

# The TOASTMASTER

DECEMBER 1999

It's the *Pause*  
that *Really*  
*Refreshes!*

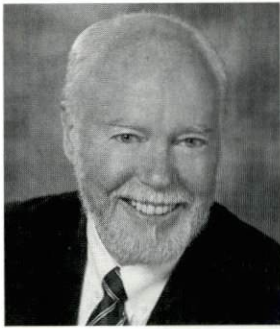
Replace those troublesome ahs  
with short, strategic silences.

**ALSO INSIDE:**

Become a Better Conversationalist

Why Does it Take Me So Long  
to Prepare a Speech?





## VIEWPOINT

# The Greatest Gift

In one of the best loved short stories in the English language, *The Gift of the Magi*, O. Henry tells the story of a young, poor, struggling married couple who sacrifice their most precious possessions in order to give Christmas presents to each other. He sells an heirloom watch to buy her combs for her beautiful hair; she sells her hair to buy him a watch chain.

O. Henry's wonderful story contains a valuable lesson for us as Toastmasters. Each of us has a unique gift to share with the world, a gift borne of our talents, personalities, abilities, knowledge, and innate sense of compassion and willingness to reach out to help and serve others. In Toastmasters we become empowered through our experience in our clubs to share this gift, whatever it is.

I would suggest that there are two rewarding and personally meaningful ways we can put O. Henry's wisdom to work. First, in our Toastmasters clubs we can consciously and intently focus on how we can help our fellow club members develop their own special gifts and bring them to flower, even as they are helping us. And second, as we search for ways of sharing and caring, we can examine opportunities to give the most precious gift we can offer and bring our talents to bear in acts of service.

How can we put the talents we gain in Toastmasters to good use in the service of others? We can find organizations and causes to which we are committed and serve by speaking out for them and leading – putting our leadership skills to work in our faith communities, community action groups, and civic organizations.

Our own Toastmasters program offers great opportunities. One of the most important is our Youth Leadership Program. Through it we can bring the Toastmasters message of empowerment and unlimited potential to our most precious resource: our children. Speechcraft is another program that lets us share the power and promise of Toastmasters in different venues in our communities and places of business.

In our places of work, in our neighborhoods, our churches, and our civic and service organizations are people who would benefit enormously, as we all have, from the Toastmasters program. Each of us can reach out and offer those around us a gift that can profoundly change their lives for the better. We can invite them to a club meeting.

In a time of joy, this is indeed a year of celebration for all of us. We stand at the brink of a new century and a new millennium, even as we proudly remember our 75 years of Toastmasters history.

Happy holidays, fellow Toastmasters. May the coming year bring us all challenge, opportunity, and great reward and fulfillment. And may we all find abundant opportunities to share with others the most precious gift we can give – the gift of ourselves.

**Tim Keck, DTM**  
International President

# The TOASTMASTER

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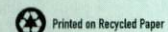
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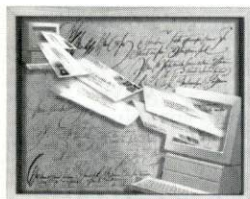
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#### *The Toastmasters Vision:*

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

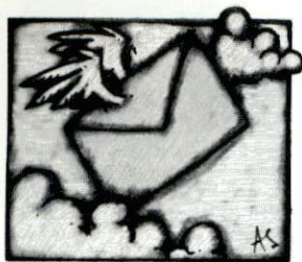
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## LETTERS

### TM HELPED HER HELP OTHERS

I am a Jew and committed to Tikkun Olam, which translates to "repairing the world." I was helping refugees from the former Soviet Union and became involved in social action. However, I could not effectively support these new Americans because I could not speak on their behalf.

Sure, I could perform helpful acts, inspire others by my doggedness and motivate others by example. But I lacked the most valuable tool, the ability to communicate through public speaking. I sat in meetings and had other committee members read statements I had prepared. Desperately seeking to free myself from my fear of public speaking, at age 56, I found Toastmasters International. It changed my life and the lives of countless new Americans whose causes I could now champion.

With a friend, I founded a Sunday school for Jewish refugee children. This year I've helped 18 youngsters from the former Soviet Union attend a day camp. These children could learn about their Jewish heritage, thanks to Toastmasters International.

Elisabeth G. Frank, ATM  
Miracle Mile Club 2283-47  
Coral Gables, Florida

### FOR SOME, MORE IS BETTER

Although I concede there is a need for one-hour Toastmasters meetings in today's busy world, I strongly advocate holding two-hour meetings when possible. They are worth the time and effort.

I bring this up because I know that, unlike the community clubs of say 15 years ago, many new clubs are sponsored by corporations and meet in the morning or at noon for one hour – because, as former International President Terry Daily has pointed out,

that is where and when people are willing to dedicate their time.

I attend a nearly 50-year-old club that meets for two hours weekly. Every member who attends the meeting gets to speak and is evaluated. We start and end on time. We are dedicated to our meetings and to each other. I feel that two-hour meetings double members' pleasure and that, compared to a club that meets for only one hour, we get double our money's worth.

Theresa Londergan  
Central Club 2277-31  
Worcester, Massachusetts

### AGAINST ALL ODDS

As a teenager, I sustained a severe brain injury and was in a coma for 45 days. The results were devastating, and it took years for me to rehabilitate cognitively and physically. Thanks to Toastmasters, I've been able to improve my communication abilities when conducting presentations at work or serving as an Ambassador for the Brain Injury Association. Toastmasters has played a major role in helping me maintain employment and has been a great place to meet friends and mentors. The Interpersonal Communication manual in particular has enlightened me in this area. Toastmasters – what a lifesaver!

Tom Connelly, ATM-B  
Albany Club 1827-14  
Albany, Georgia

### LOOKING FOR ADVICE ON HUMOR

I have been a Toastmaster for more than three years in the Moscow Free Speakers Club 6386-U in Moscow, Russia. I'm always glad to see articles about humor in *The Toastmaster* magazine. Humor is needed more than ever in our country at this time of crisis. I try to add humor to any presentation. I ask someone

to check all projects I write, due to my poor English, and I then learn my speech by heart.

Unfortunately, I have no sample speeches to compare with and follow. I would greatly appreciate getting in contact with Toastmasters interested in exchanging their humor texts with mine.

Vyacheslav I. Penzin  
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Moscow Free Speakers Club 6386-U  
Moscow, Russia

### ATTORNEY COMES OUT A WINNER

I thought I was articulate when I ran for Dade County Court Judge in 1988 after having been an attorney since 1981. But when my mother heard one of my campaign speeches, she said, "What you say makes sense, but no one is listening. You need help with public speaking."

I then joined a new Toastmasters club at Miami Beach City Hall and nervously presented my Ice Breaker speech about my campaign experiences.

I didn't win the judicial contest, but I still came out a winner. Toastmasters has helped me master the art of making my points to a judge during the brief time allowed. Participating in Table Topics has been invaluable in helping me focus my best arguments before a jury. And by building my self-confidence, Toastmasters has enabled me, as a real estate attorney, to reach a point where I find no legal situation too hard to negotiate.

What more could I ask? To see you at the International Convention in Miami Beach next August. My Flamingo Toastmasters club members will be ready to help you relax, South Beach style.

Ivar Starr, DTM  
Flamingo Club 6962-47  
Miami Beach, Florida



By Beth Fowler



Don't send mother hens  
to kingdom come.

## Speaking Across Cultures

Communicating can go haywire when Americans speak to those for whom English is a second language. Ask President Clinton. An Asian dignitary responded with grave disappointment, not delight, when Clinton promised to send a mutual rival to "Kingdom Come." Members of Clinton's

staff later discovered the dignitary had thought Clinton intended to *give* the rival a kingdom.

Fortunately, Clinton saved face. But most of us don't have a staff to clean up cross-cultural gaffes. So it's better to communicate clearly in the first place.

Asia is an economic hot spot. Chances are good that you or someone you know conducts business face-to-face with Asians. Communication techniques warrant extra attention when speaking to people who are not native English speakers. Here are communication tips I learned while traveling and living in Asia:

- **Converse in conversions.** Use measurements and standards the audience knows. An American Boeing executive described an airplane to Malaysians as, "nearly five times the length of a badminton court. It will have a takeoff weight of 229,520 kilograms." Malaysians are more familiar with badminton courts and kilograms than with football fields and pounds.
- **Learn the lingo.** Idioms and jargon add color to language *if* they mean the same to listeners and speaker. A Westerner, attempting to compliment his audience, called them "mother hens" to imply they were exemplary parents. The women were aghast. Mother hen is a Singaporean euphemism for bordello proprietress!
- **Gesture judiciously.** Toastmasters encourages incorporating appropriate gestures into speeches. The emphasis is on *appropriate*. In some Asian countries, the American good-bye wave means "please come here." Americans turn one raised hand side to side signifying something is mediocre, just so-so. The same motion means no-no to Asians!
- **Polish protocol.** Before speaking at a function, learn local protocol, unlike this red-faced emcee: John was

invited to speak at his Chinese friend's wedding. He began with witty eloquence but then dropped innuendos about the couple's pre-marital cohabitation. The parents of the bride and groom turned livid with shame. The Chinese traditionally extol the virtues and achievements of newlyweds.

- **Use comedy with caution.** Employing comedy is a delicate, risky art because it can easily insult someone. For foreigners to chuckle at what some Americans laugh at – puns, double entendres, political satire – requires an intimate knowledge of our social psychology and language syntax. Victimless and humble jokes are prudent.
- **Focus on fundamentals.** The importance of basics is magnified under the cross-cultural microscope. Astute foreign emissaries speak slower than normal, enunciate precisely, use common words, rephrase key points and pause often. They also use diagrams and props to enhance their messages.
- **Add foreign phrases.** People are delighted when I insert a foreign phrase into my English speech. Used correctly, well-placed foreign phrases can help build a bridge between the speaker and the audience. But first, consult a native to verify your pronunciation, acceptability and use of the foreign phrase.
- **Rehearse for readiness.** The prospect of speaking to people from different countries is almost overwhelming to some. A dress rehearsal with a native of the audience's home country is the best antidote for terminal jitters, and it is the best insurance against committing a cross-cultural faux pas.

