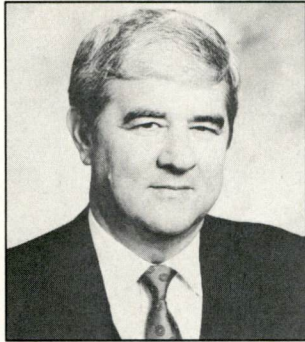


# THE Toastmaster

JULY 1989

*ETIQUETTE:  
The Conquest of Civilization  
over Barbarism*





## Dancing with Tradition

It's said that when former University of Texas football coach Darrell Royal was preparing his highly successful team for a Cotton Bowl game, a reporter asked him if he would be running the famous wishbone offense. Since this offense had proved so superior for his team all year, Coach Royal, thinking the answer to be rather obvious, replied, "Yeah, we're like the pretty little miss from the country who was taken to a Saturday night dance. Seemingly, her date was a rather plain young man, and upon her arrival at the dance, she was asked to dance by a big, handsome young cowboy who was obviously accustomed to having the ladies flattered by his attention. He apparently thought he would sweep her off her feet. But the young lady quickly turned him down and said, 'I'm going to be dancin' with the fellow who brung me.' And, sir, the answer is the same for our football team."

Our Toastmasters tradition is what has "brung" us to the dance, and it is the partner we shall continue to dance with. We are aware of the importance of the basic principles that have brought the tremendous growth and success to our organization.

At Toastmasters' 40th Anniversary, Dr. Ralph Smedley was asked for a special message for *The Toastmaster* magazine. Reminding Toastmasters of principles that helped bring the organization to that milestone, he suggested that the same principles would help us reach our 60th anniversary. Since both milestones have passed, I suggest that the same traditions will see us into the 1990s and beyond. Here are four of Dr. Smedley's now familiar principles:

**1. Keep it simple.** Many communicators have written about public speaking, but the fundamental principles of oration have not changed.

**2. Toastmasters is a "learn by doing" experience.** We do not offer instructions for everything that is done or said in the club, but rather allow the member to rely on his or her own imagination and initiative. We encourage better listening and thinking because these skills result in better speaking.

**3. Toastmasters is based on belief in the individual.** Many organizations ask their members to subordinate themselves to the group. But Toastmasters work together to bring out the best in each member, and then apply their skills to aid others.

**4. We learn in moments of enjoyment.** Fellowship is important to Toastmasters. Members stay in their clubs because they have fun and are learning together.

This is how I see our Toastmasters traditions. In order to TOUCH TOMORROW TODAY, we shall continue to build on what has brought us success, while remembering that we live in a changing world.

**TOM B. RICHARDSON, DTM**  
International President

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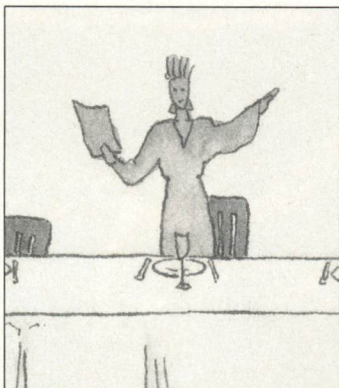
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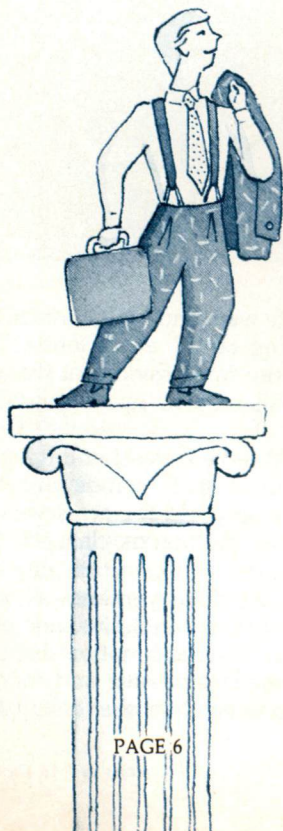
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PAGE 4



PAGE 24



PAGE 6

**4 GET A GRIP!**

A good handshake is in the hand of the beholder.  
by Gary Pittman, CTM

**6 A WORD TO THE THOROUGHLY MODERN MAN**

Do you look like a guy who's on top of the heap and tough to beat?  
by John Cadley

**8 ETIQUETTE: THE CONQUEST OF CIVILIZATION OVER BARBARISM**

A guide to good manners.  
by Thomas Montalbo, DTM

**12 MIND YOUR TELEPHONE MANNERS**

Seven guidelines for communicating over the phone.  
by Leon Fletcher

**14 TELEPHONE COURTESY**

Smile and your voice will sound friendly.  
by Pat Fitzgerald

**16 "AND OUR SPEAKER IS..."**

Introductions prepare the audience and speaker for each other.  
by Julie Bawden Davis

**20 THE ESSENTIALS OF PLATFORM PROTOCOL**

Illustrated instructions.  
by Dan Murray, ATM

**22 COMMUNICATING THROUGH AN INTERPRETER**

by Marcia Yudkin

**24 TABLE MANNERS FOR TOASTMASTERS**

Your credibility and skill as a luncheon speaker are enhanced by your grace at the table.  
by Mike Cronin

D E P A R T M E N T S

**23 IDEA CORNER**

**27 HALL OF FAME**

**31 LETTERS**

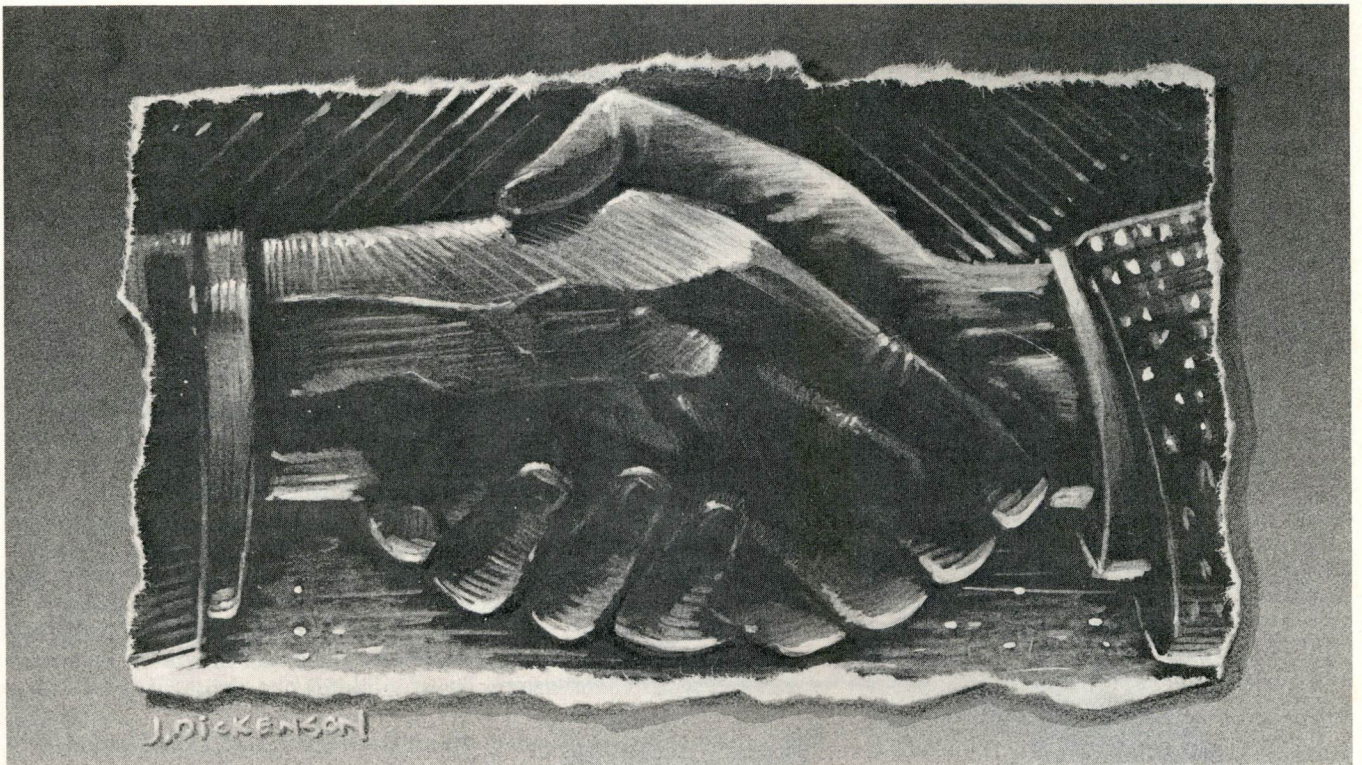
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# Get a Grip!

A good handshake is in the hand of the beholder: if it feels good, it is good.



BY GARY PITTMAN, CTM

**T**he importance of a good handshake is often overlooked. It can help solidify a new relationship or detract from an otherwise good first impression. To be such an ordinary custom of our everyday lives, it is surprising how poorly many people execute the handshake.

Parents should take the responsibility for teaching their children to shake hands at an early age. Unfortunately, many parents teach their kids the same way the family dog is taught to shake: just hold out the paw for someone else to shake. Some parents act as if the

handshake were another parlor trick for entertaining family and friends. Children get the impression that the arms automatically move upon connecting hands.

I once observed a teacher forcing two young lads to shake hands and make up after a fight. As the arms were extended and the hands clasped, their faces showed confusion as the arms were still and no movement was occurring. Taking some initiative, one of the boys began a vertical motion that must have seemed aggressive and inadvertently precipitated another disturbance.

### No wimps, please

While my college fraternity experience may have resulted in some dubious behavior, it did provide me with a lasting impression for the value of a good handshake. I feel forever indebted to the pledge trainer who told my pledge class he didn't want us embarrassing him and the other brothers with any "wimpy" handshakes. This one lesson-in-life experience was worth more than many of the three-hour courses I attended.

Limp handshakes are often described as "fish," preceded with an adjective such as "wet," "cold" or "dead"—none of which is desirable to the hand. The lack of firmness in the hand is generally considered worse than a hand that is slightly too firm. So, when in doubt, go with the firmer handshake; however, keep in mind that you are not trying to

and leaving the other party without a grip of any kind. No one wants to be labeled a cow-milking handshaker—so, please extend the hand until the webs touch.

A release of pressure by either party is a signal that the handshake is over. The classification given those continuing to hold your hand after you have released the grip is a "hand loiterer." "Hand loiterers" want to keep your hand and not give it back. If a hand loiterer encounters a claustrophobic, the latter will likely experience an anxiety attack.

A "stiff arm" handshake is one where only the shoulder moves and the elbow is not bent. This is a favored technique of mimes, robots and extraterrestrials. A variation of the "stiff arm" is the "Queen Ann," which is identical except the palm faces downward and

shakes as firm, brief and accompanied by a smile.

During the 1988 Seoul Olympics, one of the wire services ran a photo of a startled Korean official being greeted by a man whose customary greeting was to rub noses. I have heard this is a common practice among Eskimos. While I am sure this salutation is an honored tradition among those practicing the custom, it makes me grateful for the early civilized man who first extended his open hand to show he had no weapon and meant no harm.

The handshake evolved from this peaceful gesture and despite the occasional vagaries, I would like to see it adopted by all cultures. Until the day of universal acceptance arrives, one of my biggest fears is that I will encounter an Eskimo trying to sell me insurance in the elevator. ♦

I describe the best handshakes as firm, brief and accompanied by a smile.

**Gary P. Pittman, CTM** is a member of Hi-Noon Club 2217-43 in Little Rock, Arkansas. He is a commercial manager at Little Rock Municipal Water Works and is a Dale Carnegie instructor.

bring Rambo to his knees.

A difference exists between a firm hand for shaking and a firm hand for gripping. When you pick up a suitcase, your hand is made firm enough only to hold the weight, and you do not put additional pressure on the handle by squeezing tightly. The same principle applies to a handshake: The fingers should be kept firm enough so as not to collapse into a bunch of carrots under pressure; and not be so tightly wrapped as to cut blood circulation.

When reaching to shake someone's hand, spread the thumb to a near 90-degree angle from the other fingers. The hands should continue moving toward each other until the web areas between the thumb and forefinger touch each other.

### A gesture with variations

I probably shake more hands than the average person because of my involvement with various clubs and my people-oriented avocation. To be such a simple and straightforward gesture, I am amazed by the many variations I encounter.

No handshake is as uncomfortable as having the ends of your fingers squeezed together and pulled. I refer to people who grab only fingers as "cow milkers." The "cow milker" gives a one-sided handshake, having total control

you are not quite sure whether it is to be shook or kissed.

