

the Toastmaster®

july 1995



MEMBERSHIP BUILDING 101

Does your club have enough members to function effectively?

SPEECHCRAFT: REACH OUT AND TEACH SOMEONE

SLIDESHOW OR SIDESHOW?

How Does Your Club's Membership Grow?



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In a vital and healthy club, membership grows in two ways. First, each individual member experiences improved communication and leadership skills. And second, the club adds new members to its roster on a regular basis. Both of these share equal importance. Like fuel and an engine, one will not go anywhere without the other.

Many clubs reach a point when growth becomes self-perpetuating. This occurs almost magically somewhere near the 30-member mark. The club has enough members who share their Toastmasters experiences and enthusiasm with friends and co-workers who decide to attend. When the guests come, they like what they see and join. In turn, they bring more guests, who also recognize the value of the program and join.

Sounds easy doesn't it? It is... once a club reaches that point. Until it does, however, each club must emphasize inviting guests, having quality meetings and asking those guests to become members. Each club must have an ongoing membership campaign. Each member must be committed to sharing their Toastmasters experience with others.

One of the most successful membership building methods I know of is quality club programming. Early in my Toastmasters career I belonged to a club that scheduled an "educational meeting" once a month. Speakers at that meeting were given an opportunity to deliver an educational speech about some aspect of the Toastmasters program. In most cases, the speaker learned as he prepared to teach. The members and guests learned as they listened to the speaker. Topics ranged from "Duties of the Sergeant at Arms" to "What I Learned at the District Conference" and "How to Invite Your Friends to a Club Meeting." It was truly a membership growth experience from both angles - individually and for the group as a whole.

What constitutes a quality meeting with quality programming? Is it the enthusiasm demonstrated by every participant? Is it the camaraderie that flows from member to member? Is it the smooth flow of the meeting due to planning and preparation? Is it the support given each member as risks are taken? Is it the equal opportunity to participate all members are given at each meeting? Or the professional way club officers serve the members?

Rephrase the above questions as they relate to your club. If you cannot answer each question positively, evaluate why. Decide what action your club will take to make a change for the better. It's a guarantee that any change for the better for your club is also a change for the better for you and your fellow club members.

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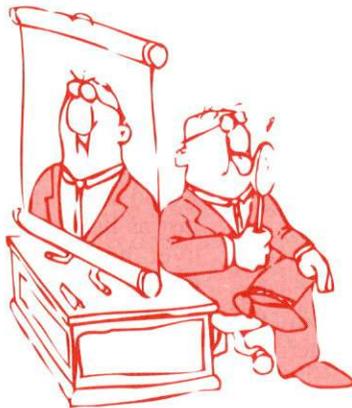
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RE: FROSTY AND SEXIST LANGUAGE

I'll bet Marion Amberg ("Let's Let Frosty Be the Odd Man Out," February 1995) is still mourning the passage from everyday language of those charming and handy racial epithets, too. After all, "African-American" is pretty cumbersome compared to some of the terms commonly used 20 years ago. Anyone who laments the use of inclusive language is seriously reaching for article topics.

Most of her examples were simply embarrassing. Hasn't she heard of "humanity" (she derides "person-kind"), "clergy" or "garbage collector"? Even my 2-year-old knows enough to say "police officer" and "firefighter."

It is astonishing to find someone in an international organization advocating language that excludes 52 percent of the population, even if it is somehow "easier."

Colleen Holloran
Westfort Club 9895-6
Thunder Bay, Ontario, Canada

I'd like to say "aMEN" to the article "Let's Let Frosty Be the Odd Man Out." The energy expended on changing our language takes energy away from the real issues.

There are many offenses in our language. I am left-handed. We say: left out, two left feet, left wing, gauche, and many other derogatory phrases using the word "left." The fact that [almost all] products and equipment are made for right-handed people poses a problem for us. Yet the issue for us "lefties" is not the language any more than language is the real issue for women.

We need acceptance as individuals, celebration of our differences and recognition of our similarities. Positive change does not occur by blaming others or dividing into groups of us vs. them.

We win when we believe we are winners. Changing the world begins on the individual level. Working to change my self-esteem and outlook has made the world a better place for me. It leaves little room for resentment of those who treat me unfairly because I have the confidence to believe in myself.

The way to change the world is to establish your own self-confidence. Try it and you may just like yourself and the world a whole lot better.

Kristi Nielsen, CTM
Rise and Shine Club 9453-21
Abbotsford, British Columbia, Canada

Is it not clear to even Marion Amberg that all snow sculptures are basically a per-daughter-ification of Mother Nature, and therefore should properly be a "snowperdaughter" and not a snowperson?

Roger Williams
ADA Club 2970-15
Boise, Idaho

I can certainly appreciate Marion Amberg's ire with the casual replacement of "person" everywhere we used to include the descriptor "man." But I'd like to point out that using "person" only highlights an unimaginative vocabulary, when we are otherwise blessed with such a rich array of nouns. Let's instead be consistent, using "waiter," actor" and "Toastmaster" for all in those fields; and creative, by using "mail carrier," flight attendant" and "garbage collector."

There is validity in both tradition and in adapting to the times. We can use the vastness of the English language – and our own ingenuity – to develop nomenclature that is more descriptive, to serve as a marvel for future etymologists.

Anne Marie Nowak
New Horizons Club 5430-4
San Francisco, California

While Marion Amberg's example of replacing the words snowman with snowperson may seem ridiculous, I would argue that it seems just as ludicrous to exclude over half the population when we communicate.

Every language reflects the prejudices of the society in which it evolved and English is no exception. When we use references containing the word "man," expecting women to think that it includes them, it sends the message that they remain second-class. The author refers to "reasonable people" – well, let's all be reasonable and allow women into the ranks of humankind.

When I begin my speeches, I avoid saying "fellow Toastmasters" and instead substitute "fellow Toastmembers." I also still find some Toastmasters materials laden with outdated sexist language. For example, I was disappointed no women were chosen as outstanding speakers. I realize that change takes time. However, if we are to be an organization that attracts today's woman, we need to include her.

Carol Tanis, CTM
Mt. Pleasant Club 5832-62
Mt. Pleasant, Michigan

WHERE ARE THE WOMEN?

The illustrations in the March issue disturbed me because of the apparent gender preference. This issue has eight major articles, with a total of 10 contributors. Five of the contributors are women. Five of the six letters to the editor are written by women. However, the illustrations are exclusively of men in action!

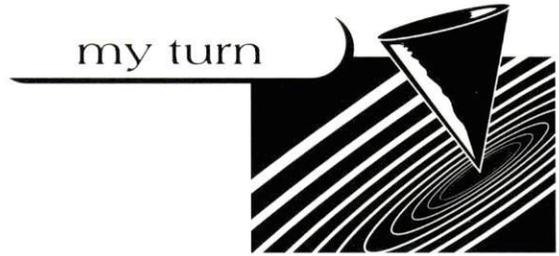
Since pictures are "worth a thousand words," the omission of women is a serious oversight, particularly in light of the obvious and active participation of women in this organization.

I hope you will consider this in upcoming issues of our otherwise enjoyable magazine.

Catherine Sperling
White Rock Club 8178-21
White Rock, B.C., Canada

Glancing through the March issue, I could not help but notice that all of the illustrations feature male speakers. While some may feel this is an inconsequential matter, others will recognize the value of presenting a more diverse image. This is not just an issue of political correctness. For an organization that aims to promote self-confidence and improve self-esteem, it is important to recognize that an individual's belief in what they can and cannot accomplish is shaped in part by images in the world around them. It is time that we drop the perception of women as passive observers for a more realistic and appropriate representation of women as active participants.

Molly Bardsley
Decatur, Georgia



Toastmasters' founder admits to having been dogmatic, and clarifies his views on speech mannerisms.

Mea Culpa

■ YES, IT IS MY FAULT. I'LL TAKE THE BLAME.

But from this day through all time to come, I disclaim further responsibility and refuse to accept the blame, or the credit.

In my earlier days as a teacher of public speaking, I was inclined to be dogmatic. I emphasized my personal likes and dislikes, and made rules to fit. If I did not like some mannerism or form of speech, I said it was wrong and must never be done. If I liked it, I gave it an approved rating.

Then I accepted these dicta as rules of speech and taught as though they were. To this day we hear it said of certain mannerisms, "A Toastmaster never does that." And I realize that the critic speaking is quoting my misguided statements of long ago. Thus, it is my fault.

I disliked apologies from the speaker – meaningless movements, hands in pockets, all sorts of things – and I said, "A good speaker, a Toastmaster, never apologizes" or "pockets his hands" or whatever the case might be. What I really meant was, "I don't like for a speaker to do that. It bothers me and distracts my attention."

I forgot that I was just one member of the audience and that other people might like what distressed me. I took my own ideas too seriously. As a result, one hears the remark all too often even today, that "A Toastmaster should never apologize for being unprepared, nervous or flustered, whatever the case may be." Frankly, that isn't so, any more than that a good speaker never puts his hands in his pockets.