Successfully meeting the multi-cultural communication challenge is personally rewarding. In spite of all the differences among nations, applause means "bravo!" in every language. **T**

**Beth Fowler** is a writer and former Toastmaster living in Hanover, Pennsylvania.





## FOR THE NOVICE

By Peter F. Jeff, ATM-B

### A roadmap for your journey toward the CTM.

# The 7Ws of Effective Speechwriting

Now that you have survived your Ice Breaker speech, you have to develop and deliver nine more speeches to earn your Competent Toastmaster (CTM) honors. The road ahead looks long and winding. But with a map, you can maneuver that road with more confidence and conviction. Consider these 7Ws of Effective Speechwriting as your map.

1. Wake Up
2. Warm Up
3. What's Up
4. Whip Up
5. Well Up
6. Wrap Up
7. Wind Up

Use this guide when writing your next speech. Think of it as a checklist to help you meet the specific speech's objectives. Let's take a closer look at the 7Ws of effective speechwriting, beginning with an arresting opening:

#### OPENING

**1 Wake Up.** Give your audience the VIP treatment: Be visual, interactive, personal. Then: TEASE the audience with either a Testimonial, Example, Anecdote, Statement,

or Evidence. Use one of these TEASE techniques to wake up your audience. For example, if you were writing a speech on the power of public speaking, you could use one of the following TEASE techniques. Here's how:

■ **Testimonial** – Use a historical figure or a reference to an expert to add credibility to your point. Pericles, the Greek orator, clearly understood the power of self-expression when he said: "The person who can think and does not know how to express what he thinks is at a level of him who cannot think."

■ **Example** – The more specific the better. Here's how: Imagine losing your job because you couldn't or wouldn't speak with confidence. Imagine losing your job as a general – the big boss – over troops in a war. And to compound the humiliation, imagine losing your job as a general to a person physically handicapped but personally confident. It happened in the U.S. Civil War. Confederate President Jefferson Davis asked General Joseph Johnson how he planned to stop the Union's army march across Georgia. Johnson waf-

fled. His delaying tactics were tantamount to what Toastmasters would call a vocalized pause. His loss for words and action contributed to the loss of his command. General John Hood, quick to articulate a course of action, confidently took over the command, despite an amputated leg and crippled arm.

■ **Anecdote** – A good speaker simplifies and clarifies. Albert Einstein once said, "Energy cannot be observed unless it is exteriorized." Then he clarified the meaning of "exteriorize" with an analogy. He said: "That's like a rich man who doesn't spend any money. No one can estimate the vastness of his fortune."

■ **Statement** – A point of view that commands attention because of its catch-phrase cache and directness. "It's not what you know that counts. It's not even who you know that counts. It's who knows that you know that counts. And that takes effective speaking skills."

■ **Evidence** – (Based on third party resource for added credibility.) Here's how: "Speaking before groups is listed No. 1 as the worst fear on page 469 of the *Book of Lists* – ahead of the fear of heights and the fear of snakes. Death is listed No. 7."

**2 Warm up.** Reach out and let the audience know you are just like them. Show them you care about them, and they will care about you. Show them your ideas will be meaningful to them because your thinking is in tune with their thinking.

**3 What's up.** Tell the audience what this speech is all about. Billboard





the essence of your message in 10 words or less. Write a headline that embodies the theme of your message, sets the tone, and foreshadows the conclusion. Use this headline to anchor your point of view and orient your audience to where you are coming from and where you are heading. Develop it as a guideline the audience can follow to better understand, assimilate and act on your message.

### BODY

**4 Whip up.** Tell the audience how important this message is to them. Motivate the audience to be as passionate as you are about your speech and how it can make a difference in their lives. Be sure to tune in to the audience's needs and answer their questions: "Why should I lis-

ten to this speech? How will it make a difference in my life?"

**5 Well up.** Use personal stories and humor to flesh out your message with an emotional appeal. Facts tell but stories sell. Sell your message. How? Increase its pH count - P for personal stories and H for humor. Share stories and humor so that your audience *feels* your speech more than just hears it.

**6 Wrap up.** As you conclude, restate the headline (see What's Up) and summarize the highlights of your speech.

**7 Wind up.** Close your speech with a strong call to action. What do you want the audience to

feel, think or do? Reference the title of your speech as you conclude. Bookend your speech: refer back to the beginning when you woke up the audience in your opening remarks. Resist the tendency to end your speech with a "thank you." Of the 217 speeches listed in William Safires's anthology, *Lend me your Ears: Great Speeches in History*, only seven conclude with "thank you."

Here's how Winston Churchill concluded his speech in the face of a German threat of an invasion on England during World War I: "Let us therefore brace ourselves to our duty and so bear ourselves that if the British Commonwealth and Empires last for a thousand years, men will still say: 'This was our finest hour.'"

And Patrick Henry ended his speech when the colonists were debating whether to embark on war against England for their liberty:

"Is life so dear or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God! I know not what course others may take, but as for me, give me liberty or give me death."

Use those 7Ws of effective speaking as a map to help you plan your journey to CTM-land and beyond in Toastmasters. **T**

**Peter F. Jeff, ATM-B,** is a member of Steelcase Toastmasters 4172-62 and Grand Rapids Toastmasters 404-62 in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

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**What are your habitual conversation blunders?**

# Become a

*T*oastmasters club meetings provide many opportunities for improving public speaking skills and learning leadership techniques. But what about the most common aspect of human communication – the conversation? Are you also practicing better conversational skills?

Dr. Bruce Gladstone of Gladstone Counseling Services in Ojai, California, in a recent article for the *Ojai Valley News*, said, "Conversation is an essential element in virtually every relationship we have. To a great extent, the quality of our relationships depends on our ability to converse verbally."

It's true. How can there be deep caring where there is no meaningful communication? How is understanding established where people can't talk to one another? How can we pass along information and instructions when we don't know how to converse effectively?



It's ironic that we receive so little training to help us hone conversational skills when we rely on this ability every day. You probably remember your parents and grade school teachers saying, "Don't interrupt while I'm talking." And, "Look at me when I'm speaking to you." This is still good advice. For the most part, however, our conversational style and habits weren't taught, but they developed over years of modeling others and receiving peer feedback.

The man who can't finish a sentence without joking probably enjoyed getting laughs as a youngster. He may have felt self-conscious about speaking to others, found that laughter eased the discomfort and created the joking habit in his everyday conversation. He found a way to compensate for his inadequacies, and now he's hard pressed to speak to anyone with a straight face and a straight line.

There's a master plumber in my town who's a pretty good listener, but his conversational style amounts strictly to grunts, guffaws and short predictable phrases. Maybe his parents did all the talking for him when he was younger. Perhaps the adults in his childhood didn't listen to him. Whatever the reasons for his limited use of language, remarkably, after 61 years, he still hasn't found a reason to develop better conversational skills.

Feedback is a powerful tool in helping people change their poor conversational habits, and this is evidenced through the success of the Toastmasters program. People have to first acknowledge that there is a problem, however, and they have to want to improve.

Most people hesitate criticizing the communication habits of others. How do you say to a co-worker, "You talk

like you have a mouth full of mush – can't you enunciate more clearly?" Or to a friend, "I hate talking to you because you never respond to what I say. You go off telling your own story all the time without ever acknowledging mine."

What if you were to say to the co-worker, "I love the way you present your thoughts, Margaret. It's difficult for some of us to understand you, though, when you swallow your words. It would be to your professional benefit if you would practice speaking more clearly. I'd be happy to help."

To the friend, one might stop him in midstream whenever he commits his faux pas and say, "Wait! We're talking about me right now. I'm interested in your story, but first, I'd like to finish mine, and then I want to hear your comments about what I've told you."

I know a woman who often talks "over" her conversational partners, interrupting their comments. I called her on this once. I said, "That's the third time today that you've asked me something and then started talking over me when I responded." She was obviously shocked for a moment, and then she

said that she appreciated my pointing that out to her. She said the habit was a family trait. "Everyone in my family talks at once. It's a bad habit that I'm trying to break."

What are your habitual conversation blunders? Is there something specific you're working on overcoming? Are you aware of a problem in your way of conversing, but you've chosen to ignore it because no one seems to notice or care? Maybe you have an annoying habit and don't know it.

The 1950 edition of *The World Book Encyclopedia* states, "The ability to engage in interesting conversation

*"How do you say to a co-worker, 'You talk like you have a mouth full of mush – can't you enunciate more clearly?'"*

# Better Conversationalist

BY PATRICIA L. FRY, CTM ■ PHOTOGRAPHY BY DIGITAL VISION



is one of the greatest personal assets a man or woman can have. It is a great aid to business and social success and also makes for greater enjoyment of the company of other persons." I think we'll agree that this is still true 50 years later.

It's elementary, but worth repeating – there are two parts to effective conversation: speaking and listening. And both parts take thought and skill. Here are some tips for becoming a better, more respected conversationalist:

**1 Make eye contact.** Looking directly at the other person is a courteous indication that you are listening. I have a deficiency in this area. I find it easy to look someone in the eyes when I'm talking to them, but when they are speaking to me, my eyes tend to wander. Of course, since I'm aware of this, it's something that I consciously work on during my conversations with others.

**2 Speak clearly and audibly.** It's inconsiderate to mumble or to speak so softly that you can't be heard, yet I frequently encounter people who do this. Most of us don't know how we sound to others. If people consistently ask you to speak up or to repeat yourself, you may have an audibility problem. Record yourself speaking in conversational style. Listen to the tape and see if you are easily heard. Ask others to evaluate your voice and its volume. Is your voice pleasant? Too quiet? Too loud?

I have a friend whose voice trails off so it can scarcely be heard at the end of her sentences. She often speaks in front of large groups and, instead of changing this habit, she always apologizes for it before starting her talk. She'll say, "Please forgive me if my voice trails off. It has a tendency to do that sometimes." Once you're aware of any problems with your vocal volume or enunciation, start working to improve. Additional tips: Ask a friend to remind you whenever you fall back into your old habits; seek professional help from a voice coach for stubborn habits.

**3 Speak at a good pace.** We've all been in conversations with people who talk so fast that you can't keep up or so slowly that, by the time they finish expressing their thought, you've forgotten the topic.

Speed talking sometimes develops from conversation anxiety. You may have learned from past experiences that if you don't get your words in quickly, you might not get a chance to participate in the conversation. If you tend to speed talk or speak ever so s-l-o-o-w-l-y, here are some suggestions. Relax. Concentrate on slowing down.

Practice forming each word as you speak. Trust that you will have a chance to share your views and that people will listen. If your comments are well thought out and interesting, you will be heard. Some slow talkers are created by an unconscious desire to control: "As long as I'm the speaker, I'm in control of the conversation."