Another deviate handshake is the "hook" whereby the hand is presented with the fingers already curled. To make proper contact with the "hook," you must veer your hand right, then take a sharp left at the knuckles.

The most perverse of all types is the "jerk" handshake. This prankster will offer his hand only to jerk it back initially and leave you foolishly reaching into thin air. "Jerk" not only describes the handshake, but the joker who employs it as well. I suspect this affliction is in some way related to the result of having been bottle fed as an infant.

"Elbow grabbers" put their idle hand to use by holding the elbow connected to the hand they are shaking. One of the most notable "elbow grabbers" is former President Richard Nixon. This propensity was once noted by the commentator of a telecast I was viewing of then President Nixon in a receiving line. The president seemed to be reserving this additional gesture for guests he considered to be "special."

### In the hand of the beholder

Just as beauty is in the eye of the beholder, a good handshake is in the hand of the beholder—if it feels good, it is good. I describe the best hand-

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# A Word to the Thoroughly Modern Man



Attention Men of the Eighties: Do you look like a guy who's on top of the heap and tough to beat? If not, perhaps you need a wardrobe engineer to help you achieve visual harmony for maximum impact.

BY JOHN CADLEY

**Y**ou thought you were the thoroughly modern man. The contents of *Magatrends*, *Theory Z* and *In Search of Excellence* lie stored in your brain like artillery shells waiting to be fired at The Battle of the Fast Track. Your cholesterol count would make a cardiac surgeon jealous, your stomach's as hard as a tree trunk, and you've got the resting pulse rate of a bear in hibernation. You know where you stand on the tough issues, too.

Anyone talking to you, for instance, will know immediately how you feel about whether real men eat quiche. And yet, for all that toughness of mind, you're not afraid to let the tender side show. You watch Phil Donahue and listen to Barry Manilow, and you can say "I love you" without experiencing stomach cramps. You even make your own pasta.

So when you kick off those Timberland boots and sit back with that glass of chilled chablis, you can bask in the knowledge that you're a Man of the Eighties. Right?

Not so fast, Roy.

There's a new game in town. It's got to do with you and the colors you're in-

to. You've heard of *Color Me Beautiful* for women? Well, Roy, here comes colors for men.

Time to take a hard look at the clothes in your closet and ask yourself, "Do they make me look top of the heap and tough to beat?" Don't bother to answer. There's only one way you will ever know for sure: ask an expert. That's right—for anywhere from \$40 to \$250 you can have a "wardrobe engineer" color code you, so you'll know precisely which shades go best with your natural coloring.

Is it worth it? Listen to what a satisfied customer has to say about the way it changed his life: "Now when I go to a rack of 42s, I know straight away that the beiges and rusts aren't even part of the decision." For the price of some designer chocolates you, too, can have that peace of mind.

To begin with, when you go to a color consultant you won't just be a person anymore; you'll be a "season"—winter, summer, fall or spring, depending on your skin tones and the color of your hair and eyes. A summer, for instance, would be someone with light beige or ruddy skin, blonde hair and gray, green or blue eyes. A winter, on

the other hand, would have milk white, olive or black skin, black hair and dark eyes.

Once you've been assigned a season, you'll sit in a chair while an expert passes strips of color under your chin to see with which tones your skin reacts best. And finally, you'll be given a list—or in some cases a swatch book—of colors that will help you make the best possible visual impression.

"Wait a minute!" you protest. Sure, you're tender and liberated, but there's a limit. Do real men worry about color? Real men worry about manly things, like lower back pain and bracket creep. But color? Are you really going to walk into J.C. Penney with a swatch book and say, "Hi, I'm a fall?"

Well, relax. Believe it or not, most of the new business color consultants are getting these days comes from men. In a single year one company increased revenues from \$600,000 to \$6 million, mostly on the strength of an increasingly male clientele. It seems that, in a viciously competitive job market where first impressions count, a lot of guys just aren't taking any chances.

Go ahead, look around you. Think nobody in your office has been color coded yet? What about the guy next door who used to wear the green plaid suits and the burnt orange shirts? One day he comes in and suddenly it's blue, gray and beige all the way. What do you think happened? Transactional analysis? A change in diet? Forget it. The guy ponied up some scratch and got himself color coded.

And if he can do it, you can. In fact, you'd better. Otherwise, you might find yourself in the boss's office one day listening to the reasons why you didn't get that regional sales manager's job.

"Not enough skill?" you ask. The boss shakes his head.

"Not enough experience?" He shakes his head again.

Then it dawns on you. "Oh, no. You mean ...?" The boss nods his head, sighs deeply, and says, "That's right, Rumsfeld, you just weren't...visually harmonious."

No man wants that day to come.

But you have to be careful because, while color consultants will recommend what looks good on you, they don't say much about what these colors actually mean. And if you don't think colors speak a language of their own, just picture your bride-to-be walking up the

## My Fair Lady

BY MARILY MONDEJAR

**T**here is a popular misconception that an image consultant is merely a personal shopper, and a color consultant only sells makeup. The truth is much more interesting, and the profession is far more complex. Literary sources provide examples of image makers and consultants who were never considered in this context, but whose work can be seen by today's standards as pioneering steps toward what we now understand to be image consulting.

Biblical Aaron, speaking for his speech-impaired brother, Moses, was an early political consultant. Lord Chesterfield, writing to his son about the ways of persuasion, is another example of this new craft. Similarly, unscrupulous Machiavelli guided his Borgia, and Shakespeare's Polonius advised Laertes that clothes make the man. These men were all aware of the importance of image making. Emily Post, Dale Carnegie and Napoleon Hill continue the forward march of our profession.

But the most admired image consultant is that wonderful George Bernard Shaw character, Professor Henry Higgins! How we love and hate him in the play *Pygmalion* and its stage and movie musical successes, "My Fair Lady," as he makes this callous wager with Col. Pickering that he can take the gutter-snipe flower girl, Eliza Doolittle, and process her into a "lady."

His speech-recording phonograph is effective but crude alongside our auto-focus video cameras. "The rain in Spain falls mainly in the plain," Eliza drills while Roger Ailes teaches George Bush to recite the American Pledge of Allegiance. Eliza learns upper class diction and George is coached to develop a suitable TV image.

Eliza learns to dance and converse in polite society. Michael Dukakis sits in a tank. Neither speaks com-

fortably in the unaccustomed venue. Eliza tells English society ladies a series of underclass disasters, and Mike gives his 5-foot-4-inch imitation of Rambo. They both express overmanipulated images. Behind the facade erected by the image consultants, we see the empty acres of a Hollywood backlot.

Yet Eliza Doolittle wins our hearts despite her crafted appearance, because within the cockney lass are solid spiritual values and child-like innocence.

This is the guiding light of a successful professional relationship between consultants and clients. The true vocation of the image consultant begins with those qualities of personality and intellect, style and ambition that the client brings for enhancement. Appropriately, we can "Higgins" our Eliza with confidence that the client's natural features will be highlighted by the application of our professional acumen.

The consultant's job begins with assessing the client's natural colors to focus the wardrobe and makeup palette. Etiquette, posture, communication skills and charisma take shape under the skilled hands of consultants and trainers. The successful relationship between client and consultant evolves to the frontier of the consultant's vision and the client's innate ability to respond to the call of a greater tomorrow.

Each new client can be lifted beyond the present environment and taught to reach out and become "My Fair Lady." That transition is the challenge and the promise of any communication consultant.

**Marily Mondejar**, a color and image consultant, is the founding executive director of the Image Industry Council International (IICI), headquartered in San Francisco. Her specialty is dressing witnesses for depositions and court appearances.

aisle in a black dress. Each color has its own subliminal message that people react to instinctively.

Brown, for instance. People who are "falls" would probably have various

shades of brown recommended to them. And that seems harmless enough. After all, brown is the color of the earth, and what could be more solid

*Continued on page 30*

# Etiquette:

## THE CONQUEST OF CIVILIZATION OVER BARBARISM

BY THOMAS MONTALBO, DTM

**I**t's not wise to violate the rules until you know how to observe them," advised British poet T.S. Eliot. He referred to literary rules, but his advice applies to the rules of etiquette as well.

Just as language enables us to communicate, etiquette provides guidelines for good manners. People with good manners get along better than those with bad manners in most of life's situations. Diplomats, for example, are noted for their tact and courtesy, because negotiations are virtually impossible without adhering to protocol.

Based on common sense and a regard for the feelings of others, good manners "can be achieved only by making consideration and unselfishness an integral part of your behavior," says Elizabeth Post, granddaughter-in-law of Emily Post and author of *The New Emily Post's Etiquette*, now in its 14th edition.

### Know the Rules

Etiquette represents the conquest of civilization over barbarism and provides good, sound, practical sense, generally referred to as "common courtesy." In her book *Common Courtesy*, Judith Martin, who writes the "Miss Manners" newspaper column on etiquette, answered the charge

sometimes made against etiquette that it's "artificial." She wrote, "Yes, indeed, it is... The idea that people can behave naturally, without resorting to an artificial code tacitly agreed upon by their society, is as silly as the idea that they can communicate by a spoken language without commonly accepted semantic and grammatical rules."

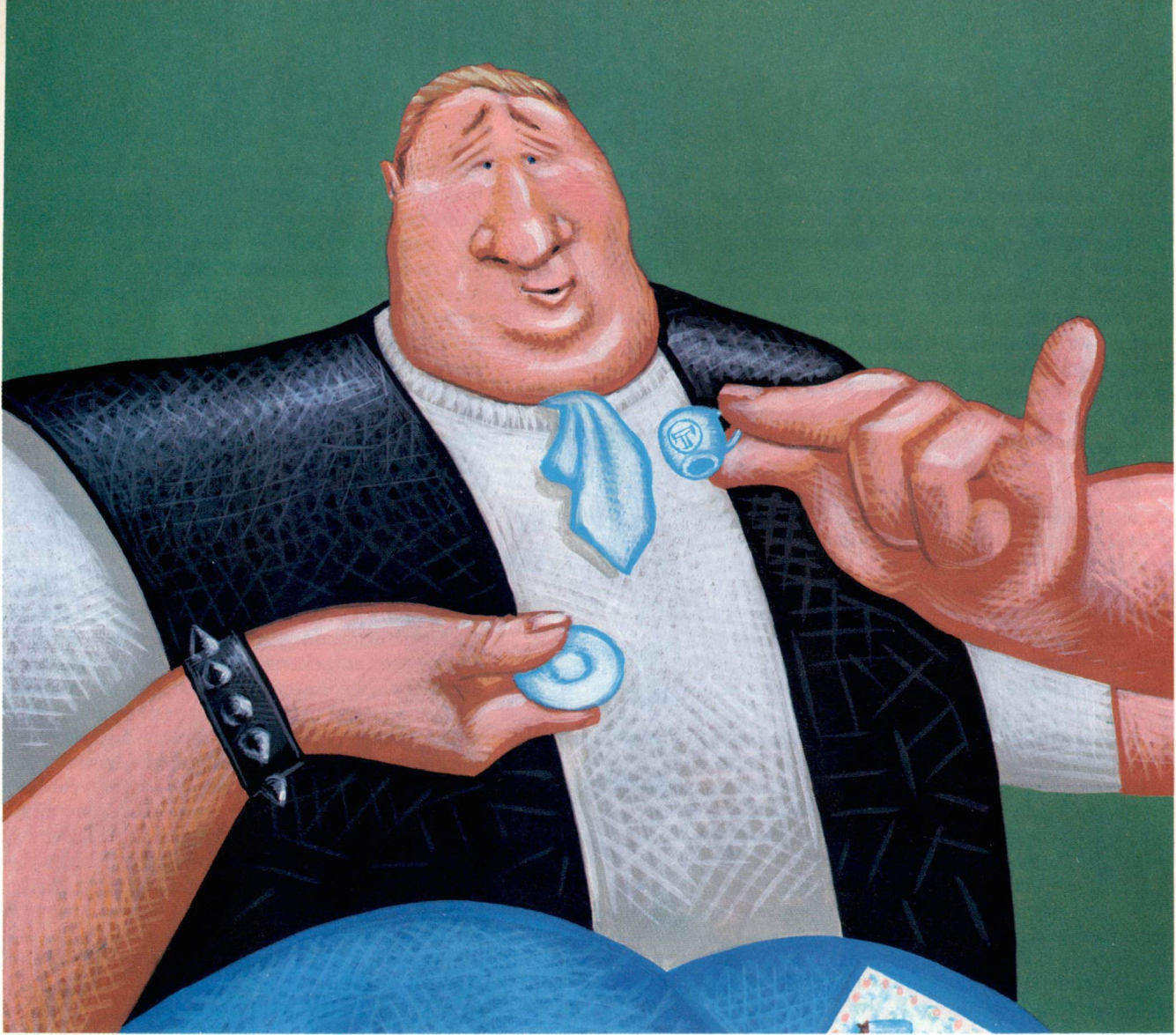
Knowing the rules of etiquette surely enables us to cope with demanding social situations easily, confidently and comfortably. That's why etiquette specialists speak of "easy manners," referring to relaxed and pleasant dealings with people.

