

February 1987

# THE TOASTMASTER



BREAK DOWN TO BUILD UP



# VIEWPOINT

## TI OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

### Something To Grow On

Following a very critical speech evaluation, a fellow club member said to me, "I don't think the nitpicking exercise was warranted, but more importantly, the evaluator did not give me something to grow on."



This occurred seven years ago but I can still see the disappointment on the face and hear the sincerity in the voice of that Toastmaster who wanted so much to be given a positive and more meaningful evaluation. At the time this happened I was in the process of developing a workshop on evaluation. The dismay of my fellow Toastmaster had such an impact on me that I called my workshop, "Something To Grow On." I believe those words express simply, though powerfully, the purpose of effective speech evaluation. Eventually I conducted several of these workshops for clubs in my district until the Success/Leadership module, "The Art of Effective Evaluation," became available.

Much of what we do and learn in our Toastmasters clubs is designed to help us become more effective oral communicators

...giving manual speeches, serving as club leaders, participating in Table Topics and speech evaluation. The latter is vital to the speaking growth of the member. I often refer to speech evaluation as being the 'heart' of the Toastmasters program. After all, most of us joined to learn, practice and polish the skills of public speaking. Evaluation provides the feedback needed to help us identify how we can improve our presentations. Without the 'heart' of the program, Toastmasters clubs would simply be 'meet to speak' clubs.

I believe that the most harmful and meaningless approaches to speech evaluation are the 'extremes.' One extreme is the nitpicker described above—the evaluator who is highly negative. At the other extreme is the member who can never find anything to evaluate and usually tells you how wonderful you were. In my club we call this type of evaluation extreme a 'whitewash.' Perhaps a similar colorful description is used in your club. Little effort is required to be an 'extreme' evaluator.

Unfortunately, in some instances members have been lost because of 'extreme' evaluations. Also, prospective members have not joined a club after witnessing an 'extreme' evaluation. Positive evaluation falls somewhere between the extremes and it not only gives the speaker something to grow on, but is also a strong contributor to membership retention.

I encourage you to observe and learn from the positive evaluators in your club. I also encourage clubs to use the excellent evaluation materials listed in the Toastmasters International Supply Catalog and to conduct the very popular "Art of Effective Evaluation" program.

The importance of positive speech evaluations cannot be overemphasized. The next time you are scheduled to evaluate, remember you are about to contribute to the speaker's 'heart' fund. Give generously, be positive and always leave the speaker with SOMETHING TO GROW ON!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Theodore C. Wood".

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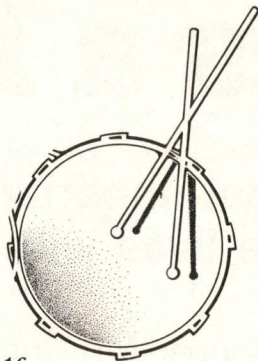
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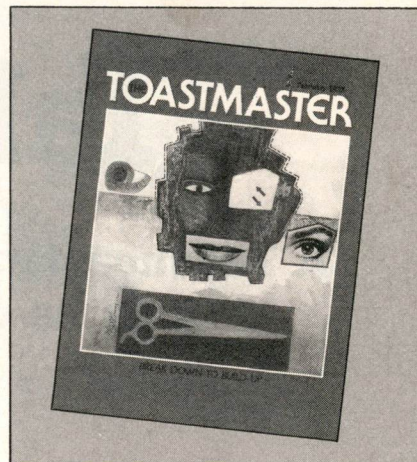
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## COVER

If you were to take apart the Toastmasters program and analyze it piece by piece, you'd find that the element resting at the very baseline—the foundation on which every other element rests—is evaluation. Two articles in this issue, "Break Down to Build Up" and "Evaluate to Motivate," offer helpful ideas for strengthening this cornerstone of the club. *Cover illustration by Geoffrey Krueger.*

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# The First Audience Takes a Bow

A Toastmaster's most important audience is the one he or she lives with every day.

by Sherry Witt Snow

**D**o you know me? I'm a member of the 'first audience.' We are mentioned in section one of Toastmasters' Basic Manual under "Preparing Yourself." The manual advises that, after working up the Ice Breaker speech, the new Toastmaster "try the talk on someone in your family . . ."—that's us, the first audience.

I discovered that I had joined this elite group (dedicated, as Toastmasters are dedicated, to the cause of clear communication) when my husband finagled me into listening to his Ice Breaker. I say 'finagle' because we were driving to work at the time:

"I have to give a speech tomorrow," he said. "Will you listen to it?"

"Well, okay." I said, hesitantly. "What do I have to do?"

"Just make sure it's understandable and that I don't say 'um' too many times."

Well, that didn't sound too terrible and I thought I could handle it. I don't remember if he ever finished his speech. I do remember that we had a tremendous fight.

With no experience in speech criticism, I dutifully followed his instructions to the letter and told him all the things that were wrong, including how many times he said 'um' (about 23) and every time he stopped to take a breath. Looking back I'm amazed he didn't leave me by the side of the road.

Since that rocky beginning my Toastmaster and I have stumbled through the manual together. We each have gotten something more out of it than we would have had he decided to go it alone. In fact, I heartily recommend that families become involved in Toastmasters. Really. Let me tell you why.

Better yet, I'll let someone else tell you why.

## One Family's Story

Mike Mahoney, an ATM with over 20 years of Toastmasters experience, reminisced recently about how he used to "line up my two daughters and my wife on the living room couch" to listen to his speeches when he first joined the organization.

Gert Mahoney, Mike's wife, remembered, "He'd tell us he had something he'd like us to hear, so we'd all sit and just wait to find out what this was all about. After the first time we always knew we had to time him."

"I didn't usually hit my time limit the first time through," Mike says, "and so I'd have to do it again. Then maybe I'd get the time right but I'd lose my place, so I'd have to do it *again*. Sometimes I'd go through a six-minute speech three or four times and by the end, boy were they bored!"

So one lesson the 'first family' can learn is to consider rotating audience duty, to prevent such terminal boredom. Timing is important too—pick a time of day when everyone is refreshed. And don't let your Toastmaster talk you to death; set a reasonable time limit and stick by it.

Mike and his family learned more than just how to time a speech. His daughters are grown now, but ask about Toastmasters and a wealth of memories comes pouring out!

Ask younger daughter Laurie which was her father's most memorable speech, and she'll tell you it was the one about his teaching her older sister to drive a car with manual transmission. Thirteen-year-old Laurie was some-

times allowed along for some very bumpy rides, and did she remember her father's speech when it was *her* turn to learn to drive!

Older sister Debbie will tell you that her father's practice of taking his daughters to Toastmasters meetings (Laurie refers to it as "being on a rotation of 'who is Dad's guest this week'") impressed upon her that certain skills, such as organization and poise under pressure, were necessary for success in business.

Debbie also realized an intangible benefit. "I currently work in a very controversial area of health care," she says. "At community meetings, cocktail parties and even family gatherings, I frequently am called upon to support my point of view firmly and eloquently without starting a fistfight. It's hard to say where I learned how to do it . . . but I'm good at it!"

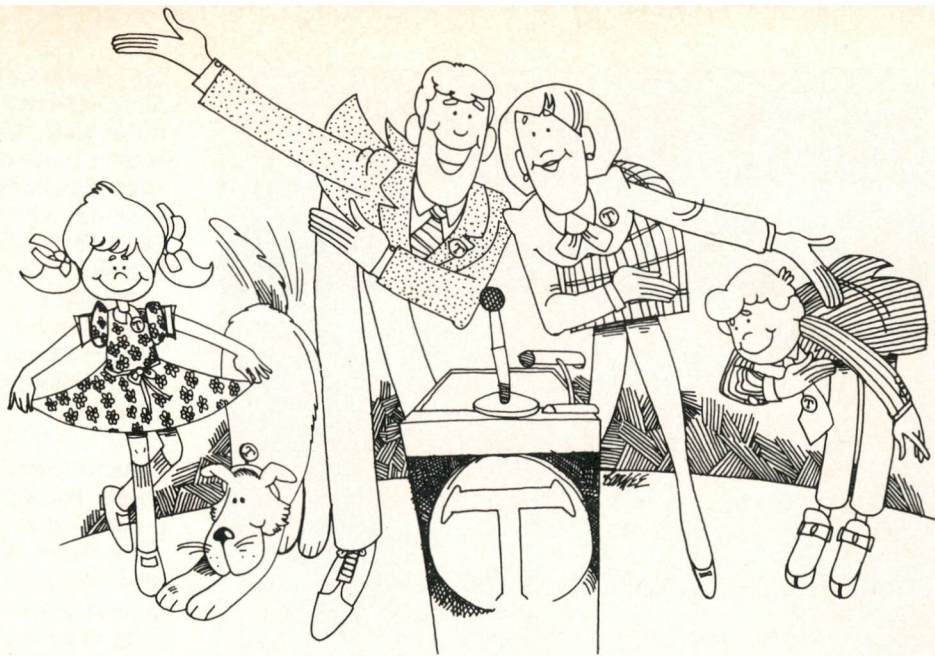
That's the thing about Toastmasters. It rubs off on you. Gert Mahoney says, "Listening to Mike practice made me more aware. I can really see the difference between someone who is a good speaker and someone who is not."

For my part I've learned to be aware of voice tone and tempo. Since my own work sometimes means presenting numeric data to management, the tempo of the presentation is critical to keep from either losing my audience in a wilderness of numbers, or boring them to the point they begin making plans for lunch instead of listening to what I'm saying.

## Family Is a Wealth of Topics

Ideas for topics are always a challenge facing Toastmasters, especially if the family is involved. There are so many





to choose from. Debbie remembers, "Dad tended to use topics that were about the family. Erma Bombeck's car, dog, kids and appliances couldn't compete with ours. We thought we were celebrities."

In my family we read the newspaper with an eye out for possible speech material. Not only are we better informed, but our conversation frequently leads to debates. Toastmasters has broken us out of the humdrum "How-was-your-day-and-what's-for-dinner?" syndrome that families fall into.

We have also become critics. Analysis of others' speeches, primarily political, has become a pastime for us. On our way home from work one night we listened to Mario Cuomo's keynote address to the 1984 U.S. Democratic Convention. "A Tale of Two Cities" was grist for our mill as we tore it apart to see what made it so memorable.

Laurie, now a college student, also knows what makes a good presentation. "I've sat through many college lectures wishing the instructors had discovered their potential as *communicators* prior to my class meetings," she laments.

"Half the audience is adrift in a sea of monotonous 'ahs,' 'ers' and 'etceteras' while the other half doggedly sifts through the lecture, searching for a unity of interest and understanding."

Perhaps the greatest benefit of being associated with a Toastmaster is that it teaches you it's okay to flounder regardless of your age or status in life. It teaches you that everyone, even the most in-command grown-up, sometimes fails.

Laurie says this has been one of her most useful lessons. "I learned that *everyone* is human and susceptible to

exactly the same stumbling blocks. I've seen young and old, professional speaker and beginner, freeze up and forget what's next."

### Avoiding the Shoals

Okay, I've persuaded you to get involved with Toastmasters, to 'actively support' your fledgling CTM. Now here's how to avoid most of the rocks and shoals. Believe me, I've hit them all.

First, while a certain amount of enthusiasm is good, don't go overboard. If you're an accomplished speaker, *do not* haul out all your high school debating trophies and prominently display them on the living room mantle when your mate tells you that he or she has joined Toastmasters. Instead, in a non-threatening manner, offer the use of your stopwatch and your services as a timer.

Second, browse through the Toastmasters manual to get an idea of what a particular speech is intended to accomplish. Is it supposed to make you laugh? Build suspense? Persuasively present a controversial point of view? The manual can tell you. Pay particular attention to the evaluation section.

Next, behave like an audience. Sit down and listen attentively to the speech. Do not cook dinner, wash the dog or knit a sweater while listening to your Toastmaster practice. It's distracting to the speaker to try to follow you around, and you can't judge the speech's impact fairly when you're preoccupied.

By the same token the speaker should act the part. My husband made a technical error when he asked me to listen to his Ice Breaker while we were driving to work. I couldn't judge the speech

fairly because the road was demanding as much, if not more, of his concentration as the speech was. Public speaking requires concentration of both the speaker and the audience.

After your Toastmaster makes a presentation, do not deliver a laundry list of everything that is, in your opinion, wrong with the speech. Start out with what you found effective in the talk, then pick out the major difficulties and concentrate on those.