Other people speak slowly because they're still formulating their thoughts while they're speaking. If the latter describes you, try thinking through your thoughts before delivering them and your pace may automatically improve.

**4 Use language and images familiar to the listener.** You probably notice that you get more out of a conversation with someone who speaks and thinks like you do, than with someone who uses vocabulary differently. Your conversations will be more effective if you try to speak the language of the person with whom you're talking. Use different words and inflection when speaking to your minister than when conversing with the teenager down the street, for example. A conversation with your type "A" boss will be more successful if you quickly get to the point. When visiting with your mother-in-law, you may want to be more relaxed and chatty.

**5 Stick to the topic.** G. Robert Geyer tells a lively story about "conversation stealers" in this magazine's September 1999 issue. He says that conversation stealers are people who jump in on your story to change the focus to themselves or to something that they know more about. As an example, I might want to tell a friend about having gone roller skating with my grandchildren over the weekend when she quickly says, "I remember the last time I went skating." Or, "I had a great weekend too. I went shopping and we had tea with the Marleys – did you know that Jim and Bev Marley bought the sporting goods store downtown?"

If you frequently steal the show in conversations, take steps to change this bad habit. How? When you're talking with someone, try focusing your attention on them more. This is not to say that you shouldn't tell your story. Of course, you can relate your experiences or thoughts. Just make sure that you also hear the other person's saga and that you acknowledge it before sharing yours. It's also important to know when to change the subject. Whether or not you initiated the conversation, change the subject when there appears to be nothing new to say or when others begin to fidget or act bored.

*"It's elementary,  
but worth  
repeating – there  
are two parts  
to effective  
conversation:  
speaking and  
listening."*



**6 Know when to speak and when to listen.** Conversation should be give and take. Each person involved in a conversation needs to speak and each needs to listen. Participate but don't monopolize. Sometimes people put you in the position of monopolizing a conversation. They ask question after question about you without offering anything of themselves. You'd think that having people express that much interest in your life would be the height of enjoyment and flattery. But after a while, it begins to feel like an interrogation rather than a conversation. I have a couple of friends who tend to grill me when we meet. I've learned to turn the tables on them after a couple of questions. I'll say, for example, "Thanks for asking about my book – it's scheduled for release next month. Now what about your son, how did he land the job writing for the church newsletter?"

**7 Express an interest in what's being said.** This seems elementary, but if you're at all observant, you'll notice that not everyone follows this good advice. Face the speaker with unfolded arms. Lean forward slightly. Make eye contact. Acknowledge statements with a nod, comment or question when appropriate.

**8 Ask open-ended questions to promote communication** – that is, questions that require more than a yes or no response. Start questions with why, how or what. "Why did you move to this area from Florida?" "What caused you to enter the flower business?" "Tell me how you managed to keep your head above water in business

during the recession." "How has your profession changed since you entered it?"

**9 Be prepared.** A good conversationalist engages his/her listeners and stimulates conversation. Hone your conversational skills by keeping up with trends and current events. Live an interesting life. Try new things so you'll have something to talk about. Accept unusual invitations. See controversial plays. Do volunteer work. Begin a new hobby. Travel. Go back to school. Read. Change jobs or professions.

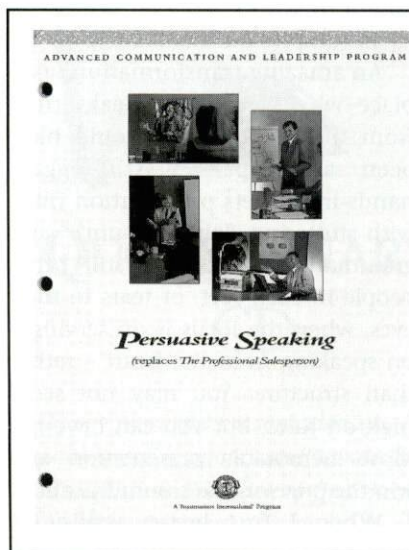
**10 Model someone whose conversational skills you admire.** Who do you most enjoy conversing with? We all know someone who gets a lot of attention at social events and business meetings. What makes this person stand out in a crowd? What are some of his most endearing qualities? How does he make you feel when you're conversing with him? Study his body language, his opening and closing statements and his speaking style. Ask him about his philosophy regarding communication. Does his attitude about people in

general reflect in his approach to conversation? To improve your conversational skills, mimic someone you consider successful in this area.

Being a good conversationalist isn't a natural trait. It takes thought and practice. Apply these tools and you'll be able to converse in any situation. **T**

**Patricia L. Fry, CTM,** is a freelance writer and regular contributor to this magazine. She lives on Ojai, California.

*"Feedback is a powerful tool in helping people change their poor conversational habits."*



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**Speak from the heart and don't let the rules rule you.**

# Show the Audience the Real You

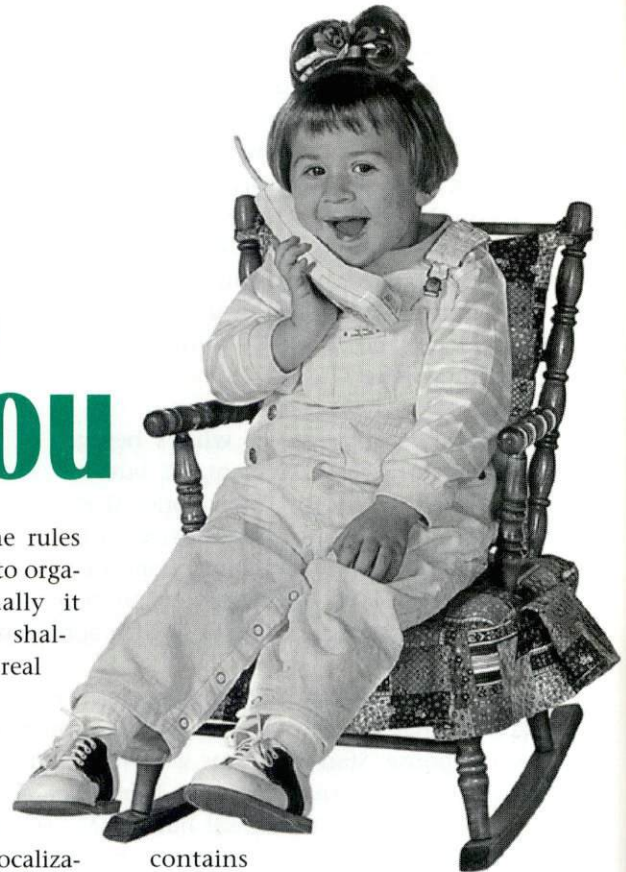
An ancient story is told of an apprentice who wanted to become wise like the spiritual masters he saw in his land. He approached one who was peacefully sitting in the sun and asked, "Sir, how long would it take me to learn your ways?" The sage calmly looked up at the youth and said, "Five years." The youth frowned because he was anxious to learn, and five years seemed eternal. He said to this wise man, "If I studied very, very hard and worked very diligently, day and night, how long would it take me?" The master answered, "Ten years."

Communication is so easy that we often make it harder by our efforts. We too easily become seduced by formula and structure. In writing: noun, subject, verb. Each paragraph has a topic sentence and conveys a complete thought. Margins are one-inch on each side, and you must never dangle a participle nor split an infinitive. In speaking, the formula is: opening, body and conclusion. Maintain eye contact, use gestures, move appropriately, and don't speak in no double nega-

tives. We earnestly study the rules and procedures. It does help to organize learning, but eventually it becomes like staying in the shallow end of the pool: the real adventure lies beyond.

A baby communicates exceedingly well. Within her range of experience, she can effectively influence those around her by gestures, vocalizations and emotional behavior. A lover speaks volumes with a raised eyebrow and a smile in her eye. A father gently rocks his newborn son and is truly a man of peace. An elderly woman stroking her dying husband's hand communicates in a realm beyond description.

As speakers and writers, we want our audiences to be persuaded, informed, entranced, educated, enthused and entertained. We can master the rules and create structurally perfect speeches or articles. We can deliver them with polished professionalism. But there is great danger in focusing on form over substance. Procedural perfection can be hollow and dead unless it



contains the element not taught in school but ever-present in us all (despite our denials): love.

An amazing transformation takes place when a person speaks truly from the heart. What would have been an imperfect stiff-legged, hands-in-pockets presentation filled with stuttering, "ah's and um's" and grammatical errors can still bring people to their feet, or tears to their eyes, when the focus is on serving – on speaking from the heart – rather than structure. You may not score high on rules, but you can have the most memorable presentation and win the prize of true communication.

When I first began writing, I would agonize over every sentence,



every word. Was it right? Would another be better? Should I rework that paragraph or move it elsewhere? I really don't understand gerunds and why they dangle, and I'd hate to have an editor realize that! My first speeches were written out in full, then broken down to themes, then placed on three-by-five cards, then memorized over and over again. During the speech, what if I forgot a phrase? What about that humorous anecdote? Oh, no! I forgot a point and now it's too late to insert it. Blast! The yellow light came on and I needed to add this great thought!

Once you relax and think of serving your audience instead of impressing them with form and your knowledge of the rules, your speaking and writing will advance to levels undreamed of in your structured days. Love is serving your audience with your thoughts and ideas; it is not maudlin nor manipulative. It

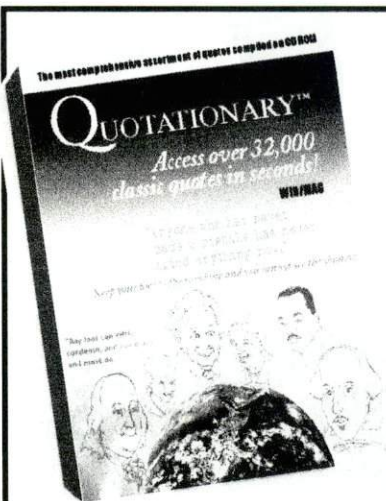
merely expresses a "service" attitude, expecting nothing in return. If your intent is to win a prize, make a sale or finesse an advantage over another, you may succeed in the short term, but eventually your presentations will be stale, trite and forgettable. When you speak or write with "how may I serve?" as your groundwork, everything you produce will seem fresh, clean and valued.