Ignorance of proper etiquette often leads to embarrassment and confusion. For example, an article in *The Wall Street Journal* reported, "Social kissing — the peck on the cheek — has become so widespread that it's spilling over into the business world," adding that this is "awkward and confusing" to many people.

Etiquette specialists agree that social kissing in business is taboo and recommend handshakes instead. Ms. Martin put it this way: "It's ludicrous and rather obsequious to pretend you are warm, close friends in a business environment. It obscures the line of rank and command."

Just as language differs among nations, so does





etiquette. Behavior that is proper in one nation may be improper in another. For example, the Japanese take off their shoes when entering someone's home. The Chinese and Americans don't remove their shoes. Local customs also influence the etiquette of greeting. The Japanese bow deeply to each other; the Americans and many Europeans shake hands; the French and Russians embrace.

#### **Change with the times**

Similarly, as language has changed from ancient to medieval to modern times, so has etiquette. In days gone by, a man had to wait until a woman extended her hand before he could shake hands with her. Today, it's proper for both men and women to initiate handshakes. Our grandparents learned that men should hold the door open for women. Now, whoever arrives at the door first, male or female, should hold it open for those following behind.

Before the advent of the automobile, etiquette required a man walking with a woman on the sidewalk to take the curb side to protect her from mud splattered by horse-drawn carriages sloshing through the puddles on unpaved streets.

But not all long-established, ironclad customs

**Most people will note your offenses against good manners as well as your mistakes in the use of language.**

handed down from one generation to another become obsolete as a result of social changes and technological developments. Old rules should not be discarded merely because they're old. Some traditions remain unchanged and still apply. One example is the thank you letter or note for which a telephone call is not an adequate replacement.

Writing takes more effort as well as more thinking and planning than picking up the telephone. Using the telephone instead is not good manners. Letitia Baldrige, author of several books on etiquette, says: "Many people feel that a word of thanks on the telephone is sufficient acknowledgment for a favor, gift or invitation. This definitely is not so. A handwritten (or typed) note is a hundred times more effective and more appreciated than a telephone call...If you make a telephone call, you may be intruding on the other person's privacy. Your telephone call may suit your schedule, but often it will not suit the other person's schedule."

When people do something for you, it's customary to send them thank you letters. So remember to thank guest speakers, hotel staff, Toastmasters and others who help make your special events successful.

### The R.S.V.P.

Even more ill-mannered than failing to send thank you letters is the non-response to invitations that specifically ask for R.S.V.P. and provide the response cards with stamped, self-addressed envelopes. R.S.V.P. stands for "Repondez s'il vous plait" and translates from the French as "Respond, if you please." Responding promptly shows good breeding, consideration and respect.

Jeannine Stein of the *Los Angeles Times* considers answering invitations a lost art. She wrote, "Ask any host, party planner or etiquette expert what the rate of return is, and he or she will say 'very poor!'"

"There is a lamentable casualness in this country that borders on rudeness when it comes to responding to an invitation," observes Ms. Baldrige. "When people do not respond, the result usually is substantial waste of food and money as a result of providing for many more people than those who attend."

Glen Waggoner and Kathleen Moloney, wondering why so many people ignore the R.S.V.P., speculated, "Maybe they're rude, inconsiderate dolts. Maybe they don't understand French abbreviations." Noting in her "Dear Abby" column that "Every bride and hostess reports the same frustrations when her R.S.V.P.s are ignored," Abigail Van Buren suggested that we replace the French initials with these English words: "Please let us know if you are able to attend — and also if you are not."

Many people think of etiquette as a list of rigid rules for weddings. That's understandable when you glance at the table of contents and index in books on etiquette. Entries on weddings outnumber all other aspects of etiquette. In fact, some books on etiquette deal entirely with weddings. Etiquette is also often thought of as straightlaced rules known as "official protocol," which is observed at social functions attended by government and military officers and foreign diplomats. At such occasions personal idiosyncrasies are irrelevant — even for U.S. presidents. President Lyndon Johnson loved Texas chili and corn bread, but was never served this fare at state dinners.

### Guidelines for Toastmasters

In reality, etiquette rules are not always inflexible. Basically, they provide guidelines. For example, the Toastmasters meeting planners' handbook, *Put on a Good Show* (code 220), includes rules of etiquette in the section "Planning a Successful Conference" but also states, "There are as many ways to organize and conduct a District Conference as there are districts in Toastmasters. Each is unique and that is the way it should be. The remarks in this section are, of necessity, very generalized and should be considered as guidelines."

Guidelines. That's the key word. A guideline states a principle that provides practical advice. Etiquette guides action or behavior. Being general,

"**A**ll etiquette is hot air, but that's what is in our automobile tires, and see how it eases the bumps!"

George Clemenceau

the rules of etiquette imply exceptions and options.

Take head table arrangements, for example. If you have too many people to be seated at one head table, you may use a two-tier arrangement: place a second table in front of and lower than the first table.

You have another option. Use "honor tables" instead of a head table that's too long. Place the honor tables immediately adjacent to the head table or just in front of it, but at a lower level. Put "Reserved" signs on the honor tables.

### Black tie etiquette

One of the first things people notice about you is what you're wearing. Etiquette experts generally agree that when an invitation reads "Black Tie," both men and women are expected to wear formal dress. A man's attire is traditional, almost ritualistic. For men, black tie always means a tuxedo or dinner jacket with matching pants and a black bow tie.

Black bow ties come self-tied or pre-tied. "There is absolutely no testable difference between the clip-on models and the tie-it-yourself models," according to John T. Malloy, author of *Dress For Success*. If you tie it yourself, make sure you do it right.

Black is considered appropriate for each of the four seasons. Lightweight fabrics suitable for the tropics are available for black tuxedos. But some celebrities bend or break the black tie rules.

President Harry Truman, for example, a former haberdasher who sported natty bow ties, once startled the guests at a formal dinner by wearing a silver-streaked black bow tie.

Will Rogers was the after-dinner speaker at countless formal banquets but never dressed black tie. Instead he wore the blue serge suit that became his trademark at the most lavish parties and dinners. He once explained, "Nothing makes people more alike than putting a dress suit on 'em."

When Mark Twain's red hair turned into an eye-catching heavy shock of white hair, it made him seem larger than life. It pleased him to reinforce this illusion by dressing for black tie affairs in white serge or flannel.

Despite the examples of President Truman, Rogers and Twain, if you ask etiquette specialists whether you, too, can bend or break black tie rules, you'll be told "no." Charlotte Ford, in her book *Etiquette: Guide to Modern Manners*, put it this way: "You may not dress below the level set by the invitation, so if it reads 'black tie,' honor it. In other words, gentlemen, don't try to get away with wearing your navy blue suit."

For women, however, dressing for a black tie affair can be an exercise in options. "What a woman wears to a black tie occasion depends on the custom in her community," Ford says. "It may be anything from a short dinner dress to a long, lavish gown." To give yourself an individual style,

she suggests using accessories: "A sash or shawl can alter your look significantly. I once borrowed a beautiful embroidered shawl from a friend to wear with a black evening dress. The shawl elicited more compliments than the dress did."

As we've seen, the traditional black tie rules still apply to men's formal wear which, unlike women's formal wear, has remained relatively static and slow in evolving into acceptable new styles.

### Mind your table manners

Just as your clothing is one of the most visible signals of your adherence to etiquette, so are your table manners. Slouching or slumping at the table is unattractive and bad for your back. Don't tip your chair, since you might break it and injure yourself or others. Sit at a comfortable distance from the table. As soon as you sit down, unfold your napkin and place it on your lap. When you finish eating, put the napkin on the table. Don't refold or crumple it. Just lay it on the table in loose folds.

Which fork to use? Begin with the fork on the outside of the place setting and work your way toward your plate with each course.

However, picking up the wrong fork is a minor offense compared with these unforgivable ones: talking with your mouth full; chewing with your

**O**ld rules should not be discarded merely because they're old.

mouth open; and gesturing with a fork or knife.

Table manners are an acquired art. If practiced at home, they become second nature. Then when dining out, you won't spoil your dinner by being self-conscious, nor will you show any bad habits that may spoil the dinner for others.

Some people feel that rules of etiquette are arbitrary and unnecessary. You could say the same about the rules of grammar. Yet those rules enable us to communicate easily and understandably. Most people will note and remember your offenses against good manners as well as your mistakes in the use of language.

When the secretary to George Clemenceau, twice premier of France, remarked that diplomatic protocol was nothing but hot air, Clemenceau said, "All etiquette is hot air, but that's what is in our automobile tires, and see how it eases the bumps."

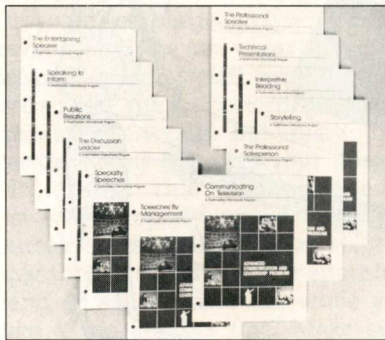
Clemenceau was right. Etiquette makes our daily contacts with other people smoother. And that's why we need to know and observe the rules. ♦

**Thomas Montalbo, DTM**, a member of Sparkling Toastmasters Club 3602-47 in St. Petersburg, Florida, has received a Presidential Citation for his articles in *The Toastmaster*. He is the author of *The Power of Eloquence*, a book on public speaking available from *Toastmasters International*.

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# Mind Your Telephone Manners

Seven guidelines for communicating over the phone.

BY LEON FLETCHER



It was more than 113 years ago — on March 10, 1876 — that Alexander Graham Bell hooked together those first two telephones and made the world's first phone call.

Today, more than 270 million phone calls are made each year in the United States alone. That's more than 1000 calls a year for every man, woman and child in the nation. In some cities, including Washington, D.C. and Beverly Hills, California, there are more phones than people.

But despite all that experience in using telephones, a great many people still misuse — even abuse — phones.

The worst phone users are not tots fumbling through their first dialings, nor even teenagers plugging into their everlasting calls. Rather, the most serious misusers are the people for whom the phone is the lifeline of their careers — business managers, supervisors, executives, sales staffs — people who are, in effect, "professional phoners."

The professional rarely breaks the basic guides to good phone usage. He or she rarely drops the phone, lets it ring too long, misdials, fails to record frequently used numbers, or makes other such obvious errors. Instead, a great many professional phoners misuse telephones in ways that insult callers, alienate customers and lose business.

Here are seven major "don'ts" — practices to avoid in your phone conversations — plus tips on how you can significantly improve the use of this valuable medium.

## **1 Don't have someone else answer your phone.**

For a great many people, one of the biggest steps up the career ladder is getting a secretary or assistant to handle phone calls.

It's great for the ego, but think of how your business would improve if you could build the ego of the caller, rather than your own self-image. Think of the positive impact on the customer when he or she hears "the boss" answer the phone personally. The caller thinks, "Hey, here's someone I can talk with directly!" Imagine how impressive (and time- and energy-saving) it is for a caller not to have to go through the usual routine of telling a secretary who is calling and other information before getting through.

### **Increase Effectiveness**

Certainly some bosses have good reasons why they should not answer their phones. They might be too busy. Or they might have a great many callers.

But that's the goal, isn't it — to communicate?

I first learned the effectiveness of not having my secretary answer my phone when I worked for a California State Department of Education official who had a staff of about 60 professionals. His task: allocating hundreds of millions of dollars a year to hundreds of schools for innovative projects. Each decision was individual; no formula existed. Busy as he was, great as the pressure was to approve these requests, to increase a certain grant, he personally took as many calls as he could. He quickly built a reputation as an approachable executive, a man of action. He rose steadily to even more responsible positions and soon became a key leader in our nation's education office.

Certainly it is not practical for a truly busy person to take all of his or her calls. But if that is your goal — to handle as many of the phone calls as you can — you, too, may find your effectiveness increasing quickly and dramatically. Try it. If you consider yourself "too busy," take another look at what you're doing. Perhaps you're bogged down in minor details. You answer your phone; let your assistant handle the routine.