Think about how you might feel if the roles were reversed. Even though Toastmasters meetings are conducted in a supportive way, for that first very critical run-through, nothing beats an audience of people who love the Toastmaster.

### Attend Meetings, Conventions

Lastly, make time to go to a Toastmasters meeting and take the kids along if they are old enough. It gives you a better understanding of what your Toastmaster is trying to accomplish. Debbie and Laurie both remember that they got to meet a lot of interesting people, and from hearing the variety of members talk learned many valuable things.

Attending district conferences and the annual International Convention can be great family outings. Debbie had pragmatic reasons for going to conventions: "We went to places with swimming pools and candy machines. It's quite a thrill when you're nine years old." Need I say more? 🎤

**Sherry Witt Snow**, a freelance writer living in Boulder Creek, California, authors a column for the Valley Press.



# PROFIT SHARING with the Corporate Club

by Andrew Bolotin, DTM

Once upon a time there was a Toastmaster named Sam. Sam was a longstanding member of a well-established community club and had recently been awarded his ATM. It was then pointed out to Sam that the sponsorship of a new club was a prerequisite for DTM. So Sam decided to sound out his boss at the XYZ Corporation on the possibility of starting a new club in XYZ's building.

The boss' response was even better than Sam had hoped. Not only would the company provide a permanent venue free of charge, but Sam could also advertise in XYZ's newsletter and post notices to inform employees of the date and time of the demonstration meeting.

Encouraged by his company's willingness, Sam went back to his club and asked five experienced members to help him run the demonstration meeting, using the normal community club agenda. In the meantime, Sam invited district officers, including the District Governor, to attend the meeting.

Three weeks later, the day of the demonstration meeting dawned with Sam in high hopes. After all, he had great expectations of being well on his way to a new club and DTM status. The Area Governor was enthusiastic since the area hadn't chartered a new club in five years. The District Governor was excited as well, because the District needed only one more club to be recognized as a Distinguished District for the year.

The demonstration meeting was scheduled to begin at 7:30 p.m. At 7:25, only three prospective members had arrived. At 7:45, five prospects were present. At 7:50, the total number of interested employees had risen to only nine.

An apprehensive Sam called the meeting to order; he couldn't wait any longer. The meeting lasted two hours, 45 minutes. Everyone put on a smile and a good effort; fortunately all present had an enjoyable time as a result. But Sam really had to try hard to smile. At the next meeting surely more people would show!

Three months later the new club project at the XYZ Corporation had been abandoned. At no meeting were more than 12 non-Toastmasters in attendance. No prospective members ever paid any fees. A dispirited Sam went back to his own club and reported the failure with a heavy heart.

Shortly thereafter Sam received a promotion at work and became 'too busy' to come to Toastmasters meetings anymore. His club held a 'final' night for him. Everyone agreed Sam was a fine fellow and had been a good Toastmaster.

Sam would have achieved better results if he'd approached the club build-

ing process with a completely different, more effective strategy. I discovered this myself, the hard way. When I first became interested in forming new clubs I participated in several demonstration meetings with the same ultimate result as above. I became convinced that there had to be a better way.

There was. Five new corporate clubs later (each formed in less than 30 days) District 73 and I had learned some important lessons in corporate club extension.

## Lesson One: The Agreement

Sam had approached the first corporation that came to mind—the one where he worked. He didn't consider whether there was sufficient support on a broad enough basis to start the club, or once formed, if the XYZ Corporation employed enough people to sustain it. Above all, Sam failed to reach a working agreement with the corporation as to mutual benefits and requirements.

It is essential to recognize that setting up a corporate club is a *sale* to that corporation. Whether we call a new Toastmasters club a training program for employees, an adjunct to existing employee training or a personal achievement opportunity for employees, the bottom line is the same: The corporation must be convinced that a Toastmasters club will help employees develop communication and leadership skills and must be prepared to *invest* corporate time and money to make this happen.

Each corporation which arranges to hold a demonstration meeting must agree to the following points:

- A Toastmasters club will allow staff to develop communication/leadership skills in a friendly and mutually helpful environment, will give staff practice in

## Corporate Club Extension Record of District 73 Australia 1984-85

Club Name	# Charter Membership*	Formation Time +
BHP Club 5389	27	29 Days
MYER MELBOURNE Club 5680	28	14 Days
AGC HOUSE Club 3746	49	3 Days
CITY CENTRE Club 4208	21	30 Days
MYER DONCASTER Club 5798	42	28 Days

\* 99 percent of all charter members had never had any previous exposure to Toastmasters.

+ Each club took less than 30 days from the date of the demonstration meeting until such time as all Toastmasters International's chartering requirements were fulfilled.



leadership roles and will allow the corporation to assess staff in a setting closely related to 'real life' responsibilities.

- The Toastmasters club, once chartered, will be self-administering and self-funded.

- In return for these benefits, the corporation will either collect or donate the full initial fees for all charter members within an agreed time limit. In no event should this time limit exceed 30 days.

- The company's personnel department will be responsible for the attendance of at least 30 prospective members at the demonstration meeting by using publicity proven effective in the past.

- The corporation will supply all equipment necessary for the new club and a permanent venue on company premises.

- The District will provide standard educational/administrative support to the new club, including two club sponsors who will remain with the club until it's mutually agreed such special assistance is no longer required.

### Lesson Two: The Demonstration

Sam made some fundamental errors in planning the XYZ meeting. Not only was it far too long, but it did not address the prime objective of employees: Will this organization called Toastmasters really benefit my career in the corporation?

The meeting must be kept simple and brief, be timed exactly and involve only those Toastmasters who are actually participating in the program. At the end of the meeting, put this motion: "That the XYZ Toastmasters Club be formed and that a steering committee be appointed for that purpose."

Immediately after the motion is accepted, the club sponsors should select the steering committee and arrange for its first meeting to be held within 72 hours.

### Lesson Three: The 'Close'

The task of the steering committee is threefold:

- 1) To ensure a minimum of 20 members and pay all fees they are responsible for by agreement with the corporation.

- 2) To fill the agenda for the next general meeting, scheduling prospective members to fulfill most roles in the program.

- 3) To begin to function as the new club's executive committee, subject to ratification by the total membership. These steering committee members are invariably elected to the inaugural club executive.

## And the Moral Is...

If Aesop were alive today, he would have a field day writing morals for *this* story. I can see it now:

*Look before you leap. Don't take anything for granted. Never put off until tomorrow what can be done today.*

This Toastmasters fable-spinner has another moral in mind, however: *Back to the basics.*

Identify a prospective club target, and plan strategies of attack. Three items that should never be left out of any company club marketing effort are the promotional brochures geared specifically towards corporations and organizations: "Join Us For Success" (Code 100), "Speak Up and Get Ahead" (101), and "Communication . . . Your Success Depends Upon It" (103), available from the Supply Catalog.

To create greater interest, club extension teams should always have on hand the "Be Prepared To Speak" videocassette in VHS (215-V) and Beta (215-B) formats, and the "Membership and Extension" slide presentation (376). Both are effective in demonstrating the benefits of Toastmasters.

But, most importantly, be persistent on your follow-ups. Remember: *Every dog has its day, a stitch in time saves nine and a rolling stone gathers no moss.* □

### Lesson Four: The Next Meeting

Sam intended to keep running meetings until the club was solidly formed. It is much more feasible to use the steering committee as your agents at the meeting after the initial demonstration to ensure that the corporation fulfills its commitments.

By using this strategy you can attract at least 20 members with a minimum of confusion and hesitation. In addition, prospective members have a chance to participate as Toastmasters, subject to joining. This formula is so effective that before you know it, you'll be planning the club's charter ceremonies.

### Lesson Five: The Charter

There are many ways to hold charter ceremonies. Whichever you choose, appropriate pomp, ceremony and protocol should be strictly observed. The reason is simple.

Put yourself in the position of brand

new members of a brand new club: They've been impressed by a tightly run demonstration meeting. They've paid money to belong to an organization that promises great career and personal benefits. They've seen the corporation commit itself to the venture. And they've been directed along the path by capable club sponsors.

Now you must provide the recognition for their having 'seized the opportunity.' After all, you've succeeded in building a new corporate club in less than 30 days!



Andrew Bolotin, DTM, was the 1985-86 District Governor of District 73 Australia, and is a long-standing member of Oaks Club 2141-73 in Malvern, Victoria,

Australia. He has a special interest in club extension.

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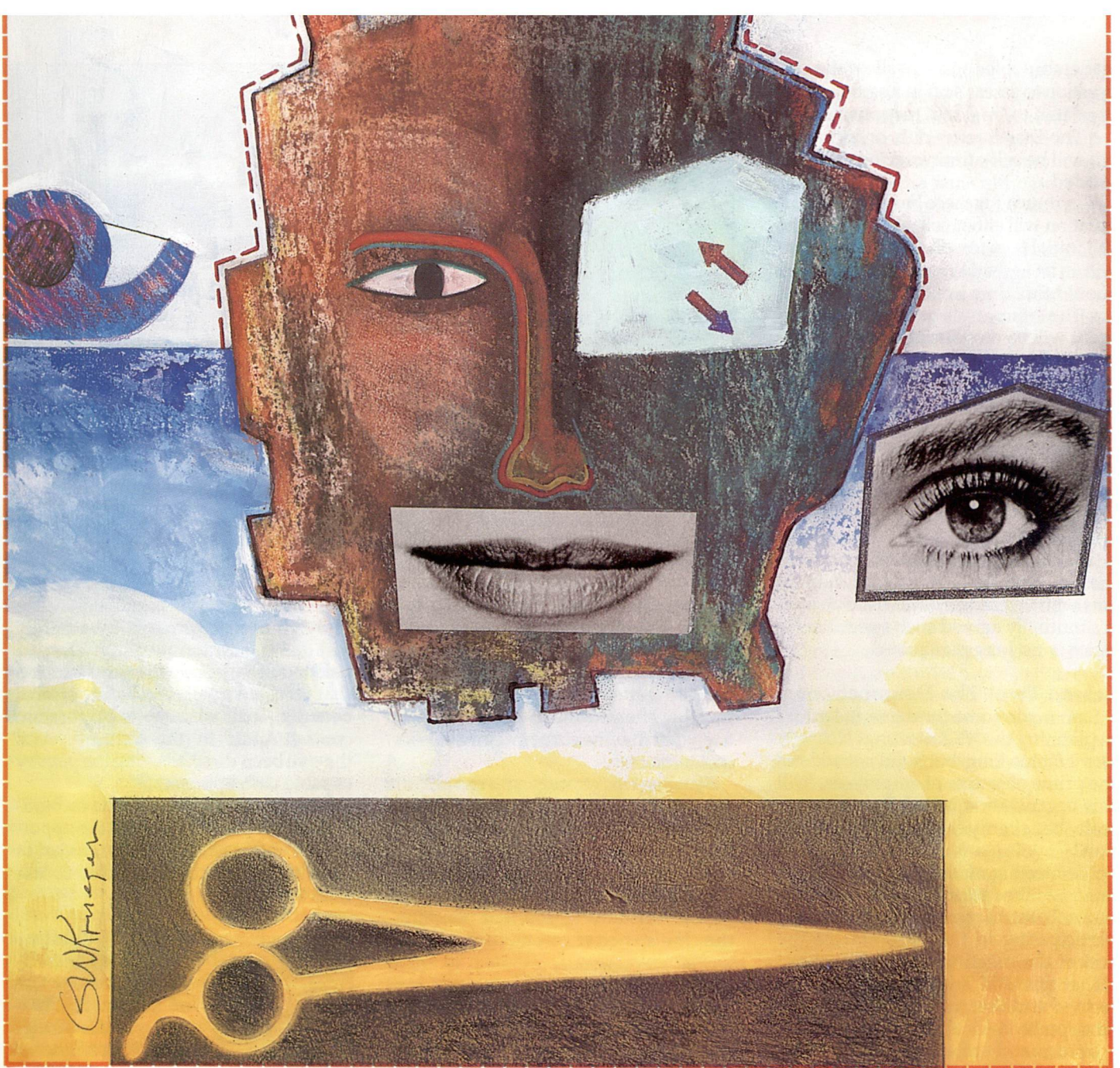
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# Break Down to Build Up

**Use this pattern to cut evaluation into strategic components and create a design for the speaker's confidence.**

by David H. Lee

One of the most difficult assignments for many Toastmasters is the evaluation of a fellow member's speech. The reasons for this difficulty are many. Social standards strongly suggest that to criticize others is improper, and it may take an extreme effort to overcome this conditioning.