Speaking from the heart is as simple as expressing the joy you felt when you walked through a garden of riotous colors and soothing fragrances. It can be as easy as describing the wonder you felt when you saw a glint of sunlight in a pine forest. It is as meaningful as relaying how cool the dirt felt when potting a plant. It is not the words themselves or the topic at hand that matter – as there are endless subjects for speeches and writings – it is in how you view your presentation. Do you wish to express yourself with sincerity or

follow a well-rehearsed format? Do you wish your audience to feel the things you have felt or to be fed with intellectualisms? Do you want perfection or to express the all too imperfect humanity in us all? When you wish to honestly share a part of yourself, the words will flow, the images will be created, and the listener will capture your vision.

Think of the speaking and writing rules as a necessary and solid foundation, but a foundation only. If you could build a skyscraper, would you be content to stay on the ground floor? Master the rules... to a degree. But then, move beyond that and speak your words and write your lines with love for your audience and a desire to sincerely share a part of yourself. **1**

**Dennis Kessinger** is a writer and novelist. A former Toastmaster, he lives in Redding, California, with his wife and young son.



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## HOW TO

By Eric Guévremont, CTM

Leave no part of your speech unchallenged.

# Win At That Speech Contest – Even If You Lose

Would you like to perform at your highest level in a speech contest? Do you dream of inspiring multitudes with poise and confidence? I did, last spring, when I participated in my first Toastmasters speech contest. After winning at my club and at the area level, I made it to the division contest. There, in front of 200 observers, I learned that contests are a competition with yourself. There are no judges, no competitors. Only your personal performance counts. Here are a few lessons I learned along the way that may help you perform better:

### PREPARE THOROUGHLY.

■ **Set a challenging, yet realistic goal.** Don't set yourself up for failure by determining "to win the world championship." You can't predict who the judges will pick, even if the winner seems obvious to you. Avoid frustration by setting a goal that you can control – for example, "to develop my skills to the level of world champion" (or club/area champion). You have complete control over the level of skill you attain.

It may take time, effort, perseverance and insight to achieve this goal, but you remain in control. After all, you can speak at a world champion's level and still lose within your club. The good news is that if you consistently speak like a champion, you will tend to win your share of contests.

■ **Imitate the best.** Attend your district conference to watch accomplished speakers in action. Study the videotape of last year's International Speech Contest finalists. Watch the speakers carefully, noting what they did and didn't do. Invite a few Toastmaster friends to a "judging party." Judge each contestant, using the official judging form, and then have a discussion about the contestants' performances. You will learn what the best speakers do and gain valuable insight into what the judges are looking for. It is unlikely that you will win regularly unless you have at least seen the champions in action. First imitate

what they do, and then develop your own style.

■ **Learn slowly, but learn well.** Developing your speech contest skills is a yearlong project. You reap the results, the habits that you've seeded. Spend twice as much time on each contest speech as you would on a "regular" manual pre-





sentation, and polish each speech to perfection. At the end of the year, if you have given five contest-quality speeches, you will have gained five "years" of contest experience. Furthermore, you will have some speeches ready if you get to the regional or international finals. Speech mastery requires that you skip no steps in developing your foundations. Success comes only from extensive and complete preparation.

■ **Get feedback from others.** You are responsible for designing your own speech. However, after practicing a few times, you get attached to your words, and it becomes difficult for you to improve. Let go of the ego and ask others for objective feedback. Make sure to ask for specific advice, e.g. "what do you think of my gesture on this sentence?" Leave no part of your speech unchallenged.

■ **Always practice the speech with a new twist:**

Speak in a new location, experiment with your voice, change the speech itself, try new gestures, speak in the manner of a well-known celebrity or while carrying dumbbells. Making a change every time will prevent you from getting "stuck," from blanking out. You will thus feel confident if something unexpected happens during your contest performance.

■ **Practice the speech at least five days a week,** for three to five weeks. It takes that long for you to truly embody your speech. Practicing once a day for a week is more powerful than rehearsing seven times the day of the competition, and will lead to a more polished speech.

## AT THE CONTEST

■ **Use cards to remind you to get centered while you wait your turn to speak.** Write down your first sentence, or even the first few words of each paragraph. It will relieve you from last-minute panic about forgetting your speech.

■ **Practice in the contest room ahead of time.** Also, before the contest starts, stand on the platform and visualize yourself speaking when the room is full. Breathe deeply and know that you will be all right. It helps if you already have attended a contest as a member of the audience. There is nothing like attending a live performance to discover how well you need to prepare.

■ **Channel your nervous energy.** You will feel nervous before the contest. Eat lightly. Hormones are flowing through your body, preparing you for action. Move around, walk, and thus give an outlet for that nervous energy. Focus on remaining centered, detached from the outcome or from other contestants. You are at the level you're at. If you don't win, you weren't ready, or it simply wasn't meant to be. Perform as you've been performing in practice, and let the chips fall where they may. Don't try to "out-do" yourself. You may unconsciously over-exaggerate your gestures, speak too fast, or come up with a brilliant idea – which turns out to be not so insightful. Give the audience time to absorb what you said. Above all, trust your preparation.

■ **Make sure someone tapes your actual speech.** Reviewing your performance will give you invaluable feedback for the next time.

■ **The larger the audience, the more energy you can tap into.** It is very energizing to speak to a large crowd. Adapt your speech for the larger audience: bigger gestures, louder voice, different tonality. In

our division contest, one woman gave a very witty speech...which was perfect for a small audience. Her voice didn't carry past the first few tables; her visual aids were unreadable to most audience members. She didn't give herself a chance.

■ **Distractions happen.** When I started my speech at the division contest, a fire truck whizzed by with very loud sirens. Don't let that disturb you. Audience members may not have noticed the distraction, so don't point it out to them. Their attention will go where your focus is. If you are concerned that they won't be able to hear you while the sirens are blowing, pause for a moment. But keep going. If appropriate, you can joke about it. Otherwise, proceed with your speech as planned.

■ **Choose to believe that judges are consistent.** In the past 10 years, several people have made it to the finals of the International Speech Contest two years in a row! That can't be luck. How many repeat winners are there in your district?

Resist the thought that there is a conspiracy against you. When I lost at the division level, many people told me "I don't understand. You were clearly the best. I don't know what those judges were thinking." Well-meaning friends may make you feel more frustrated, taking away your power and putting it in the mystical hands of the judges.

Choose to believe that if you didn't win, then there is something more that you need to learn. There is a reason the judges made the choices they did. If you didn't win, you weren't ready to win. Go back to the drawing board, work hard, and learn from your lessons. You will thus develop your skills as you set out to do. Whether or not you win the speech contest, you will still come out a winner. **1**

.....  
**Eric Guévremont, CTM,** is a member of EarthSave Club 8237-21 in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada.



# It's the *Pause* that *Really* Refreshes!

Replace those troublesome ahs with short, strategic silences.

**M**any years ago, while attending a church service, I counted more than 100 ahs in a visiting missionary's 15-minute appeal for contributions. I was, sad to say, engaged in counting ahs when I should have been listening to the message.

The missionary's message was lost on me in great part because he had never learned the power of pauses. If for every ah he had substituted an appropriate pause for a few seconds, his message, supporting anecdotes and bits of humor would have etched themselves on the minds of his listeners to better effect.

Ahs are nothing more than vocalized bridges connecting one thought to the next. The only real antidote is to consciously replace them with pauses. The merits of pausing are manifold: Pauses are an essential ingredient of humor. They accentuate the positive. And they give the listener an interval, however short, to absorb the message and file it away in memory.

## THE AH PROBLEM

As for the ah, I for one believe that too much is made too often of this peccadillo of public speaking. How often do we find the assigned grammarian tabulating when he or she should be listening for the graphic, picturesque use of words and language, and the more obvious linguistic faux pas. After all, it's better to evaluate than to tabulate.

Admittedly, calling attention to promiscuous use of ahs has merit. How often are speakers surprised when told they used 10, 20 or 30 ahs during a seven-minute speech?

## SOLVING THE PROBLEM

Each ah is a hiccup of thought, a distraction, that interferes with smooth transferral of ideas and emotions from speaker to listener. Thus, ahs certainly should be avoided in the interest of effective communication. But eliminating ahs should be a positive effort. It should focus on the habitual and deliberate use of appropriate pauses, not simply on the negative attempt to wipe out a defect.

Properly inserting pauses involves two elements: thought control and breath control. Thinking comes first. Unfortunately, too many speakers do not mesh the gears of brain and voice. They talk rapidly without monitoring what they are saying – like the speaker who when asked for his subject beforehand, replied: "I won't know until I've heard what I have to say!"

## THOUGHT CONTROL: MENTAL MULTIPLEXING

On the other hand, the person delivering a well-prepared speech is in effect multiplexing – transmitting several streams of signals over a single channel. While presenting the message, he or she also interprets audience reaction and monitors environmental distractions such as



BY ROY FENSTERMAKER, DTM ■ ILLUSTRATION BY MIKE CRESSY





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*“Pauses are an  
essential ingredient  
of humor.*

*They accentuate  
the positive.”*

---

person, in a matter of seconds I was handed the tiny microphone.

In the pause of no more than a few seconds that ensued, several possible actions raced through my mind.

- “Don’t waste time replacing the mike on your lapel.”
- “Move the mike from one hand to the other so that you can use both hands in gesturing.”
- “Repeat the last phrase and continue from there.”
- “Concentrate on what you’re saying, and make the audience believe!”

That involuntary break allowed me to quickly regain control, and I have to assume the glitch had minimal effect on my speech’s final outcome. However, one man asked me afterward if I had dropped the mike deliberately.

#### **BREATH CONTROL**

The second fact to consider about using pauses effectively is the matter of breath control. Unless we have asthma, obesity or an incipient heart problem, we rarely give much thought to our breathing apparatus. We take it for granted. Unfortunately, this is true too often when it comes to speaking.

Many problems the beginning speaker faces, including ah problems, could be put to rest by giving more thought to the mechanics by which we give voice to our thoughts and emotions, especially how we breathe. Proper breathing provides oxygen to the lungs, energy to the body and power to the voice. Take, for example, the signs of nervousness: the squeaky voice, sentences trailing off into inaudibility, or (more rarely nowadays) blushing. Most of these defects can be remedied by the habitual practice of steadied breathing. (I highly recommend the exercises suggested in the Toastmasters publication, *Your Speaking Voice*, Catalog No. 199.)

sounds, noises, and temperature and lighting variations. The secret of the successful speaker is to be aware of all these factors and still remain in perfect control. Such a speaker knows where he or she is in the presentation at all times and what if, any adjustments, are necessary to win the audience.