## **2 Don't put a caller on hold before he or she can speak.**

Don't have your phone answered with, "This is the Charles Company —

will you hold please?"

The solution is clear: If you are getting more than two or three calls a day that you or your staff are immediately putting on hold, you need to expand your phone service. Get someone else in the office to answer when you are already on the phone. Or, as a poor alternative, switch on a tape recorder that answers your phone automatically.

More businesses seem to be putting callers on a "fast hold." But many companies get around the problem somewhat by having an answering machine detail information and play music.

The best message to put on your automatic answerer is brief, simple and direct.

## **3 Don't ask "Who's calling?" in answer to "Is Mr. Smith in?"**

The publisher of one of my visual aids for learning public speaking breaks this rule on every call. At first I thought he was recognizing my voice and trying to avoid me. But I checked with a few other people who do business with him and found it was standard procedure in his office.

If you use this technique, stop it. Maybe you have an eager secretary, assistant or other staff member who thinks he or she is "protecting" you by screening your calls. But clearly, this practice simply damages your image.

To ensure that your phone is answered properly, make a call to yourself occasionally. If your voice is recognizable, then have your spouse, a friend or an associate call while you listen in on another line. Make sure your calls are being answered the way you want them to be — quickly, pleasantly, honestly — in a style that helps, not hinders, your business.

## **4 Don't answer the phone when you're talking with someone in person.**

This habit is comparable to allowing someone to march into your office and barge into a conversation. It's an undesirable interruption if it's by phone or in person. It's discourteous, distracting and despicable.

How can you block such interruptions? Most people stop in-person interruptions by closing the office door. You

can do the same with your phone. Tell the secretary, switchboard operator or someone else on your staff to hold all calls. Just be sure you return calls promptly — certainly the same day and preferably within an hour.

Besides preventing interruptions, blocking calls has an additional benefit: it makes your visitor feel that you're giving full attention to his or her words.

If you let your phone interrupt your conversation with a potential client, the customer might question the importance you place on this meeting and consider taking his or her business elsewhere.

But the alert reader might now be thinking that this technique of blocking phone calls conflicts with the first tip: to answer your own phone. However, telephone etiquette is not an exact science, but an art. It's creative. You have to adapt these tips to your situation. Try to answer your own phone as often as you can; block your phone when other duties require you to.

## **5 Don't leave one call to get involved with another.**

In situations when you're talking on the phone with one person and you have to answer another call, you need to use good judgment.

In this case, remember that the caller you're talking to got there first, and apply that ancient guide, "first come, first served." But if that conversation has been going on for some time — say five minutes or longer — the caller may understand if you say, "I've got another call. I don't want to cut you short, but would you mind if I leave you for a moment just to get that caller's name and number?"

Again, you need to be concerned about timing. Even a carefully stated explanation of why you're leaving the line probably won't be well received if you make it in the first minute of a call. If two calls do come in quick succession, it may be better to just let that second call ring rather than desert the first caller.

*Continued on page 29*

# Telephone Courtesy

Smile and your voice will sound friendly.

BY PAT FITZGERALD

**E**very time you make or receive a telephone call at work, you are representing your company. The impression you create usually is a lasting one, so you'll want to make sure your voice and manner always show you at your best.

In a retail environment or in a service

organization, you want a voice that speaks well for you. Telephone courtesy can make a difference between satisfied customers who will return time after time, and dissatisfied customers who'll take their business elsewhere.

Every phone call has three important parts: *the preparation, the conversation and*

*the follow-up.* Each part is vital to the success of your business and to you. On **incoming calls**, your preparation is internal as well as external. Have a pencil and pad handy to write the customer's name and comment. You must know your products and services and the company's policies. Your position and friendly attitude is vital to your effectiveness. After all, when the telephone rings, it is "your job calling!"

Use telephone courtesy in your phrases. Some phrases are better than others; here are some suggestions:

## **This is better**

Would you repeat your name, please?

Would you spell that, please?

I'm sorry, I didn't get that.

Thank you, I'll check for you.

Yes, Mrs. Anthony, I'll be happy to do that for you.

It will take a minute or so. Would you like for me to call you back?

Thank you for waiting. I have that information now.

Can you recall the name of the person you spoke with?

I'm sorry, Mr. Beard is away from the store. May I help you?

Thank you for calling, Mr. Dunn.

I was glad to have been able to help.

You are welcome, Ms. Green. Good-bye.

## **than this:**

What name did you say?

What? Speak louder, I can't hear you.

I can't understand what you are trying to say.

OK. Let me see if I can find out about it from someone.

All right. I'll do what I can about it.

Hold it. I'll see what I can do.

You are out of luck. I can't find it.

I don't know who would have told you that.

He's still out to lunch. I don't know when he'll get back.

OK. So long.

That's OK. Bye bye.

All right. Bye.

## **Smile and listen**

Answer calls promptly. Quick service helps build a reputation of efficiency. Identify yourself and your company or department. By identifying yourself immediately, you eliminate guesswork for the callers and encourage them to identify themselves as well. Smile and your voice will sound friendly.

Show that you are interested in the call by listening intently to your caller. Write down the person's name and try to understand the message. Listen for the tone of voice to aid your communication and understanding.

Use the customer's name often in your conversation. Listeners note the first five words said immediately after hearing their own name in a direct address. Speak clearly and slowly enough so your words can be understood.

## **Put yourself in the caller's shoes**

Your voice and attitude are the most obvious means by which the customer can judge the quality of your organization, so sound as good as you really are. Be alert, pleasant, natural, distinct and expressive. You want to stand out as someone special. Put yourself in the caller's place. You enjoy speaking with efficient, friendly, courteous and helpful people who do what they promise. Be

that kind of person to your callers. Take time to give the call a good ending — thank the customer and do your best to close the conversation in a way that will leave the person feeling satisfied. After saying goodbye, hang up last.

The follow-up is completing the agreed-upon tasks or finding the necessary information to aid your customer. If you have taken a message for a co-worker, be sure to write legibly, put the date and time of the call and make sure the message is received promptly by that person. If your follow-up requires calling the customer back, be sure to mark your calendar to ensure the call is made.

#### Be organized

When placing **outgoing calls** in business, the most important step is to plan why you are calling and what you want to say. By determining your objective for the call, you will avoid sounding unprepared and hesitant, and you won't forget an important element of your conversation. Preparation gives you the opportunity to decide the most effective way to phrase your statements and ideas.

#### Establish rapport

Plan an opening statement that will set the tone of the conversation. In the initial stage of the conversation, identify yourself and your firm while establishing rapport through a friendly greeting or interest-creating comment. With this opening, your message will receive attention. Some examples include:

"Good morning Ms. Anderson. This is Jerry McCloud of Sav-Mor Drugs. I'm glad to get this opportunity to speak with you. The reason I'm calling is to make you aware of a product that will increase your company's profits."

Another example: "Hello Joanne. My name is Pat Miller and I am with St. George Hospital. I'm calling to discuss ways we can improve our patients' recovery rate." The interest-creating comment doesn't tell the called party what you want, but only encourages that person to listen to your message.

Use persuasive techniques in your message. Use the customer's name and relate benefits the customer will receive. Everyone is interested in "What's in it for me?" Stressing benefits helps to persuade people to give you information, assist on a committee or purchase a product. Plan the best possible way of expressing those benefits, and you will be

more successful in accomplishing your objectives.

By planning your outgoing calls, you will not only cover all the important items, but you can cut your telephone conversation time. This organizing will aid in controlling your time and reducing your long-distance telephone bill.

#### Preparation — Attitude — A Smile.

These three items help you become more effective and courteous. There's

always time for telephone courtesy. Treat every call with importance: You will find that your job will be easier and your business will improve. ♦

**Pat Fitzgerald**, president of *Fitzgerald and Associates*, is a management and marketing consultant. She also is a noted speaker, lecturer and training consultant. Fitzgerald is the corporate training representative for the California State University at Long Beach, Extension Services.

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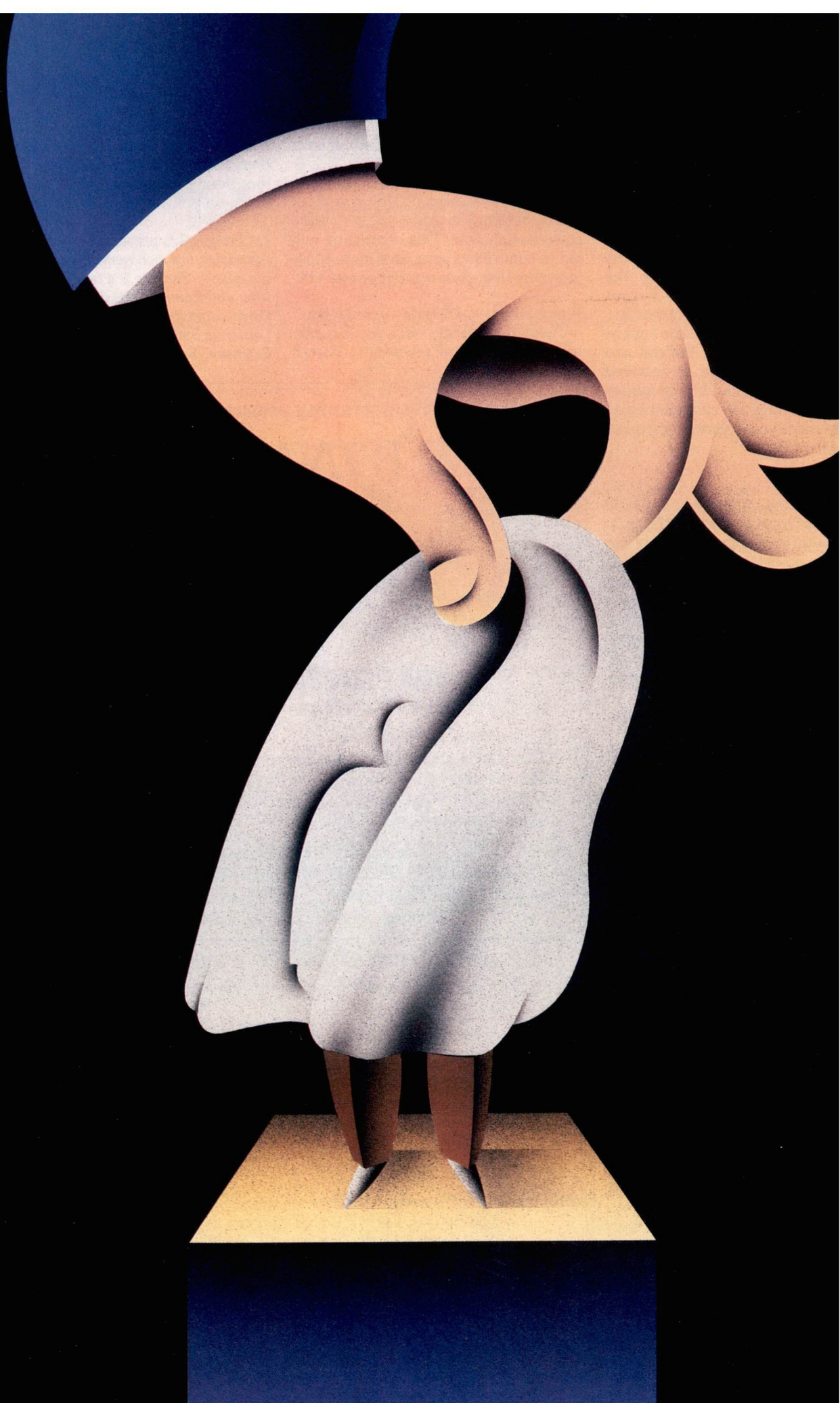
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# "AND OUR SPEAKER IS..."

BY JULIE BAWDEN DAVIS

Introducing a speaker is often an overlooked task. This shouldn't happen, because the introduction is an important part of any speech. Even when the speaker is well known, a polished opening statement is critical for several reasons.

The introduction is a customary ritual that marks the transition from the speaker being a part of the group to becoming the center of attention. It is a way of placing the guest in the limelight by telling the audience to make a transition from talking among themselves to focusing their attention on the lecturer.

The introducer has the opportunity to explain the significance of the speech, which puts listeners in the right frame of mind. A district governor may be visiting to explain how new Toastmasters positions will affect the organization. This situation is different, for example, from a speech on how Toastmasters helps members advance in their careers.

Furthermore, introducers are given the opportunity to relate the special qualifications of a speaker. Listeners may learn, for instance, that the congressman from New York, who will be speaking about business in Japan, lived and worked there for 10 years.