Some Toastmasters, particularly newer members, lack knowledge and experience in speaking, and therefore feel inadequate to evaluate the speaking skills of others. Sometimes members find identifying noteworthy items in speech presentations difficult. Or the difficulty may be in organizing the material into a concise oral evaluation.

Whatever the reason, when evalua-



tions are difficult to give, they are not enjoyable for the evaluator, and often not useful to the speaker.

A good way to overcome any of these difficulties is to adopt a specific technique for critiquing the speech and presenting the oral evaluation. The Breakdown Method of speech evaluation is such a technique. It makes evaluating easier, and thus allows the development of evaluation skills through experience.

Reference to 'breakdown' in connection with this technique does not suggest that Toastmasters should succumb to nervous breakdowns during speech evaluations! Rather, 'breakdown' refers to breaking the organization of an evaluation down into specific steps. This is done *before* the speech, to make it easier to organize a concise and useful oral evaluation.

Any evaluation method is meant as a general guide, not as an unvarying format. The five steps of this technique allow the evaluator a flexibility to develop a personal style and to shape the evaluation to the specific speech, while giving a concise, thorough evaluation.

The five steps are: Facts, Achievement, Content, Externals and Summary.

### 1) Facts

First, briefly present information which will set the stage for the evaluation; this step, addressed to the audience, becomes the introduction to your presentation. List facts which are pertinent to the audience's understanding of the basis for your evaluation.

For example, for a Communication and Leadership manual speech you should describe the assignment in your own words. You might also state what you perceived the speaker's purpose to be: to convince, to entertain, to inform, etc. This enables the speaker to know if the speech had the intended effect.

If the speech was given on short notice, or was practice for a job-related speech, you may wish to mention this also. Remember to be brief; this phase of the evaluation is only to set the stage for the remainder of your presentation.

### 2) Achievement

Now address the speaker, continuing to do so for the remainder of the evaluation. For a manual speech or any other speech in which a specific objective has been assigned, tell the speaker whether or not you felt the assignment was fulfilled, and explain why or why not. Questions listed in the evaluation section of the manual will give guidance in organizing this portion of the evaluation.

## To increase the impact of your oral comments, focus on one positive point and one negative point.

This step may encompass as much as half of the oral evaluation time for speeches with specific assignments. For other speeches, a brief statement concerning the speaker's achievement of his or her purpose may be sufficient.

It's important to maintain a balance between positive and negative comments in any evaluation. Speakers want to know where they excel as well as where they need improvement. Coupling negative comments with suggestions for ways to improve helps to prevent any sense of hopelessness on the part of speakers and reflects your genuine interest in their improvement.

### 3) Content

When evaluating the speech's content, explain the most outstanding feature of the speech, and the feature which most needs improvement. Choose only one positive point and one negative point to mention, even if there are many. This increases the likelihood that your comments will be remembered. List other points in the written evaluation.

Content includes items such as the organization or structure of the speech, the effectiveness of the introduction and the conclusion, the efficiency with which smooth transitions were made between various elements of the speech and the definitive use of facts, anecdotes and examples.

### 4) Externals

Next, address the manner in which the speech was given—the elements of the presentation external to the speech itself. Proceed just as you did when evaluating content, but talk about use of gestures, discernible nervousness, eye contact, appropriateness of the speaker's appearance, voice inflection, volume, tone, etc.

### 5) Summary

Summarize your evaluation by tying together your major points on 'Achieve-

ment,' 'Content' and 'Externals.' Make this final portion of the evaluation a cohesive and concise statement about the speech. Avoid broad comments such as "Overall, this was a very good speech." Such comments leave the speaker and the audience suspecting the evaluator's sincerity.

The various steps outlined in the above paragraphs become more or less important depending on the specific speech. For instance, if the speech assignment as outlined in a Toastmasters manual involves work on speech organization you can eliminate the 'Content' section of the evaluation, since the 'Achievement' step will encompass a discussion of the speech's content.

Any evaluation can be divided into separate, more manageable pieces. But these steps alone will not necessarily make evaluating easier. It is also important to observe two simple guidelines.

First, always organize *before* the speech. Divide three or four pages of paper into sections using the steps of the technique as section headings. If you have trouble remembering the steps, the first letter of each combines to spell FACES. Allot space in ratio to the amount of time you expect to spend talking on each step. The 'Facts' and 'Summary' sections usually merit the least space.

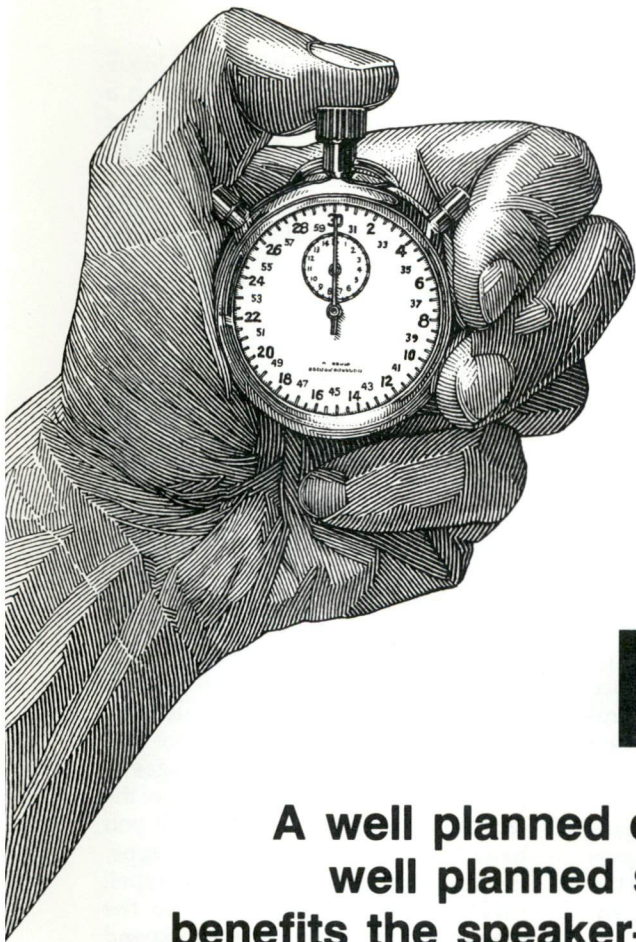
Under each heading jot the major items you want to watch for, particularly in the 'Achievement' section. With minimal reorganization and work on the summary, you'll be ready to give your presentation.

The second guideline is to be flexible. Flexibility enters the evaluation by the way the separate steps of the technique are applied to an individual speech, by the items which are selected to be mentioned and by the manner in which the evaluation is ultimately presented. The technique supplies the basic framework; the evaluator supplies the content and style.

If evaluating has become a dreaded task for you, you may wish to try the Breakdown Method of speech evaluation. By making evaluating easier, this technique will allow you a more enjoyable, and therefore worthwhile, experience. As evaluating becomes more enjoyable, you will develop your own style and give speakers better evaluations. 🍀

*David H. Lee, sponsor and mentor of FACC Masters Club 5086-26 in Colorado Springs, Colorado, has been a Toastmaster for 10 years. He is currently manager of Technological Development at Ford Aerospace.*





# Evaluate To Motivate

**A well planned evaluation, like a well planned speech, not only benefits the speaker—it can motivate the entire club.**

by Rob Julian, DTM

**A**nd now, ladies and gentlemen, we have the evaluation of Mary's speech." The chairman of the evening sits down and beams expectantly across the table at you. Panicked, you wonder what on earth you can say. The speech seemed all right. Mary delivered it well, with no obvious signs of nervousness, and the audience seemed interested. What can possibly be said other than, "Well done!"?

Evaluation is possibly the most important skill you can develop in Toastmasters. No other public speaking organization gives training or emphasizes both speech delivery and speech evaluation to match the standards of Toastmasters.

Evaluation is important for two reasons. The first and most often mentioned reason is that competent evaluation is necessary for a speaker to improve. Many faults which might ruin an otherwise competent delivery remain unrecognized until identified by a sympathetic evaluator.

## Evaluate To Motivate

The second reason is often glossed

over or never mentioned at all. In any leadership role, in business or community life, we are constantly required to monitor the progress of the people we direct. If staff members are not measuring up to expectations, they need to be informed in a manner that will motivate, not alienate, them.

This task is even trickier when the

organization is a voluntary one such as Toastmasters or the local Parent Teachers Association. We must praise good performances, identify weaknesses and recommend improvements. These are precisely the activities we engage in during Toastmasters' evaluations!

Evaluation itself is not difficult; in fact we do it all the time in our everyday lives. We evaluate every TV program we watch—even if only by changing channels or turning the set off. We evaluate our mates' cooking, our neighbors' gardening, our teenage children's choice of music.

What is difficult is presenting our evaluations in a manner that will be useful. How many of us, for instance, will expressly compliment the principal of the local high school for his or her prize-winning address?

How many of us would go further and offer suggestions on how to make the speech even better? Yet it's worth noting the grateful reception when you let the person know you are capable of and willing to give such advice.

In Toastmasters, evaluation can be a complex task. We can become so anxiously immersed in looking for such details as appropriate gestures, eye contact and voice modulation that we end up missing the main point of the speech altogether.

Can you remember the details of the last speech you evaluated? Can you remember what the purpose was, and what the speaker was trying to achieve?

But how can you know precisely what the speaker's purpose may be, especially if the speaker is not very experienced? The answer is so breathtakingly simple, it seems ludicrous. Yet in most Toastmasters clubs, it is ignored.

## Ask the Speaker

It is a point of absolute necessity that, before the meeting starts, you exchange

## Make Your Cornerstone Secure

Evaluations are the cornerstone of the Toastmasters educational program. Good evaluations help club members develop their speaking abilities to the fullest, and create a positive, success-oriented environment. It's important that all club members know how to evaluate properly.

Toastmasters International's Success/Leadership Program, **The Art of Effective Evaluation (Code 251)**, can help club members develop their evaluation skills. The program can be conducted during a single club meeting lasting about two hours. A coordinator presents it in a seminar-style format involving all club members. Topics covered include the importance of evaluations, how to assess the quality of your club's evaluations and how to evaluate effectively.

Everything you need to know to conduct the program is in the coordinator's and participant's manuals. Consult your Toastmasters Supply Catalog for information on ordering. The Supply Catalog should be available to all members at every meeting.



a few words with the person you are going to evaluate. Ask them what they hope to achieve by the speech, and if there is anything in particular they would like you to comment on.

"But," you say, "surely I should just comment on what's spelled out in the speech project directions in the Toastmasters manual." Yes, but the manual should merely serve as a guide. It's most effective if each member personalizes the manual's instructions to fit his or her goals and needs.

The speech may be titled "Be Persuasive," yet the speaker could also be concentrating on controlling a sidefoot shuffle. He may be trying a speech without notes for the first time. She may want feedback on an attempt at humor.

Even more important, the speaker needs to let you know whom, how and in what way he or she hopes to persuade. Does he or she hope to change people's attitudes toward racism, or to get the audience out demonstrating against the rising cost of living?

Unless you have a quiet chat with the speaker beforehand, you may miss these points entirely.

Once you know the speaker's purposes, two questions automatically follow in evaluating a speech:

- Did the speaker succeed? If so, why? If not, why not?
- What can the speaker do to improve the speech?

These two simple questions give meaning to evaluating details such as eye contact, voice projection and gestures—either these contribute to the purpose of the speech, or they detract from it. If you don't know what the speaker is trying to achieve, you won't be able to effectively judge whether or not he or she has used these behaviors successfully.

### Quiet Time

After the speaker (whom we'll call Mary again) has given her speech, you'll need at least five minutes to think about the two questions specified above and to structure your answers. If the chairperson has programmed you to give your evaluation straight away, you owe it to yourself and to Mary to request a change in the program before the meeting to allow you those five minutes.

During the five minutes, pick out two or three main reasons why the speech succeeded or failed. These could include the mechanics of delivery, the speech's logical development or both.

Suggest ways Mary could overcome each weakness you've identified. It is

pointless, for instance, to say the speaker still has a sidefoot shuffle without giving any advice on how to cure it. You might suggest that Mary give her next speech standing on a step stool.

### Your Speech Opportunity

Evaluation is a public speaking opportunity for you. Were it not, you'd simply be required to give Mary your advice personally after the meeting.

