because it's relaxing and calming, says Steve Wilson, founder of the World Laughter Tour Inc., an organization based in Gahanna, Ohio, that promotes therapeutic laughter and a vision of world peace through laughter. He teaches "laughter yoga," a therapy started in India in 1995 that teaches people to laugh without using jokes.



Laughter improves creativity and problem-solving. It activates the limbic system in the brain, connecting the right and left sides. It helps you do more whole brain work," he says.

"Laughter improves creativity and problem-solving. It activates the limbic system in the brain, connecting the right and left sides. It helps you do more whole brain work," he says.

Under acute stress, the two hemispheres of the brain become disconnected. For instance, if you're late to work or an event, you'll fumble, drop things and make mistakes. Laughter works as a relaxation response and calms the system. "One of the myths is that laughter is trivial," he says. "It's very powerful." Merely smiling can be healing and reassuring.

Humor Changes Perception

Robert Harris, a real estate agent with Troop Real Estate in Simi Valley, California, attributes much of his success to using humor in his job.

"I take what I do very seriously, but buying a house is one of the most stressful acts a person can participate in," says Harris, who closed more than \$30 million in sales in 2001. "Introducing some humor or lighthearted moments helps relieve stress for all parties."

For example, Harris took a couple to see a home, but it was dark, and the electricity had been turned off. He turned a potentially awkward and embarrassing situation into a lighthearted one with comments such as, "If you could see the dining room, you would notice a lovely chandelier," and "Since you can't see the carpet, perhaps you might feel the plush with your feet."

In a field that lends itself to frustration and delays, Harris tries to make buyers and sellers more comfortable by interjecting humor. "Most of my business is from referrals. I think that people come back to me both from the smoothness of the transaction and because they enjoyed being with me," he says.

"Inside Jokes" May Lead to Team-Building

The first time a new employee laughs with new co-workers is usually the first time he or she feels part of the team in a new environment. Says Wilson, "You know you have an 'inside joke' when everybody at work laughs, but nobody at home does." Ironic or "black humor" can even have a place. "It doesn't mean we aren't compassionate," he says. "We're discharging tension."

Richard Jacobson, a news anchor with a Los Angeles radio station, says having an ironic sense of humor helps him and, sometimes, his listeners. "As a journalist, you encounter the rough edges of society much like firefighters, policemen and physicians [do]. A certain amount of humor allows you to keep your emotional equilibrium," Jacobson says.

He likes to end newscasts with back-of-the-book stories. He might introduce police-blotter items by saying, "And now for another chapter of stupid criminal tricks." After telling the story of a man who was trapped unhurt in a sewer overnight, Jacobson played Art Carney's "The Sewer Song" from *The Honeymooners*. Another story described a criminal who ordered pizza and then robbed the deliveryman. Talk about leaving a trail!

Making the Effort

It isn't always easy to find humor in business. Daniel Saintjean, a Montreal publisher and professional speaker, says it takes effort to incorporate humor into presentations, e-mails and letters, but using a funny quote, cartoon or other humor "has the effect of loosening someone's tie or shoelaces. It relaxes them for a moment."

President Bush used this technique at a ceremony commemorating National Hispanic Heritage month on Sept. 28, 2001. It was an emotional event that included Latin singers and representatives from the Hispanic community. When Bush stood to speak, he said, "Mi Casa Blanca, es su Casa Blanca." This light joke visibly lifted the heavy mood.

In his workshops and speeches, Heckler promotes finding humor in the workplace. "Humor is what's obvious, but we have been trained to be too polite to mention it," he says. He hunts for mirth in posted signs. At one meeting, he noticed a sign that read: "For restrooms: Use stairs." He once saw this notice in a tattoo parlor: "All work done while you wait." He asks: What's the alternative?

He's mentioned Sept. 11 in all his speeches since the attack, but still preaches the benefits of humor. While it may seem rude or unfeeling to inject humor during that time in U.S. history, he notes that humor is needed more than ever in times of trauma "to maintain our equilibrium, indeed, our souls." **T**

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By William Mason

There are many techniques to help you remember jokes. Your only requirement is desire – you just have to want to.

The problem is, most of us can't remember the jokes we read or hear. Don't despair, because there are many techniques to help you remember jokes. Your only requirement is desire – you just have to want to.

Below are 12 different techniques to help you remember jokes. Pick several that work best for you and combine them. At first it might require a little effort, but soon these memory mechanisms will click on automatically whenever you hear a joke you like, and remembering them will become second nature.

- **Decide if you want to remember the joke.** A joke must make you laugh before you will want to repeat it. If you don't tell a joke with complete conviction, you will greatly diminish your chances of getting a laugh.

- **Ask to hear it again.** Ask the person who told it to you to repeat it. He or she will be flattered and gladly do it, and hearing the joke twice will double your chances of remembering it. If others are present, they will probably not appreciate hearing it again, so wait for the first available moment to draw the teller aside.