There are occasions when it is not only desirable but necessary for a speaker to make an explanation, which might be construed

as an apology. There are situations in which hands in the pockets are quite in order. There are conditions to justify almost any mannerism or gesture of which man is capable.

It is when a mannerism or action becomes habitual, and is in itself a hindrance to the effect of the speech that it becomes objectionable. There is no rule by which one can state that a certain mannerism is always bad. Circumstances always modify rules.

Having made my confession and washed my hands of responsibility for the capricious critic who chirps, "A good Toastmaster never apologizes," let me speak this word of caution:

While no gesture or mannerism may be classified as bad, per se, it is safe to say that any such action is bad if it detracts from the effectiveness of the speech. Anything which keeps the speaker from making his point, from winning the vote, from convincing his audience, is bad practice and should be discontinued. Anything which strengthens his speech and helps him make the sale to his audience is good enough to use, but must be used only when needed. Beyond this, let no one try to lay down general rules for the speaker which will cover all specific cases.

It is always the speaker's responsibility to make his speech effective. If he does that, applaud him; commend him; vote for him, even though he violates all the rules in the book. If he doesn't put it over, even though he follows every rule, his speech is not a success. The test of the speech is not in following the textbook, but in making the sale. **Ⓛ**

Reprinted from the September 1945 issue of The Toastmaster.

by Ralph C. Smedley

"There are conditions to justify almost any mannerism or gesture of which man is capable."

Perception

IS REALITY

by Horace Caviness, DTM

6 Watch what you say from the lectern – a guest might be listening.

In most instances, people's perception of us is just as important as how we really are. If we are strong, but *appear* weak – or we are brave, but *appear* cowardly – people will believe we are weak cowards. Likewise, the most knowledgeable person in a career field may lose out to someone less qualified if he or she fails to make a good impression in the job interview. Therefore, it is important to make sure we are perceived to be as good as or better than we really are.

The same rule applies to your Toastmasters club. In actuality, you may be a good, strong group but give the impression of being weak to visitors.

A wise friend of mine, a former district governor, gave me the following advice during a training session for newly elected club presidents. It applies to anyone serving in any type of leadership role:

- When at the lectern, never present problems to the club, only solutions. (Problems should be solved behind the scenes.)
- Never ask for volunteers from the club as a group. (This can be done more effectively on an individual basis.)
- Always present everything in a positive manner. (Every crisis can be an opportunity for someone.)

Every club has occasional problems. For example, an officer might move to another city and have to be replaced, scheduled speakers cancel on short notice, or articles

for the club newsletter are not submitted on time. Our first reaction is to go to the lectern and present the problem to the club (and its guests) and ask for a volunteer. Quite often, members will hesitate to respond right away because they first need to consider whether their schedule permits them to spend the time required for the task. And, since the whole group is being asked, each person hopes that someone else will volunteer. Imagine how the guests will perceive the club in this situation. They might think, "These people are supposed to like the Toastmasters program, but no one wants to serve as an officer, speak or write an article. Do I really want to join such an organization?"

My friend told me that a better and more effective way of handling this type of request is behind the scenes – not in public. You are most likely to persuade someone to serve as a club officer, fill-in as a speaker or write an article if you contact members individually. Then, having solved the problem, you can announce to the club that, "Our Vice President Education is moving to another city, but Fred Jones has agreed to serve in this position until the next election. Let's thank Fred with a round of applause!" Imagine what a good impression this would make on a guest. (The guest doesn't need to know that it took two weeks to convince someone to fill this position.)

Contrast this with a guest hearing the following, "Our Vice President Education is moving to another city and we need a re-



Not only can presenting problems to the club and asking for volunteers give guests a poor perception of your club, this also can have the same negative effect on members, who may perceive their club as weak and disorganized. If club leaders seem powerless to solve problems and appear to be begging for help, it can negatively affect club morale, and members

“Problems should not be presented to the club. The members elected the officers to take care of those problems.”

placement. Would someone volunteer?” When the guest hears nothing but silence, he or she might think the members are not enthusiastic about their club.

If handled as my friend suggests, replacement of speakers or other positions on the meeting agenda – arranged in private – can simply be announced as “program changes.”

Requests for articles for the club newsletter can be presented in a positive way before the group by thanking those who already have submitted articles and encouraging others to submit their articles before the deadline. Behind the scenes, the editor(s) can apply friendly persuasion to individuals and even suggest ideas for articles. Most members show strength in areas they’ve been sincerely complimented on.

Most work and problem-solving should be done by the executive committee and the solutions should be presented to club members in short business sessions for necessary approval. Problems should *not* be presented to the club. Members elected the officers to take care of those problems.

may transfer to another club or lose interest in Toastmasters altogether.

In Chinese, the character equivalent to the English word “crisis” is created by joining together two other characters which individually represent “danger” and “opportunity.” Every crisis in a Toastmasters club provides an opportunity for someone. It can be a chance to test managerial skills or an opportunity to serve or speak in place of another member. The challenge is not to panic in a crisis but to seize the opportunity to work quietly behind the scenes to resolve the problem, and then present the solution to members and guests in a positive manner.

As a result, club members and guests alike will perceive your club just as it is – well-organized with strong, talented leaders. The guests will want to join, and the members will want to stay active. **①**

Horace Caviness, DTM, is a member of the Riyadh Club 6897-U in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

Building membership to a comfortable level is important – and challenging – for all Toastmasters clubs. Twenty members – that’s the requirement for chartering a new Toastmasters club and the number of members a club should have to function effectively. Members join a club for various reasons and leave for various reasons. Every year the average club loses 40 percent of its members, and most gain back slightly more than that.

This article outlines the successful membership building efforts of the CalCompetents Club of Anaheim, California. The CalCompetents Club is an in-house group, sponsored by CalComp, Inc. You will find many ideas that can assist you in ensuring that your club has enough members to function effectively. Adjust these ideas to meet your club’s needs and culture.

8

1. IMPLEMENT A MEMBERSHIP BUILDING PROGRAM

■ CONDUCT A MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

Recent research shows that most Toastmasters want more people in their clubs! More members mean more variety, more ideas, more feedback and better learning. In addition,

Your club’s pattern for success.

MEMBERSHIP

since up to 40 percent of your club members will leave this year, you’ll need to replace them to keep your club going. For a membership drive to be successful, all club members need to participate. You may choose to divide the group into teams, or award points individually. Either way, choose awards that will encourage all club members to participate. Sometimes team pride is enough. In some clubs, the second place team treats the winners to

a meal. Individual awards can range from speaking-related books to a special trophy or plaque.

■ RECRUIT FROM ALL AVAILABLE SOURCES

Many community organizations and companies conduct seminars on subjects such as self-improvement, communication enhancement, etc. If the sponsoring organization permits, you may use this to your advantage by distributing promotional material or by giving a short presentation about Toastmasters. Asking the participants to join Toastmasters during or immediately after a motivating workshop is perfect timing!

■ CONDUCT A SPEECHCRAFT PROGRAM

Speechcraft is an eight-session program designed to introduce novice speakers to Toastmasters and public speaking skills. Experienced members of your club present the fundamentals of public speaking in the atmosphere of a Toastmasters club meeting. Speechcraft has several benefits. Participants become a part of your club’s meetings; they come to know and enjoy the club’s fellowship while gaining confidence and training in their communication skills. Many Speechcraft participants end up joining a Toastmasters club. Therefore, clubs that conduct a Speechcraft program at least once a year have few membership problems.

■ PUBLICIZE YOUR CLUB

Print a bulletin or memo that can be distributed to local businesses, members of your local Chamber of Commerce or employees of your company.

Send press releases announcing your club’s meeting time and location to local newspapers. If your club is company sponsored, post notices inviting employees to attend your meetings and publicize your activities in your company’s official newsletter. Many corporations sponsor various types of training programs. Toastmasters can be promoted

to each of these as a method of skill enhancement. Receiving a paycheck is every employee’s favorite work-related activity. A message can easily be printed on pay stubs or a flier can be inserted in check envelopes.

Posters and displays also are effective promotional tools. Placed in strategic locations, posters, fliers and sample copies of *The Toastmaster* can generate interest and publicize your club’s meeting time and location. Donate copies



PHOTOGRAPHY: JON FEINGERSH

BUILDING 101

of *The Toastmaster* to your doctor's office or public library. List your club's meeting place and time and a contact phone number for potential members.

2. DEVELOP A STANDARD GUEST LETTER

Effective follow-up with guests is just as important as making a great first impression during their initial visit to your club.

A follow-up letter after a guest's visit to your club could contain the following types of information:

- ✓ Thanks for attendance
- ✓ Benefits of participation
- ✓ Brief explanation of the communication and leadership basic manual and first 10 speeches

- ✓ Components of the *New Member Kit*
 - ✓ Cost of membership
 - ✓ Time and location of next meeting
 - ✓ Who to contact for more details
 - ✓ An invitation to return and apply for club membership.
- Follow-up with a phone call every time the guest visits.

■ PROVIDE A GUEST KIT

Provide guests with useful information about your club and the Toastmasters program. An issue of your club's newsletter, the fliers *Success Starts with Toastmasters* (Catalog No. 99), *Why Toastmasters is Smart Business* (Catalog No. 101), and *All About Toastmasters* (Catalog No. 124) are also appropriate. *The Toastmaster* magazine is a popular item with guests, too.