As an example of having to make spur-of-the-moment adjustments, I cite a personal experience. While competing in the finals of the International Speech Contest of 1983, I accidentally knocked my lapel mike to the floor. With the help of the contest chair-



Taking several deep breaths before beginning to speak and cultivating the habit of pausing occasionally to inhale – especially between significant transitions of thought – can work wonders. The pause provides time to look ahead into the mental outline of what follows. Moreover, it gives the speaker increased self-confidence and enhances the listeners' conviction that the speaker is really in control of the material.

Keep in mind that pauses in the right places need not imply staccato delivery. Pauses may vary in length – one beat, two beats, three beats. Variety and placement add to the delivery's appeal and aesthetics.

In preparing your next speech, think positively about what the 16th and 17th century author Sir Francis Bacon

called "lucid intervals and happy pauses." Remember that pauses – like ahs – should not be inadvertent interruptions of thought, but rather deliberate and important parts of your speech – vocalized bridges spanning one thought to the next. If you have an "ah problem," plan how to replace those irritating sounds with short breathing spaces between ideas, words or phrases. Give yourself – and your audience – a break. And you will find that you have discovered the key to making a really refreshing speech. **T**

**Roy Fenstermaker, DTM.** won the International Speech Contest in 1983. He is a member of Dynamic Force-masters Club 587-F in Santa Fe Springs, California.

# Give Audiences a Break!

By Roy Fenstermaker, DTM

Pauses play important roles in a variety of public speaking situations, not least of which is replacing those troublesome ahs. Here are examples of some other ways pauses can serve as speech-enhancers:

■ **Humor:** One of the funniest episodes in Jack Benny's lengthy and hilarious career was the scene in which a holdup man accosted him and demanded: "Your money or your life." Instead of replying instantly, Benny placed his hand under his left elbow and stared off into space. The criminal, with growing impatience, said, "Well, what will it be?" Benny's reply: "I'm thinking! I'm thinking!"

The comedian's reply in the midst of this colloquy was typical of his mastery of timing. Suppose the three lines of dialogue just cited were spoken exactly as given but without a break. How would it register on a laugh-meter? Zilch!

■ **Accentuating the Positive:** The (I hesitate to use the word) pregnant pause may come before or after the key word or phrase. In effect, it is a verbal exclamation point. It says, "Now pay attention, this is important!"

And, incidentally, it gives the audience an opportunity to laugh. One can only say, "Let them!" And the experienced speaker will never step on a joke that's getting a laugh by rushing pell-mell into the next thought.

Even in speech contests, in which time is of the essence, rarely will a few-seconds pause here and there be a factor in disqualifying a speaker. Besides, the preparation should include allowances for pauses . . .

The pause accentuates the positive in every speech, including humorous ones. It is the single most effective

way of calling attention to the importance of what has been said or will be said.

Consider that rhetorical master, former British Prime Minister Winston Spencer Churchill, speaking to the Canadian Parliament on December 30, 1941:

*When I warned them (the French Government) that Britain would fight on alone whatever they did, their generals told their Prime Minister and his divided cabinet: "In three weeks England will have her neck wrung like a chicken." Some chicken! Some neck!*

Try reading that passage with and without pauses.

■ **Aid to Memory:** Another use of the pause is to give the audience the opportunity to absorb the message and file it away for future reference. Rarely will listeners take notes while the speaker is talking. It stands to reason, therefore, that the speaker should make it easy for listeners to remember: There are at least two possible ways to do this:

(1) Use verbal signposts – such as solid speech organization, acronyms, enumerations and mnemonics – along the way.

(2) Give listeners a little breathing space to fix in mind the point just made or to alert them to an important point coming up.

In brief, pauses help eliminate the bane of beginners, the ahs; they enhance the effectiveness of humor; they accentuate the positive; and they provide listeners with opportunities to absorb what is being said. To think we can accomplish all this by something as simple as momentary silence!



By Cindy Podurgal Chambers, DTM

One June day in 1968, the mailman handed me an envelope covered with a childish script much like my own. Ripping it open, I discovered an amazing treasure: An invitation to Janet Thompson's 12th birthday party! The most popular girl in the entire 6th grade wanted me to come to her party! Oh, the promise, the hope, the power of an invitation!

That simple notecard – swiftly enshrined next to my autographed photo of Davy Jones – marked the beginning of my love affair with invitations.

Whether embossed or unembellished, invitations say "I need you" in a most delightful way. They're also one of Toastmasters' most overlooked PR tools. They can help your club gain new members, spotlight its successes and increase member pride. In short, invitations are an invitation to club success.

Let's say you'll be completing your final CTM speech next month. Who would you like to have share that special moment? Your boss? Your next-door neighbor? Your niece? Invite them, using either the Toastmasters Guest Invitation (Catalog #344), store-bought notecards or homemade postcards. An invitation doesn't have to be fancy or formal to speak eloquently. And an event doesn't have to be exceptional to warrant an invited guest. Invitations, by their very nature, can turn an ordinary meeting into a special one.

Imagine you're the Vice President Education, and you'll soon be inducting a new member into your club. At least two weeks before the ceremony, ask for a list of special people the inductee would like in attendance. Then mail each one a simple invitation saying something like this:

*The Officers and Members of \_\_\_\_\_  
Toastmasters Club request the pleasure  
of your company at the induction of  
\_\_\_\_\_  
on \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_.  
RSVP to \_\_\_\_\_*

At the conclusion of the meeting, you should extend a verbal invitation to each guest to join the club as well. But even if they don't join, you've created a positive and memorable impression of Toastmasters – one that they will share with others. Meanwhile, the newly inducted member has gained pride in his achievement and a sense

# By Invitation Only

of the significance of his Toastmasters membership. It's a priceless membership tool for the cost of a few notecards and stamps.

Toastmasters International also has formal "Invitation to Membership" cards (Catalog #348), which invite visitors to join. Your club's Vice President Membership should use the club's guest registry to send one of these to all club visitors a few days after they've attended a meeting. It's an easy and elegant way of saying "we like you and want you to join us again" – and who can resist being needed in such a nice way?

Another invitation-only event is as easy to initiate as it is effective. Simply identify some of your city's top speakers, then send each a card inviting them to share five minutes' worth of speaking tips at your next Toastmasters meeting. Most would be flattered to give their expert advice. Your club members will benefit from the speakers' knowledge, and your esteemed visitors will probably enjoy the rest of the meeting too – perhaps enough to return as members.

Don't forget to add the media to every guest list. Before hosting a special event, invite a local reporter to join you. As with all written invitations, include a phone number where you can be reached for confirmation. And if you don't hear back within a week or so, call. Few people RSVP anymore, and most would appreciate a timely reminder.

As you can see, there are as many opportunities for sending invitations as there are club events. Here are just a few more to get you started:

- Speech contests
- Completion of Youth Leadership or Speechcraft
- Area meeting or club exchanges
- Club parties, picnics, fundraisers or other special events
- End-of-year recognition for officers and/or other club contributors
- Member farewells

So what are you waiting for? An invitation? Write your own and watch your club reap the benefits for years to come! **T**

**Cindy Podurgal Chambers, DTM.** is a freelance writer and member of Heartline Toastmasters Club 7409-63 in Clarksville, Tennessee.





## HOW TO

By Marjorie Brody, CSP

### E-mail Etiquette:

# Conducting the Business Electronic Way

**B**usiness etiquette encompasses much more than simply knowing how, when, and if to hold a door open for someone. With more businesses across the world connected to the Internet and relying on e-mail, knowing "netiquette" is important; it could make or break a business relationship.

More professionals are relying on e-mail as a form of communication. Often it's the fastest way to make contact and get responses. But if you don't know the proper etiquette for on-line correspondence, you could lose an account or face personal embarrassment with just one gaffe or misstep. Here are seven suggestions to polish and hone your e-mail etiquette skills:

**1 Watch your words!** You may think that what you say is easy to understand, but sometimes words can be misconstrued. Be concise and to the point. This will eliminate the

need for costly long distance phone calls to follow up on e-mails that need further clarification.

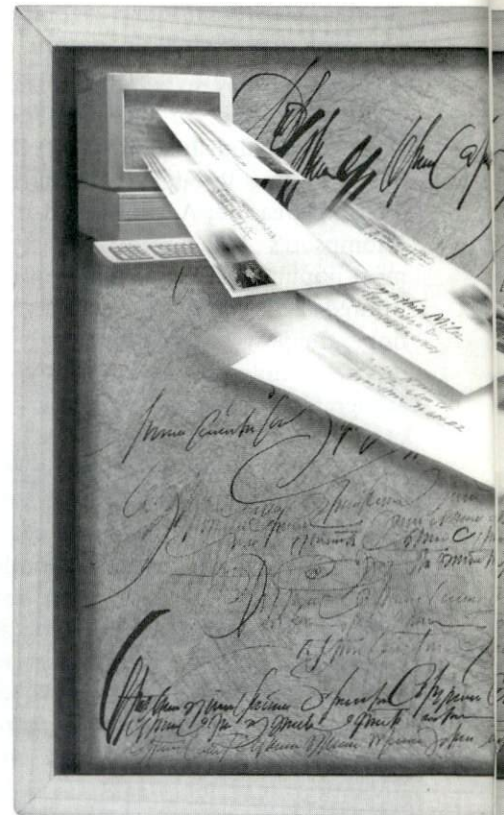
**2 Don't "flame" people.** If you use antagonistic words or critical comments – known as "flames" in cyberspace – they can hurt people and cause awkward situations. E-mail is not the place to make negative comments. In general, it's not a good idea to "diss" the competition – but it's even worse to do so in cyberspace. If there is a problem, resolve it in person whenever possible, or over the phone. Don't have a war of typed words.