Since it is a speaking opportunity, speak to the whole audience, not just to Mary. That is, rather than say, "Mary, you succeeded in your task tonight because..." say, "Mary succeeded in her task tonight because..." Give your evaluation in third-person rather than second-person wording.

It would be rude to ignore 20 to 30 people who are forced to listen to you while you speak to only one of them. By all means, address occasional points directly to Mary, but your primary task is to communicate with the whole audience.

Evaluation is a speaking assignment of only two to three minutes in length. You've already determined the main points and suggestions you're going to make, so why burden yourself with the voluminous random jottings you've probably made?

To keep confusion to a minimum, before the meeting prepare an evaluation outline incorporating the two important questions discussed in the "Ask the Speaker" section of this article.

If you forget to mention a specific point during the evaluation, there's no harm done. You can mention it in person afterward, and in any case, you'll also complete the evaluation guide in the manual.

Next time you give an evaluation, use it as a leadership opportunity. Question the speaker about his or her purpose beforehand. Determine whether or not he or she succeeded, make positive suggestions on how to correct weaknesses and give your evaluation as you would an organized speech, with as little referral to your notes as possible. 🎤



**Rob Julian, DTM, a member of Capital Club 409-72 in Wellington, New Zealand, is Past Area Governor and winner of the 1985 District 72 and 1986**

*Divisional Evaluation Contests. Head of the Science Department at Newlands College, he is Past President of the New Zealand Science Teachers' Association.*

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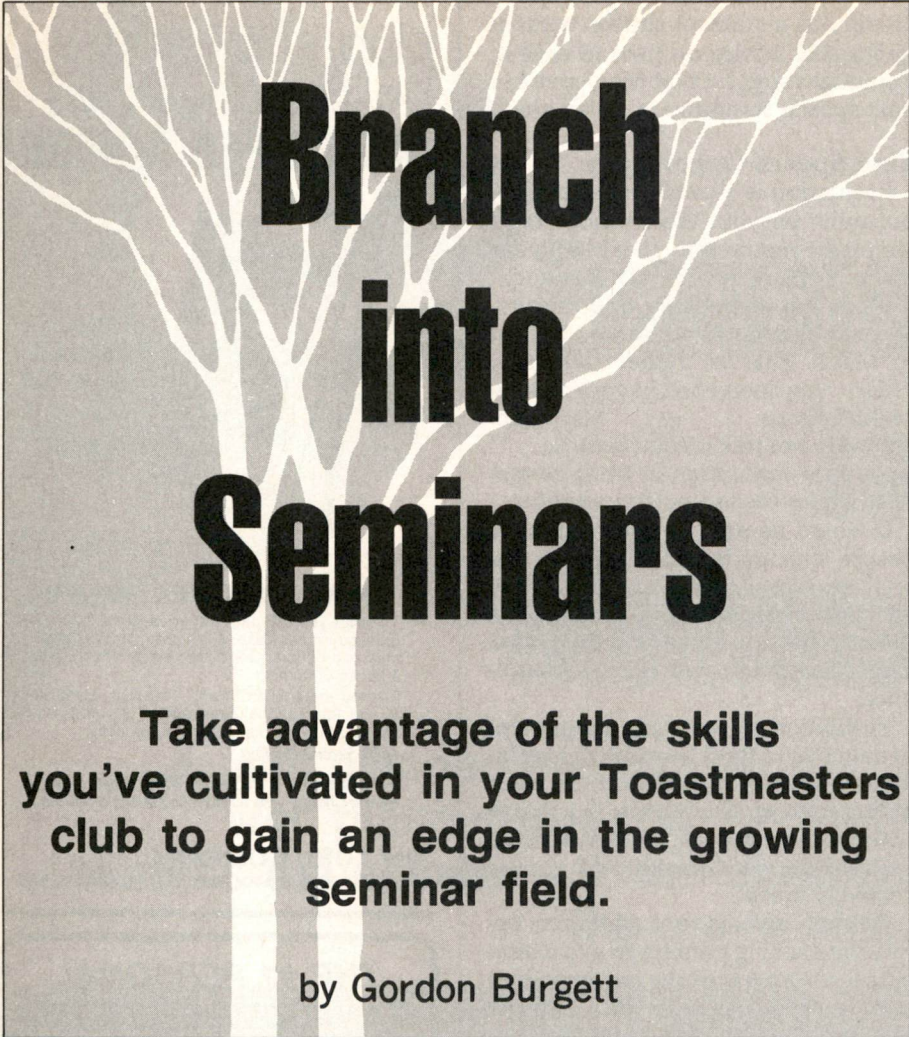
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# Branch into Seminars

Take advantage of the skills  
you've cultivated in your Toastmasters  
club to gain an edge in the growing  
seminar field.

by Gordon Burgett

**L**ooking for a lucrative way to capitalize on your newly-found, or newly-honed, speaking skills? Toastmasters are ideal candidates to join the burgeoning ranks of seminar presenters and workshop leaders filling a contemporary need for 'how to' information in short, intensive, tightly-packed programs.

Virtually every professional, and practitioners of most vocations and avocations, know something that others would pay to learn. Identifying and organizing that knowledge, preparing it in a format for oral presentation, packaging its theme and title and providing the necessary support material (workbook, handouts, bibliography, audiovisual material, etc.) are the first steps. Finding a sponsor or promoting your own program follows.

Sponsorship, as we shall see, can be risk-free and relatively easy to arrange. The first steps are the major hurdles, but the reward can far outweigh the initial travail.

## Why Offer a Seminar?

Because sharing knowledge with

others helps them, earns you a sense of accomplishment and further extends the bond of learning and cooperation among all people.

If that's hard to pocket, seminars (used generically to include all forms of educational outreach, including workshops and training programs) are among America's fastest growing industries, currently accounting for as much as \$10 million in annual earnings. Even a wee fraction of that would sweeten mightily the other benefits!

Also, teaching in a seminar setting validates your expertise and offers you a form of strategic positioning that can be used for a pay raise, a job change or other advantages that come from having knowledge in demand. Finally, seminars are ideal platforms from which to move into new avenues of idea dissemination, such as articles, books, speeches, teaching and consulting.

"What do I know that others would pay to hear?" This question is a stumper because most people attempting to answer it assume they need years of hands-on expertise to qualify as a

seminar presenter. Or they figure their seminar topic must be so unique that no one but they could offer it!

Years of experience are great, but with the best length for a seminar averaging four to six hours (eight hours lasting an eternity for most listeners), how much of a lifetime can you share in a day or less? And who wants to hear more than a bit of it anyway?

If you have spent your life acting, great. But who will pay, say, \$30 to \$50 to hear you deliver a talk on "How I Acted on the Stage"? Yet you can draw a crowd by giving a nuts-and-bolts program called "How To Turn Every Audition into an Accolade" with a brief, descriptive write-up explaining that through the seminar, participants will learn how to get chosen for the parts they seek, or to so impress the director that he or she will not forget them when assigning future roles.

If selling is your forte, what kind of topics can you present? Not just "Selling." It's too vague. Nor "How I Made It to the Top!" Too few care—they want to know how *they* can make it to the top.

So consider a tighter, more specific, audience-directed topic like "Selling as a Second-Career Choice," "How To Sell Computer Software Abroad" (or better, in a specific region or country), "How To Close," or "Women: Where To Find the Best Jobs in Selling—with or without Experience!"

Get the idea? Ask what others *need to know* about the topic. Ask from various perspectives: from the outsider wanting in, the newcomer, the climber eager to accelerate his/her advancement or salary increase, the expert seeking specific techniques or information.

From businesspeople to the public at large, the question that will unerringly point you to seminar topics that draw crowds is this: "What do others *need to know*?" Some participants will attend simply to expand their knowledge, a few will come out of curiosity, but rarely will enough register to make seminar-ing worth your time and effort, unless their need to know exceeds your program's cost in time and money.

## Study the Needs

Study the current extended or continuing education catalog from your nearby college or university. Read the occasional seminar ad in the newspaper or your professional journal. Ask a secretary where you work to save any seminar information received, and study it.

The topics of such seminars are seldom so brilliant that most people



couldn't have thought of them. Rather, they are straightforward 'how to' subjects that people need to know.

Nor have many of the speakers spent their life gaining expertise. They generally have on-site experience, have read the academic writings (if any) and are current on related articles in the trade and general press. They know the state-of-the-art of the topic, and can speak clearly and with enthusiasm as they relate to the angle of their seminar.

In many cases, with a bit of work and organization, you could be talking rather than listening. Simply take what you know, add to it (if necessary) by reading and swapping knowledge with others, bring yourself up-to-date and put a seminar together that's clear and helpful!

Somebody already doing that topic? There may be 100 seminars being given about 'how to close a sale,' but there's room for 101, particularly if yours is better or different. Uniqueness comes from three elements: the topic, the slant you take toward it and the way you present it. Look for variables in any of the three, develop a super seminar and you're on the way!

### Who Will Attend?

You may be asking yourself, "Who will pay to hear me speak?" A voice in you answers, "Maybe your mother, a friend or two and your kids—if you give them the money! But who would pay to learn how to...?" Scores or hundreds, if it's something to their advantage and they think you can tell them.

So you work backwards in designing a seminar. You pick the topic, form-fit it to an audience and stress how the audience will benefit by hearing what you have to say. Then direct your promotion to that same pre-identified audience.

Again, they aren't there to hear *you*. Another voice would do if it said the same useful things in an acceptable way. They are paying to hear about what they need.

You see, at the outset they don't know any more about you than the seminar write-up tells them. They assume if you're speaking you have the basic skills. Toastmasters training gives new seminar presenters the edge here.

It's only if you don't speak well or have a weak program or both, that they will not recommend friends to your future seminars or attend other programs you offer.

You can entice them to attend your other programs by designing intriguing titles for the presentations. Much of the attraction to your seminars comes

from the titles.

### Your Title Is Crucial

When you see an ad in a magazine or on a billboard, if the key words don't grab you, you move on. It's the same with seminar titles. If the title doesn't shout 'BENEFIT,' if your eye isn't caught and drawn into the descriptive write-up that follows, you won't attend. You won't even tell a friend to attend.

The point is clear: Work and work and work on the title. The title must attract the reader to the subject. It must show a way to meet a need. It must imply, if not state, why the person should attend. Plus the title should be short!

The benefits should be obvious: By attending this program the person will solve personal problems, get rich, find security, hobnob with the famous, improve their social life, find a job, overcome frustration and so on.

Ninety-five percent of successful seminars have drawing titles and selling write-ups. Study them by the dozen

and by the hour. That's the main reason they are successful. (See also pages 19 and 20 of *The Toastmaster*, December 1986 issue, for articles on 'billboarding your speech.')

By knowing your audience you can usually determine the best way to offer your program. Seminars usually fall into one of these three general categories:

### 1) Public, Self-Sponsored

These are by far the riskiest. You want to tell others "How To Buy Homes without a Down Payment" or "How To Corner the Cabbage Market." You want to offer the seminar to all interested. You arrange for the location, setup, promotion and back-of-the-room product sale.

You know that telling others about the seminar may cost you, in advance, as much as 65 percent of your anticipated income. And if you draw a smaller crowd than you planned for, you can lose your shirt!

What kind of topics justify that risk?

## Let Toastmasters Help

Successful professional seminar leaders are experienced seminar leaders. But if you're just starting out, how can you get the experience and practice you need to become a pro?

Toastmasters can help. Through its Success/Leadership Series, you can acquire the skills you'll need to build a profitable career in seminar presentations.

The Success/Leadership Series is a set of educational modules emphasizing leadership and communication. In each module, a seminar leader conducts a workshop designed to help participants develop and refine their communication and leadership skills.

The series is a terrific way to help develop your skills as a seminar leader. Each module includes instructions and a script; some include exercises, workbooks and overhead transparencies. Working in conjunction with your club, you can present the modules in your club, company or community and acquire the experience you need to become a professional seminar leader. (Note: Toastmasters International's Success/Leadership modules may not be presented for personal profit.)

Choose from the following modules:

- **Speechcraft (Code 205)**. This module provides speech training in eight different sessions.
- **How To Conduct Productive Meetings (236)**. This module teaches the techniques and dynamics of small group meetings.
- **Parliamentary Procedure in Action (237)**. This module instructs participants on parliamentary discussion.
- **How To Listen Effectively (242)**. This seminar teaches listening, speaking and leadership skills.
- **The Art of Effective Evaluation (251)**. This program gives members the knowledge, skills and motivation they need to become more effective evaluators.
- **Building Your Thinking Power, Part I: Mental Flexibility (252)**. This program teaches how to adapt your behavior to achieve the best results.
- **Building Your Thinking Power, Part II: The Power of Ideas (254)**. This program teaches participants how to become more effective evaluators.