■ WELCOME GUESTS WARMLY

Ensure that guests are greeted immediately upon entering the club's meeting space. Remember, you're in a comfortable environment, but they are not – not yet anyway! Give them a name tag and a *Guest Kit*, and request that they sign your guest book. Seat them next to a personable, experienced Toastmaster who will be able to answer questions and explain details during the meeting.

3. CONDUCT A NEW MEMBER INDUCTION CEREMONY

Formally inducting new members into your club gives them a sense of belonging and increases the level of com-

mitment between the club and the member. An induction script appears in the *Club's President's Handbook* (Catalog No. 1310-A), and in the *New Member Orientation Kit for Clubs* (Catalog No. 1162). Present a membership pin to each inductee during the ceremony.

■ DEVELOP A NEW MEMBER ORIENTATION GUIDE

Toastmaster, Table Topics Master, Grammarian, Ah-counter – these familiar terms may sound like a foreign language to new members. A new member orientation guide can make all the difference during a member's first few meetings. You may wish to purchase *Toastmasters and You* (Catalog No. 1167) for each new member. This guide contains a card explaining the Toastmasters educational system, a membership certificate, The Icebreaker speech guide and the pamphlets *When You're the Introducer* and *A Toastmaster Wears Many Hats*, an informational guide that explains the roles of a club meeting's typical participants. You also will want to add information and details specific to your club, along with a letter of welcome from your club's Executive Committee.

■ IMPLEMENT A MENTOR PROGRAM

Assigning a mentor to each new member will increase that member's satisfaction and progress. The mentor is responsible for determining the educational needs and wants of the member, and for helping to prepare that person to participate in the various meeting roles.

10

My Reasons For Joining Our Club

by Reuben Copen, CTM

■ A few months ago I was having a cup of coffee with one of our club members, when he suddenly asked me "Why did you join Toastmasters?" My first thought was that since I am retired, I was looking to become active in some local organization.

However, after some thought and self-analysis, I found many other reasons. For example, I really like to be a part of the program instead of sitting in the audience and being entertained. Another reason is the need for self-expression and creativity. Getting an audience to listen to you without boring them is an important skill. I was reminded of the story Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg recently told an interviewer. She spoke about the first time she addressed the Supreme Court: "I was very nervous," she said, "but when I started to speak I felt a sudden surge of power. After all they had to listen to me because they had nowhere else to go."

At my first few meetings I was apprehensive about finding subject matters, but I soon discovered that I only had to pick up

a newspaper or an encyclopedia and do a little research at the library to come up with a topic. And then I found that the most comprehensive subject is myself – it is the one subject I know the most about! Everyone has an interesting story to tell.

I did not join to get a better job (as I am retired). I don't want to be a professional speaker or a politician. Perhaps some of my main reasons simply were to get out of the house and get to wear business clothes and meet new people and get their views on current topics. But the most important reason is that I didn't want my brain to become idle.

Getting up in front of a group makes my adrenaline flow. It's exciting, it's educational and it's creative. It's self-fulfilling. It can raise you out of the doldrums. There is always another goal to reach out for. I haven't missed a meeting in almost two years.

Reuben Copen, CTM, is a member of Tupelo Club 5632-43 in Tupelo, Mississippi.

Let's Help Others Help Themselves

by Carl P. Schwartz

■ Are you missing out on a golden opportunity? An opportunity not only to increase your membership, but to help the community around you? I think you might be.

If your Toastmasters club is anywhere near a military base that is scheduled to close, and you are not heavily recruiting new members, you are doing everyone a disservice.

An organized recruiting campaign, promoting the benefits of Toastmasters skills to people who are changing jobs and careers, could do wonders for your membership roster.

Many Toastmasters credit the organization for teaching them to organize their thoughts, research difficult topics, present material to diverse audiences and "think on their feet." These are exactly the skills needed in the job market today.

The United States' Congress has levied on the Department of Defense a requirement that all military personnel departing the service must be given the opportunity for transition counseling. These transition assistance managers (TAMs) are directly contacting every departing employee. If your Vice President Public Relations and Vice President Membership were to lay out a logical briefing, detailing the benefits of Toastmasters training to military personnel, I am certain most TAMs would either present the material themselves or give Toastmasters an opportunity to present a 10-15 minute segment to those leaving. Be sure to provide handouts or brochures with local club officers' phone numbers, as well as posters that detail club meeting times and places.

But don't limit yourselves to military bases. Is a local college or university seeing decreased student enrollment and having to lay off employees? Has the town's third-largest employer announced that there will be 250 layoffs within the next six months? That's enough time to get those job seekers their CTM, and the big boost in confidence that goes along with those 10 speeches and half a dozen Table Topics. Not to mention the networking opportunities with fellow club members!

As Toastmasters, we can make a positive difference. We must be innovative in seeking out new members and creative in the way we present the material to those who need it. People can't seek us out if they don't know we exist. Publicize your own success. If Mr. Smith, who joined your club in March, earns a job using the network and skills he developed by attending Toastmasters meetings, tell the world. Put an item in a local newspaper, get him on the radio and encourage him to speak to others facing the same unemployment situation.

Dr. Smedley's work is important, and we must carry on the torch. Wouldn't it be wonderful to read in the local paper that UNEMPLOYMENT IN CENTERVILLE LOWEST IN FIVE YEARS and know that you played a role in making that headline news?

Carl P. Schwartz is a member of Waylands Speechmasters Club 5558-25 at Sheppard Air Force Base, Texas.

4. INCREASE MEMBER RETENTION

Meeting the members' needs is the objective of any Toastmasters club. Finding out what they want is the first step in meeting those needs. The *Member Interest Survey* (Catalog No. 403) is a useful tool for helping members express their needs and goals. Base your club's educational program on the results of your research.

■ ANALYZE REASONS MEMBERS MISS MEETINGS

Members may miss meetings for a variety of reasons. Find out what they are and try to work around them. Change your meeting time or location if necessary. Try to ensure that everyone has a place in each program, whether speaking, timing, participating in Table Topics, greeting guests, etc. Members will be more likely to attend if they have a specific responsibility.

■ NURTURE POTENTIAL NON-RENEWALS

From time to time, the level of enthusiasm among members will decrease. This may be because they feel they have reached their goals – or are not reaching their goals –

or they may be contributing too much time to the club and are becoming "burned out." Introduce them to the advanced manuals or club leadership opportunities, or lighten their load as appropriate.

5. START ACHIEVING NOW!

■ PLAN TO SUCCEED

Plan your club's year by using the *Club Success Plan* (Catalog No. 1111), a guide based on the Distinguished Club Program. Keep track of your club's achievements, and audit them quarterly using the *Distinguished Club Program Progress Report* sent to club presidents in October, January, April and July. Keep your club informed of its progress on a monthly basis.

If your club has a membership building success story, please send details to the Membership and Club Extension Department at Toastmasters International as an entry in the Top Five Membership Campaigns Contest. ①



RETENTION —

The Other Side of Membership

(12

A penny saved
is a penny
earned. The
same principle
applies to
members.

This magazine has featured a number of articles about the importance of membership building drives and new members. I agree fully — new members are a vital part of a strong club. But let's not overlook the fact that "old" members are important, too. Let's try to overturn the turnover!

Ben Franklin once said, "A penny saved is a penny earned." The same principle applies to members: Every member who *didn't* leave your club is one less new member that you will have to recruit to bring your club to its target level. Other benefits of longtime members are their level of experience and the fact that it is less work to keep an old member than to attract a new one.

This was driven home forcefully to me last September when I served as club president. My club was about to lose four or five members and drop below the 20 level. I realized the wavering members probably would have decided to stay had I only contacted them earlier. After some intensive phoning, cajoling and begging, I cut the losses to only two. A membership drive then restored the club to 20 — after a few months. It was a painful lesson for me.

What did I learn from this fiasco? The importance of member retention and the fact that it must be worked at, not just left to chance. I also learned a few principles, which I will pass along in this article:

■ **Pay special attention to new members.** They may decide not to renew their membership when their first dues renewal time comes. One problem I encountered was that many new members didn't understand that there is an initial one-time new member fee of \$16 in addition to \$23 membership dues every six months (\$5 for the local club, plus \$18 to Toastmasters International). Consequently, we lost a new member who paid \$27 in July, then felt "soaked" and declined to rejoin when we asked her for another \$23 in September.

To make the situation clearer, we now tell new members that membership dues are \$23 every six months, **plus** a one-time fee of \$16. In addition, a member joining in March or September now is charged \$42, and is signed up until October or April, meaning that we don't ask that person for dues again for six months.

by Steven Needler, CTM

Another problem is that new members often hesitate to participate in meetings. But if they don't participate, they quickly realize they aren't getting much out of their Toastmasters membership. So as soon as they're signed up, our Vice President Membership schedules them for an Icebreaker within a few weeks to start their progress right away. After that, we try to give new members other assignments to keep them busy, interested and happy.