**3 Remember, few people like "spam."** When sending unsolicited e-mails, make sure the message has value to the recipients. If you don't, they may very well consider it "spam" (Internet lingo for junk mail), and delete it unread. Whenever possible get the recipients' permission,

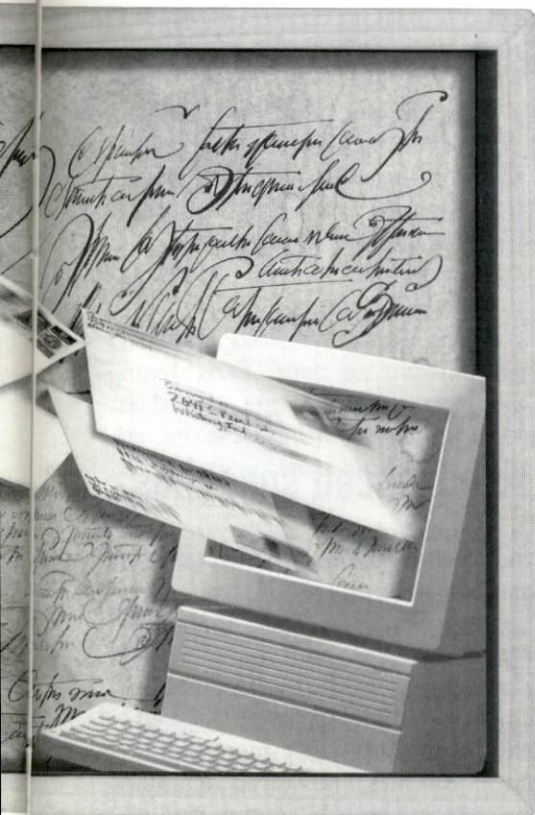
or at least ensure that they know the message is coming.

**4 Nothing is private.** There is no such thing as a private e-mail. Even when a message is deleted, many software programs and on-line services can retrieve messages on the hard drive. Before you click on "send," consider what may happen if the message is read by someone else – your boss, for example. The general rule of thumb is not to send personal or confidential e-mails. Better safe than sorry. You certainly won't want a client's secrets revealed or your off-color joke to be read by the wrong person.

**5 Keep attachments to a minimum.** The larger the attached document, the longer it takes to download, and the more memory space it fills on a recipient's computer. Some e-mail attachments may not be necessary. Consider faxing







lengthy documents that might otherwise be e-mailed. Or, if time is not really an issue, use regular mail services, UPS or Federal Express.

**6** **CC Or Not To CC?** Just like a regular memo, you may want to send copies of your e-mail to others in the office or other clients as "FYIs." The same guidelines apply about flames and spams.

**7** **Never assume anything.** While you may be an Internet pro and familiar with the lingo and various emoticons (like the popular smiley face :-)) and others), don't assume the recipient is. **T**

**Marjorie Brody, CSP,** is a professional speaker, executive coach, seminar leader and author of 15 books, including *Etiquette for Everyone, Everyday*. She can be reached at [mbrody@brodycomm.com](mailto:mbrody@brodycomm.com).

## Guidelines For Contacting TI's Headquarters Via E-Mail

**W**orld Headquarters staff members receive lots of e-mail; many get near 100 messages a day. To expedite your request and help us serve you better, please note the following guidelines when sending e-mails to WHQ:

- Include your full name, as well as your club and district numbers. And if you are asking us to send you something or correct your mailing address in our database, indicate your address, including the country you live in.
- Send your message to only one person or department. If it gets to the wrong person, we'll redirect the message to the right person. For correct addresses, please refer to our e-mail directory on the TI Web site at [www.toastmasters.org](http://www.toastmasters.org) or the sidebar below.
- Make sure your return e-mail address is valid, so we can reply to your inquiry.
- Keep your message short, and summarize your main point in the first sentence or two.
- Because of the volume of mail received, our policy is to keep e-mailed replies brief and to the point. Staff members check their e-mail messages several times each day. Nevertheless, our standard five-day response time applies for e-mail as well.
- Please keep attachments to a minimum, as they take a long time to download and often don't translate. We accept documents created in Word Perfect, Microsoft Word and Excel. When sending attachments, please remember to include your name, address and club and district numbers on the attached document as well.
- A word about documents: Please visit our Web site before requesting documents. Our most requested documents are available to download from there ([www.toastmasters.org](http://www.toastmasters.org).)
- Certain documents are not accepted by staff in e-mailed forms. Those include member applications and educational award applications, both of which require original signatures.

WHQ does not have the resources to conduct research for members' upcoming speeches. If you need information on speechmaking topics, your best bet is the community library. If you need copies of a specific magazine article, we'll be happy to send it to you provided you know the issue in which it appeared.

### For Questions On:

Membership and new clubs  
 Educational materials, speech contest procedures and rules  
 Orders  
 Finance, officer records, address changes  
 District programs, regional conferences  
 Publications and public relations  
 Policy administration, proxies, bylaws

### E-mail:

[drex@toastmasters.org](mailto:drex@toastmasters.org)  
[educ@toastmasters.org](mailto:educ@toastmasters.org)  
[tmorders@toastmasters.org](mailto:tmorders@toastmasters.org)  
[fapa@toastmasters.org](mailto:fapa@toastmasters.org)  
[ssills@toastmasters.org](mailto:ssills@toastmasters.org)  
[pubs@toastmasters.org](mailto:pubs@toastmasters.org)  
[nancyl@toastmasters.org](mailto:nancyl@toastmasters.org)





## CAN WE TALK?

By Shelia Spencer, ATM-S

# Don't Quit After Your CTM:

### 10 reasons to give 10 advanced speeches.

It took more than a year for you to complete them, but the 10 assignments on your CTM (Competent Toastmaster) application have finally been initiated by the Vice President Education. You've received hearty congratulations from fellow members, and they are introducing you as "the brand-new CTM." Very soon, you and your boss will receive formal mailings from World Headquarters that

document your achievement. Time to put up your feet and...

Wait! What's this? The other side of the CTM application is asking you to choose two advanced manuals, which will be mailed to you free of charge. The manuals are listed, but you don't remember seeing copies of them or hearing other members talk about these projects. Oh well, at least they're

free, so close your eyes, pick two, and forget about them, right?

Wrong! If your club has been encouraging its members to pursue ATM (Advanced Toastmaster) designations, you've probably been encouraged to think about these advanced manuals from the day you finished your seventh or eighth speech. Your mentor has recommended a few manuals for you, and perhaps you've leafed through some other members' old copies. You know which projects you want to start with, and which manuals will follow them.

If you are halfway through your CTM (or beyond), and find yourself identifying more with paragraph two of this article than with paragraph three, here are 10 reasons for you not to see the CTM as the "end" of your Toastmasters speaking career:

**1 Create new personal challenges.** Part of the excitement of pursuing a CTM is experiencing new-growth processes. When club meetings become a "no-brainer" because you've already mastered the skills required for all typical club functions, you might become bored and indifferent. Meeting the complex objectives of advanced speech projects will "raise the bar" by asking

you to elevate your personal performance standards.

**2 Expand the content of your club presentations.** It's difficult, if not impossible, to cover the essentials of any topic in a mere five to seven minutes. Advanced manual assignments provide an opportunity to bring complex ideas and detailed information to your club meetings. Now you can select topics with more "meat" and cover them in more depth.

**3 Develop a broader range of speaking skills.** Not to brag, but I'm almost finished with my sixth CTM. As with most members, it took me a year and a-half to complete my first, but now I encounter speech opportunities everywhere, especially as an emergency "replacement" speaker. For these situations, it's usually best to have a standard five- to seven-minute CTM project "in your back pocket." Making the most of these opportunities will draw on every skill you possess. Advanced manual assignments give you additional skills to enhance all your presentations - even those additional CTM projects.

**4 Make a mental connection between Toastmasters and "real**



life." The simple, basic objectives of the first 10 speech projects allowed you the freedom to speak about your friends, pets, hobbies, dreams – almost any subject qualified as a topic. However, in real life the bank needs to discuss the fine points of that loan, the boss wants a detailed status report, and the kids demand answers to life's difficult questions.

Advanced manuals require you to adapt basic skills toward structured goals, such as transmitting technical knowledge or speaking before a skeptical audience. Practicing these techniques can help you understand how to apply your speaking skills within the context of real-life situations.

**5 Strengthen your job skills.** Are you already employed or hoping to pursue a career in customer service, sales, management, public relations, training or professional speaking? Several of the advanced manuals are geared toward developing skills that are central to these professions. It's even possible that your work-related presentations can be delivered as advanced manual assignments. Thus, you get to practice and refine your corporate presentations within your club meetings before delivering them on the job.

**6 Enrich your personal life.** Would you like to improve your interpersonal skills in general, or be more at ease and verbally adept during social gatherings? Do you feel a longing to volunteer for the storytelling program at the local library, or become more involved with activities in your community or house of worship? Advanced manuals that include specific assignments and insights for strengthening these particular skills are available.

**7 Select advanced speech topics to benefit your club members.** If you choose manuals such as *Persuasive Speaking*, *Speaking to In-*

*form* or *Interpersonal Communication*, your topics can be creatively geared to the needs of your member audience. Sell them on Toastmasters concepts; inform them about real issues within the corporation or community where you meet; teach them ways to resolve personal conflicts so that they can reduce those stress factors in their lives.