When you are responsible for presenting a guest, think of it as another opportunity to refine your speaking skills. Keep a few rules of protocol and etiquette in mind.

## Use Correct Titles

Always use the speaker's correct title. "Corporate executives and ambassadors tell me that it's insulting to be introduced improperly," says Dorothea

*Introductions prepare  
the audience and speaker  
for each other.*

Johnson, a protocol and etiquette consultant whose clients include the World Trade Center in Washington, D.C., for whom she writes a column on international protocol. "If you are going to introduce someone, call ahead to verify the speaker's exact name and title." Also make sure you know how to pronounce the name.

Generally, the more important a person is, the less introduction he or she needs. If you are introducing the President of the United States, for example, you would simply say, "Ladies and gentlemen, the President of the United States." Do the same when introducing Toastmasters' International President to members.

When introducing politicians, keep the following rules in mind:

If a senator is to speak, introduce him or her by saying, "Ladies and gentlemen, it gives me great pleasure to introduce Senator Brown from California." A congressman, on the other hand, is not introduced as such. A member of the House of Representatives, for example, is properly introduced as "our distinguished guest, Representative Doe from California." If the speaker is a governor, say, "Ladies and gentlemen, let me introduce Governor Doe of California."

Follow the same rule with celebrity speakers. "If the person is a first rate celebrity, make the introduction short and to the point," says Johnson. "Would Tom Selleck need any background?"

For lesser known individuals, establish their statures by relating highlights of their careers. Use information that people will relate to and recognize. For instance, some people are well known by certain accomplishments. Authors such as Kenneth Blanchard and John Naisbitt are best introduced along with their most famous books, *The One Minute Manager* and *Megatrends*. Even if the books are not best sellers, they are helpful to mention, especially if they relate to the topic that the author is to discuss. They also provide reading material for listeners who are interested in future information.

### Get Organized

When preparing an introduction, you need to organize it as well as you would a full-length speech. In his book, *Effective Speaking*, Dale Carnegie suggests using the "T-I-S" formula to help organize facts.

"T" stands for TOPIC. Start your introduction by giving the exact title of your speaker's talk. You should call the speaker for this information a couple of weeks before the occasion.

"I" stands for IMPORTANCE. Here you tell or infer why the particular topic is of interest to the group. If, for example, your speaker is a time management expert and the speech is called "Saving Three Hours Every Day," you could say, "How many of us have finished a day thinking, 'If only I had more time?'"

"S" stands for SPEAKER. List the speaker's qualifications, focusing on those achievements that

**T**he more important a person is, the less introduction he or she needs.

---

relate to the speech topic. Then clearly give the speaker's name. Make sure that the introduction is no longer than 30 to 45 seconds.

### Be humorous

Although the introduction must be short and factual, it doesn't have to be dull and cliché. Inject humor and wit and you will impress both speaker and audience.

Introducing someone in a clever manner takes preparation and homework. When you call to get the speaker's title, ask the person's secretary to send a biographical package. When reviewing it, note special interests that you may be able to include in your introduction. Then call the secretary back for more information.

"Say you discover that the congressman played basketball in college," says Johnson. "You could ask the secretary, 'Does he ever play a game?' The secretary may tell you that he coaches a team. You could pull that into your introduction, saying something like, 'The congressman was almost late getting here because he had basketball practice.' Witty, personalized statements impress and amuse the speaker and make you look like you know him or her well."

Another approach is to tie the speaker to current events. Perhaps the area from which the person is coming is in the news. For example, if he or she is from Utah and 15 inches of snow has fallen in the last several days, you could tell the audience that the visitor arrived at the function via snowmobile. The possibilities are endless when you arm yourself with a little information and use some creativity.

### Microphone etiquette

An important aspect of introducing a speaker is the use of the microphone. A great introduction can be marred by a squeaky reception. Your best defense against microphone mishaps is to check the mike ahead of time.

Determine what type of mike will be available: a lectern with a microphone attached, a microphone on a floor stand, a hand-held roving microphone, a lavalier microphone that loops around your neck or clips onto your clothing, or a cordless mike. If you have a choice between a stationary and roving microphone, note that the latter type allows freedom of movement.

When checking the mike, have someone assist you with the testing process. Have the person listen while you speak into the system.

Adjust the mike so that it falls below your chin. The closer to your chin, the lower the volume needed on the public address system; the farther from your chin, the higher the volume. Always speak toward the stationary microphone on the lectern, whether you are looking to the right or left, keeping in mind that if you move away from the mike, your voice will fade out.

When using a hand-held mike, always hold it vertically in front of your mouth. If you hold it

horizontally, certain letters will create a popping sound and make your speech unintelligible. Also don't put the mike right against your mouth, even though some entertainers do this. The mikes they use are designed for noisy backgrounds. Most public address mikes should be held four to eight inches away from the mouth.

Once you have placed the mike at the right height, turn it on and test the volume and tone settings of the amplification system. Speak into it at the volume you expect to use when you introduce the speaker. Have your assistant check your voice from different positions in the room. If you experience high pitched, squealing "feedback," adjust the volume, bass and treble. Sometimes a reduction in treble or an increase in bass, in addition to an adjustment in volume, will eliminate feedback.

### Making the introduction

If you must reposition the microphone when leaving the lectern, do so quickly and quietly, touching only its neck. To make sure it is on, look at the mike's switch and tap it lightly, or say, "testing, one, two, three, four." If you're still uncertain that it's working, ask someone in the audience if the volume is right. Never blow into the microphone; this is highly unprofessional and can damage it. Also, don't ask the audience, "Is this on? Can you hear me?" This is rude and makes you appear inexperienced.

If you're using a hand-held mike, shut it off when you're done and hand it to the speaker, or set it down lightly.

As you speak, keep a few things in mind. Never lean on the lectern or use the microphone to give you support. "You lose 99 percent of your power when you lean on anything," says Johnson. "Touch the lectern, but only lightly. It's there to support your mike and hold your notes, not you."

Johnson also suggests that you practice what she calls "eye sweeping." "Some experts say that you should look at one friendly face in the audience, but I think that's amiss," she says. "Doing so excludes communication with everyone else. It's important to sweep your eyes across the tops of heads. This makes it seem like you're looking into everyone's eyes." She also reminds speakers to avoid things like hair flipping, folding arms across the chest and sticking hands in pockets.

Although the job of introducing a speaker may seem insignificant, it's an important ritual. When you effectively introduce someone, it sets a positive tone for the speech. A good introduction makes you and your speaker appear well prepared and confident. ♣

**Julie Bawden Davis** is a full-time freelance writer residing in Orange, California, who specializes in human interest stories and personality profiles. Her three columns, "OC Careers," "OC Insights" and "OC Couples" regularly appear in Orange Coast Magazine.

## Proper Seating Arrangements

BY JULIE BAWDEN DAVIS

**W**hen planning a function, seating the guest of honor and other visitors in their proper places is a task that should not be taken lightly.

A variety of seating arrangements can be used, depending on the facilities at your disposal.

The **Schoolroom style**. Attendees are located at rectangular tables that face an even longer rectangular head table at which the speaker or guest of honor is seated. Most hotels have a supply of 6-by-18-foot tables used for this arrangement, but the supply is often limited and additional labor and tablecloths are necessary for set up.

**Conference style**. All attendees sit around one large table. Several variations of this style exist. Tables can be set up in a T-shape, with the guests of honor placed at the top of the T and other attendees seated along the sides. Another favorite is the hollow square, which places the guest of honor at the center of one of the sides of the square.

The **Banquet style** is a popular seating arrangement that spaces round tables in front of one rectangular head table. To allow everyone to see the speaker without having to turn around, leave a small segment of each table unused so that everyone is facing the head table.

The head table must be carefully planned. The guest of honor or guest with highest rank is to be seated to the right of the presiding officer, because this is the official place of honor. Other head table guests may be seated in two ways:

The *alternate method* places the guest of highest rank to the right of the presiding officer, the next highest to the left, with the rest alternating right and left. Those with no rank are seated at the end. The *straight line method*, on the other hand, places the guests along the table in graduation of rank. Those with the lowest rank are seated at the ends.

If a lectern is used, the presiding officer sits to the right of it. If none is provided and the number of head table guests are even, the presiding officer sits to the right of center. A guest speaker who is not a Toastmaster outranks international officers and is seated to the right of the presiding officer. Guest speakers who are members should be placed as close as possible to the officer in charge. If spouses are to be seated at the head table, they should sit next to their husbands or wives.

All individuals of the same rank should be seated at the head table, unless one of them is performing a special function for the event.

One interesting way to avoid jamming a head table with too many people, is to follow the procedure used in the White House. According to etiquette consultant Dorothea Johnson, they use a variation of the banquet style format featuring a horseshoe-shaped or rectangular table for the guests of honor. Other tables are placed throughout the room. At every table they seat a VIP.

At most gatherings it's a good idea to use place cards; they eliminate confusion. They can be placed only at the head table or throughout the room. Place cards should always be easy to read, but never typed. Handwriting or calligraphy adds personality and warmth.

Pretty pieces of paper or cards make good place cards. Fold them in half and prop them up like tents or lay them flat on top of each person's empty plate. Guests feel especially welcome and selected when they realize the time and effort you've spent in making attractive place cards.

# The Essentials of Platform Protocol



1. The Toastmaster introduces the speaker and leads the applause.

BY DAN MURRAY, ATM

**W**hat is it that makes one Toastmasters meeting seem a crashing bore and another lively and invigorating? Certainly content and preparation are important. But it's the smooth transition between the various agenda items and the general pace of the meeting that makes it seem interesting and professionally handled. The way to accomplish this is through platform protocol.

Webster's Dictionary defines protocol as "rules of etiquette and order in diplomatic or military ceremonies." For Toastmasters, platform protocol is the step-by-step process followed by the presiding Toastmaster when introducing and welcoming a speaker to the lectern. It also is used by speakers and moderators to return control of the meeting to the presiding Toastmaster.

(In the context of this article, the word "Toastmaster" also means chairman, moderator, master of ceremonies, or any other designation applied to a person in charge of the program.)

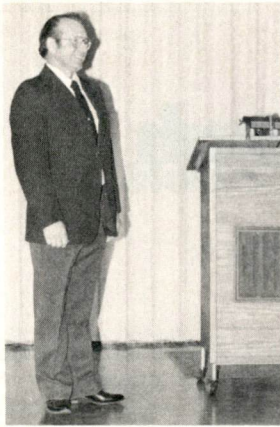
Why use platform protocol? It's a courtesy deserved by every speaker and audience member and it keeps the meeting lively and interesting — which keeps people coming back. Following are step-by-step illustrated instructions in the basics of platform protocol as it relates to the introduction of a platform speaker and the return of meeting control to the Toastmaster after a speaker's presentation.

Put them to use in your club meetings!

#### Additional comments:

- Following the introduction of a speaker, the Toastmaster/audience maintains the applause until the speaker reaches the lectern.
- The lectern should never be left unattended.
- Correct dress for platform performers is a coat and tie for men; a dress or suit for women. ♦

**Dan Murray, ATM**, is editor of District 33's newsletter, *West-Word*, from which this article is reprinted.



2. As the speaker approaches the lectern, the Toastmaster takes one pace backward at a 45 degree angle from the lectern and awaits the speaker's arrival.



5. Following the last words of his presentation, the speaker briefly scans the audience and turns to the Toastmaster, saying, "Mr. Toastmaster."



8. The Toastmaster expresses his appreciation to the speaker for his contribution to the program. If a recognition item (certificate, plaque, ribbon) is to be presented to the speaker, it is done at this time.



3. The speaker is greeted by the Toastmaster with a firm handshake and warm smile. The speaker turns and acknowledges the Toastmaster ("Mr. Chairman.")



6. The speaker takes one step backward at a 45 degree angle and, still facing the audience, waits at the lectern for the Toastmaster.



9. The speaker acknowledges the recognition.



4. The Toastmaster returns to his seat by the platform.



7. The Toastmaster returns to the lectern and greets the speaker with a firm handshake and a warm smile.



10. The speaker returns to his seat.

**Note:** The Toastmaster leaves the platform in the opposite direction from which the speaker arrived to avoid crisscrossing. If crisscrossing cannot be avoided, the Toastmaster walks behind the speaker.

# Communicating Through an Interpreter

BY MARCIA YUDKIN

Unless you are fluent in languages other than English, you will often need an interpreter when you do business overseas. During the year I spent working in China, I saw many Americans confuse interpreters by mumbling, using metaphors particular to American sports or TV shows, or extending courtesies to the interpreter, not the foreign boss.