Remembering Jokes (so you can tell them!)

The ability to make people laugh is in high demand. As a Toastmaster, you're not only required to occasionally be Jokemaster for the evening, but you'll probably be asked to lighten other occasions such as weddings and dinners, as a result of your Toastmasters training. At the very least, you can spruce up your speeches with jokes and humor.

Telling jokes is also a magnificent icebreaker. People often feel uncomfortable in new social situations, and jokes are a great way to relax. Everybody loves to laugh! So if you can tell jokes well, you will always be welcome.

- **Make mental notes and visualize.** Just after someone tells you a joke, silently repeat to yourself the exact wording used, descriptions of characters, and any mannerisms that made the joke funny. Wait until the joke is over, though. By visualizing, you are creating a movie in your mind. Later, when you tell it to someone, just roll the movie! One easy way to do this is to put someone you know into the joke.

- **Repeat the joke back to the person who told it to you.** The person who told you the joke is the best coach to help

you tell it. While listening, he or she can help you fine-tune those nuances that are so crucial to the proper execution of a joke. You may not have to repeat the whole joke, but be sure to repeat key phrases.

■ **Rehearse.** Practice, practice, practice. Consider all the elements that make that joke funny, including lengths of any appropriate pauses, physical motions that help the set-up and, especially, rehearse the punch line. Speak it out loud, and review it mentally.

■ **Change the joke.** Just as the best way to learn how to play a musical passage on an instrument is to change it a little, the same is true of jokes. If you alter the joke slightly, you will remember it easier. This is because it now has some of your own personality stamped on it.

■ **Have a test person.** Choose a friend to be your trial audience whenever you want to tell a joke for the first time, preferably someone who shares the same sense of humor. Once you have successfully told a joke, your subconscious will easily and frequently bring it back to you. Success breeds success, and the more you tell and the more people laugh, the more your confidence will grow.

■ **Tell the joke as often as possible.** When you hear a joke, tell it to someone as soon as possible. Once you have successfully told a joke, you will remember it for days, weeks, months and even years.

■ **Categorize the joke.** In the same way you organize information in your computer into folders, you could put jokes into categories in your mind. For example, "lawyer jokes" go together, so imagine the best joke for setting up one or following another. If one joke leads into another, it will be easy to remember a whole series of jokes. (It's been observed that Robin Williams tells "jokes within jokes." But how did he start? Like anyone else, one joke at a time.)

■ **Imagine the best circumstances in which to tell the joke.** After hearing a joke, you might think of a person or group that would like that joke. If so, imagine telling them that joke, so that next time you are with them, you'll remember to share it with them.

■ **Think about who told you the joke and why you liked it.** Suppose you didn't use any of the previous techniques except the last one, and then you see your friends and want to tell them the joke but can't remember it. What then? Try to picture the person who told you the joke – that will sometimes trigger the memory. Or think back to the feeling you had when you heard it. What was it about that joke that made you want to share it? If you can

remember the punch line, you can usually work backward and reconstruct the joke.

■ **Write it down!** This is the most important advice, more important than the rest put together. Unless you write it down, you will forget more than you remember. It doesn't have to be the whole joke; a few key words will do. Just jot it down and transfer it to a notepad or your computer as soon as you can. Do not write out the whole joke, because when it comes to telling it, it will be more natural if you have written just enough to remember the set-up and the payoff.

Joke-telling is a skill that can be learned by anyone. But to tell jokes you first have to remember them. So here are 12 simple techniques to help you remember funny lines and stories. Use them to lubricate the engine of social and business conversation.

Plus, you can make any speech you give that much more enjoyable to listen to. And your own confidence and prestige will skyrocket as a result. **T**

William Mason, CTM, is a freelance writer and former member of Sages Toastmasters in Johannesburg, South Africa.





The value of planned spontaneity.

What Should I Have Said?

◆ EVER WONDER HOW COMEDIANS COME UP WITH JUST THE right thing to say at just the right time? In a comedy club, a glass goes crashing to the floor. The comedian says, “Just put that anywhere.” That, my friend, is a good example of *planned spontaneity*.

I was at a Chinese restaurant not long ago, trying to eat my chow mein with my chopsticks. After my third failed attempt at catching some noodles, I said, “Excuse me sir, can I get a fork, please?” The waiter smiled at me and responded, “Ahhh, getting hungry?” I laughed out loud. You think that’s the first time he said that? Not! He knows the value of planned spontaneity.

My good buddy and fellow motivational humorist Tim Gard and I were watching another speaker as he fell right off the back of the stage. After making sure there was no blood, Tim turned to me and asked, “If you were him, what would you say right now?” I thought for a moment and said, “Don’t mind me, it’s just a stage I’m going through.” Not bad with three seconds notice. “Tim, what would you say?” Tim smiled and said, “I will now take questions – from the floor.” Just like that, a potentially embarrassing mistake can become a positive and contributing part of the show.