Remember, practice makes perfect. Begin practicing your seminar presentation skills today so you can become the professional seminar leader people will pay to hear. Consult Toastmasters' Supply Catalog for order information and prices. Your club should make the Supply Catalog available to all members at every meeting.



Usually those which promise high profits to a wide segment of the populace and which will be attended by people who will pay \$100 or more to participate.

## 2) Public, Institution-Sponsored

Offering seminars at institutions—including colleges, universities and special-interest groups like hospitals, professional associations, trade groups, etc.—is often risk-free, at a cost.

For example, when offering a seminar to nurses you might do so through a hospital, through an organization of nurses or through a university, primarily to its nursing students and graduates.

The extended education branch of colleges or universities is an excellent sponsor for new programs. While the details vary widely, a university may include your seminar in its catalog, provide a room for the program, handle all phone and mail preregistration and include participant parking in exchange for, say, 50 percent of the profit.

They charge \$40, you get \$20. If the catalog is sent to 50,000 people and 25 attend your program, you earn \$500. You pay no direct promotional expenses, you learn the seminar trade and the school benefits by sharing your expertise with its clientele.

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## The seminar must shout "BENEFIT" to your audience —it must fill a need.

Some seminar presenters go no further: Extensive catalog distribution and their considerable draw make schools an ideal setting. These include programs for teachers, writers, academicians, inventors and other idea people.

To get on the docket, contact the program director (check the catalog listing) and call or write to see if your seminar would fit with that school's offerings.

Then send a four-paragraph write-up (for the catalog), a one-paragraph bio, a resume, an outline of your program and a workbook (if provided), all with a letter explaining who you are and why you think your program would make a valuable addition. You should be aware that most booking is done four to six months in advance.

## 3) Private, Business or Corporate

Seminars for businesses or corporations, like those presented through schools, incur neither room costs nor promotional expenses. If you can convince the ABC Company that its first-contact telephone employees need your seminar (or training program) called "Converting that Call into Cash or a Smile," ABC will provide the place, people and time.

The difficulty is convincing the right person that what you have to say is worth unshackling workers, finding others to answer the phones in their absence, risking their time and all the while pay you real money!

So here your promotional efforts (and costs) must go into letters, phone follow-ups and first-class presentation materials to get the 'go-ahead.'

Probably the first question the corporate training director asks will be, "Where have you given this program before?" Few companies are eager to help you cut your speaking teeth! So, to gain a reference, you might begin by presenting a seminar free of charge where you work. Or, if the program lends itself, offer it through colleges or universities to gain at least enough experience to lessen any booker's doubts.

## What about Content?

Define clearly what you want to say to your audience, explain key points, illustrate with examples, anecdotes, charts, discussion and audiovisual tools. Keep your purpose in view and the flow forward.

Answer questions as you go along, use humor where appropriate to lighten the burden and reiterate regularly the points made. Summarize, list key points and ask for final questions. Simple—very much like the speeches you've given in Toastmasters.

Use notes as needed, but don't read them. Know your organizational structure and how you will cover it, review each example and have all humor down pat. Then be yourself; speak as you do when talking to friends and let the audience know you care about them and are concerned that they absorb what you have to say so they can enjoy the benefits.


Smile, be pleasant and positive—and they'll never guess you shook in your boots for the first 10 minutes!

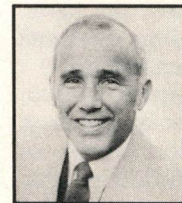
## Can You Do It?

Seminars are the brightest light in the educational field. People are begging for applied knowledge in bite-size portions—people past the usual college age, who already served their time by the quarter or semester.

Now they want their learning to-the-point, with a purpose, clear, quick and brief. They want it in one night or on a weekend day. They'll pay, but they're selective.

Somebody is filling those rooms and splitting those fees. That somebody looks an awful lot like you. Bright, articulate, caring, thorough. They have converted knowledge into income through speaking and teaching. No magic, just hard work. Why? The rewards.

If you know something others would pay to know, can speak clearly, want to improve and are willing to work, those rewards, financial and soul-filling, are begging to be shared. 



**Gordon Burgett** offers 120 seminars annually, keynotes, consults and recently co-authored (with Mike Frank) *Speaking for Money*, a how-to book about setting up a successful speaking or seminar career, available from *Communication Unlimited, P.O. Box 1001-X, Carpinteria, CA 93013.*





**“More**

**Bookings!”**

by Tom Winninger

**Here's a simple system that can help you generate bookings each time you speak, plus provide feedback on your effectiveness.**

**S**o you've worked through many of Toastmasters' manuals and are now using your skills to speak in settings outside the club. You want to branch out, to speak to more groups and larger audiences, to conduct more seminars, but you seem to be short on contacts.

There probably isn't a speaker alive who doesn't want more bookings, or who doesn't want to upgrade the quality of his or her current bookings. Whether you're doing 15 or 200 bookings a year, the number and quality are directly related to your particular system. You can use a simple system to help

generate leads and bookings immediately, while at the same time give yourself feedback on the effectiveness of your presentation. It is called the 'PSK' card system, and can easily be integrated into your presentation.

At a comfortable point in your presentation, usually toward the conclusion, make a general statement like the following: "I do a number of different presentations. If you are a member of a group or organization which might be interested in one of these, it's easy to bring me in.

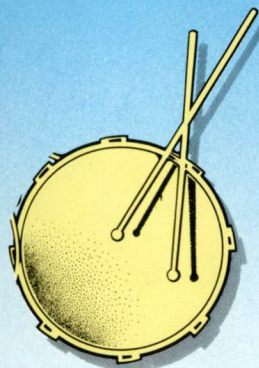
"Simply take the card you find on the table (your name and address) and

your business cards and write on the back 'PSK,' which stands for Program Seminar Kit. I'll be happy to send you some information describing how your group or organization could present a program like this.

"Underneath 'PSK' on the card, indicate your group or organization. At the end of the program today, leave your card on the table or hand it to me."

Every presentation should generate a minimum of three potential leads. If you are a speaker with above-average delivery, you will typically get back three or more cards from a group of 50





# Jazz It Up with Offbeat Facts

Offbeat facts can add unexpected rhythm to the most 'square' speech.

by Leon Fletcher

- *Barbara Walters is reportedly the highest paid public speaker in the U.S., receiving \$20,000 per lecture.*
- *The first university to establish a department of public speaking was the University of Michigan, in 1892.*
- *If you speak through your nose you snoach.*

**T**hose are but a few examples of the virtually unlimited number and diversity of unusual facts you can use to spark interest in your speeches—if you know where to find such strange details. The major source: offbeat reference books.

Of course, you know about such standard research sources as dictionaries, almanacs and encyclopedias. And the July, 1985 edition of *The Toastmaster*, page 11, in the sidebar entitled "Where To Find It: Sources," told you about specialized reference books which can supply statistics, facts and trivia, quotations, humor, jokes and anecdotes.

But there is a third group of books which can be of special help to Toastmasters seeking particularly stimulating specifics for their speeches—offbeat reference books such as the ones I'll mention in this article and in the accompanying sidebar.

Such nonstandard reference books can help you add interesting tidbits to your speeches. They can help you present data that is vivid and memorable. They can help you drive home a point

dramatically.

## Uncommon Words and Lists

Recently I prepared a speech to give to passengers aboard a luxury liner. My topic: sea terminology. Of course I covered such basic terms as fore and aft, port and starboard, amidships, rudder and such.

Then, to give my listeners an idea of how extremely obscure the language of the sea can be, I worked up this sentence to include in my speech:

On one cruise, my pyx was nearly naufragous, making me worry about naulage and wish I were a remiped paralian.

That line came from stringing together words found in the highly unusual reference book entitled *Mrs. Byrne's Dictionary of Unusual, Obscure and Preposterous Words*. It contains "the 6000 weirdest words in the English language," according to the editor's introduction, and every word "has been accepted as a formal or legitimate English word by at least one major dictionary."

Mrs. Byrne's definitions of the words in that sea-going sentence:

- pyx: a ship's binnacle
- naufragous: causing shipwrecks
- naulage: payment for sea freight
- remiped: with feet or legs used as oars
- paralian: someone who lives by the sea.

If you're giving a speech about writ-



ing, you might create a bit more interest by using the word 'mogigraphia,' which means writer's cramp. Talking about accidents? Sneak in the word 'matutolypea'—getting up on the wrong side of the bed. Speaking about dreams? 'Galeanthropy' means the delusion that one has become a cat.

Another useful book for finding uncommon information is *The Celebrity Book of Lists*. In it I learned:

- For a speech about education, that Glen Campbell, John Chancellor, Cher, Bo Derek, Eartha Kitt, Frank Sinatra and Peter Ustinov were all high school dropouts.

- For a talk about families, that Julia Child's father was a farm consultant, Dinah Shore's owned a department store, Dick Cavett's was an English teacher and Joe Namath's a steel worker.

- For a speech about heritage, Ed Asner, Eric Severeid and Margaret Thatcher, among other famous people, are parents of twins.

According to this celebrity fact book, Benny Goodman had 10 brothers and sisters. Mr. Rogers, host of the famous TV program for children, graduated magna cum laude (with high honors) from Rollins College.

Frankie Avalon has eight children, Dean Martin has seven. Orson Wells was 6'3½" tall, Mickey Rooney is 5'3," Gary Coleman is 3'7." Julia Child is 6,' Nancy Walker is 4'11."

Such details can help make your speeches more interesting, memorable and relevant to your listeners. Used wisely—that is, occasionally—rarely-known facts can do much to help make your speeches more effective.

### Avoid Pitfalls

But there are dangers in such research. You can easily become fascinated with the facts themselves. As a result, you may start sticking bits of off-beat data into your speech merely because the information is interesting to you.

So be sure you don't get carried away; always keep in mind one of the essential guides to good speaking: *Everything you say in your speeches should be there ONLY because you're convinced it will help you attain your specific speech goal with your particular audience.*

With that guideline in mind, you could dig into the specialized reference book entitled *Today's the Day!* It lists several events which have happened on each day of the year. Speakers can

use this book in such varied situations as:

Speaking on April 24? That's the day when:

- The U.S. Library of Congress was established, in 1800.

- The revolutionary anthem "La Marseillaise" was composed, in 1791.

Honoring an employee retiring on June 21? On that day:

- The smallest yacht—5'11"—to cross the Atlantic from Europe arrived in the U.S., in 1968.

- The first long-playing 33½ rpm record albums were released, in 1948.

Talking on your birthday? Mine is August 28, the day:

- The world's first radio commercial was broadcast, 1922.

- The first U.S.-built passenger train started operation, 1830.

There are several other books which present somewhat comparable listings of events which happened on each day of the year. Some similar books merely name the events; some concentrate on events of a hundred or more years ago; some cover special subjects, such as sports, literature, history.

I find the book *Today's the Day!* especially helpful in speech planning because it presents brief but specific details about each event, includes a balanced mix of recent and ancient happenings and covers both significant and trivial incidents.

### Unusual Firsts

Speakers who want to include in their speeches specifics about the 'first' for almost any event in the United States will probably find the information in *Famous First Facts and Records* helpful. From the first abdominal operation (1809), to the first woman mayor of a city of over 200,000 population (Mrs. Patience Sewell Latting, Oklahoma City, 1971), virtually every event about which you may need a starting date is in this book.

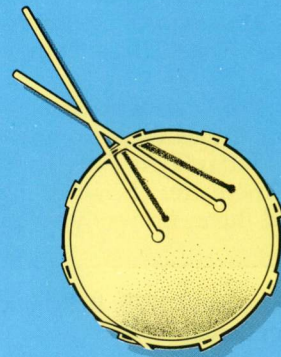
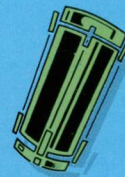
Giving a speech about safe driving?

- The first car accident: May 30, 1896, in New York City.

- The first person killed in a car wreck: Henry Bliss, on September 13, 1899, in New York City.

- The first driving course in high school: at State College High School, Pennsylvania, February 17, 1934.