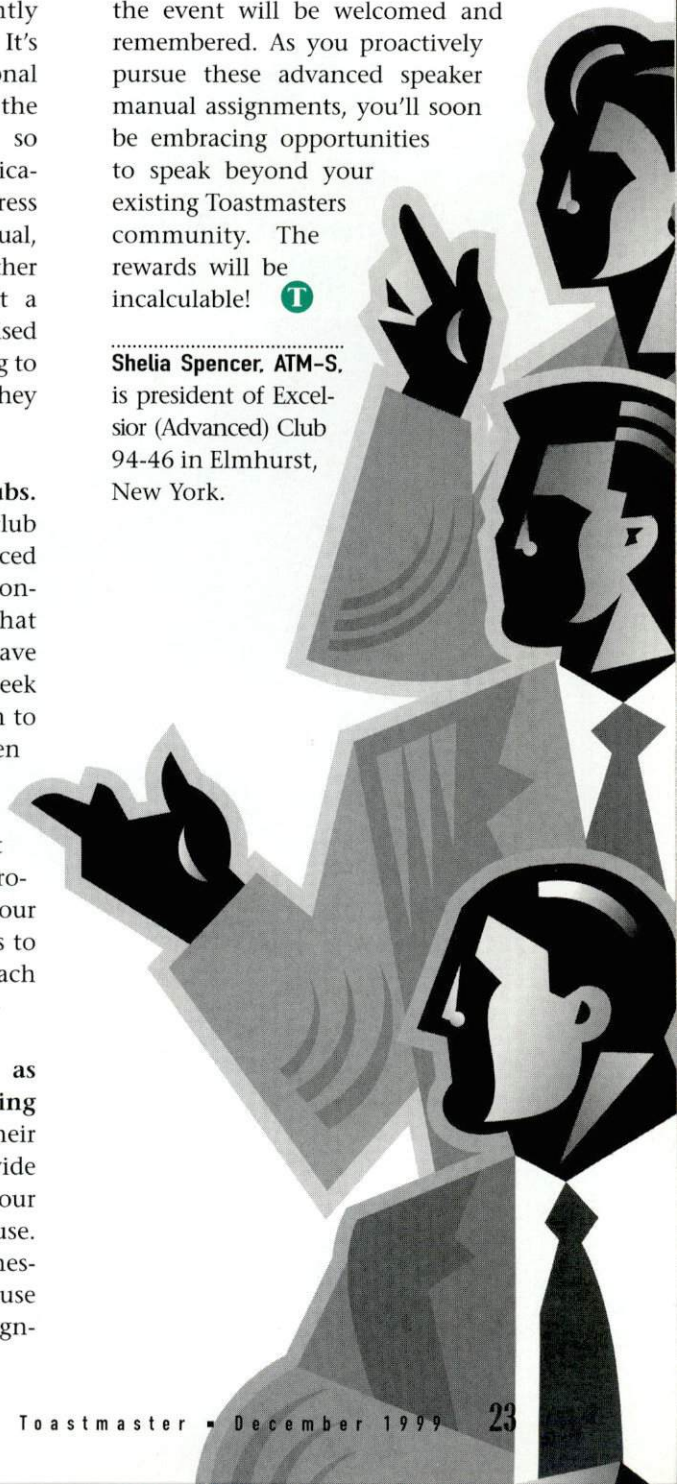
**8 Pave the way for your club speakers.** Are you currently mentoring other club members? It's a mistake to think that educational guidance is unnecessary after the third speech, because there is so much to learn about communication and leadership! As you progress through your own advanced manual, you'll be setting an example for other members. Soon, you may start a whole new trend. Don't be surprised when other members start turning to you for advice and support as they begin their own ATM projects!

**9 Network with nearby clubs.** The very first person in a club who undertakes a specific advanced manual may feel anxious and confused. However, it's likely that members in neighboring clubs have completed these assignments. Seek out their experience, invite them to attend your club's meeting when you present the speech, and consider asking one of your "coaches" to serve as a guest evaluator for your advanced project. Once this door is opened, your clubs may find many other ways to share unique resources with each other.

**10 Use advanced manuals as springboards to something bigger.** Advanced projects and their accompanying suggestions provide potential marketing tools for your club, yourself or a personal cause. Consider the possibility of orchestrating a Toastmasters Open House around a *Professional Speaker* assign-

ment. Volunteer to design and host a corporate event by applying approaches from the *Discussion Leader* manual. Delivering a keynote address at your high school reunion is a natural way to fulfill speaking objectives from *The Entertaining Speaker*. If you have an opportunity to toast your mayor or roast your retiring company president, check out the guidelines in *Special Occasion Speeches* so that your contribution to the event will be welcomed and remembered. As you proactively pursue these advanced speaker manual assignments, you'll soon be embracing opportunities to speak beyond your existing Toastmasters community. The rewards will be incalculable! **T**

**Shelia Spencer, ATM-S,** is president of Excelsior (Advanced) Club 94-46 in Elmhurst, New York.







**N**ewcomers to public speaking and those who speak infrequently often show amazement at how long it takes to get a speech from the idea stage to the ready-to-give stage. When they remember the time and effort involved, they often pass up opportunities to speak.

# So Long Why Does It Take Me to Prepare a Speech?



## Perhaps you don't know this fool-proof speech-making formula.

Why is it that many speakers seem to prepare speeches with ease while others struggle? Are you just born with the talent? Is it always a big job?

The secret is a natural formula. Those who know it prepare easily; those who don't have a hard time. An experienced speaker, someone who has made the formula habit, can usually construct a well-prepared speech moments before delivery. Many even get so good at it that others think they were "born" with speaking genius.

What then is this magic formula for preparing a speech? What are the steps to making speech preparation easy? There are six:

- 1 Gather a random idea list.
- 2 Write out a Specific Purpose Statement.
- 3 Rearrange the body from the random list.
- 4 Add the introduction and conclusion.
- 5 Rewrite the notes into delivery notes.
- 6 Practice.

On first glance you may say, "That's no secret. I know those!" Yes, perhaps you do, intellectually, but the failure to do them habitually, all in order, is the cause of most of the pain of getting a speech together. So, let's look at each step more carefully:

### STEP 1: MAKE A RANDOM IDEA LIST

Novice speakers often beat their heads against the wall in search of a speech topic. Experienced speakers usually have more topics to speak on than opportunities to deliver them. Why? Because they are continually practicing the first rule.

Experienced speakers *expect* to give speeches. They think of themselves as "speakers." Therefore, they are constantly in the process of gathering speech material and jotting down speech ideas. This is the first step of the process. The more speeches you give, the more you will develop the same habit.

Before any speech, you will need to have developed a random list of thoughts. You may do this over a long period of time or just before you prepare the speech. You can't skip this step. You must not go directly to preparing speaking notes, or worse yet, to writing out the entire speech.

In fact, here's some advice from my 30 years experience as a professional speaker: Don't write out speeches. Although writing out a speech has some benefits and values, it should not be done early in the preparation process. Rather, begin your preparation by writing down

a random list of ideas that you might cover in this speech. Be careful, however, not to worry about organization or the number of items on this list. Don't even be concerned about whether you will use all the material. Just quickly jot down random thoughts off the top of your head. Put them down in no particular order. (This is very important.)

Remember, this sheet of paper is not your speaking notes. It is just the "homework" phase during which you quickly and randomly brainstorm for ideas.

### STEP 2: THE SPECIFIC PURPOSE STATEMENT

It is important to realize that when you step on the stage, every audience member will automatically wonder about three things. You must answer these questions right up front:

1. What are you talking about?
2. How are you going to approach this topic?
3. What's in it for me?

Failure to answer any of these questions in the first few minutes is a sure road to failure. Answer them with a sentence or two called the Specific Purpose Statement – the SPS for short.

The SPS, though not a part of any of the three main speech sections (introduction, body or conclusion), is usually placed between the introduction and the body of the speech to answer all three questions. Every speech should be prepared and delivered around a simple and clear SPS.

Step two then, on a new sheet of paper, is to write out an SPS, usually in prose, that genuinely answers the three questions. Tell what your topic is, what structure you will use to present it and why the topic is important to the audience. Write it on the second sheet of paper near the top, in a box, leaving room to add an introduction before it.

From this point on, everything you write should fulfill the SPS. If it doesn't, change it, get rid of it or alter the SPS. Avoid this step and your speech will be hard to construct and the audience will be confused and bored. This is the most important of the six steps. Until you write a proper SPS, organization will elude you.

### STEP 3: REARRANGE THE BODY

Next is the organization step. Notice that it is not step one. Here, you'll review your random notes and try to identify three or four categories. If you keep the SPS in mind, you'll discover that some of the random ideas do not fit. Either eliminate those ideas or modify the SPS to include them. Putting numbers in the margin may help.

BY JOHN PORTUNE, ATM-B ■ PHOTOGRAPHY BY TOM & DEE ANN MCCARTHY



Next, transfer the selected random ideas to the new sheet of paper, the one with the SPS already on it. List the main categories in the order you will present them. Leave space between points for later ideas. This is the real organizational step of the process. It won't work, however, unless you have done the two preceding steps.

Also, if you are planning to use visual aids in your speech, this is the time to include them in your preparation. Add marks in the margin showing where they will be used.

#### **STEP 4: ADD THE INTRODUCTION AND CONCLUSION**

Now that you have roughly organized your topic, it is time to add the introduction and conclusion. These are like the wrapping on a birthday or Christmas present: They are not the substance of the speech, but without them, a speech is as incomplete as an expensive gift in a brown paper bag.

We often tell speakers to do three things in a speech: (1) tell the audience what you are going to tell them, (2) tell them, and then finally, (3) tell them what you told them. In essence, these are the three classical parts of a speech.

You already have the body of the speech – the “tell them” part – worked out. An introduction gets the audience members' minds ready to receive that body of information.

All elements of the introduction should lead the audience toward the body. It must be simple and direct. At all costs avoid the bad habit of tacking onto the introduction extra comments, apologies or even funny stories that have nothing to do with the body of your speech. Now write its key points on the second sheet of paper above the SPS.

Then, write out or memorize the first sentence or two of the introduction. The rest of the speech can be delivered impromptu, but the first words of the introduction must be “down pat” and delivered with drama and force. Many otherwise well-prepared speeches fail because of a lackluster opening.

The conclusion is normally a repetition of the introduction and SPS. It should simply and dramatically review the main points and remind the audience of why the topic is important to them. Just like the introduction, it should be short, mostly memorized and contain no filler material. The last words out of your mouth may be the only words the audience will remember.

#### **STEP 5: REWRITE YOUR NOTES**

Newcomers and professionals alike are often tempted to stop here. It is very easy to feel that the second sheet of paper, the one that contains all the material of your speech in an organized manner, is your speaking notes. Wrong!

This sheet is wordy and hard to read. Recopy your organizational notes onto a new sheet of paper as the notes from which you will speak.

Do this by writing down key words only. The information on the two sheets will be similar, but the speaking notes will be briefer. Print large, with a bold pen and

use abbreviations. Different colors and different styles for the letters (caps and lowercase) is also a good idea.

Replace the little connecting words with dashes or slashes. Speaking notes must be readable at a glance, from several feet away. They should contain only key words. Believe me, even beginners can effectively use memory-cue notes. It's been my experience that beginning speakers who quickly move away from written notes in favor of memory-cue notes improve as speakers more rapidly than those who write their speeches word for word.

#### **STEP 6: PRACTICE**

In public speaking, just as in any other skilled activity, lack of practice leads to “terminal mediocrity.” Professional musicians, for example, know that they cannot omit practice. Yet so many speakers do not actually speak their notes out loud in practice.

I suppose the reason they don't is that it is easy to feel ready to speak once you have notes on paper. Wrong. If you stop here, two essential ingredients will be left out.

One is language conversion. If you have ever tried reading out loud to a group, you will know that written words are very different from spoken words. Written language is compact and formal. An audience will miss much of written speech that is spoken; it comes too fast.

Spoken speech commonly uses simpler words. If you do not practice your speech out loud, your words will come out sounding stilted.