Make sure they don't feel left out! Assign a mentor to each new member. An occasional call from the club president will further boost their sense of belonging and will also let the president get some feedback from the new members.

■ **Encourage the new CTMs.** I will never understand why so many Toastmasters remain satisfied with achieving the CTM award, and do not concentrate on the three ATMs or the DTM that they could achieve. Whatever the reason, many members feel like they've reached their goal once they've completed 10 speeches. So that's a danger point!

Shortly before members give their 10th speech, I like to give them a call to let them know I'm impressed with their achievement. I also ask them which three manuals they intend to order, reinforcing the fact that there is life after the CTM. I explain that most of the advanced manual speeches will be longer than five to seven minutes, and that they will need to coordinate the longer speeches with the Vice President Education. Basically, I tell them that the club will work with them as they continue their progress toward an ATM. It helps if several Toastmasters are progressing toward the ATM simultaneously. If one is actively striving for an award, then he or she will serve as a role model for the others.

■ **Watch for the members who don't attend.** If new members don't attend for several meetings, it's a danger signal. Perhaps they felt the last few meetings weren't productive enough. Maybe a relative or friend is visiting them and they are taking a few weeks off from Toastmasters. Or they could be out of town. Whatever the reason, give them a call

and gently find out what's going on. This call has several purposes:

1. If handled properly, it will reassure members of the club's support. Express interest in the member and say such things as "We've missed you;" "Hope everything is all right with you;" etc. Don't dwell on the health of the club. Let them know that someone in their club is thinking of them.
2. If the club has a problem that's driving away members, this can alert you to its existence.

■ **Involvement is commitment.** Try to let every member know of activities outside the club, such as officer training, area competitions, etc. I also suggest to eager new members that they may want to run for an officer position in a few months. If I think a member is competitive, I may ask him or her to consider participating in a speech contest at the club, area or district level. The goal is to let all members know that Toastmasters is much more than a bunch of people giving speeches, and that their own development can rise significantly higher than merely becoming a better speaker.

Members are the lifeblood of any Toastmasters club. Let's do everything we can to keep the members we already have! ①

Steven Needler, CTM, is the president of Rocky Flats Club 2626-26 in Golden, Colorado.

"If a member doesn't attend for several meetings, it's a danger signal. Perhaps she felt the last few meetings weren't productive enough."

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EIGHT STEPS TO Successful Mentoring



by David Cruickshanks, ATM

■ WHEN NEW MEMBERS JOIN A CLUB, THEY undertake a great journey – one filled with traps and triumphs, fear and confidence. They expect to gain specific benefits (usually self-confidence) in return for their membership. The club's obligation is to help new members achieve these goals. Most of the time we just give them their manuals, tell them to pay attention at the meeting and expect them to attain what they seek.

Is it any wonder, given this situation, that many members find themselves back in Kansas without achieving their goals? Has the club helped them as promised?

A guide through the land of Oz can make the difference between success and failure for a new member. Instead of the Good Witch of the North, the Toastmasters guide is a mentor. The mentor is important not only to the new member, but also to the health and development of the club. The more satisfied members are, the longer they stay in the club as active, contributing members.

As a mentor, you should take a proactive approach with your new member. Remember your own first steps of the journey down the yellow brick road of the manual and put yourself in the new member's shoes. Most likely that person used every bit of courage he or she could muster to walk through the door. The thought of delivering these first few manual speeches is terrifying for most new members.

The following guidelines will help your new members progress through the Toastmasters program and reach the Emerald City – ensuring they receive the benefits for which they joined. They also will make mentoring a rich and rewarding experience for you!

1 Look at your club's meeting schedule. Highlight your own duties, and also those of your member. Think of that person's responsibilities as your own. Take ownership of your member's progress.

2 Take time to review your basic manual for the guidelines of your member's next project.

3 Call the member a few weeks before a speech and review the project together. At this point, new members often start regretting their decision to join. Like the cowardly lion, they probably joined hoping the club would wave its magic wand and bestow them with courage. Your job is to demonstrate that courage is not the absence of fear, but doing what one fears most. So help alleviate fear by putting the wheels in motion. For instance, tell them that focusing on the manual project takes attention away from fear. Answer questions and discuss future speech topics. Encourage your member to

Helping a fellow member grow is perhaps the most rewarding aspect of the Toastmasters program.



think – not to worry. Offering a solution is half the battle.

4 Follow up a week later to see if your member is having problems constructing the speech. Help with writing if needed, but don't take on the project yourself. Simply ask questions to guide the member through it. Questions should start with the speech, move to the main ideas behind it and then to the individual points. Brainstorm with the member and explain how to organize.

5 Offer to listen as your member practices the speech. Be sure to provide positive feedback – don't criticize. Tell what you like, what might be improved upon and then *show* how to improve it. After the speech has been delivered, compliment the new member and offer one (and only one) tip on how to improve. Sending a congratulatory note after the Icebreaker (or another major project) can go a long way toward building a person's confidence and usually is greatly appreciated. If the new member was unhappy with the performance, send him or

her a note of reassurance. This could make the difference between the person giving up or continuing on the journey. Make the person *want* to do better the next time!

6 Offer some tips for controlling nervousness. If you don't have any advice to offer from personal experience, a little research could benefit you, also. The best cure for nervousness is preparation and more preparation. The more prepared people are, the more likely they are to feel comfortable. (Trotting to the lectern, squeezing the chair I'm sitting in and pacing in the back of the room to release excess energy before the speech works for me.)

7 Review the responsibilities involved in serving as a Toastmaster, Table Topics Master, Evaluator and General Evaluator. Many fledgling Toastmasters are concerned about giving their first evaluation. Flush out their fears by explaining the fundamentals of a good evaluation. The evaluation guide sent with the basic manual offers good tips.

8 Encourage new members to run for club office, participate in contests and district functions. One-on-one encouragement from more experienced Toastmasters can make a difference in the growth and development of fledgling members. The more involved they are, the more likely they are to receive the benefits for which they joined. Facing the Wicked Witch of the West by constantly testing and stretching their comfort zones is the only way they will improve.

While serving as a mentor usually does not take much time or effort, the responsibilities are great. You have the opportunity to make a profound and lasting difference in another member's life. Watching a fellow Toastmaster grow is perhaps the most rewarding aspect of the Toastmaster program.

When your member decides to click his or her heels together three times and return to Kansas, it will be because they received the benefits for which they joined. The gift of self-confidence is one that will benefit them for the rest of their life. You get the satisfaction of having helped make it happen. **1**

David Cruickshanks, ATM, is a member of Miami Lakes Club 6568-47 in Miami, Florida.

"Your job is to demonstrate that courage is not the absence of fear, but doing what one fears most."

Speechcraft:



Reach OUT AND Teach SOMEONE

An eight-week Speechcraft course can be rewarding for the coordinators, the participants and the club. But how do you find a cohesive group that is willing to learn and sees the value? Better yet, once you find such a group, how do you motivate the participants to commit to attend the full course without falling by the wayside? Here's what it takes to organize a successful Speechcraft program:

by Karen Robertson

about the course, specifically mentioning improved confidence, clearer communication and other potential benefits to the company.

TWO TOASTMASTERS TO COORDINATE THE COURSE

Toastmasters are constantly challenged to stretch and move out of their comfort zones. Many members would be willing to coordinate a Speechcraft course once they understand the gain for themselves, others and the club. What an opportunity to grow!

Present the idea to members focusing on:

- Growth in club membership
- Financial boost to club
- Credit for outside speeches
- Points toward club awards
- Opportunity to use leadership skills
- Community awareness of Toastmasters

When two members volunteer to coordinate the course, others should be encouraged to attend at least one of the classes and participate in some part of the instruction.

AN INTERESTED CORPORATE GROUP

Look within your club at the businesses and corporations represented by its members. There may be car dealerships, school districts, department stores and an array of other large and small businesses to choose from. If not, contact the Chamber of Commerce, local service groups or city agencies.

The program coordinators first should meet with the corporate administrators to describe the benefits of the Speechcraft experience. This is a chance for the Toastmaster to practice persuasive skills.

Most professional speakers charge big bucks for corporate in-services, seminars and workshops. What administrator wouldn't be impressed by valuable staff training offered by Toastmasters at such a low cost? Be sure to give details

A CONVENIENT LOCATION

Offer to teach the classes in their own facility. A conference room works well, and participants won't have to commute. A handy coffee pot is nice, but not necessary.

A COMMITMENT TO THE BOSS

Set the dates for each meeting and promise to arrive early, set up the room and start and finish on time. Let the boss know you are investing your own time and energy and will expect those who enroll to complete the course. Emphasize that the purpose for the course is twofold: First, to help others grow, and second, to add new members to your Toastmasters club.

"...charge each participant a registration fee with a rebate from the company for perfect attendance."

A COMMITMENT FROM THE BOSS

Ask the boss if the company will reimburse part or all of the registration fee to any Speechcraft participant who graduates from the eight-week course with perfect attendance.

If you ask the company to pay the registration fees, then the employees don't have to invest anything. It is much better to charge each participant a registration fee with a rebate from the company for perfect attendance. This shows that the company values staff development and wants its employees to be committed to completing the course.