As speakers, stuff happens before, during and after our talks. We need to be prepared, armed with clever lines illustrating that not only are we in control, but that we can think on our feet. We cannot forget Friedman’s law: Whatever can go wrong will go wrong, and usually at the worst possible time. So, as any good scout would say, be prepared – with some good old-fashioned planned spontaneity.

Ready to give it a try? Here goes; good luck:

The microphone goes dead:

- *Evidently, someone has heard this speech before.*
- *Let me have a show of hands: How many of you read lips?*
- *This is carrying Silent Night a little far. (Holiday time)*

Feedback from the microphone:

- *If I wanted some feedback, I would have asked for it.*
- *Stare cautiously to the left, while listening to the microphone buzz. Then say in a concerned tone, “Whatever it is, it’s getting closer.”*

When the lights go out or flicker:

- *I’ve often had people doze off during my talk, but never an entire chandelier. – Gene Perret*
- *I do my best work in the dark.*
- *This lighting really plays tricks on your eyes. I’m actually a lot more handsome and skinnier than I look.*
- *Everyone’s a critic.*

Loud noises:

- *Mom, can you be a little more careful?*
- *That concludes the musical portion of the program.*

Fire alarm or bell:

- *Time to take my pill.*
- *So that’s what happened to my wake-up call.*

Slide is upside down:

- *For those of you standing on your heads...*
- *This is the Australian part of the presentation.*

Writing on flip chart and you run out of ink:

- *Obviously, I’ve come to the dry part of my presentation.*

Participant walks out:

- *Look, my first walking ovation.*
- *It gets better, I promise. I walked out of my first talk.*

The key in delivering planned spontaneity is to pause for a moment after the incident or comment, look up like you are thinking, and then – boom – deliver the line. The audience will think you are making it up on the spot. So the next time you find yourself sitting on the floor after a fall from the stage or watching an audience member try to sneak out, apply your planned spontaneity and deliver laughs. **T**

Scott Friedman, President-Elect of the National Speakers Association, is the author of *Punchlines, Pitfalls and Powerful Programs – Ten surefire ways of adding humor to your presentations*. Visit his Web site www.funnyscott.com.

By John Kinde, DTM

**If you want to be funny,
don't try to be. Less is more.**

Show Me the Funny!

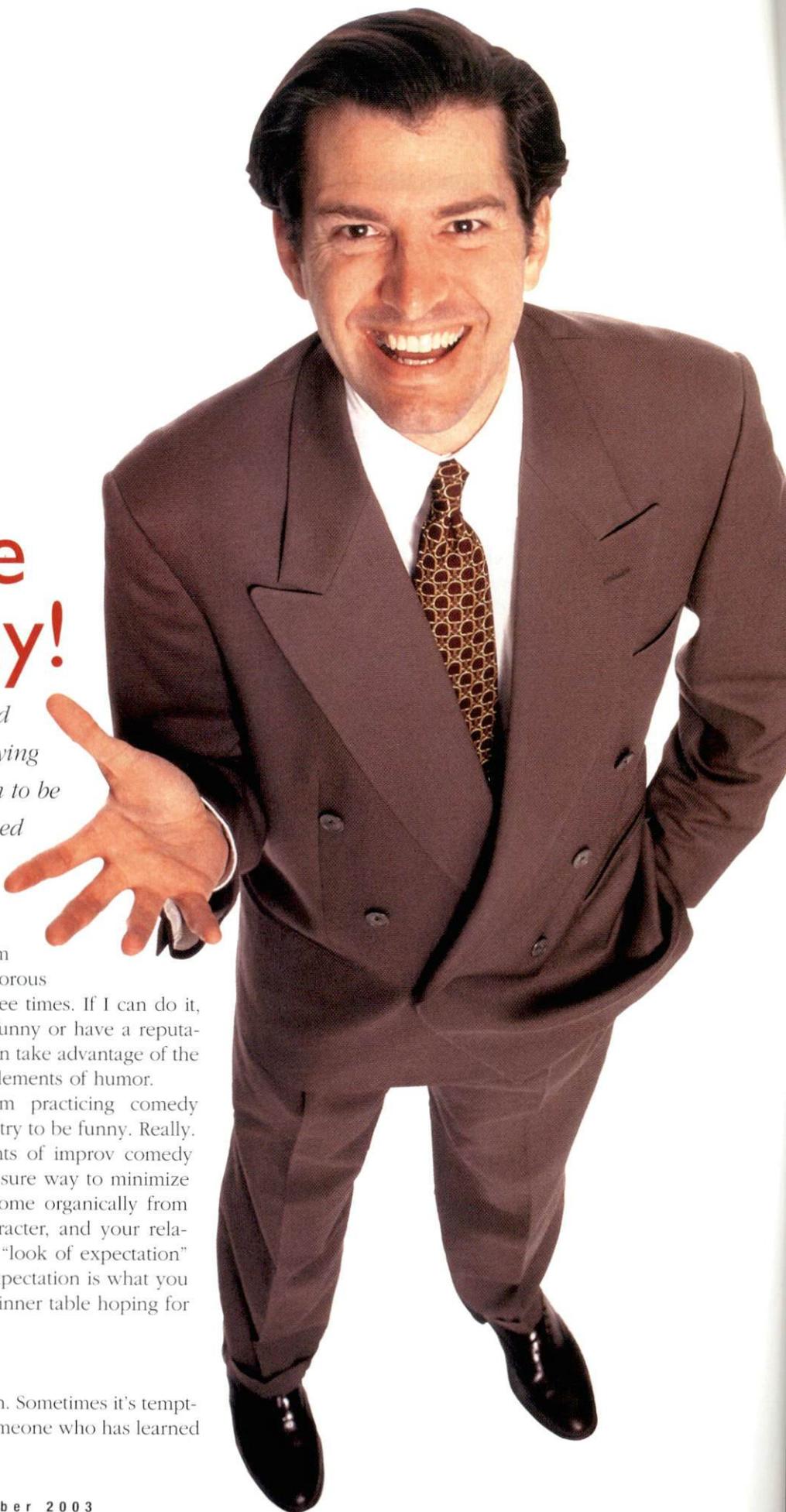
If there's one thing I've learned in my nearly 30 years of studying humor, it's this: You can learn to be funny. Some people think you need to be born funny; if you weren't the class clown, there's no hope.