Besides dates, *Famous First Facts and Records* presents relevant details. The first school established in the North American continent, for example, was by the Dutch West India Company on Manhattan Island in 1633; for the first





## Selected Offbeat Reference Books

- *American Averages*. Mike Feinsilber and William B. Mead; Dolphin Books, New York; 1980.
  - *The Celebrity Book of Lists*. Ed Lucaire; Stein and Day, Publishers, New York; 1984.
  - *Facts about the Presidents*. Joseph Nathan Kane; Ace Books, New York; fourth edition, 1981.
  - *Famous First Facts and Records*. Joseph Nathan Kane; Ace Books, New York; fourth edition, 1981.
  - *Mrs. Byrne's Dictionary of Unusual, Obscure and Preposterous Words*. Josefa Heifetz (Mrs. Byrne); University Books, Inc., Secaucus, New Jersey; 1974.
  - *The Reverse Dictionary*. Theodore M. Bernstein; Quadrangle/The New York Times Book Company, New York; 1975.
  - *Today's the Day!* Jeremy Beadle; Signet Books, New York; 1981.
- (There are, of course, a great many other unusual reference books. To find them, browse your local bookstores and libraries.)

142 years, until 1775, instruction was given in Dutch.

Around election time in the U.S., some speakers turn to the valuable paperback *Facts about the Presidents* for details usually not found in typical biographies. For each president, this book presents a multitude of details in listings, rather than in narrative form. That makes fact-finding much easier.

Information is given about birth, parents, relatives, election highlights, cabinet appointments, administration, unusual facts and much more.

Especially useful for speakers is a section for each president, listing distinctive details. For example:

John Fitzgerald Kennedy was:

- The first president born in the 20th century.
- The first president who was a Roman Catholic.
- The first president whose inauguration was shown on color television.
- The fourth president assassinated.
- The eighth president to die in office.

In addition, *Facts about the Presidents* presents more than 100 pages of "Comparative Data"—truly fascinating material valuable to speakers. Included are such details as:

- Ancestry—for example, two presidents were Scotch: Monroe and Hayes.
- White House weddings—16, including those of President Cleveland, a daughter of Grant, a son of John Quincy Adams.
- Nicknames—'Handsome Frank' Pierce, 'Canal Bay' Garfield, 'Wobbly Willie' McKinley.
- Books written by presidents—37 by Theodore Roosevelt, 25 by John Quincy Adams.

The details go on and on—arrests (Pierce for running down an aged woman while driving his carriage,

Grant for speeding while driving his carriage), secretaries, pensions, last words, burial sites, stamps issued in commemoration and much more.

### The Right Word

Finally, when you reach the stage in planning where you 'word your speech' you may have trouble finding the precise word to express a particular point. For help, most speakers turn to a dictionary or thesaurus.

But some speakers have found it valuable to consult *The Reverse Dictionary*. As its name states, this book is just the opposite of a conventional dictionary. While a traditional dictionary lists words in alphabetical order and then gives their meanings, this book lists meanings in alphabetical order and then presents the words. You could use this book in these situations:

- You're preparing a speech about strange creatures but can't remember the word for a "gigantic unidentified water beast." You look up that definition in this book—looking under the 'g' section for the first word of the definition which is listed ('gigantic'), and you'll find the word you need: 'Leviathan.'
- You can't remember the word for that "extra day in leap year." Look up that definition and you'll find 'bisextile.'
- You need the word for "toasted slices of bread that have been baked yellow." Look under that definition and you'll have your word: 'zwieback.'

But that last example points up a serious problem in using *The Reverse Dictionary*. The definition that comes to my mind when I think of 'zwieback' is "twice-baked bread"—the definition which comes from the word's original

German derivation.

But that definition is not listed in this book. Then I think of the definition "bread which is baked twice." So I look under "bread. . ." and again don't find my definition listed. But "bread that is baked yellow then sliced and toasted" is there.

The point: To use this book, you are expected to think up the exact definition the book presents—and often that's not the definition which comes readily to mind.

There are, of course, many other offbeat reference books. They cover such varied fields as mechanics, chess, word games, literary highlights, shells, glass balls, barbed wire—a truly impressive variety of specialized subjects.

### One Problem

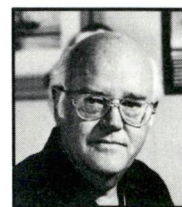
For many, but not all, offbeat reference books, there is one major problem: In using them, you often can't look up specific bits of information *directly*. Rather, many of these books are more for browsing, for wandering through until you stumble on some specific detail you can use in your speeches.

For example, suppose you're preparing a speech about elections. You're wondering if there is one or more unusual words related to elections which might add sparkle to your speech. One source for such words, you know, is *Mrs. Byrne's Dictionary of Unusual, Obscure, and Preposterous Words*.

But in that book you can't look under the heading 'elections' to find unusual words relating to that subject. The problem is that the unusual words themselves are listed alphabetically, just as words are listed in a conventional dictionary.

So you have to skim through *Mrs. Byrne's Dictionary*, and perhaps you will spot—right there on page 107—the word 'kakistocracy'—government by the worst citizens.

On the other hand, some people would claim that such skimming does have at least one advantage: You may well become a 'logolept.' As defined by Mrs. Byrne, that's "a word maniac." 🗣️



**Leon Fletcher**, Emeritus Professor of Speech, Monterey Peninsula College, California, has authored a Harper and Row textbook on speaking, *How To*

*Design and Deliver a Speech* (Third Edition) and the Ballantine paperback, *How To Speak Like a Pro*.



# Orchestrate Your Ideas



**Like a talented conductor, you must harmonize your material in a way the audience will respond to and remember.**

by Carol S. Mull

**H**ave you ever listened to a long, rambling speech that jumped from one feature to another, with no real organization or direction? If so, you were undoubtedly bored, and you probably wondered what the speaker was actually trying to tell you. Or have you, when preparing your Toastmasters speeches, been confronted with a jumble of seemingly unrelated facts, with no real idea as to how you should organize them all into an easily understood presentation?

It has been demonstrated scientifically that people simply do not remember dis-associated facts and figures. They can recall only those items they can relate to already-stored knowledge. So, the more we humans learn, the easier the learning process becomes for us, because we have more and more mental 'hooks' on which to attach incoming new information.

When telephone numbers began to increase in length, a major telephone corporation conducted a series of experiments to determine how many random numbers the human mind can retain long enough to dial them. The results indicated that most people can remember only seven numbers for three or four seconds, and that they can do this only by repeating the numbers over and over.

So, if you want your audience to remember the material you present, it is

absolutely essential to present the content of your speeches in a well-organized form.

Following are seven basic methods of organization. One of them will be appropriate for the body of any particular speech you might give.

## Seven Ways To Organize

The first form of organization is called *identification*. To use this method, you must bring the subject into focus by attempting to answer the question, "What is X?" You can achieve this by gradually supplying more and more arresting details, which build to describe either the context in which X appears or the situation which produces X.

The identification method will work well for those speeches which seek to convey your feelings about a situation. It could be used, for example, as an outline for Toastmasters' Ice Breaker speech. As you add layer upon layer of detail, your audience will grow in understanding of your subject.

The second method is called *definition*. To define a subject, place it in a general class and then demonstrate how it differs from other members of that class. For example, a horse, in general terms, is an animal. Specifically, it is large, strong, herbivorous, has four legs, solid hoofs and a flowing mane and tail. It is used by humans for drawing or carrying loads, transporting riders, etc.

Identification applies well to abstract, intangible subjects which are difficult to convey, while definition is best suited

to concrete objects, like your home, your car, your pet.

Third is the *classification* technique for organizing your material. In order to classify a body of facts and figures, you must develop a systematic arrangement of categories (classes), so that broader categories subdivide into narrower ones. By definition, all members of a class have at least one characteristic in common, although this characteristic will vary according to your purpose.

For example, edible plants may be classified as fruits, vegetables, nuts, berries and the like. Or they might be organized by color, region grown or by whether their fruit products are harvested above or below the ground.

Another instance in which the classification method applies well is a speech about behavior modification. You might classify your examples as either aversion therapy, electrical stimulation, Skinner's behavioral conditioning or anti-anxiety drugs.

When preparing a classification-type speech, it's helpful to put together a brief outline, with individual items under their proper headings, like this:

- A. Controllers of Human Behavior
  - 1. Aversion
  - 2. Electrical
  - 3. Conditioning
  - 4. Drugs
- B. Behavioral Psychologists
  - 1. Freud
  - 2. Skinner

## Compare and Contrast

Fourth, you may present a subject by



*comparison* (indicating the similarities between two or more things) or by *contrast* (demonstration of the differences). To be comparable, your items should share membership in a class. For example, you can compare nature lovers and nature haters, as they both relate to nature.

You cannot compare democracy and communism, because the former is a subdivision of a political system and the latter of an economic one. You may compare and contrast men and women, or humans and plant life.

The *illustration* method is often used by the news media. It can be an effective one for you, the speechmaker, to convey your message.

At its simplest, a particular member of a class is used to explain or dramatize the group as a whole. Television news broadcasters and feature writers often select and interview a single victim of a work layoff, survivor of a flood, etc. Always, the individual member selected must be representative of the distinctive qualities of the class.

The illustration provides the particulars on which a generalization is based; the generalization itself—a type of person or thing, an idea or abstraction—may or may not be explicitly stated.

For this reason, the illustration method can be useful when you want to convey an idea that is too emotionally charged or controversial to state boldly. Instead, you can create a word-picture with your illustration and let the audience draw its own conclusions with only a little help from you.

When composing such a speech, you, unlike the news media, need not be hampered by having to produce an actual photograph. So, if a perfect illustration from life is not available, you may 'create' an individual who embodies the traits of the group. Just make sure he or she is truly representative.

The illustration method has many

## Use the illustration method to present controversial or emotional material.

applications for speakers. It can be used to convey the problems of political systems, economic and social classes, family crises, natural disasters or almost anything.

The *analysis* method of organization is applicable to any subject that can be divided into component parts. For example, you can divide a man's life into its public and private aspects, or into those parts most crucial to his successes and failures. Or you may focus variously on faculty, students and curriculum as points of departure for your commentary on a school.

Analysis may also be concerned with connection of events (*causal analysis*). That is, given *this* condition or series of circumstances, *these* effects will follow. Thus, science fiction might be explored in relation to its artistic, therapeutic or social impact.

### Argue and Persuade

The seventh basic form of speech organization is *argument and persuasion*.

Formal argument consists of the proposition (an assertion that leads to the issue); the issue (the aspect of the proposition that you are attempting to prove and the question upon which the whole argument rests); and the evidence (the facts and opinions you offer as testimony).

You may order the evidence deductively, by proceeding from certain premises to a conclusion; or inductively, by generalizing from a number of instances and drawing a conclusion. Argument is an appeal to reason; persuasion, to the emotions.

The speeches of our political candidates are good examples of persuasive oratory. In these we hear irony, satire, paradox, metaphor and allusion used to achieve the ends of the office seeker.

Some candidates have employed logic in their appeals to people, but those candidates who use pure emotion have been the most successful at the polls.

Argument and persuasion is also the method of organization for many business speeches, especially those attempting to sell a product. It's also the tool of lawyers pleading a case before a jury.

Sub-organizational schemes which can be used in connection with these seven methods include spatial and chronological. Chronological organization is useful when telling about your life—or anything that happens in a sequential time frame.

Spatial organization might be used in a speech in which you are describing the interior of a home, public building or even football field. You might take your audience on a tour of a home, moving from room to room, from the front door to the back or from east to west, fully describing each room as you proceed.

The seven forms of organization described above—identification, definition, classification, comparison and contrast, illustration, analysis, and argument and persuasion—will enable you to arrange the content of your speeches into clear, manageable groupings of ideas rather than bog them down with disassociated bits of information.

If you've ever listened to a rambling collection of trivia and wondered what the speaker was trying to say, you can appreciate the need for these strategies of formal organization.

The important thing is to organize your speeches according to these plans. Then you will sound competent and your messages will be readily understood by your audiences. 🗣️



Carol S. Mull, a Toastmaster for three years, is a member of Indianapolis Downtowners Club 2944-11. A freelance writer, newsletter publisher and Authors

Guild member, her published work includes two books and several magazine articles.

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to 100 people. One of these three should prove a qualified lead for you.

If you receive less than three leads or get none at all, it's time to take a hard look at your topic selection, style and skill level. This is an indirect method of feedback on your speaking ability, but worthwhile nonetheless.