Here's how to maximize the chances of getting your message across courteously and accurately when an interpreter is translating your words to someone else, and someone else's words to you:

**1. Remember who you are addressing — not the interpreter.** If you are speaking with Mr. Ayamoto, maintain eye contact with him, and address him directly. Say, "May I order three thousand of these now?" not "Ask him if I may order three thousand of these now."

**2. Slow down your normal pace of speaking** and pause after every two or three sentences. Otherwise the interpreter may miss, forget, condense or mangle parts of what you've said.

**3. Avoid slang, irony, sarcasm and jokes**, all of which don't travel well. Instead of translating a joke, one interpreter in China reportedly said, "The foreigner has just told a complicated joke. Please laugh here."

**4. Don't assume that someone speaking to you through an interpreter understands no English.** Ms. Vasquez may merely lack good pronunciation, confidence, a specialized vocabulary or fluency. Don't say anything to your colleagues or the interpreter that you wouldn't want the foreign counterpart to hear.

**5. When numbers form an important part of your message, write them down**

if you don't see the interpreter doing so. Even better, bring prepared handouts in both languages to foreign meetings or negotiations.

**6. Don't draw conclusions from your counterpart's body language or gestures.** A nod of the head in response to your question may mean, "Yes, I see what he is saying," not "Yes, I agree with what you have said." Ask for explicit verbal confirmation of what you believe was agreed upon.

**7. Since communication takes at least twice as long** when everything goes through an interpreter, save everyone's sanity and patience by saying only what absolutely must be said as directly and

clearly as possible.

By following these simple rules, not only will your foreign ventures be more fruitful, but both you and your company may escape the taint of the legendary "Ugly American" syndrome. ♦

*Marcia Yudkin, author of Freelance Writing for Magazines and Newspapers (Harper & Row, Publishers), was writer/editor at the Foreign Languages Press in Beijing, China.*

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## Business Etiquette from the Japanese

Whether in English or through an interpreter, what you say and how you say it are important to Japanese executives. Consultant Milton Pierce (New Management, Fall 1987) interviewed dozens of Japanese executives, compiling a list of their hard and fast rules for conducting business. Here are a few:

- If you can't act your best, don't expose yourself to others. If you aren't functioning at peak efficiency, postpone the meeting or get someone else to fill in.
- Never do business with someone you don't like. Never disagree or argue. Confrontation makes problems worse.
- Never say no — people will feel less offended. It is more polite to simply delay any action — they'll get

the hint.

- Don't be the first to try a new idea. Japanese never want to be out of step with colleagues nor wish to appear superior.

- Let the beauty of life come before business.

- Work with total devotion. Work weekends, evenings, even on vacation.

- Consider a mistake by a team member everyone's mistake.

- If a coworker makes a mistake, provide a way to correct it with a minimum of fuss.

- Always show respect for people.

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## Humorous Heckling

BY LORIN SEPTOFF, CTM

**L**ate last year, the Petaluma Toastmasters club initiated a new speaking activity. It began as a proposal for an experimental meeting format and has become a regular event at our first monthly meeting.

On that evening, one of our scheduled speakers volunteers to be the "Humorous Heckling Target Speaker." This means that during the speech, anyone in the audience may voice a witty comment when something the speaker says or does strikes them as funny. The speaker has the option of responding in a way that he or she feels will contribute most to the overall impact of the speech.

### How it started

In the past, speakers and comedians have said things that triggered humorous associations in my mind. My impulse at such times was to voice a retort that might elicit laughter, an expanded understanding of the topic for all present, or even a brief impromptu dialog with the speaker or comedian. However, out of respect for the speaker, I remained polite and quiet.

After being a Toastmaster for awhile, it occurred to me that the club could provide a safe environment for an "experiment." With impish delight, I wrote a proposal and submitted it to the members for their consideration.

With its approval, we have given ourselves permission to be outrageously hilarious whenever it suits our fancy!

### Objectives

The activity of humorous heckling sets the stage for a variety of beneficial possibilities. These include:

- providing opportunities for us as an audience to sharpen our wit in a playful atmosphere.
- providing opportunities for us as speakers to become more proficient in responding to and handling wisecracks or other unsolicited comments. These could be used to enhance the speech instead of detract from it.

- expanding the repertoire of our speaking skills by improving our ability to think clearly and quickly in less than ideal circumstances.
- elevating the level of enthusiasm for all by infusing the spicy punctuation of witty repartee and impromptu dialog between audience and speaker.

### Actual experiences

Our club president, Laura Roberts, boldly volunteered to be our first target. She survived our enthusiastic challenges and still relishes "heckling" other target speakers along with the rest of us.

Our second volunteer, Lorna Medway, deliberately chose to speak about the inherent superiority of the female gender, fully cognizant that she would be speaking to a predominantly male audience. You can imagine just how lively the heckling was that evening!

All of us who have volunteered to participate in this "ritual" have reaped tangible, beneficial speaking experiences from it. We were all challenged, in a prepared speaking situation, to assess the nature of the comments, determine the appropriateness of a response and deliver that response in a highly-charged and fast-paced interactive setting.

This activity can truly qualify as an exercise in "thinking on one's feet!"

### Evaluation and judging

Criteria for evaluating the quality of comments include whether or not they enliven the speech, and are direct, funny and timely. Members also should determine if the heckling added an interesting or useful perspective to the presentation, and to what extent the speaker was challenged to respond.

Voting is carried out in the same manner as voting for the best Table Topic speaker.

### Recognition

It is our practice to award certificates of recognition to those "brave individuals" who volunteer to be our humorous heckling target speakers.



## MOVING?

Please give us your old address as well as your new one by attaching an address label from a recent issue of THE TOASTMASTER in the space shown.

ATTACH YOUR ADDRESS LABEL OR PRINT YOUR OLD ADDRESS HERE:	(INCLUDE CLUB AND DISTRICT NUMBER)	
	Name (print) _____	District No. _____
Club No. _____	New Address _____ Apt. _____	State _____
City _____	Province/Country _____	Zip _____
<small>Would you like a list of clubs in your new area? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO                  Please circle your TM recognition: CTM ATM ATM-B ATM-S                  If you are a club, area, division, or district officer, indicate complete title:</small>		

Mail to: Toastmasters International  
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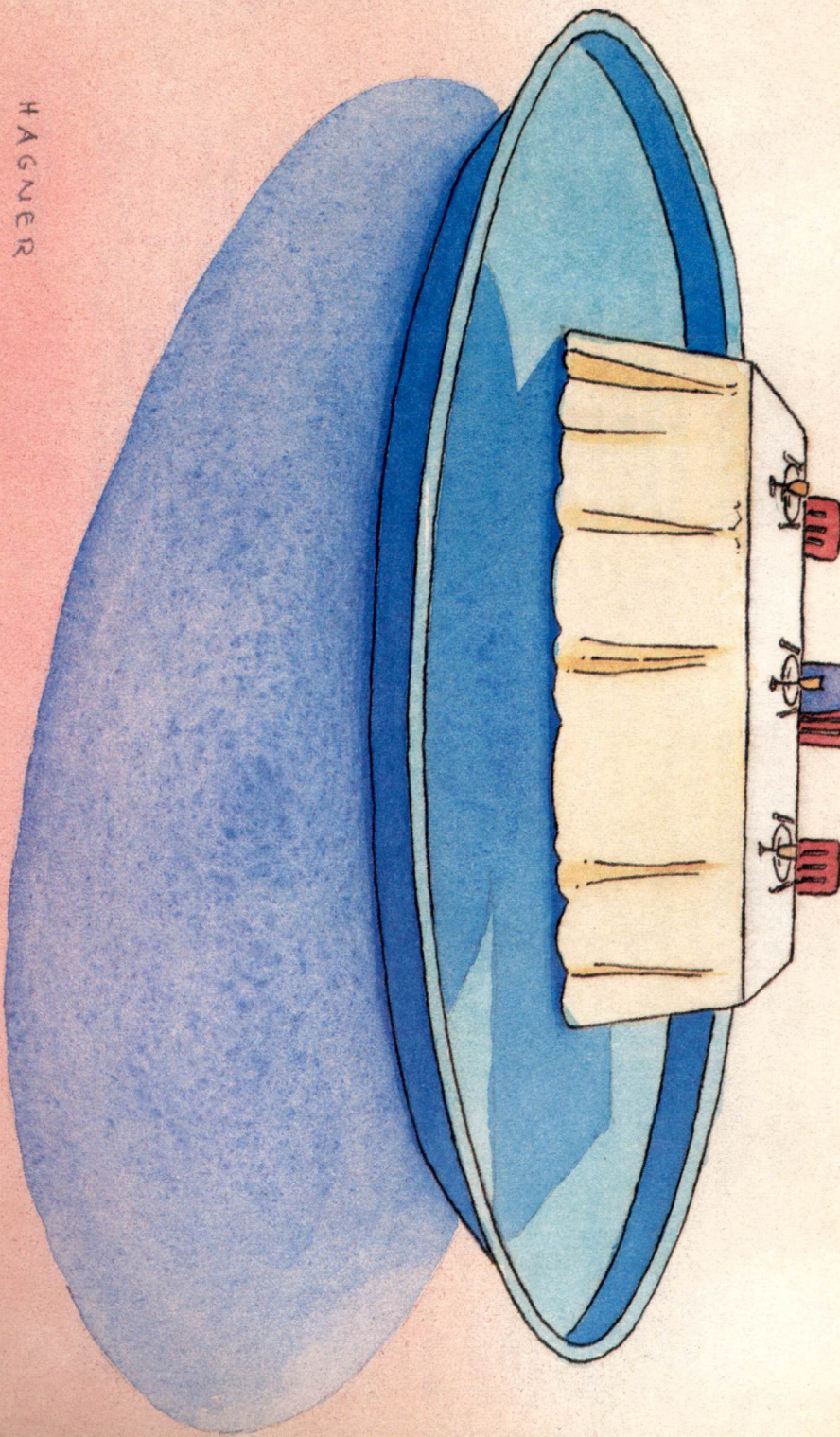
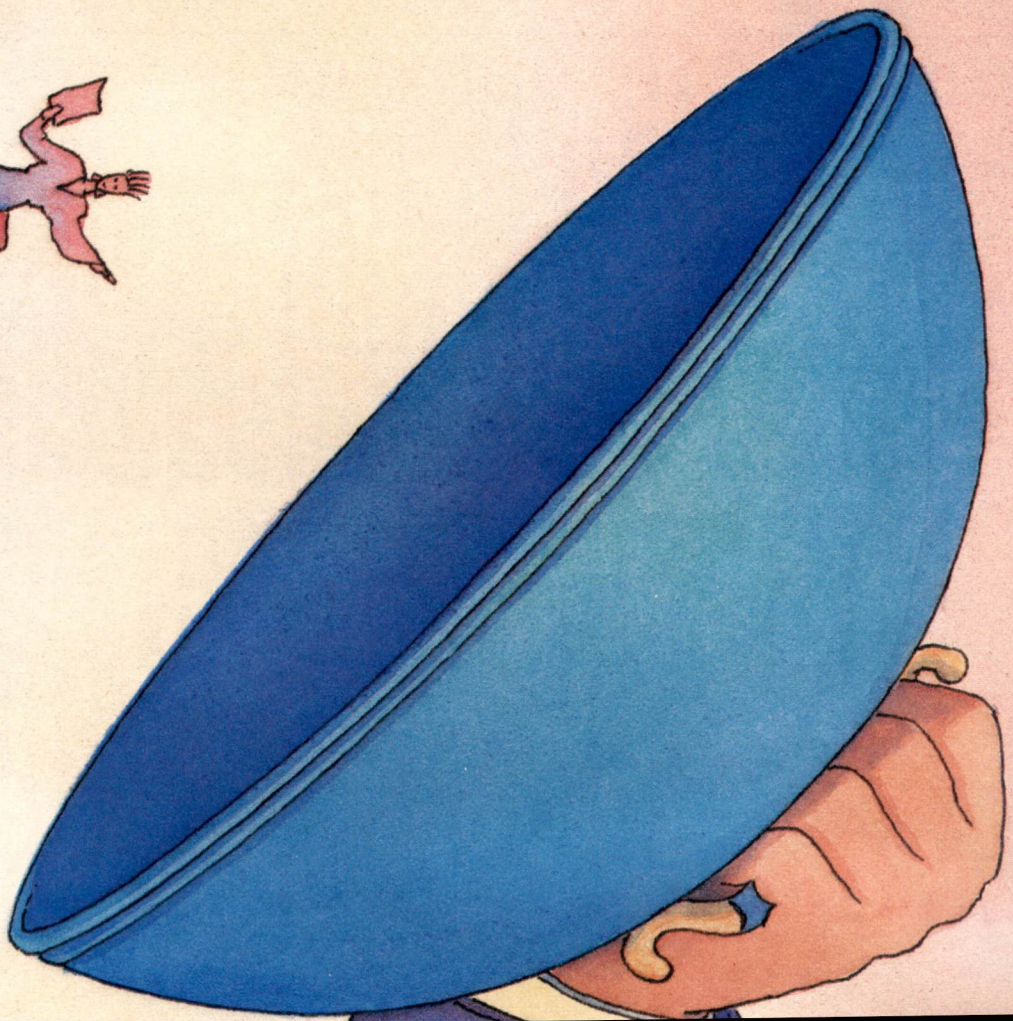
These are signed by their evaluators and by the person voted "Best Humorous Heckler" of the evening.