I'm a laid-back, serious Norwegian from North Dakota, and I've won humorous speech contests at the district level three times. If I can do it, you can do it. And if you don't look funny or have a reputation for being funny, great! You then can take advantage of the element of surprise, one of the basic elements of humor.

Here's a secret I've learned from practicing comedy improv: If you want to be funny, don't try to be funny. Really. Trying too hard kills the joke. Students of improv comedy learn that going for the gag is often a sure way to minimize the laughs. Relax. Let your humor come organically from your stories, the essence of your character, and your relationship with the audience. Avoid the "look of expectation" when a humor bit fails. The look of expectation is what you get from your dog sitting next to the dinner table hoping for a treat from your plate.

Play It Clean

When writing your speech, keep it clean. Sometimes it's tempting to cross the line, but take it from someone who has learned



the hard way: Clean material consistently plays stronger. Not only that, playing it clean takes more talent and skill. Off-color humor is a comedy cop-out. Any junior high school student can get a cheap laugh from four-letter words and bodily-function jokes. Blue humor puts your reputation at risk. One of your goals is for people to want to hear you speak again and to tell their friends about you. The more experience I have using humor, the more conservative I've become. When in doubt, leave it out!

Joke books are not the best source of funny material; personal stories are. Your own stories are original and compelling. Humor comes naturally from the pictures you paint. Force-fitting a "joke" to a point will always be second best to a personal story. And besides, the best kind of joke is not one you've picked off the Internet or found in a joke book. Everyone has probably heard it, and your element of surprise will be short-circuited. A benefit of using joke books is that they can be handy for jump-starting your thinking and getting you on the road to writing your own original material.

Identify the key trigger word in your joke and put it at the very end of the joke's punch line. It maximizes the tension build-up and the element of surprise. Try to avoid putting even one word after the punch word. Adding clutter after the punch word or punch line buries it and disguises the joke.

Less is more. The more concise you are, the more likely your humor will hit the target. If you have a long setup for a punch line, the punch line carries a lot of baggage. So write your material, then edit and cut.

Also, specifics are funnier than generalities. A "1985 yellow Yugo" is funnier than "a car." Paint rich word pictures. It's also conventional wisdom in the comedy writing business that words with a "K" sound are funnier. Therefore a Cadillac is probably funnier than a Ford.

"Joke books are not the best source of funny material; personal stories are."

Invest in your talk by writing and practicing it well in advance of your delivery date. As you're sitting at the speaking venue awaiting your introduction, I recommend that you not rehearse your speech mentally but instead concentrate on what's going on around you. Check out the features of the room. Pay attention to the details of the meal and the service. Listen to everyone speaking before you. Take notes. Look for humorous connections you can drop into your talk – these last-minute lines might be the best part of your entire presentation.

Add Punch to Your Delivery

Never rush your delivery. When you get to the punch line, deliver it, and then pause. Wait for the laugh and it will normally come. A Toastmaster friend once told me: "I figured out why you're so funny. You insist that we laugh!" What she meant was that I wait for the laugh and give the audience a chance to get the joke.