The other reason for actually speaking your speech is to energize your notes. Unfortunately, memory-cue notes, good as they are, won't function without practice. They are dead until performed.

Finally, as promised, there is a place for writing out a speech word for word. It is part of the practice step, not the organizational step. Only after you have prepared and practiced from memory-cue notes can it become helpful to write out a speech word for word. At this stage you will write it from your memory-cue notes. This process turns your spoken speech back into written words. The benefit of it is that you will almost surely turn a clever phrase that you can use or you may simplify a thought or think of a fresh idea. Speech contestants are familiar with the idea of writing out a speech as part of the practice phase. Don't use the script to speak from. However, this script will be useful if you later want to repeat the speech or if your audience wants a printed text from you.

Every speaker will implement these six steps slightly differently. Learn and adopt each step early in your speaking career, even for your first speeches. Make the process habitual. Your growth in public speaking will be maximized and your efforts minimized. You will never again complain, “Why does it take me so long to prepare a speech?” **T**

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**John Portune, ATM-B,** is a member of Sony Club 4038-4 in San Jose, California.





By Mark Majcher, ATM

### Toastmasters Share Their Lessons Learned

# Let's Hear It for Listening

**I** hear you loud and clear." Or do I? It's tempting to interrupt when someone starts a sentence because we are inclined to believe that we know exactly what the person will say next. If that is true of you, try this experiment. For the next 30 days do not interrupt anyone as the person starts to share a thought. You may be surprised at the number of times the speaker's words differ from what you expected to hear.

■ To be a good communicator, one must be a good listener. Listening demands more than simply hearing; it is active participation. This became especially evident to me during a conversation with a friend. I listened attentively for hidden messages and found that I then empathized with my friend more and knew him better than ever before. In the two-way listening process, the listener paraphrases what another person says, which enhances communication and produces better relationships.

DEREK WONG, CTM • SINGAPORE

■ As a mentor, I share information from The Toastmaster magazine to help new members develop and reinforce their speaking and listening skills. I keep – and use – all my copies because it's unlikely a new member will have seen the magazine's past issues.

ALISON BUCHANAN, ATM-B, CL • TORONTO, ONTARIO, CANADA

■ Having difficulty obtaining a "word for the day" for your club meetings?

I use a computer program by Merriam-Webster that provides a "Word of the Day" (WOD) seven days a week. Locate the program – whether on your own computer or at a library – at <http://www.m-w.com/service/subinst.htm>. You can obtain not only a word for the day, but also the pronunciation, all of the definitions and the word's history from its original source!

Check to see if your library provides free Internet service. If it does, and you don't have Internet access at home, try the free service when your turn as Grammmarian pops up on the schedule. (Your library may limit each person's Internet time and require advance reservations.)

JOHN E. ROBERTS JR., DTM • JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA

■ I have set up two Toastmasters "ideas" folders in my computer. One is for information from friends or e-mail lists that spark creative speech ideas. The other is to help me as Topicsmaster. This folder's contents range from HTML documents to material from Internet Quote pages to my own thoughts that I quickly jot down in Notepad.

JEAN V. DICKSON • SAINT JOHN, NEW BRUNSWICK, CANADA

■ When scheduled as Topicsmaster, I write club members' names on 3 x 5 cards. At the meeting, I pull cards of members who are present, excluding those with major speaking roles. This enables me to make sure everyone has an opportunity to speak.

HARRY L. JOHNS, ATM-G • LAS VEGAS, NEVADA

■ Early in my Toastmasters career, I learned to collect my thoughts before responding to my Table Topics assignment – by pausing and asking the Topicsmaster to repeat the question. This provides a little more time for my subconscious to start formulating thoughts and initiates a more organized response.

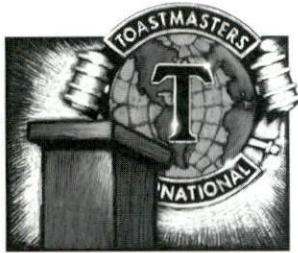
If I'm given a topic I know nothing about, I talk about something slightly related, then use a connecting transition to a subject I feel more comfortable with. It's easy to fill the required one-to-two minutes and even use the word of the day when I twist the task to my topic.

RICH WALKER, ATM-S • SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA

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

Send to: Mark Majcher  
"Topical Tips"  
1255 Walnut Court  
Rockledge, FL 32955  
or e-mail: [majcher@spacey.net](mailto:majcher@spacey.net)





## TOASTMASTER TRIBUTE

# In Memory of Past International President Russell V. Puzey, 1910-1999

**T**oastmasters past International President Russell V. Puzey – who served in 1953-1954 – died on August 21, 1999, after a long illness. He was 89.

Puzey's son, Brian, said his father joined Toastmasters "because he was so nervous about speaking in front of colleagues at business meetings that he would get an upset stomach." With the help of Toastmasters training, Puzey eventually overcame that fear, was elected to the highest leadership position in the organization in 1953 and, according to an obituary in *The Chicago Sun-Times*, went on to advise U.S. presidents Dwight Eisenhower, Richard Nixon and presidential candidate Adlai Stevenson on techniques of writing and giving speeches.

In the newspaper article, Brian Puzey recalls how his father's relationship with President Eisenhower got started. In 1951 or 1952, his father heard the president speak at a hotel in Washington, D.C. "Afterward they bumped into each other, and my father said Eisenhower needed to improve his speech writing." According to the *Sun-Times*, the elder Puzey told Eisenhower "how to make his speeches more positive and warm, because he tended to be abrupt." The two became friends, and Eisenhower occasionally visited Puzey's home. Later, Nixon and Stevenson also sought Puzey's advice on speeches. "My father liked the ability to communicate ideas to people,



and do it so people could understand and hear what you were saying," Brian Puzey was quoted as saying.

Born in Catlin, Illinois, Russell V. Puzey and his four brothers and a sister grew up helping their father work the family farm. As a teenager, much to his father's dismay, Puzey decided to attend University of Illinois rather than work on the farm that had been in his family for several generations. He worked his way through school, majored in accounting, became a certified public accountant and landed a job with the accounting firm of Frazer and Torbet in Chicago. There, he climbed the career ladder to become managing partner, a position he continued when the firm merged

with Main LaFrentz.

In 1959, Puzey moved from the big city of Chicago to Inverness, Illinois, where he could admire the wide open land. "Even though he had left the farm, you couldn't get that farm boy out of him," his daughter, Barbara, said. Puzey was elected to the Inverness Village Board in the mid-1960s, and from 1973 to 1981, served as village president. "He was very concerned environmentally and was worried about wetland preservation and the land and wildlife," his daughter said.

In addition to his son Brian and daughter Barbara, Mr. Puzey is survived by a brother, Albert, and a grandson. **T**

## For the Good of All

In an editorial titled "The Mind of Man" published in the August 1954 issue of *The Toastmaster* magazine, President Puzey wrote:

*"...Our Toastmasters clubs keep the mind active, fertile and open for newness by research and study on assigned subjects, by alert conversation, and by the art of listening. They create a desire for service to our fellow man. Above all, they show us the strength of character, understanding and purpose that is within each of us. Through criticism and the observation of progress in others as well as in ourselves, we can focus on the problems of the world, and good can come forth. With good programming and evaluation, we will retain our members indefinitely. We must always be cognizant of such possibilities and diligently prepare, eagerly seek each opportunity, and wholeheartedly engage in our assignments. As individuals in the group, we must work for the good of all.*

*"I firmly believe in the greatness of our clubs as the means for the release of the beauty that is in us. I am convinced that we are destined for greatness, and that we shall contribute mightily to the future minds of men. Never let us think other than up and big and new."*



# HALL OF FAME



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

## DTM

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

- Sheila M. Spaulding, 9331-F
- Richard Bailey, 2535-2
- Margaret B. Fagetti, 49-4
- Michael S. Warner, 4129-8
- Jeffrey Hagen, 50-9
- Brenda Giguere, 7262-10
- Gayle A. Kindsvater, 1475-12
- David R. Wilkerson, 1556-12
- Richard R. Snyder, 7213-12
- Phillip R. Liles, 9505-12
- John D. Lewallen, 7260-14
- Patricia J. Fiene-Voyna, 8352-14
- William C. Biss, 1686-18
- Eric J. Steele, 8812-22
- Ralph B. Wallace, 9276-23
- Mark S. Novak, 825-25
- Doug Daniels, 5718-25
- Oliver Ray Cozby, 6824-25
- Marilyn S. Albee, 726-28
- Stephen Licari, 1074-31
- Marjorie Noack, 9327-31
- Anand Ramaswami, 2294-37
- Robert L. Cranston, 1107-38
- Terry G. Schutt, 6520-38
- Judy Wavers, 9826-39
- Tom Rogers, 8990-42
- Tony Neitzler, 5440-44
- Virginia E. Rowland, 3774-47
- Tim Pesut, 6026-47
- Ivar Starr, 6962-47
- John R. Nelson, 9241-47
- Yan Ngai Nen, 5573-51
- Hoon Tien Hun, 8975-51
- Kristopher G. Sprague, 7877-53
- Leanne Hulan, 8737-55
- Sheryl Kaye Wallace, 2468-56
- Larry Fulton, 5497-58
- Charles E. Dodge, 5470-62
- Charles E. Cook, 7409-63

### 60 years

- Eugene, 145-7
- Akron, 151-10
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Denise Sheppard

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- Governors Club of District 6, in memory of Arlene Goolsby
- Darren Lacroix
- Mary Rinnert, in memory of John W. Haynes, International President 1955-56
- Past International Director George J. Ott, DTM, in memory of John Slyker, DTM, International Director 1980-82
- Jonathan J. Jackson, in memory of Charlene "Shorty" Williams, DTM, District 33 Governor 1990-91
- Immediate Past District 46 Pamela Keyzer, DTM, in memory of Larry Schwadron, DTM
- Immediate Past District 46 Pamela Keyzer, DTM, in memory of Hugh Owen, DTM
- Past International Director Ron L. Harger, DTM, and Lois Harger, ATM-S, in memory of John V. Slyker, DTM, International Director 1980-82

Statement of Membership, Management, and Circulation	
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2. Club Name	TOASTMASTERS CLUB 2118
3. Club Address	11111 Avenue Vista, Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688
4. Club Telephone	714/942-1111
5. Club Secretary	Denise Sheppard
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## Anniversaries

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- Cindy Podurgal Chambers, DTM*
- View From the Top Oct/24

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- Thomas P. Cummings, ATM-G*
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