### The challenge: Now it's your turn

Spontaneous outbursts of humorous jousting are guaranteed to evoke high-spirited exchanges between the humorous hecklers and target speakers. So if you would like your club meetings to be a lot more fun and lively, this is how you do it!

**Note:** If your club decides to experiment with this idea, your willingness to share your successes, comments and suggestions for improvement will be much appreciated. Please send these to Innovative Educational Services, P.O. Box 750805, Petaluma, CA 94975. Thanks.

**Lorin Septoff, CTM**, is a member of Petaluma Toastmasters Club 732-57 in Northern California. He directs movement and awareness workshops and teaches an experiential course for integrating belief systems.



HAGNER



# Table Manners for Toastmasters

Your credibility and skill as a luncheon speaker are enhanced by your grace at the table.

BY MIKE CRONIN

**E**arnest rose from the banquet table with the napkin still tucked in his belt, soup spots on his tie and a chicken leg in his hand. He had come to plead for donations, but the banqueteers found him too pathetically comical to take his cause seriously. They snickered at the clumsy importance of Earnest, and their check-books remained unviolated.

Eventually most Toastmasters will have the privilege and pleasure to address a crowd that is still spooning in a billowy chocolate mousse. Whether you came to entertain or inform, they will be scooting chairs around to hear and see you. Many of them will already know that you are the guest speaker and will have scrutinized you several times during dinner. They likely will have already formed an opinion on your credibility and skill as a speaker based on your behavior at the table.

Thus, the success of your speech will hinge not only on the speech, but on your presentation of yourself during the entire evening. Etiquette never really went out of style although it did take a holiday, and now good manners are every bit as important as dressing for success.

Consequently, the following points, well practiced, will enhance your presentation and help lead you to success as a banquet and luncheon speaker.

### Take a seat

How and where to sit at crowded dinners can be confusing, even embarrassing. A good host will probably have reserved a seat for you, but you may still need to ask, "Where would you like me to sit?"

If your seat awaits you at the dais, be especially careful about walking. Many facilities carelessly place microphone wires along the top of the platform. Even professional speakers have tangled with cords seemingly alive with the spirit of Puck. If that's not bad enough, most daises are notoriously narrow. Television cameramen recently caught a politician miss his chair and plop to the floor. He was razzed nationwide for days.

Moving a chair in or out from the table can be awkward on carpet. In any event, move the chair in small increments rather than scooting up or back in one lunge by lifting from the edge of the seat with both hands. Remember that people admire grace.

Once you are in place, immediately put the napkin on your lap. This clears a space for plates—hurrying waitresses often spill plates because they must adjust their habitual plate-laying motion to miss your hands as you hasten to remove the napkin. It also removes a visual barrier from your face if the napkin is "standing."

Whenever you leave the chair, remember to return it to its "under the table" position and place the napkin on the chair. Laying it on the table may further soil it, and at the very least shows others how messy you've been. Furthermore, the waitress may take it, and you'll lose its use for later.

As you sit, an upright posture displays confidence and authority. Slouching and leaning denote dependence and sloppiness. Most people generally consider it acceptable to place the hands on the table once the plate has been removed, but not before. No elbows, please.

### Which glass is mine?

Perhaps the most often asked question is, "Is that your water or mine?" The answer is based on the convention of "right-handedness." One's rightful coffee cup and water glass are to the right of the plate. Wine glasses generally wait directly in front of the eater. That lonely little saucer on the left belongs to you, too, but more on it later.

Most people know to turn upright the coffee cup as a signal to have it filled; however, if you want decaffeinated coffee, you must be alert to prevent the buzzing waitress from slopping in the leaded stuff while you chit-chat. A sudden rush of caffeine to purified veins may cause you to act unduly nervously.

As for wine glasses, many facilities regretfully offer only one style of glass while serving both red and white wines. If you are lucky enough to have the two customary styles, use the wide mouthed, bell-shaped one for red wine, and the narrow mouthed, vase-shaped one for white wine. You never know who in the audience will know the difference.

Furthermore, underindulge.

**G**ood manners are every bit as important as dressing for success.

---

Whether drinking wine or water, the pundits of proper etiquette insist that you politely wipe your lips each and every time before you take a sip. Such wiping prevents your tablemates from losing their appetites because of bits of food clinging to the rim of your glass. Rather than dragging the napkin across your lips like a rasp, merely pat the lips gently.

If you wish to bring a drink to the lectern, bring the water. Often lecterns have a shelf where the glass can be safely protected from excited gestures.

### Too many spoons

A good banquet facility offers an array of silverware not unlike a surgeon's instrument tray—an implement for every purpose. Choosing the proper one is actually easy—start from the outside and move in. The smaller fork on the outside is for salads, the inner fork for the main course. When a tiny fork appears, so will bowls of shrimp, pickles or other petite foods; the tiny fork is for placing these foods onto your plate.

The soup spoon isn't always broader than the regular spoon, but it is always on the outside. And since soup generally appears before the main course, simply follow the rule of working outside in. If a solitary spoon lies at the top of your plate, use it for dessert. Many restaurants do not provide a butter knife, but when they do, you'll recognize it as the smaller one with a disproportionately broad blade.

When you lay down a knife, fork or spoon, place it on the edge of the plate. Make sure that your silverware rests securely; the clank of a dislodged knife attracts attention. When the dinner comes in courses, the waitress will tell you if you need to keep an implement; if so, make sure to put it on the butter plate, not the table.

A few clever Americans have learned to use Continental manners. That is, right-handed eaters keep the fork in the left hand and the knife in the right. This can cause awkwardness under crowded conditions, and some unsophisticated eaters will think it a throwback to hillbilly manner. Actually, these manners are graceful and efficient.

In Continental manners, laying the fork down with the tines up indicates to the waitress that you have finished your meal. In sophisticated facilities, you may find your plate prematurely whisked away.

### Please pass the butter

Items such as butter, rolls and condiments often must be shared, and therefore passed. To avoid confusion and to ensure that everyone gets offered the various foods, pass in one direction only. Rather than creating chaos, go with whichever direction was first started and let flexibility be the better part of valor.

Remember that lonely little plate? It longs for the company of rolls. Butter plates, as they are called, are monogamous—at least through dinner—which works out well because banquet managers

*Continued on page 30*

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- Clarence Thornton, 3682-36

*“A mind once stretched by a new idea can never go back to its original dimension.”*

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

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- Ray W. Wilson, 4275-11
- Keith N. Hood, 6269-11
- Beverly Belcher, 242-13
- Lois A. Gore, 242-13
- Jacqueline Paltis, 4021-13
- Kenneth L. Holden, 326-14
- Edward T. Catchings, 2523-14
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- Linda F. Whalon, 454-16
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- Jill B. Cody, 1082-18
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- Lawrence Knotts, 1286-25
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- Lois J. Tressler, 4926-26
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 Hameed Khan, 6303-36  
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 Al Buehler, 3029-42  
 E. A. Da Silva, 5740-42  
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 Travis Wyly, 1142-43  
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 Jean A. Woodworth, 1094-45  
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 Hollis M. Dowell, 1135-47  
 Jerry S. Gold, 2004-47  
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 Donna S. Traxler, 2821-47  
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 Christopher Collins, 6517-56  
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 Elizabeth Gressette, 2968-58  
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 Christine B. Jordon, 1397-66  
 Melvin C. Torian, Jr., 5746-66  
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 Valerie Lewis, 2163-69  
 Alison L. Armstrong, 2622-69  
 Damian Peter Jones, 3732-69  
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 Ronald Brownlea, 1121-70  
 Janet Mary Hollis, 2618-70  
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 Betty C. Hollott, 4875-70  
 John Cunningham, 3794-71  
 Mary Richards, 4592-72  
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 Lake Isabella, CA-Tues.,  
 noon, Bonanza Rest., 5500  
 Lake Isabella Blvd., (619)  
 379-2742  
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 Wed., noon, Henry Reuss  
 Fed. Plaza, 310 W. Wisconsin  
 Ave., (414) 291-1656  
**Link Oratory Society,**  
**7325-36**  
 Silver Spring, MD-2nd &  
 4th Thur., 4:45 p.m., CAE-  
 Link Simulation Sys. Div.,  
 11800 Tech Rd., (301)  
 622-8207  
**Booz Allen Hamilton,**  
**7401-36**  
 Bethesda, MD-1st & 3rd  
 Thur., noon, Booz Allen  
 Hamilton, 4330 E.W.  
 Highway, (301) 961-4248  
**Jaakko's Jaappers, 7320-37,**  
 Raleigh, NC-Tues., 5 p.m.,  
 Colony Corp. Ctr., 5510 Six

Forks Rd., (919) 847-6842  
**Empire, 7345-39**  
 Grass Valley, CA-Fri., noon,  
 Lotsa Pasta, 11670 Sutton  
 Way, (916) 273-9777  
**Native, 7316-42**  
 Saskatoon, Sask., Canada-  
 Tues., noon, Indian & Metis  
 Friendship Ctr., 168 Wall  
 St., (306) 244-0174  
**U2, 7318-42**  
 Calgary, Alberta, Canada-  
 Thur., 4 p.m., MacEwan  
 Hall—Univ. of Calgary, 2500  
 University Dr. N.W., (403)  
 237-5924  
**Estevan, 7337-42**  
 Estevan, Saskatchewan,  
 Canada-Wed., 5:30 p.m.,  
 Estevan City Hall, 1102 4th  
 St., (306) 634-9803  
**CU at Noon, 7341-42**  
 Edmonton, Alberta, Canada-  
 Wed., 11:45 a.m., Mez-  
 zanine Meet Rm., 10405  
 Jasper Ave.  
**Articulators, 7347-42**  
 Edmonton, Alberta, Canada-  
 Mon, noon, Alberta  
 Research Council, 250 Karl  
 Clark Rd.  
**Single Malters Umlimited,**  
**7359-42**  
 Calgary, Alberta, Canada-  
 (403) 237-5924  
**Wolf Creek, 7395-42**  
 Wolseley, Saskatchewan,  
 Canada-Thur., 7 p.m.,  
 Wolseley High School  
**Lonza Hystars, 7390-46**  
 Fair Lawn, NJ-(alt.) Mon. &  
 Tues., noon, Lonza, Inc.,  
 1217 Rte. 208, (201) 794-2400  
**Sarasota W.C.R., 7327-47**  
 Sarasota, FL-2nd & 4th  
 Wed., 7:30 a.m., Sarasota  
 Bd. of Realtors Bldg., 3590  
 S. Tuttle Ave., (813)  
 349-4411  
**Protoasters, 7362-47**  
 Tampa, FL-Wed., 8 a.m.,  
 Holland & Knight, 400 N.  
 Ashley Dr., (813) 223-7591  
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 Hollywood, FL-Wed., 7:15  
 a.m., Memorial Hospital,  
 3501 Johnson St., (805)  
 985-5901  
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 East Fishkill, NY-2nd & 4th  
 Wed., 6:30 p.m., ZiMario's  
 Rest., Route 52, (914)  
 896-4223  
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 Saratoga Springs, NY-2nd &  
 4th Mon., 6:30 p.m.,