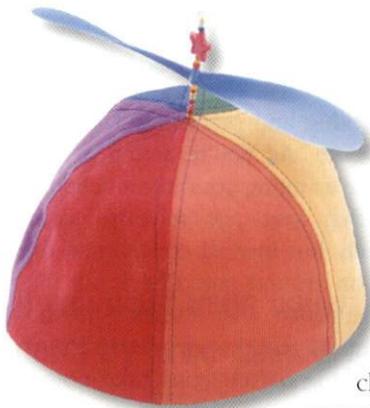
Don't be in a hurry to proceed to the next funny line. Don't step on the laughter. Starting to speak too soon is like telling the audience "please don't laugh!" Let the laughter peak, and as it starts to fade (but before the laughter completely stops), continue speaking. The proper rhythm will come with experience.

If you try a joke that falls flat, never apologize or explain it. If they don't laugh, pretend you were serious. Your humor is meant to be a surprise. If they didn't laugh, it's your secret. If a long story meant to get a laugh is greeted with silence, try saying this: "And the point of that story is...." Let's hope your humor has a point!

Animate your speech. Show rather than tell. Don't bury your head in your notes. Know your material well enough so you can deliver it without notes, and thus bringing your gestures, movement and facial expressions to life.

To maximize the surprise element, don't "telegraph" a joke. Never use the





equivalent of "a funny thing happened to me on the way over here." You'll dull the surprise.

Try to deliver your humor in a room that it well-lit. Because comedy clubs are often dark, we sometimes mistakenly believe that comedy plays best in a dark room. Not true! Humor plays best in a well-lit room. Laughter is contagious and people will laugh more when they see others laughing. If possible, arrange the seating so that people can easily see each other.

Practice at Your Club

The best place to practice delivering your humor is at a Toastmasters club. There is no substitute for practice in a supportive environment, and a Toastmasters meeting is the best place to grow and stretch.

The people you think of as funny, in my opinion, are probably not funnier than you are, they're just more consistent. The main difference between an excellent improv player and a beginner is consistency. Both have moments of brilliance. The great player will just hit the mark more often. Your humor consistency ratio improves only with experience. A Toastmasters club is the perfect place to be bad while getting better.

In my opinion, the Jokemaster function, as featured by many clubs, is a waste of time. My observation is that this person usually reads a mediocre joke to the audience and is met with polite chuckles. The joke is normally not very funny and this is not a good way to learn humor delivery.

Here's my suggestion: Replace the Jokemaster with The Observational Minute. This is an observational humor segment placed near the end of the meeting, normally after the evaluations but just before the General Evaluator's review of the meeting. The person leading the Observational Humor segment will ask: "Does anyone have any observational humor?" Members create fresh humor out of the circumstances and flow of the meeting. In time, members of your club will gain some genuine humor skills, creating the best and most powerful form of humor (along with stories): observational humor.

"A Toastmasters club is the perfect place to be bad while getting better."

And now it's time to enter the humorous speech contest. Always remember, you learn more when you come in second. Losing is a good thing; it leads to growth. When you're second best, you take a harder look at your material and delivery. And besides, when it comes to a perspective on winning (for example at a district-level humor contest), remember this: For the most part, you are being judged by people who have not accomplished what you are trying to do – win the District Humorous Speech Contest. So don't take the results too seriously. Compete for the sake of competing. And in the long haul, if you do well, you'll be like Babe Ruth, who is remembered for his home runs, while his record number of strike-outs are quickly forgotten. Everyone who competes wins a growth opportunity.

When competing in Toastmasters humor contests beyond the club level, have comfort in the fact that the higher up the ladder the contest is, the easier it is. Your material becomes more highly refined and tested. The audience is larger. Bigger audiences mean more laughs. The most challenging contest is at your club level. So when you reach the higher levels, step on the platform with confidence, knowing that you are prepared and up to the task. And when the audience is sitting there thinking "show me the funny," you will!

John Kinde, DTM, is a member of Powerhouse Pros Club in Las Vegas. He is an Accredited Speaker and the Director of the Las Vegas Improv. Reach him at www.HumorPower.com.

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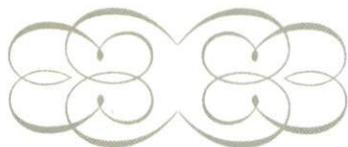
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The Eulogy for Princess Diana



**Earl Charles Spencer remembers
“...the unique, the complex, the extraordinary
and irreplaceable Diana...”**

More than any other kind of speech, a eulogy has potential for enormous impact because of the pools of emotion that are just waiting to be stirred and emptied in a satisfying tear-filled catharsis.

Rarely has there been the kind of ambient emotion surrounding a eulogy as there was when Earl Charles Spencer, Princess Diana's younger brother, took his place above the crowd at Westminster Abbey and before the world's television cameras on September 6, 1997.

Remarkably, Spencer was able to hit all the right notes and created, as the famous speech-writer Peggy Noonan called it, “a breathtaking address.”