If the company offers to pay a \$10 rebate to each employee with perfect attendance, and a dozen enroll, the company would still only spend \$120 for this valuable eight-week course. That's a small investment to have experts teaching skills right on site.

AN ENROLLMENT FEE

If you offer the course for free, participants haven't committed anything and may be more likely to drop out along the way. Charging an enrollment fee of \$25 will give the course value. With the \$10 rebate promised by the boss, they stand to retrieve part of their money for perfect attendance. They also know their boss is aware they are

taking an innovative course that will make them more valuable to the company.

A CONVENIENT TIME

Offer to split the time with the company. If the work day starts at 8 a.m., offer to begin at 7:30 and finish by 9. This agreement calls for a compromise from everyone. The coordinators will have to arrive early, the employees will have to come to work early, and the boss will have to allow only one hour of training time each week.

REWARDS FOR PARTICIPANTS

Speechcraft participants have nothing to lose and a lot to gain by completing the course. To recognize their achievements along the way, give out ribbons, "warm fuzzies" from peers and coordinators and send a news release to the company newsletter describing the Speechcraft course, including names of all the participants.

Each meeting, bring a guest speaker from your club to do the instructional portion of the meeting. If your members recently have given a winning contest speech or other outstanding presentations, invite them to demonstrate their expertise at the Speechcraft meeting. Providing refreshments is an added treat.

REWARDS FOR THE BOSS

For the last meeting, have all participants bring breakfast dishes and invite the boss and other office employees for breakfast and a demonstration. After everyone has eaten, ask a few Speechcraft participants to give prepared speeches, or challenge them with entertaining Table Topics. Ask visitors if they'd like to participate.

The boss will get a chance to see how Toastmasters operates and how the employees have advanced. If the impression is positive, you may be asked to repeat the program for another group. Thank the boss for supporting the program by making a special presentation. He or she will enjoy the appreciation and look forward to the next program.

REWARDS FOR UNENROLLED EMPLOYEES

Everyone in the office will enjoy the breakfast and the Table Topics. They may even wish they had joined or ask to have the course repeated for another group. They will also be exposed to Toastmasters and its benefit to the community.

Treat this final meeting as a graduation ceremony. Present completion certificates, take pictures and publicize the event.

REWARDS FOR THE CLUB

Invite the graduates to visit your regular Toastmasters club. Modify the program to honor the Speechcraft visitors. Give them the opportunity to present prepared speeches or participate in Table Topics.

If your meeting conflicts with their schedule, provide them with information on other clubs in the area.

A dozen Speechcrafters at \$25 each will earn a revenue of \$300. After subtracting the cost of the booklets, ribbons and maybe a few refreshments, the club will realize a sizeable financial gain.

REWARDS FOR THE COORDINATORS

The club may present a certificate of appreciation to the coordinators, but the biggest reward comes from the appreciation of the graduates and seeing their growth. Coordinators may be asked to speak professionally, offer other seminars, or emcee special occasions.

Don't wait any longer. Get started now! Order the Speechcraft manuals. Each packet contains five student booklets, certificates, coordinator's manuals and registration forms. Purchase ribbons and borrow the timing light, stopwatch and extension cord from your club. Now you are set to go! After a couple of meetings, the Speechcraft participants will be running the whole show and you'll be surprised how easy it is to "reach out and teach someone." **T**

Karen Robertson, CTM, is a member of Community Speakers 6900-12 in Lake Elsinore, California.

An Improved *Speechcraft*

Have you been putting off conducting a Speechcraft program because it seemed to be an overwhelming endeavor? You need not procrastinate any longer. Toastmasters International's Speechcraft program has been dramatically improved so it is easier to organize and conduct.

The newly revised program has:

- More "how to" information on organizing a program in the Coordinator's Guide.
- More detailed information on conducting each session. For each session the new Coordinator's Guide includes an agenda, brief descriptions of what the coordinator is to do for each item on the agenda, and a list of personnel needed.
- A more detailed Speechcrafter's Handbook. The new handbook includes more information about speaking, evaluation, and about participants' roles in the Speechcraft program.
- Flexibility. The new program allows the coordinator to conduct the program in four, six or eight sessions, with each session lasting 75 to 90 minutes when the program is conducted outside the club, and 30 to 60 minutes for program conducted during club meetings.

When ordering, be sure to specify that you want the new program. Old Coordinator's Guides and Speechcrafter's Handbooks will be available until the supply is exhausted.



■ BY MARCH 1994, TUGGERANONG TOASTMASTERS had fallen on hard times.

The number of members had dwindled to 13, with only nine or 10 attending meetings. Our President and Vice President Education had moved and could no longer maintain their memberships. Then we started to conduct some questionable activities, such as presenting non-manual speeches and skipping executive meetings and issues of our newsletter. Why did we let this happen? Well, it was a gradual slide and we were too close to notice what was happening.

meetings. The results of those meetings were focused on programming manual speeches, reintroducing the newsletter (which had been "dormant" for more than a year) and having a membership drive.

SPREADING THE MESSAGE

At the start of each meeting the President hung a banner from the lectern containing the words "20/20 Vision" with the two zeros being drawn like a pair of eyes. The vision was repeated for the benefit of members and visitors, along with a status report: "By the

by Patrick Supple, CTM

20/20 Vision

HELP!

The first step we took was electing a new Vice President Education and President.

The new President chose the theme "20/20 Vision" to see the club through the next few months. The vision was announced at a meeting in February. It said: "**By June 30 we aim to have 20 manual speeches presented by members of our club and to have 20 active members in our club.**"

The metaphor of 20/20 Vision was selected because the clear definition of our goals would give us a clear and balanced vision of where we wanted to be in the future. We recognized that a specific number of speeches and members by themselves did not measure the complete effectiveness of the club. It did, however, provide two simple items to focus on. As an added benefit of achieving our 20/20 Vision, along the way we would have conducted 20 evaluations, and have more members at meetings to participate in Table Topics and fill leadership roles.

One of the first effects of having stated our vision was that club officers recognized we would need to start planning to achieve it. So we began having monthly executive

first meeting in April we have already achieved 10 speeches and membership has grown to 15." We also were reminded of what we would have to do during the coming meetings to remain on track.

THE RESULT

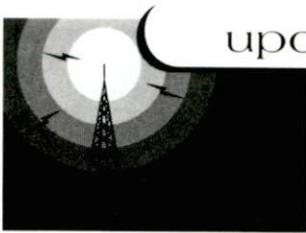
The 20 manual speeches were completed early with the last one presented at the first June meeting. Our 21st member was inducted during the last meeting of June. Some members were so caught up in the success they said we should have made it 30/30 Vision!

By June 30, 1994, our club had made a complete turnaround. Manual speeches were presented and evaluated at each meeting, our membership was growing and we had a strong new executive committee to continue building on the club's newfound strength.

The main benefit of our 20/20 Vision was to unite the members by striving for a common goal. If your club needs a boost, come up with a catchy phrase and be prepared to help your members as you leap forward to success! **T**

Patrick Supple, CTM, is a member of Tuggeranong Club 5071-70 in Canberra, Australia.

How one club built its membership and started doing things right again.



Executive Director Lauded for 20 Years of Service

■ HAVING SERVED LONGER THAN ANY other Executive Director in the history of Toastmasters International, Terry McCann recently celebrated a new milestone: his 20th anniversary with the organization.

materials and service levels provided by World Headquarters continue to match an expanding membership.

PRELUDE TO TOASTMASTERS

When Terrence J. McCann replaced retiring Executive Director Buck Engle on March 1, 1975, he brought a wealth of experience, not just as a Toastmaster, but from the fields of business administration and marketing from his work with other service organizations.

After graduating from the University of Iowa, McCann returned to his home town of Chicago. There he received a Marketing M.B.A. from Loyola University. Soon afterward he served on the national headquarters staff of the United States Jaycees, both as Production Manager and Program Manager.

Next McCann joined the Knox Reeves Advertising Agency of Minneapolis, Minnesota, and, three years later, returned to Chicago to take a position with the Supermarket Institute, eventually becoming manager of communications and public relations. His former association with the service-oriented Jaycees proved invaluable as McCann moved on to serve as Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer and assistant to the Executive Administrator of Lions International in 1973. Two years later, his current association as Executive Director of Toastmasters International began.

ATHLETIC HONORS AND PERSONAL TRIUMPHS

Along with the steady progress of personal and professional growth that led to Toastmasters International, McCann has always maintained an ongoing commitment to athletics. After his Olympic triumph, he coached

Executive Director McCann has long been associated with Toastmasters International. In fact, soon after winning the gold medal in wrestling at the 1960 Olympics in Rome, he realized that he would need the skills offered through Toastmasters.

"After I won the Olympic title, I was asked to speak all the time, and I was really scared to death," admits McCann. "I knew I needed some help, so I joined the Oil Capitol Club in Tulsa."