You might want to discuss the experience with your Toastmasters club members—let them know you need more critical evaluations in order to improve. Or maybe they can point out any problems with the topics you choose to speak on.

The future success of your speaking business is based on you. And, just like a speech itself, success in speaking is a system with a beginning, a middle and an end. The beginning is creating the Program Seminar Kit cards.

The middle involves the follow-up to those cards, with a four-step strategy we'll discuss shortly. The end is the actual presentation, which becomes a beginning in and of itself since every program provides an opportunity to get leads.

If you get four to 10 leads per presentation, you can be satisfied that your delivery, program content and style are effective. Many speakers are unsuccessful because they are unwilling to promote themselves, to ask for leads.

They assume, "If they like me, I'm sure they'll give me a call." Because of that assumption, many speakers find their main support must come elsewhere than from the speaking business.

### Get Their Cards First

To be successful, you must promote your speaking abilities. If participants ask about your seminars, request your business card or indicate they will follow up, remember this simple rule: Get *their* business card first! Write 'PSK' on the back and *you* follow up with *them*.

The odds are less than one in 10 that someone who takes your business card will contact you. It's important that you take the initiative and get their card. After all, they might lose yours on the way home from the presentation!

If a potential client approaches me at a seminar and asks for my business card, saying that he or she will contact me about a speaking date, I say I don't have my business card with me (when I actually don't), but will send one along with some information. Then I ask for the prospect's card. It's simple—so simple that many people don't do it.

The Program Seminar Kit card comes

## Don't wait for them to ask for your card—get theirs first.

in several forms. It can be a 3" by 5" evaluation card you pass out at the beginning of the program. Keep your evaluation questions simple. Never ask participants to write long dissertations! Rather, give them the opportunity to simply respond "yes" or "no."

A second method is to ask the audience to submit their own business cards (if they're a group of individuals who exchange business cards). Or you can pass out blank pieces of paper sometime before or during the program, and provide people the opportunity to respond.

Remember, when you request that people fill out the PSK card, have them include the name of their organization along with their position so that you'll be able to discern the quality of the lead.

The middle part of your system is to follow up with these steps:

1) Call the person to gain information about the group or organization before you send them any information. For example, say, "I am calling to verify some information before I put together the packet so that I can personalize it for your group."

During this phone call, ask questions like: How often does your company invite speakers? Who was your last speaker? Who decides which speakers to invite—a committee of managers from your organization? How many people are on the committee? What types of programs do they normally look for? How long do the programs generally last? How much money is budgeted for programs like this?

2) After interviewing the potential lead, put together a follow-up Program Seminar Kit. Include photographs, recommendation letters from similar groups, a list of program titles, a program outline and a cover letter.

Mail the packet, noting the date on your 'Key Contact Card.' You can either use the business cards or evaluation cards you've collected to serve as your Key Contact Cards, or you can retype the names and addresses onto cards to fit in a file or enter them on a computer

list. The important point is to keep your contacts on file. Within four or five days, move on to step three.

### Call Again

3) Call again to verify that the packet was received. If it wasn't, specify what the packet included. Then explain that you will call back in a couple of days to make sure they did receive it.

If the packet was received, ask questions like: When will you make a decision about the upcoming program? When is your next committee meeting? How many speakers or program topics are you considering? Is there any additional information you need at this point?

If you discover that the decision will be made in the next couple of weeks, specify the date on your Key Contact Card for future follow-up. After this third call, move immediately to step four.

4) Send a thank-you note, saying that you appreciate being considered as a speaker and look forward to hearing from them. You might also include one of your favorite recommendation letters, one you had *not* included in the packet. Then note this information on your Key Contact Card. You might create a month-by-month section of the file, filing items by the month you plan your next follow-up.

This is a total system. It's easy to use and very effective. Remember, always find out and verify the person's name who will be making the final decision. You must get your information to that person. Quite often speakers fail to book more engagements because they do not reach the person actually responsible for the decision.

Once you've been speaking to groups outside your club for awhile, use the Program Seminar Kit and you'll eventually generate three to 10 leads from every presentation. When you reach 100 to 125 programs a year, you're ready to consider hiring an assistant to follow up on the PSK cards and information packets. Success is in the system! 📞



**Tom Winninger**, President of Master's Management Group, Inc., travels over 120,000 miles each year, speaking to sales and management organizations

in 38 U.S. states and three Canadian provinces. For further information, contact him at P.O. Box 1661, Waterloo, IA 50704, or call (319) 236-3174.



# LETTERS

## VIPs Inspire

The article 'VIP Toastmasters' by Jack F. Rizzo, in the October issue, literally brought tears to my eyes. Mr. Rizzo's description of a Speechcraft program for the visually impaired was one of the most inspiring articles I've ever seen in your magazine. To Mr. Rizzo, his fellow Toastmasters and his courageous students, I offer a hearty well done!

*John T. McCarthy  
Riverside Club  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin*

## No Foxes at this Henhouse

The comment by Mr. Bob Webb (October *Letters*) regarding my article in the August issue, entitled "Intuition: Not for Women Only," is greatly appreciated. However, I believe his criticism of my statement that, "To develop intuition you must constantly analyze your thinking. . . ." was taken out of context from the remainder of the sentence.

The development of the intuitive process involves the ability to separate "genuine creative insight" from "emotional bias" as the remainder of the sentence reads. How else can one determine whether or not wishful thinking or conditioned responses are camouflaged as intuition, other than by analyzing the very thought process that makes one arrive at a solution to the problem? No foxes at this henhouse!

*Donn LeVie, Jr., CTM  
Ft. Bend Club  
Rosenberg, Texas*

## A Rich Reservoir

By all means, "Capture the College Market" (September issue) as a source of swelling Toastmasters' membership. Every college and university has an 'in-house' source of hundreds or thousands of potential Toastmasters. Clubs can be formed by-the-minute from the never-ending pool. Colleges are educational institutions, Toastmasters is an educational endeavor, and students are eager to learn and become proficient in communication skills.

Students by nature are a transient lot, so be prepared for an especially high turnover of members. As the article says,

"Be prepared to re-establish membership each fall." The turnover may cause problems in officers serving out their six-month terms, so be ready for this—possibly have a substitute to back up each office.

Problems of continuity of course may be solved by persuading or requiring students to attend meetings regularly during off-periods such as summer vacations at a club of their choice, wherever they may be throughout the world.

Special effort may also be necessary to preserve diligent attendance at meetings during exam times, when many students feel pressure to curtail extra-curricular activities for studying.

College clubs are not likely to produce many members who work through to ATMs and beyond. An optimistic estimate is that students will carry membership in a college club a maximum of three years, and thus are slim sources of higher Toastmaster recognition or District officers. Any who do pursue long-term membership probably will go to another club after college days. Faculty and staff are better long-term sources.

College clubs are unlikely to produce any consistent participation in the contest series, particularly during fall. With club contests calling for completion in August, few student clubs will be active enough for contests. Possibly college club contests could be scheduled in May, for those who expect to be back in the fall.

Keeping in mind these few adjustments for a special 'market,' colleges and universities clearly are a rich reservoir of potential Toastmasters; certainly as to charter and new member fees.

*Dick Prosser  
Professor, City College of San Francisco  
President, Berkeley YMCA Club*

## A Touching Experience

Why on this earth would a normal human being want to stand up in front of a group of other normal people and make a fool of himself or herself?

I'm writing this letter to tell you that after a year in Toastmasters I feel I am not normal anymore. What I have considered normal for the past 30 plus years is not my normal of today. My fellow Toastmasters and myself are not normal; we are different because we

want more than what's usual, and we give a bit of ourselves to achieve this.

My main reason for joining Toastmasters was to become less nervous while speaking in front of people. I am already achieving this goal, but the surprising part is that I am getting from Toastmasters things I did not not expect.

During the short time I have been a member I have learned to *really* listen to other people. I may be standing on the sidewalk, talking to a neighbor or in my living room, watching TV. Wherever I am, my sense of hearing has taken on a deeper, more meaningful power.

I have always had this power; Toastmasters taught me how to use it. Not only do I *really* listen to other people, I listen to myself. Sometimes I do not like what I hear, so I strive to bring forward what I really want to say. In this way, I present the best 'me' possible. By presenting the best 'me,' I am a happier person and that happiness will be transmitted to other people and other things.

During speeches, as I listen to other Toastmasters speak, an empathy for them develops and I become less selfish. I learn about other people's lives; their backgrounds, experiences; their fears and their joys. This opportunity has taught me more about myself and I am more appreciative of the life I live.

The Toastmasters club is frightening to many people and this fear has kept them away. This makes me very sad. These people do not just miss out on their opportunity to become better speakers; that is just the surface of what Toastmasters is about.

While learning to communicate more effectively I have learned that communicating really is touching: My ideas and thoughts touch someone else. For a few minutes each week I learn how to touch people's lives in the way I so desire. I have gained a new perspective, a new awareness and a new self-confidence using this touching experience, and I thank Toastmasters!

*Susan V. Lavin  
Boeing Vertol Club  
Philadelphia, PA*

Mr. William Patton, Treasurer of the Prairie's Edge Toastmasters Club 4193-8 in Paris, Illinois, every Thursday eve-



ning drives to Vermilion, Illinois, to take me to our Toastmasters meeting and then returns me home—a total of 14 miles. I'm unable to drive at night.

I want other Toastmasters to know about the kind service he is providing. Mr. Patton is to be commended for his outstanding service to another Toastmaster.

*Del York  
Prairie's Edge Club  
Paris, Illinois*

### **Toastmasters Saves the Day**

At a recent meeting of The Austin Club 4256-56, a member of some two years standing gave a vivid demonstration of the practical benefits derived from Toastmasters.

The company he owns was audited by the state sales tax division which alleged a serious deficiency. Our Toastmaster opted for the oral protest hear-

ing and his newly found Toastmaster eloquence carried the day with the judge dismissing all the charges. The money saved, our Toastmaster said, "will pay my Toastmasters dues for many years to come." Another victory for Toastmasters!

*David J. Abel, DTM  
Past District Governor  
The Austin Club  
Austin, Texas*

### **Let the Children Be**

I wrote to Toastmasters' World Headquarters, proposing that Toastmasters' limit on the age of 18 be eliminated. Our club rejected a man and his 16-year-old daughter because of her age. We would have welcomed him alone but he wouldn't accept that.

I received a letter back from Headquarters, saying that the matter had

been discussed and change rejected by the Board of Directors, so I now address all members. There's no reason for age limitations and some great arguments in favor of eliminating them.

Our desperate need is to help the young attain, as Winston Churchill said, "wisdom and maturity." That can't be taught in school. Our eight-week Speechcraft is hardly a beginning when we expect adults to spend several years in a club, mastering our arts.

Vote in your club one way or another on this issue, then in your District. Let your Director know; ask for his or her support. I've known a lot of young people well-qualified long before age 18 and it's long past time to accept them.

*Thomas S. Booz, ATM  
West Broward Club  
Plantation, Florida*

## **IDEA CORNER**

### **Toastmaster Helps Easter Seals**

Following a massive stroke over three years ago, one of the significant factors in my recovery was the Easter Seal Society of Sacramento. I found their therapies not only professionally competent but, equally important, supportive and compassionate.

Wishing to repay their efforts at least partially, I volunteered my services as a Toastmaster. I was asked by Mrs. Jeri La Pord, Director of Special Events, to form a Speakers Bureau for the Society. I am now Coordinator of this Speakers Bureau. The Society is particularly appreciative of Toastmasters, because of our inherent skills and training.

This past fall I represented Easter Seal during the United Way Campaign. This involved delivering 15 speeches, three of which were double-headers. The length of the talks ranged from five minutes to one-and-a-half hours. This has been my most rewarding and beneficial experience in my seven years as a Toastmaster.

I believe other chapters of Easter Seals would welcome such a Speakers Bureau in their area. These bureaus would provide Toastmasters with a

chance to perform a needed community service, and at the same time provide themselves with an outlet for outside speeches. I urge Toastmasters everywhere to contact their local Easter Seal Society with this proposal. If you need help or advice, please contact me directly at 2510 Fair Oaks Blvd., #126, Sacramento, California 95825.

*Kenneth Dawson, ATM  
Los Elocuentes Club  
Sacramento, California*

### **An Old-Fashioned Invitation**

Here is a simple but effective idea for club membership building that may be of value to Toastmasters clubs everywhere. As the Administrative Lt. Governor of District 47, I am directly concerned with membership building and retention among our 165 Floridian and Bahamian Toastmasters clubs.