The emotion kept building. We knew we weren't supposed to applaud or cheer – this was, after all, Westminster Abbey. The tombs of eighteen monarchs of England; Sir Isaac Newton; Mary Queen of Scots; the poets Chaucer, Browning and Tennyson; and many other British notables lay under our feet. But we couldn't help it.

As the hundreds of thousands outside huddled together to share a grief that surprised everyone, a handful of us inside listened to brotherly words of passion that reverberated off every sculptured angle of the venerable walls.

Princess Diana hated speaking in public, but her brother, Earl Charles Spencer, clearly didn't. A student at Oxford, a journalist and former contributing correspondent for NBC's *Today* show, Spencer captured every nuance of the complex personality that had held the world spellbound. The vulnerability and the power, the sophistication and the childishness, the nursery school teacher and world icon, a woman who had the ultimate power brokers waiting in line to shake her hand and the lonely princess spending Christmas Eve alone – Diana's brother caught it all.

But it wasn't only the brilliance of the observations that caused us to sit frozen on our wooden benches. It was that the tears, the anger and the anguish of the millions filling the

*“A family in grief,
in a country in
mourning, before
a world in shock”*

– EARL CHARLES SPENCER





streets outside had somehow entered the cathedral and lifted Earl Spencer's words to spiritual heights.

Why had this former nursery school teacher touched so many, not only in London, but also around the world? Why was her death, and the funeral that followed six days later, an event that touched millions?

Based on the time I spend with Princess Diana, I can attest to her extraordinary charisma. You simply had to be in her presence for seconds and you could feel it. It emanated from her in the way she held her body – tall and regal, but completely approachable; it shined from her smile, and as her brother remarked in the eulogy, it came from “the sparkle in those unforgettable eyes.”



Analysis of Earl Charles Spencer's Eulogy for Princess Diana, Westminster Abbey, London, Sept 6, 1997

I stand before you today the representative of a family in grief, in a country in mourning before a world in shock.

Notice how the rhythm captures us when phrases are grouped in threes.

We are all united not only in our desire to pay our respects to Diana but rather in our need to do so.

For such was her extraordinary appeal that the tens of millions of people taking part in this service all over the world via television and radio who never actually met her, feel that they too lost someone close to them in the early hours of Sunday morning. It is a more remarkable tribute to Diana than I can ever hope to offer her today.

By acknowledging the audience and their feelings, Spencer makes everyone feel personally connected to the speech.

Diana was the very essence of compassion, of duty, of style, of beauty. All over the world she was a symbol of selfless humanity. All over the world, a standard bearer for the rights of the truly downtrodden, a very British girl who transcended nationality.

I love this phrase. It immediately tells us who Diana is and cleverly introduces the theme of Diana's personality – her contradictions – and reinforces her role as the world's “Queen of Hearts.”

Someone with a natural nobility who was classless...

This is a wonderful contradiction that says so much.

...and who proved in the last year that she needed no royal title to continue to generate her particular brand of magic.

See how elegantly he takes aim at the “mourner” sitting in the first row – Queen Elizabeth II, who many believe insisted on the removal of Diana's title, “Her Royal Highness,” as part of the divorce settlement with Prince Charles.

These were days I will always treasure. It was as if we had been transported back to our childhood when we spent such an enormous amount of time together – the two youngest in the family.

Fundamentally she had not changed at all from the big sister who mothered me as a baby, fought with me at school and endured those long train journeys between our parents' homes with me at weekends.

That meant a lot to her. The last time I saw Diana was on July 1, her birthday in London, when typically she was not taking time to celebrate her special day with friends but was guest of honor at a special charity fundraising evening. She sparkled of course, but I would rather cherish the days I spent with her in March when she came to visit me and my children in our home in South Africa. I am proud of the fact that apart from when she was on display meeting President Mandela, we managed to contrive to stop the ever-present paparazzi from getting a single picture of her.

Now, he confirms that this princess was really just like "regular" people, something everyone felt in their deep connection to her.

The world sensed this part of her character and cherished her for her vulnerability whilst admiring her for her honesty.

Shifting back into the third person he continues the public relations effort, describing how Diana transcended her struggle with eating and other disorders and turned them to the benefit of the world.

And here we come to another truth about her. For all the status, the glamor, the aplaud, Diana remained throughout a very insecure person at heart, almost childlike in her desire to do good for others so she could release herself from deep feelings of unworthiness of which her eating disorders were merely a symptom.

Great phrase – constituency of the rejected – and a wonderful public relations turn as well. Spencer is addressing those critics who accused Diana of being too self-absorbed, insensitive and manipulative in her work with her charities.

Without your God-given sensitivity we would be immersed in greater ignorance at the anguish of AIDS and HIV sufferers, the plight of the homeless, the isolation of lepers, the random destruction of landmines. Diana explained to me once that it was her innermost feelings of suffering that made it possible for her to connect with her constituency of the rejected.

Notice how he makes his sister come to life, as he names the very specific human qualities that made her special. Specific references to real-life qualities or behaviors, in any speech, are almost always greatly appreciated by an audience.