This past March, family, friends and staff members recognized his most recent achievement

within the Toastmasters organization: an unprecedented 20 years as Executive Director. With two decades of growth, change has been inevitable. But under McCann's careful direction, quality has kept pace with quantity as educational



Terry McCann and family. Clockwise, from top left: daughter Rose, son Sean, granddaughter Shannon, daughter Bridgid, grandson Evan, Terry, wife Lucille, granddaughter Katie.

junior high school wrestlers in Tulsa, Oklahoma, where he also joined his first Toastmasters club.

Later his volunteer efforts led the Mayor Daley Youth Foundation Wrestling Team to 14 national championships, eventually placing eight team members on the 1968 United States Olympic Team. In 1977 McCann was inducted into the National Wrestling Hall of Fame, and by 1992 into Chicago's Sports Hall of Fame. He currently

serves on the Executive Committee and the Board of Directors of the United States Olympic Committee and is President of the Surfriders Foundation.

In addition to his duties as Executive Director, McCann also has lectured at nearby colleges and served as a seminar leader for Fortune 500 companies. Last year McCann renewed his wedding vows with Lucille, his wife of 40 years. The couple has seven children and 15 grandchildren. **T**

Setting the Tone of Leadership

■ Despite the 70 years of Toastmasters International's existence, only a few have served as Executive Director. Dr. Ralph Smedley, the organization's founder, was recognized as Secretary and, by the 1940s, chose to focus on the writing of educational materials. He and other members of the Executive Board agreed that the growing organization required a person who would not only supervise "the home office," handle administrative tasks, and interact

with the Board of Directors, but also set the tone of leadership for the entire organization. The office of Executive Director was created to meet this need.

Since that time, Toastmasters International has benefitted under the guidance of four remarkable Executive Directors. Of the four, however, it is current Executive Director McCann who has served the longest period of time and insured a continuity of leadership.

21)

You have the opportunity to continue the legacy of our organization's founder by contributing to the Ralph C. Smedley Memorial Fund. The fund is used to develop new and innovative educational materials, such as the videocassette "Meeting Excellence" and the Success/Leadership Series. In fact, your entire contribution goes toward developing new educational materials for clubs and members. Not one penny is used for administrative costs! Contribute \$10 and receive a special Toastmasters International paper-weight. A club donating \$50 or more will get a unique club banner ribbon. Donors of \$100 or more receive a special plaque and have their names permanently inscribed on a donor recognition plaque at World Headquarters. In addition, every contributor will be recognized in *The Toastmaster* magazine.

Keep the Legacy Alive!

All contributions are tax deductible. The support of you or your club will result in people learning, growing and achieving through Toastmasters. Why not discuss this during your club's next business meeting? Contributions should be sent to:

The Ralph C. Smedley Memorial Fund

TOASTMASTERS INTERNATIONAL
P.O. Box 9052
Mission Viejo CA 92690, U.S.A.

If making an honorary or memorial contribution, please indicate the name and address of any person(s) to whom acknowledgement should be sent.



Ralph C. Smedley

TAKING TOPICS TO THE TABLOIDS



Rod and Dan's Excellent Adventure

by Dan Carrison, ATM

Rod Walsh and I met at Burnt Toastmasters. One of the unique features of Burnt Toastmasters is its freewheeling Table Topics session, which is often political in nature. Because of the long association between members, controversial topics are possible without hurt feelings, and even the formal speaking sessions are often debates between two members.

Rod and I often became worthy adversaries during Table Topics, and one morning after a spirited debate he said to me, "We ought to write a newspaper column." I thought he was joking.

"I'm serious," he said. "We'll do what we do in Table Topics, then put it in print."

I pointed out to Rod that while a column might be fun, getting published on a regular basis would be next to impossible. From what I knew of the newspaper world, I thought most editors would have little interest in what two unknowns had to say.

But Rod wouldn't listen to reason. He argued that the opinion page of every newspaper already featured a Column Left/Column Right format, in which famous commentators would lay out their side of a debate, often in a dry, ponderous style. "Let's be different," he said, "and make our column reader-friendly, just as if we were two buddies in a tavern arguing politics."

We decided to name the column "Rosie's Bar & Grill – A Barstool Debate." Every two weeks, we would hash out the pros and cons of the hot issues of the day and send the articles to a bunch of newspapers. For six months we sent out a bi-weekly column to the opinion editors of 100 newspapers. To our knowledge, not one published us.

Finally we got a call. Someone liked our approach and said his newspaper would carry us – if we didn't mind not being paid.

Now that we were "official" columnists, we scratched the other 99 newspapers off our list and turned our attention to the syndicates. We would copy each article that appeared in our one and only newspaper, then send it out to 15 nationwide syndicates – the same syndicates that carried our heroes, like Mike Royko, George Will, William Safire and Mark Shields.

For another year and a half nothing happened. Finally, we got a "nibble" from the New York Times Syndicate. They said they liked our style and would like to see some more samples in six months.

Those six months seemed like an eternity, but we finally sent our new samples in. Then, rather than wait for another nibble or another six months, we decided to take the bull by the horns by flying to New York and meeting these people.

The editors agreed to meet with us, but as Rod and I walked up to the office building in mid-town Manhattan, we realized that we might have to settle for some words of encouragement. When the editors said they were willing to carry our column, we couldn't believe our ears!

Our columns now are "on line" to more than 500 newspapers nationwide. Although we have not been an overnight smash hit, people tell us to concentrate on the quality of each column and the orders will come.

Thanks to Toastmasters – and Table Topics – we are now struggling syndicated columnists. Rod and I think that our dialogue approach would lend itself to radio as well. If any Toastmasters have suggestions for us to pursue that line, please write Rod Walsh & Dan Carrison at 14852 Ventura Blvd., Suite 210, Sherman Oaks, California 91403-3499. **T**

Dan Carrison, ATM, and Rod Walsh are members of Van Nuys Burnt Club 914-52 in Tarzana, California.



Have you heard the one about
the audience that got away?

by Joanne Sherman

Hook 'em Early, Then Reel 'em In

■ *A MUFFLED SOUND WOKE ELEANOR FROM deep sleep. Fear clutched at her heart as she realized she wasn't alone. Slowly, a shadowy figure was moving across the dark room, toward the bed.*

Do I have your attention?

There is a rule in story writing: hook 'em early. From the opening line every sentence should hold the reader's attention, making them want more. That's why stories often start with action instead of explanation. Hook readers from the beginning, get them interested in what's next, and I promise they'll keep reading. The same rule applies if you deliver your message via the spoken word, rather than the written one.

I am a public speakers' worst nightmare, though I prefer to think of myself as a challenge. I am like a fish. I *have* to be hooked quickly, because once my attention strays, I start counting curtain pleats behind the speaker, or chipping at my nail polish, or putting together tomorrow's grocery list. I may *look* as if I'm really there, but like the fish that gets away, I am gone.

Whether addressing a large group or writing a story, the first few words – the opening – are vitally important. They establish a relationship and set a tone. The best speakers I've heard (and by that, I mean the ones I've actually listened to) employ methods of quickly hooking their audience. Some open with humor, others make a startling statement to jolt listeners to attention. It seldom

matters to me *how* the speaker grabs my attention – I just want them to do it.

When I open a book, I *want* the writer to pull me in, and when I listen to a speaker, I want him or her to do the same thing. I'm not there to count ceiling tiles, I *want* to listen and hear, to be moved, educated, enlightened, or inspired. Call me lazy, but I resent having to work too hard to keep my attention focused on the speaker. I think it's my responsibility to be there, prepared to listen. But then it becomes the speaker's responsibility to keep me there – in body *and* mind.

Not moving, hardly even breathing, Eleanor struggled to control the panic that threatened to paralyze her body. Should she try to run? But where? The shadowy figure stood between the bed and the door, blocking her only escape.

There is another rule in writing that can be applied to public speaking. Show, don't tell. If a writer pens, "Eleanor woke up when she heard a noise and was scared," that's telling. But by showing rather than telling, the reader is able to "visualize" Eleanor's face.

I have heard speakers spend 10 minutes *telling* me what it is they are going to tell me. I prefer to hear, briefly, what the subject is about, not a lengthy dissertation detailing what I'm about to be told. Once a person loses interest and stops listening, they won't hear the fascinating words that follow.

Recently, I sat through a lecture about honey bees. I didn't attend willingly, but

was dragged by a friend interested in apiculture and I was already eyeing my nail polish before the speaker was introduced. Then he opened by saying, "I'd like to tell you about my experience as a beekeeper. Some have been quite painful as I've been stung on every part of my body, except the most extremely sensitive part...[long pause]...here, I'll show it to you," then he stuck out his tongue. The opener grabbed my attention and what followed was interesting enough to save my manicure.

Oh, and about Eleanor. That shadowy figure in the bedroom was her husband trying to sneak in so she wouldn't know how late he'd been out with his friends. Furious, Eleanor demanded an explanation.

"I was window shopping for a diamond necklace for your birthday," he said.