Frequently, in talking with club leaders, I have used Babe Ruth's success plan as a good example. Ruth believed the law of averages worked for him just as it does for you and me. He knew he could not get a home run with every hit and that sometimes he wouldn't even get a hit. But he felt he could succeed if he'd try as often as possible. Did

his idea pay off? You bet it did! His home run record stood alone for many years!

To get new members for our clubs, nothing beats this simple idea for quick results: Let each member of the club agree to invite one person a day to visit a club meeting. No arm twisting, no pressure; just a plain, old-fashioned friendly invitation to come to a club meeting.

In a 20-member club, if each member asks one person per day, this will result in 140 invitations per week. In a year's time this will produce 7000 invitations. Let's assume that only one out of 10 of those invited actually come to a club meeting. That means 700 visitors a year. Further, let us assume that only one out of 20 who visit will actually join the club. That means 35 new members each year!

Nothing fancy, no great planning sessions, nothing to buy. We just each agree to invite one person a day from among all our friends, relatives, neighbors and coworkers. Try it! Your club will grow and you'll be giving others the opportunity to benefit from the Toastmasters program!

*George Shyrock, ATM  
Bradenton, Florida*





# Deliver First-Class Speeches

**You've got a great idea for your next speech topic, but your delivery has been weak lately. Here are some methods that will help you deliver a first-class speech.**

by Stewart Marsh

**W**hen Winston Churchill was the First Lord of the Admiralty in Great Britain early in his career, he had many critics in the House of Lords. Of one of his most persistent critics Churchill said, "He can best be described as one of those orators who, before they get up, do not know what they are going to say; when they are speaking, do not know what they are saying; and when they have sat down, do not know what they have said."

No one consciously desires to be that type of speaker. The preparation and delivery of your speech—where you know in advance that you are going to be called upon—will of course have much to do with your success or failure.

Suppose you've been asked to talk to a community organization. You've chosen a theme. How do you go about getting ready?

One way is to write the speech out in its entirety, giving careful attention to the introduction, main points and conclusion. The process will help you brush up on your vocabulary and avoid grammatical mistakes.

You will need to check the meaning of words about which you are uncertain. From time to time you may want to search out synonyms for words.

Putting your thoughts down on paper often helps avoid clichés. It should also help you organize your ideas and not



fall prey to shoddy thinking.

### Read the Manuscript

Once you've committed your ideas to writing you can read from the manuscript as a form of delivery. Reading from a manuscript may help you sidestep mistakes in grammar and vocabulary. You won't suffer the consequences of careless preparation or have to depend on last-minute inspiration. You won't have to worry either about forgetting what it is you intended to say.

This method of delivery is excellent for an editorial reply on television or radio—one limited to a brief time frame. Or, if you're presenting a technical paper to a scientific conference, accuracy may demand that you read from a manuscript. These are occasions when you may want not only to write out your message, but also to read it.

Nevertheless, this method of delivery has distinct disadvantages. Reading limits the power of the voice, as well as eye contact and body movement. Animation becomes difficult; it's awkward to gesture. And since eye contact is minimal, it's difficult to gauge how the audience is receiving your message.

Also, reading tends to make you dependent on a manuscript. If you suddenly lose your place, you'll most likely panic. And if you can't find where you left off, you seriously jeopardize your presentation.

Plus, if you habitually read from a manuscript, you may be left helpless when called upon unexpectedly for remarks. So most speakers usually do well to avoid this form of delivery.

### Commit It to Memory

Another method of preparation and delivery is to write out all or part of your speech, then commit it to memory. Many notable speakers of the past would write out their entire message, and then memorize it verbatim.

One orator, who gave the same speech many times to audiences throughout the nation, stated that he became all the more effective when he had repeated it almost word for word over 50 times!

On the other hand, memorizing a speech may lead to a mechanical, uninspired presentation. This method generally does not allow for any variation which unusual circumstances or unexpected happenings may necessitate.

Distracting surroundings or events may prove disastrous to people who

commit a discourse entirely to memory. These speakers, unless they're able to concentrate fully, may become preoccupied and forget their messages.

And if you always depend on memorization, like a reader who relies on manuscripts, you will have difficulty speaking extemporaneously when the need arises. Even a standard dose of Table Topics may not be enough to reverse the problem!

Therefore, many speakers make no attempt to memorize their speech as a whole, but rather commit to memory only key sentences or phrases, depending on these to jog their recall. For example, when they have concluded the first major point in a speech, they recall the key sentence leading into the second major point, and so on with the rest of their remarks.

**Many experienced speakers feel that 'free speaking' is the most effective delivery style.**

### Free Speech

A third method of delivery, one which works well with minimum memorization, is the technique of free speaking.

A story that illustrates this method is about a minister who attracted large congregations, proving to be a very popular pulpiter.

When asked by a newspaper reporter what he felt to be the reason for his success, the minister replied, "Well, some ministers write out their sermons very carefully before Sunday comes around, and the old Devil has a chance then to look over their notes and harden the hearts of the congregation against what's going to be said from the pulpit. But I'll tell you, when I get up to preach on Sunday, the Devil himself doesn't know what I'm going to say!"

However, free speaking at best—as it concerns a scheduled speech rather than extemporaneous or impromptu speaking—involves careful preparation as well as a background of knowledge. You must know your subject intimately. To prepare for such a speech, you may need to look over pertinent material you have at home and even research the topic at the library.

One experienced public speaker told me that he never makes notes, but instead spends considerable time beforehand going over his speech in his mind. Most speakers do jot down notes on the topic, at least to keep from jumbling their facts.

Some speakers carefully outline their speeches, a procedure which is generally of great help. It enables them to order their ideas in a logical framework. Then, if they follow the method of free speaking, they may use only a brief written outline during their delivery or memorize key sentences, without depending on any notes.

Free speaking allows one to make maximum use of voice, gesture and eye contact with the audience. This method of delivery also allows a speaker to take best advantage of audience response and to make the most of unusual circumstances and happenings.

Spur-of-the-moment occurrences can often be turned into assets if the speaker is not tied to a manuscript or memorized speech.

On one occasion, I'd been asked to give an after-dinner talk to a group of college students. The dinner was held in a banquet room decorated with a number of cuckoo clocks.

I had just been introduced and was getting to my feet when the clocks signaled the nine o'clock hour. One clock after another echoed, "Cuckoo-cuckoo-cuckoo."

Of course the audience broke into laughter. When the merriment subsided, I began, "Now you know what to expect of me. It reminds me of the time I spoke to a group of school children. Afterwards, a girl came up to me and said, 'I like to hear you talk. You are so cool and unconscious.'"

The various methods of preparation and delivery are not of course mutually exclusive; they're often mixed or combined. Sometimes a speaker may use all three of the above-mentioned strategies: some written preparation, partial memorization and considerable free speaking. As to which method is best, much depends on the particular speaker and occasion.

In the case of a scheduled speech, careful preparation is essential, whatever the method of delivery. Many experienced speakers feel that free speaking, with a minimum of memorization or reference to written notes, lends itself to maximum effectiveness under most circumstances. 🗣️

**Stewart Marsh** is a former psychology professor and college dean who lives in Pasadena, California.



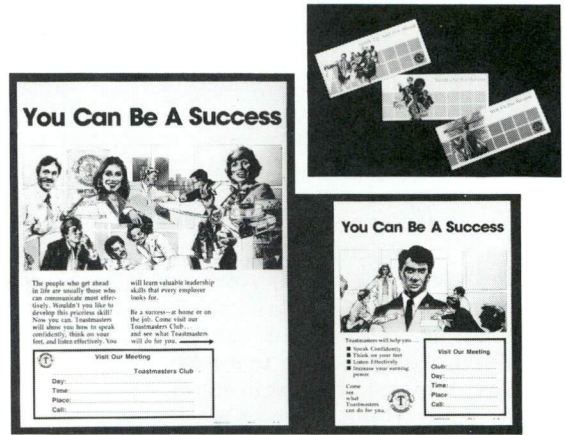
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# How to Serve Table Topics

## A TRUE TABLE TOPICS "MASTER" AIMS TO "SERVE" MEMBERS.

by Robert E. Miller, ATM

**T**able Topics sessions are like snowflakes, like fingerprints and like people. There are no two exactly alike. As the Table Topics Master, you can't help but offer something different, even if you use previously tried topics. Let's look at some positive and negative aspects of Table Topics leadership—some do's and don't's.

If you are scheduled to lead Table Topics for a theme meeting, by all means prepare your topics to the theme. However, if the field is wide open, develop your topics around a favorite theme of your own. Having a single theme helps you narrow the vast supply of ideas your imagination will provide.

Have several topics ready to suit Toastmasters of various skill levels. Choose topics that will provide your speakers a firm "hook" on which to build a story, to express an opinion, to draw from personal experience or to display imagination. Table Topics is an educational exercise of impromptu speaking, not an opportunity for one Toastmaster leader to try and catch unexpecting fellow members "off-guard" or to embarrass anyone.

The number of Table Topics subjects you assign will depend on the balance of the meeting. If a Speechcraft, business meeting or other lengthy club activity is scheduled, use the minimum number of Table Topics.

On the other hand, if only one speaker is scheduled on the program but several speakers are present, you have the responsibility to involve those Toastmasters who came to the meeting, but who are not on the program.

As the meeting starts, silently choose speakers suitable to match your list of topics. Permit no one to see your topics or the topic speakers' names you've chosen.

You normally have 15 to 20 minutes for the complete Table Topics session; use it wisely. Explain briefly the value of Table Topics and the premise of your theme—in one sentence if possible.

Call upon the Timer to explain the timing allowed for each Table Topics speaker. Is the timing device visible and in working order? Now you should have ample time for the speakers.

### Choosing the Speakers

Remember, your ultimate objective is to provide a public speaking opportunity for those members or visiting Toastmasters who are not scheduled to speak, or who will have little or no opportunity to speak at the meeting.

**A visiting  
Toastmaster  
is fair game.**

Therefore you should refrain from choosing the program's scheduled speakers.

Also, the Toastmaster, Master Evaluator and Club President should be excused, unless there is only a small number of club members in attendance. Incidentally, a visiting Toastmaster is certainly "fair game" for Table Topics, unless that Toastmaster came as one of the speaker/evaluator team.

Evaluators are "iffies." If few Toastmasters are present, an evaluator may be selected for Table Topics. If other Toastmasters should be given the opportunity, evaluators can be excluded.

NEVER call upon a guest who is not a Toastmaster to participate in Table

Topics. If you do, you risk the possibility of frightening that prospective member away. Also, you deprive a dues-paying member of the privilege of practicing extemporaneous speech.

Call the name of the first Toastmaster you have chosen to speak. Explain clearly and succinctly the topic premise. Speak directly to the topic speaker. If you feel a particular Toastmaster needs assistance to proceed, you may offer him or her a lead or suggestion to prompt the response.

Once you have completed your topic presentation, never repeat any portion, large or small, for a topic speaker. If presenting quotations or published excerpts, it is most helpful to preprint these items on three-by-five index cards for the speaker to reference while speaking.

Ordinarily, topic speakers should stand at their places, not at the lectern. However, if conditions warrant, the speakers may be allowed to leave their places in order to face the audience fully or to see the timing device.

Each time you lead the Table Topics session, you exercise a unique opportunity for leadership. Each Table Topics session, by design, is unique. No two sessions can possibly be the same. Therefore, by proper preparation and thoughtful consideration of the selected speakers, YOUR session stands a chance of being the best one ever. 🗣️

**Robert E. Miller, ATM**, is Senior Technical Writer for Gould Inc., Computer System Division, Plantation, Florida, and is a member of and has held all club offices in Venetian Club 952-47. He also has served as Area 4 Secretary for three successive years and as District 47 Secretary. Rob serves often as a contest judge in District 47's Advanced, International, Dramatic Reading, Evaluation, Humorous and Table Topics speech contests.



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 Eden Prairie, MN—Tues., 11:30 a.m., MTS Systems, 14000 Technology Dr. (937-4439).  
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 Minneapolis, MN—Thurs., 11:30 a.m., General Mills, Inc., 9200 Wayzata Blvd., Auditorium 2C (540-7756).  
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 Chardon, OH—Thurs., noon, Geauga County Sr. Citizens Bldg., 12555 Ravenwood Dr. (285-3854).  
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**2324-64 Empress**  
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1810



1842



1843



1840



1844



1917



1980



1976



1977



1978



1984

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