But your greatest gift was your intuition, and it was a gift you used wisely. This is what underpinned all your other wonderful attributes. If we look to analyze what it was about you that had such a wide appeal, we find it in your instinctive feel for what was really important in all our lives.

There is a temptation to rush to canonize your memory; there is no need to do so. You stand tall enough as a human being of unique qualities not to need to be seen as a saint. Indeed to sanctify your memory would be to miss out on the very core of your being, your wonderfully miscellaneous sense of humor with a laugh that bent you double. Your joy for life transmitted wherever you look your smile and the sparkle in those unforgettable eyes. Your boundless energy which you could barely contain.

Note the effective use of repetition: the word strength.

We have all despaired at our loss over the past week, and only the strength of the message you gave us through your years of giving has afforded us the strength to move forward.

A healing perspective for the millions who were so visibly pained by her passing. Notice how effortlessly he shifts from talking about Diana to talking directly to her.

Today is our chance to say thank you for the way you brightened our lives, even though God granted you but half a life. We will all feel cheated always that you were taken from us so young and yet we must learn to be grateful that you came along at all. Only now that you are gone do we truly appreciate what we are now without, and we want you to know that life without you is very, very difficult.

The Enigma and Princess Diana

The Speech – What to Look For: With his great use of imagery, Earl Charles Spencer vividly captured both his sister's magical qualities and the tragedy of her life. At the same time, he subtly and gracefully criticized those he felt had made her unhappy: the press and, especially, the Queen and the royal family.

The Delivery – What to Listen For: The largest audience ever to hear a speech heard a calm, composed, flawless oration, well-paced as it rose to a crescendo, which created such emotion that it caused a highly inappropriate but irresistible reaction – thunderous applause.

The Person – Qualities of Greatness: Diana was a mass of contradictions that were played about on the world stage almost daily: The pinnacle of royalty with the needs and problems of many women; a confident, charismatic enchantress and a lonely insecure woman. She was, as her brother said, "The unique, the complex, the extraordinary and irreplaceable Diana."



Personal touches like this are always wonderful. By letting us see their relationship, Spencer allows us to feel closer to him and to Diana. By making this oblique reference to the fact that they came from a broken family, he reinforces another connection many felt they shared with Diana.

It is a tribute to her level-headedness and strength that despite the most bizarre-like life imaginable after her childhood, she remained intact, true to herself.

With the slang term, *bizarre-like*, he shifts gears and resumes his beautifully worded attack – this time on the media.

There is no doubt that she was looking for a new direction in her life at this time. She talked endlessly of getting away from England, mainly because of the treatment that she received at the hands of the newspapers. I don't think she ever understood why her genuinely good intentions were sneered at by the media, why there appeared to be a permanent quest on their behalf to bring her down.

It is baffling. My own and only explanation is that genuine goodness is threatening to those at the opposite end of the moral spectrum.

The casual phrase, *it is baffling*, makes this part of the speech even more personal. Next comes one of my favorite phrases, which is powerful yet subtle. In just a few words, he cements the theme of Diana's goodness and simultaneously delivers a direct shot at, presumably, everyone who was in any way her critic – *the opposite end of the moral spectrum*. Wow!

It is a point to remember that of all the ironies about Diana, perhaps the greatest was this – a girl given the name of the ancient goddess of hunting was, in the end, the most hunted person of the modern age.

This is Earl Spencer's own favorite line. He has taken her very name and eternally bound up her image with ancient mythology, with something larger than life, with a goddess, no less! In addition, to say that she was *hunted* creates in the audience a visceral image as well as real empathy with the feelings Diana must have experienced on a daily basis.

She would want us today to pledge ourselves to protecting her beloved boys William and Harry from a similar fate. And I do this here, Diana, on your behalf. We will not allow them to suffer the anguish that used regularly to drive you to tearful despair.

Beyond that, on behalf of your mother and sisters, I pledge that we, your blood family...

Another salvo at the royal family. Notice both the anger and the protectiveness that comes with the words, *we, your blood family*, and how an already powerful speech becomes even more powerful as Earl Spencer shifts from third to first person, again speaks directly to his sister and allows his own emotions, his own vulnerability, to come through.

...will do all we can to continue the imaginative way in which you were steering these two exceptional young men so that their souls are not simply immersed by duty and tradition but can sing openly as you planned.

He hits the target. Ever so diplomatically, he essentially tells the Queen, "We won't let you squash their spirits like you tried to do to their mother's!"

We fully respect the heritage into which they have both been born and will always respect and encourage them in their royal role. But we, like you, recognize the need for them to experience as many different aspects of life as possible to arm them spiritually and emotionally for the years ahead. I know you would have expected nothing less from us.