Not bad for an opener. ①

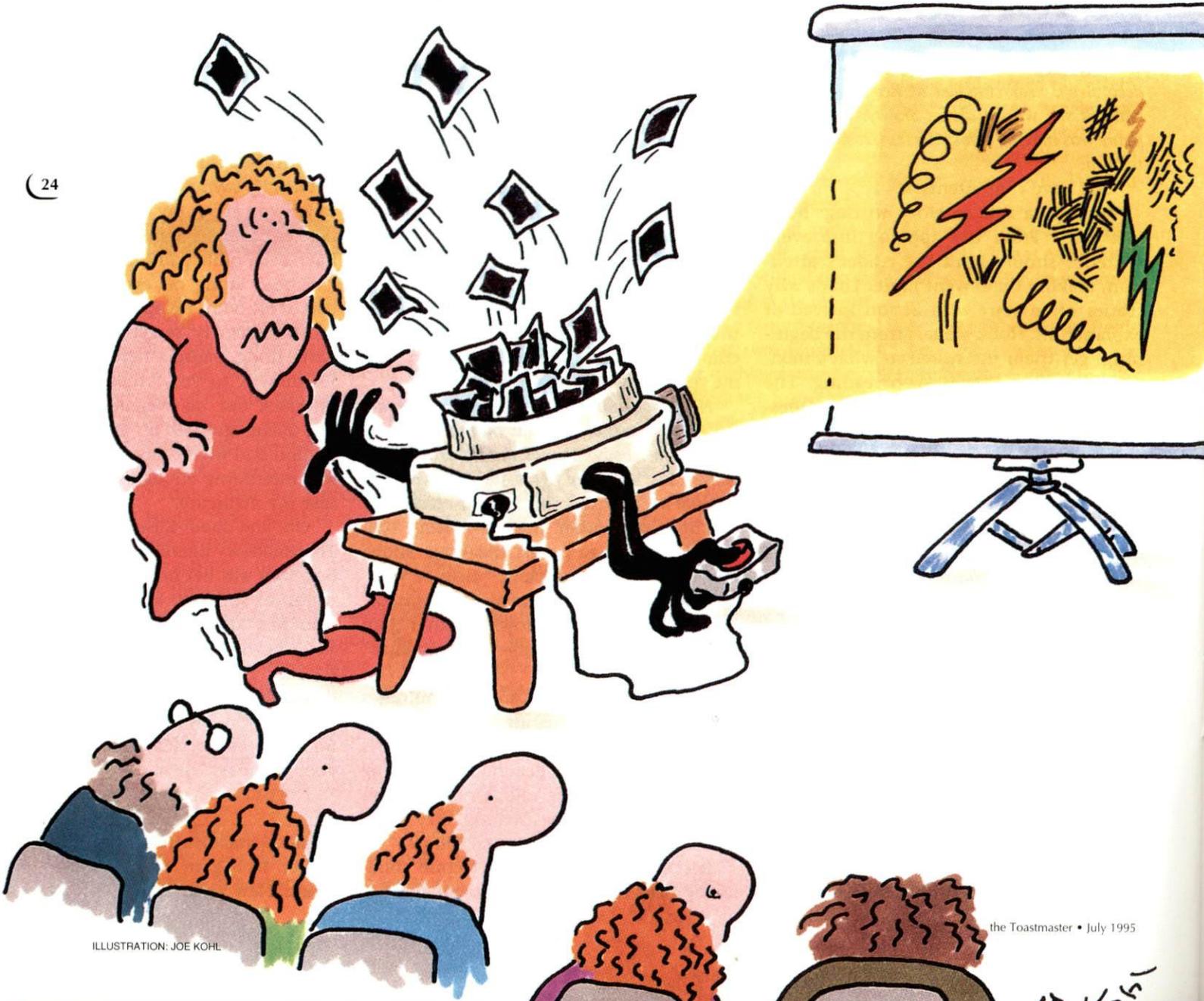
Joanne Sherman is a freelance writer living in Shelter Island, New York.

Slideshow or Sideshow?

by Dorothy Reinke, CTM

Don't let your slideshow steal your presentation and put you on the sidelines!

24



4/16/95

Slideshow presentations are dramatic and colorful. If used correctly, they can help a presentation look professional and effectively convey information or demonstrate a concept or product.

But how can you control the show and keep it from stealing the stage from you? How do you keep it from pushing you to the sidelines?

Since slideshows are a relatively new technique for many speakers, you'll want to consider these questions before you prepare.

What is a slideshow? A slideshow is an automated presentation from a projection device to a screen. This term was formerly associated with a show using the 35 mm carousel slides, but "slideshow" now generally refers to a personal computer (PC)-based series of graphs and pictures that are projected to a viewing screen. You design the graphics on your computer, determine the order you want to show them, and use them as visual aids in your presentation. You can either display them automatically at fixed intervals or manually control when you want the next one to appear.

How does a PC-based slideshow differ from a 35 mm show? When you prepare a 35 mm show, you usually prepare drafts of the slides at your own office, then send them to an art house to prepare the finished slides. The cost is \$25-\$50 per slide depending on whether you have text, graphics or actual photos on the slides.

The 35 mm show requires quite a bit of planning and preparation. Since the slides are expensive, you are less likely to prepare slides for a single presentation or customize the slides for a specific show. The slides are put in a carousel, and your presentation is inflexible. The advantage is that the 35 mm projector is inexpensive, readily available at convention and business sites, and portable.

In contrast, the PC-based slideshow is less expensive to prepare, easy to modify and easy to customize each time you use it. However, the equipment needed to show it is much more expensive than the 35 mm projector.

At a recent presentation, the speaker used 35 mm slides and stood behind the audience by the slide projector advancing each slide. She didn't come to the front of the audience even when introduced! Since PC-based slideshows are projected from the front of the room, you can avoid this problem.

How does a slideshow differ from a presentation using overhead transparencies? With a slideshow, you don't have to plot all your slides on the plotter, so you can easily make changes even at the last minute. It's also easier to customize your presentation for a particular audience. You can use the name of a company on the screens and when you give the show to another company, just make quick, inexpensive changes.

With the PC slideshow, the overlay technique helps the audience concentrate on one point at a time. There is no need to drag a sheet of paper down the transparency to focus the audience's attention on your current point.

The equipment for showing overhead transparencies is inexpensive and readily available; whereas, the PC slideshow requires special equipment.

What stylistic elements do you need to consider in preparing your slideshow? The basic rule is "Keep it simple." With so many nifty pictures, backgrounds, colors

and fonts to choose from, you can easily go overboard. Don't make the graphics too busy or complex. Limit the number of different fonts on the screen. Select large, easy-to-read fonts. Keep the background simple.

Limit yourself to one main idea on a screen, and limit the number of screens in your speech. Use the overlay technique to pull up points as you want the audience to focus on them, and fade the color on points already covered.

Avoid the "auto pilot" technique where you preset the speed of the show and let it run. "Auto pilot" doesn't let you control the show to allow for discussion or questions. Be sure to face the audience at all times – even when you need to push the key or button to continue. If this is not possible, find an assistant to push it at your signal. A remote control button also gives freedom of movement.

What about color? There are so many possibilities that it is easy to overdo it. You are no longer limited to eight basic pen colors on a clear background; you can select from a whole palette of colors. However, too many clashing colors will distract from the message you want to convey.

A common error is using red on a blue background. Instead, use a strong contrast in intensity between the colors of the background and the text, graph or picture.

Also, be considerate of the color-blind person who may be forced to distinguish between shades of gray. Be sure

"Be considerate of the color-blind person who may be forced to distinguish between shades of gray."

there is enough contrast between the text or graphic and the background and avoid "patterned backgrounds."

With some software packages such as Freelance by Lotus, you can preview the picture in shades of gray to be sure you have enough contrast.

What speaking techniques will you use? Basically, adhere to the same good Toastmasters techniques that apply to the use of any visual aid:

- Be sure everyone in the audience can see the screen clearly.
- Limit the amount of material on any screen to a single main idea.
- Use title phrases to supplement the material.
- Talk to your audience, not to the visual.
- Maintain eye contact.
- Rehearse your slideshow.
- Anticipate problems.
- Avoid keeping the room dark for very long.
- Keep it simple.

What special equipment will you need? You'll need a personal computer to run the slideshow and a projection device. You can use a portable computer and connect it to a small portable projection device that rests on top of a standard overhead projector. Some of the portable devices only project blue on yellow backgrounds, while others project all colors.

Most powerful equipment is permanently mounted to the ceiling or a rolling cart. You get the best quality picture from a fixed projector such as Barco, Electrohome or Panasonic brands of projectors connected to a personal

computer. If your conference room is not equipped with such a device, you can rent one.

What special software packages will you need? You'll need a software package to create your graphics. Select one that automates the process of generating a series of high quality graphics and has the capability of showing them continuously in a slideshow. Two such products are:

- Freelance for Windows by Lotus
- Charisma by Micrografix

If you will be giving the presentation from a different PC than the one you created it on, you may want a program such as Freelance that lets you

show the slideshow on a PC without installing Freelance.

How can you control the show and keep it from stealing the stage from you?

- Limit the number of screens.
- Control the show by pressing the button.
- Use the overlay to focus attention.
- Keep colors and background simple.
- Have sharp contrast between background and text.

If you remember these easy techniques in your slideshow presentations, you can control the show, and you will be the star of the presentation instead of standing on the sidelines. ①

Dorothy Byers Reinke, CTM, is a Learning Products Developer at Hewlett-Packard Intercontinental in Palo Alto, California. She is a member of HP Toastbusters Club 5825-4.