These words – *spiritually and emotionally* – were carefully chosen. (It was just days before that Queen Elizabeth had seemingly been forced to take to the airwaves to show that she was emotionally affected by Diana's death.) Spencer also uses an excellent communication technique designed to reduce resistance to what will follow: He begins by asserting the traditionalists' (the royal family's) beliefs, then talks about less traditional (Diana's) beliefs on how her children should be reared.

William and Harry, we all care desperately for you today. We are all chewed up with sadness at the loss of a woman who wasn't even our mother. How great your suffering is we cannot even imagine.

[Here Earl Spencer became so overcome with emotion that he almost could not continue.]

Saying what so many were thinking here, notice how graphic and effective the phrase *chewed up* is. You can almost feel what he is feeling.

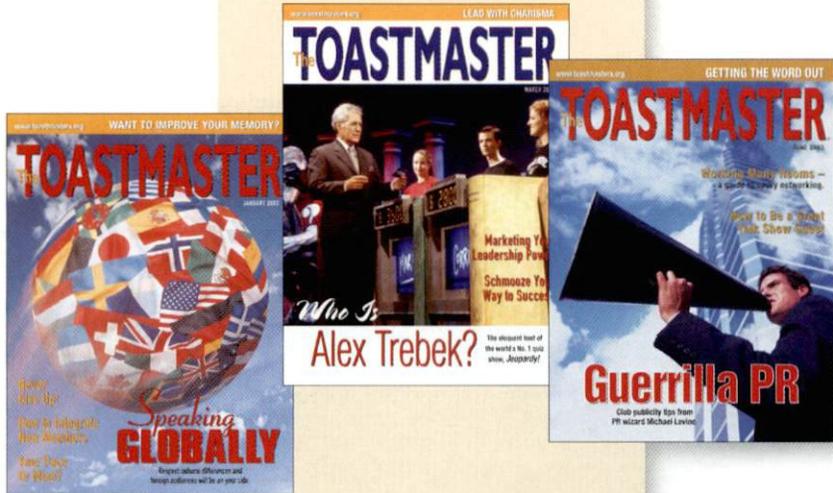
I would like to end by thanking God for the small mercies he has shown us at this dreadful time. For taking Diana at her most beautiful and radiant and when she had joy in her private life.

Above all, we give thanks for the life of a woman I am so proud to be able to call my sister: the unique, the complex, the extraordinary and irreplaceable Diana, whose beauty, both internal and external, will never be extinguished from our minds.

This is a beautiful way to end. Can you feel the rhythm that he builds with the words *the unique, the complex, the extraordinary*? With this uplifting close, Spencer allowed those inside Westminster Abbey and those listening outside and around the world to let go and celebrate this amazing life. The entire Westminster Abbey echoed with thunderous applause.

Excerpted with permission from Richard Greene's coffee table book, Words that Shook the World: 100 Years of Unforgettable Speeches and Events (Prentice Hall, 2002). **T**

Richard Greene of Beverly Hills, California, is a speech coach who was summoned to Kensington Palace in 1996 to advise Princess Diana on her public speaking. His book, *Words That Shook the World: 100 Years of Unforgettable Speeches and Events* celebrates the art of speech with analysis of what he considers "the 20 most inspiring orations of the 20th century," including two CDs with audio recordings of those speeches. Signed copies are available at a discount for Toastmasters through his Web site at www.WordsThatShookTheWorld.com.



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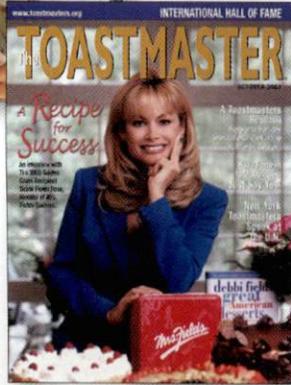
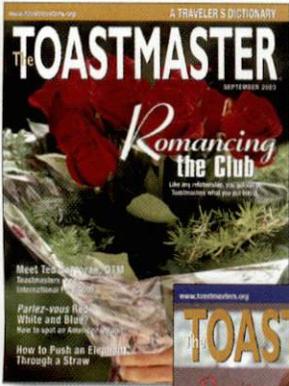
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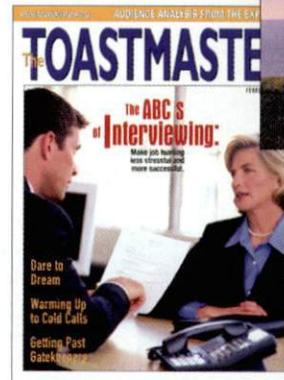
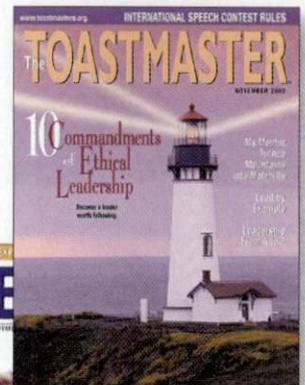
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