"Limit the amount of material on any screen to a single main idea."

One of the best ways to build your Club's membership is through a Speechcraft Program. This eight-session program teaches potential members the basics of public speaking and is a great introduction to the Toastmasters Communication and Leadership program. In fact, many members began their Toastmasters "career" as a Speechcraft participant.

These materials will help you get started:

___	203-A	Number One Membership Building Tool	.12
___	203	Speechcraft Promotional Kit	1.50
___	205	Speechcraft Starter Kit	13.50
___	204-H	Speechcrafter's Handbook	1.25
___	207	An Opportunity to Succeed	.08
___	261	Participant's Certificates	.30
___	99	Success Starts with Toastmasters	.15
___	101	Why Toastmasters Is Smart Business	.15

Speechcraft

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PAYMENT MUST ACCOMPANY ORDER

- Check or money order enclosed: \$ _____ (US FUNDS)
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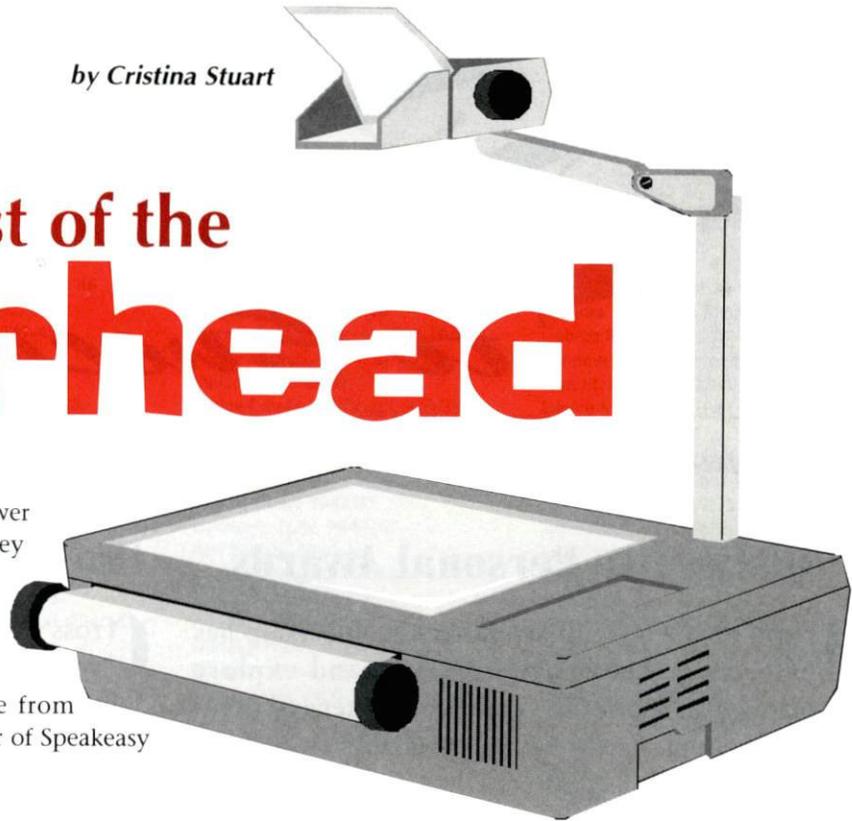
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For orders shipped outside the United States, see the current Supply Catalog for item weight and shipping charts to calculate the exact postage. Or, estimate airmail at 30% of order total, surface mail at 20%, though actual charges may vary significantly. Excess charges will be billed through your Club's account. California residents add 7.75% sales tax.

by Cristina Stuart

Making the Most of the overhead



Experienced speakers know the added power their presentations can carry when they use an overhead projector correctly.

Overhead projectors grab listeners' attention. They can make or break the impact of a talk.

Here are some suggestions for their use from Cristina Stuart, author and managing director of Speakeasy Training Ltd.:

- Never switch on the projector unless your transparency is in place. A bright, blank screen attracts everyone's eyes, and the impact of your visual will be lessened.
- For the same reasons, always switch off the projector before removing your transparency.
- Allow sufficient time for viewers to absorb the content of your transparencies. They may be familiar to you, but the audience is seeing them for the first time.
- Allow a few moments of silence before speaking about a transparency. When the audience's eyes turn from the screen back to you, you'll know it's time to begin.
- Point at the transparency, not at the screen.
- Use a pen, not your finger, when pointing to relevant parts of the visual.
- After placing the transparency on the projector, look over your shoulder once to see that the visual is correctly lined up. After that, do not turn around again.
- As soon as the visual is no longer relevant, shut off the projector and remove the visual.

For important presentations, enhance your transparencies with these techniques:

COLOR TRANSPARENCY FILM. Adds interest and eye appeal.

1. Lay your framed visual facedown on the desk.
2. Overlay with the color transparency film and secure that with tape.
3. Add other color transparency films to obtain different color effects. Each layer of film reduces the amount of light passing through the transparency. Project the transparency to make sure you haven't added too many films.

COLOR PENS AND PENCILS. Specially made 3M pens add color to transparencies that have been covered with a sheet of write-on film. Permanent and water-soluble colors are available.

BILLBOARDING. This highlights a specific area of a visual. Tape the unimaged color film of your choice over the mounted transparency. Then, using a sharp knife, cut around the section you wish to highlight. Be careful to cut only the color film.

OVERLAYS. These simplify difficult concepts and allow the presenter to build up the story in an easy, step-by-step process.

1. Hinge on the overlay transparency to be presented first.
2. Flip over the hinged visual to add information to the projected message.
3. Try not to use more than two overlays per frame because each overlay cuts down the amount of light passing to the screen. **T**

Cristina Stuart is the author of *How to Be an Effective Speaker: The Essential Guide to Making the Most of Your Communication Skills* (\$12.95), NTC Publishing Group, Lincolnwood, Illinois.

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PASSPORT to Success



Annual Membership Program – July 1, 1995 through June 30, 1996

Distinctive Personal Awards

If you're like most Toastmasters, membership has helped you cross new frontiers and explore unmapped territories in your life. Like tens of thousands of people each year, you probably crossed the border into a Toastmasters Club because someone invited you to a Club – the first stamp in your Passport to Success!

28

New member sponsors earn the following distinctive personal awards when members they recruit join a Club:



A limited edition **Passport to Success** pin will be sent to everyone who sponsors five members!



The exclusive **Gold Star** pin is for those who go the extra mile and sponsor 10 new members.



The **Toastmasters Necktie or Ascot scarf** – not available for sale – is the award for the sponsoring 15 or more members.

Just think, if you sponsor 15 members, you will receive all three items!

This year, share the benefits of Toastmasters with others – invite your friends and associates along for the trip! Help them take the first step toward obtaining the communication skills that will enable them to travel past the barriers and fears in their personal and professional lives.



Cross The 20 Member Frontier!

Cross the frontier into 20 member country this year and earn 300 Distinguished Club Program points and a recognition ribbon to hang on your Club's banner. If you've already reached that mile marker, increase your total membership by five during the 1995-1996 year. For example, if your Club's initial membership count is 17, you need only have a final membership count of 20! If you have 11 members, reach 16! If you have 20 members, reach 25!

Why does your Club need to grow? To provide variety! Variety is one of the many benefits of joining a Toastmasters Club, since different speeches, points of view, and speaking styles help to enliven and enhance our Toastmasters experience. To experience true variety, however, your Club needs at least 20 members.

Remember, the excitement that new members bring can revitalize your Club's personality!

For recruiting information, contact World Headquarters and request a copy of *From Prospect To Guest To Member* (Catalog No. 108), an informative booklet that teaches members to be effective recruiters.

See your Club's copy of the Passport to Success membership programs flier for complete details of these and other Toastmasters International membership programs. Copies of the flier (catalog no. 1620) are available free of charge from Toastmasters International.

Toastmasters International

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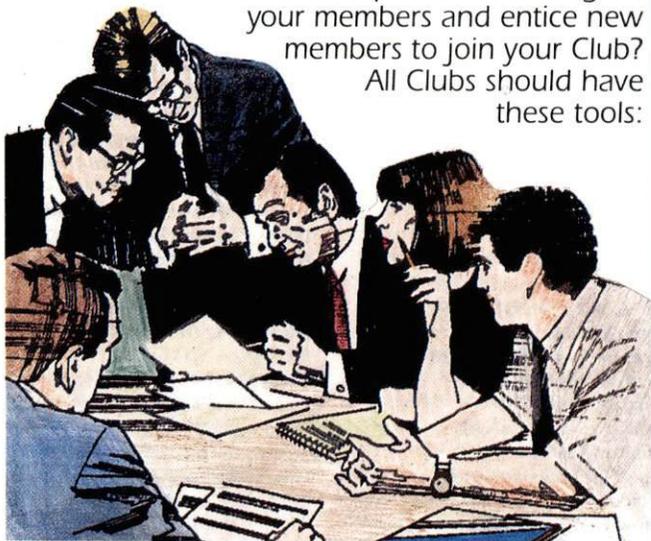
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