Ramada Renaissance, 534  
 Broadway, (518) 885-7197  
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 Springfield, MA-2nd & 4th  
 Wed., 6 p.m., Springfield  
 YMCA, 275 Chestnut St.,  
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**Seriously Speaking, 7378-56**  
 Houston, TX-1st & 3rd Sat.,  
 noon, Lonnie C. Smith  
 Library, 3624 Scott., (713)  
 799-8841  
**Smashing, 7350-57**  
 San Ramon, CA-Thur.,  
 noon, ADP 2010 Crow Can-  
 yon Pl., (415) 866-1100 x2053  
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 Danville, CA-Tues., 8 a.m.,  
 Danville Hotel, 155 S. Hartz  
 Ave., (415) 933-7100  
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**7324-58**  
 Greenville, SC-2nd & 4th  
 Tues., noon, CRS Sirrinc,  
 Ind. Div., 2 Patewood Dr.,  
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 Canada-1st & 3rd Tues.,  
 noon, Bank of Montreal, 55  
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**7385-62**  
 Flint, MI-2nd & 4th Mon., 7  
 p.m., Unitarian Univ.  
 Church of Flint, (313)  
 239-0186  
**Towne Criers, 7326-63**  
 Johnson City, TN-2nd & 4th  
 Fri., noon, Municipal & Safety  
 Blvd., 601 E. Main St., (615)  
 282-1848  
**Sunrisers, 7338-63**  
 Morristown, TN-Fri., 7 a.m.,  
 M-H Library Comm. Rm.,  
 417 W. Main, (615) 581-4250  
**The FORKS, 7373-64**  
 Winnipeg, Manitoba,  
 Canada-Wed., 12:10 p.m.,  
 Aikins Macaulay & Thor-  
 valdson, (204) 949-1370  
**Tarcoola, 7377-69**  
 Brisbane, Qld., Australia-  
 Tues., 7 p.m., Sherwood  
 State School, Sherwood  
 Rd., (07) 379-5806  
**Narrabri, 7321-70**  
 Narrabri, N.S.W.,  
 Australia-2nd & 4th Tues.,  
 7:30 p.m., Narrabri High  
 School, Gibbons St., (067)  
 92-1300  
**A.G.S.M. Speakers, 7333-70**  
 Sydney, N.S.W., Australia-

Tues., 1 p.m., Australian Grad. School of Mgt., (02) 6618170  
**ARAWANG, 7334-70**  
 Weston, ACT, Australia-Thur., 7:30 p.m., Weston Creek Comm. Ctr., Coolleman Ct., (062) 887982  
**Bronte Broadcasters, 7335-70**  
 Bronte, NSW, Australia-1st & 3rd Tues., 7:30 p.m., Bronte RSL Club, MacPherson St., (02) 344-5880  
**Harris Omaha, 7340-24**  
 Bellevue, NE-Wed., 11:40 a.m., Harris Corp., 301 N. Wash. St., (402) 293-3346  
**CSWS Friday, 7348-25**  
 Dallas, TX-Fri., noon, Central & South West Services, Inc., 2121 San Jacinto St., 23rd Fl., (214) 754-1165  
**Cocktail, 7339-70**  
 Canberra, ACT, Australia-Wed., 5:30 p.m., Canberra College of Adv. Educ.,

Canberra, ACT, (062) 526217  
**Bandon, 7364-71**  
 Bandon, Co. Cork, Ireland-Wed., 8 p.m., Muster Arms Hotel, Brandon, Co. Cork, (023) 44110  
**Cook Strait, 7375-72**  
 Wellington, New Zealand-1st & 3rd Tues., 7:45 p.m., Baptist Church Hall, 284 The Parade Island Bay, (04) 837516  
**Platform Speakers, 7394-73**  
 Sale, Victoria, Australia-2nd & 4th Tues., 7:30 p.m., McMillan Rural Studies Ctr., Desailly St., (051) 495373

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 Bacchus, 3791-15  
 Free State, 3800-18  
 Wanderers, 2305-74

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Potomac Edison, 2613-18  
 New Bern, 2812-37  
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 Interstate North, 2823-14  
 Southside, 3894-14  
 Up and At-em, 1627-16  
 Grumman, 3188-46  
 Speakeasy, 2208-56  
 Essendon, 1568-73

### 10 Years

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 Virgin Islands, 4040-U  
 Good Neighbor, 4043-8  
 Classic City, 4048-14  
 West Side, 4047-18  
 River Side, 4038-35  
 AM Appraisal Articulators, 4044-35  
 Landmark, 4046-35

## Telephone Manners

*Continued from page 13*

### Self-Analysis

Another technique used by many business people receiving a second call is to tell the first caller, "I've got another call. Let me take it, and I'll get back to you later." That might be accepted by close friends or long-term business contacts. But even they may feel uncomfortable and "second best."

The best technique would be to have someone else ready to take your calls when you're already on the line. Or, again, have an automatic device ready to switch on.

However, if you're often faced with a call coming in while you're already on the phone, ask yourself these questions and try to answer them honestly:

"Am I talking on the phone too much, too often or too long?"

"Am I keeping my calls on the subject, without wandering into yesterday's ballgame, or this weekend's concert?"

"Am I getting too many calls? Do I need an assistant?"

"Am I making too many calls? Could I eliminate some without much loss? Could I combine calls or communicate via correspondence instead?"

**6** Don't give slippery, copout replies on the phone.

Because few offices record phone calls, and because many people take limited notes about their phone conversations and statements made on the phone, they may be considered less binding than written statements. That leads many people to give vague, marginal, questionable information on the phone. They seem to feel they can give approximate figures, for example, then confirm them later. Furthermore, people on a phone often pass the buck — the call — to others, taking less responsibility than they might if they were talking with the caller in person.

Staffers often hedge their answers on the phone with slippery statements — "As far as I know..." or "To the best of my knowledge..." or "The last I heard on that was..."

Such lines leave the speakers with plenty of options to cover their tracks later, when accurate or additional facts are pinpointed.

You'll face many situations in which you don't have the information right at hand during a call. Then your answer should be "I don't know, but I'll find out and call you back." Or, "That's not handled by our office, but I'll have the right person call you — or, if you prefer, I'll give you her phone number."

**7** Don't misuse an electronic telephone answering device. Increasingly, employees in one-person

offices to large corporations are letting machines answer their phones. But those machines often leave a negative impression on a caller.

When I called a business that had such a machine, I found that the staff listens and screens calls. I started to give the message, and suddenly a live voice came on the line. The business staff was using the machine to screen calls. This of course, is an insult to callers.

Recorded messages that put down the caller are another type of telephone misuse. One tape told me, "We're really very busy here right now, but if you'll leave your name and number, we'll call you between four and five this afternoon — that's the only time we handle calls."

The best message to put on your automatic answerer is brief, simple and direct.

Breaking bad habits — old habits — can be difficult. But here's a technique for avoiding bad habits that works for many people: Post a list of these phone practices in your own handwriting next to your phone. If you take this effort, you are more likely to heed the guidelines. Try it and see — or rather, try it and listen! ♣

**Leon Fletcher** is Emeritus Professor of Speech, Monterey Peninsula College, in California. His book, *How to Speak Like a Pro*, is available from Toastmasters International.

## Table Manners

Continued from page 26

have thoughtfully provided only one roll per person. When eating the roll or piece of bread, break off a small piece at a time.

When you take butter from the communal bowl, put the butter directly onto the plate. Pass the bowl to your neighbor, then butter the roll. (I know I sound like somebody's mother, but everyone watches the guest speaker.)

The same advice goes for all condiments from communal bowls that must be spooned or knifed out. Pass, then spread. People will love you for it.

## Excuse me

Few people can finish a meal without burping or committing some other indelicate act. Most etiquette books offer the same advice: don't draw attention to the indiscretion. Apologize only loud enough for those who clearly heard the indiscretion. Involuntary acts such as burping are natural and commonplace; treat them as such and they won't embarrass you.

Dealing with spills unfortunately requires a bit more attention, if only to keep yourself and neighboring diners from a drenching. Employ your napkin readily, but quietly. Your dignity is at stake. More importantly, any victim of your spill—especially the lady in silk—holds your reputation in her lap.

If you must remove gristle or bone from your mouth, do it discreetly with the napkin. The unwanted piece may be placed on the plate after pulling the napkin back under the table. Only comment on the matter if spoken to.

**R**emember that people admire grace.

Finally, a fable: Once upon a time, a terribly bashful young man was inextricably seated with seven young women. He diverted his uncomfortableness by ravishing the rubber chicken, as did his tablemates. The ladies, however, finished in ample time to see him also eat that funny green thing (parsley). He didn't like it, but they roared with glee.

Many people actually find that funny green thing and other garnish to be a delightful finish to a fine meal; one which refreshes the breath. If you eat the garnish, do so with a confident flourish. Sneaking it in betrays composure and confidence.

## The total presentation

Using good table manners with fluency requires practice. True grace and ease comes from doing the right thing continually until it becomes second nature. Important people at banquets always appreciate good manners and will judge you accordingly. They will associate how gracefully and easily you behave at the table with the credibility and value of your speech.

When you have behaved with poise at dinner, you can rise to the lectern with the confidence of a Churchill. Before the microphone, where all the world's a stage, you can bring your total presentation to a climax in the best Toastmasters tradition, and the evening will be fun instead of funny.

**Mike Cronin** is a member of Last Chance Club 5063-17 in Helena, Montana. A business development specialist for the Small Business Administration, he also teaches part time at Carroll College.

## Modern Man

Continued from page 7

and reassuring than terra firma?

Only it just ain't so. Tests show that people react very negatively to brown. Charles Revson, the infamous CEO of Revlon, actually kicked a young executive out of his office for wearing a brown suit, shouting after him: "You know what brown's the color of, don't you?"

Why don't people like brown? Possibly because it's made up of orange and black, colors that symbolize danger and death, respectively. So while you're up there giving that presentation, thinking your new brown suit tells people, "Hey, I'm a solid, down-to-earth, visually harmonious guy," people just may be getting the message (subliminally of course), "He's into damage and destruction."

Or take red. Your color consultant says red would suit you for leisure wear, so

There's a new game in town. It's got to do with you and the colors you're into.

you buy a red crew neck. You fling it casually over your shoulder and pick up that woman you've been dying to date. Only when you ring the door bell, she answers and immediately crouches into a Kung Fu attack position. Why? No, it wasn't something you said. It was the sweater. In the subliminal language of color, red signifies sex and anger.

Red may, however, have some business applications. Constant exposure to the color increases blood pressure, heart rate and respiration. So if you have a business rival with a heart condition, that fire engine red tie your wife gave

you for Christmas might be just the answer.

Even gray isn't safe. You think you're saying, "reliable conformist." But gray symbolizes fog, mist and smoke—not good images for the Young Turk on his way up. Watch out for purple, too. It means royalty, and nobody likes a snob. Green means leprechauns. And yellow, of course, is the international symbol for cowardice.

Does this mean you shouldn't seek out a color consultant? Heck, no. If dogs can have psychiatrists, you can have a color consultant. But just remember: once that expert gives you your colors, he's gone. He's not going to be there to explain things when the whole room jumps up and pins you down until the cops come.

**John Cadley** is an advertising copy writer in Syracuse, New York. He has written a short play and many humorous magazine articles.

## Too Many Letters Advocating A Cause

The content of "Letters" seems to have gone from matters concerned with public speaking to "you have to run your club my way" letters.

As a member of two clubs, I have noticed the following:

November 1988: "'Off color' or offensive jokes lack dignity and respect for our organization's ideals and are a disgrace to Toastmasters International and its founder." One club to which I belong has a jokemaster and some members tell "off color" jokes while some do not. The club members take it in stride.

January 1989: A full column devoted to smoking. One of my clubs permits smoking, the other allows it only on breaks. I have noticed that many foreign airlines permit smoking without restriction. You have to make your choice. Let's not try to get everyone to abide by your demands.

February 1989: "... Everyone knows that there is a God of this universe and that He is directly involved in the affairs of ... Toastmasters." One of my clubs has an invocation, the other a thought for the day.

I would certainly like to see more letters about speaking and less space devoted to people with a cause.

Paul J. Sanden  
Budding Professionals Club 5042-3  
Phoenix, Arizona

## Podium vs. Lectern Crusade

I was enjoying Neal Johnson's article "Program Your Meetings" in the April issue when to my shock and horror the word "podium" was mistakenly used for "lectern" in the "Sample Toastmasters Club Meeting Schedule" shown on page 7. Not once, twice or three times did Toastmaster Johnson thrust the word "podium" at me, but four times!

According to my *New Webster's Dictionary*, the words "podium" and "lectern" are thus defined:

"Podium: A small raised platform or stand used by conductors and speakers; a dais."

"Lectern: A stand upon which a speaker or lecturer may rest notes or books."

Using the word "podium" when meaning "lectern" is a common

mistake. For Toastmaster Johnson and others, I offer this simple way to determine which word is correct:

One *steps onto* a podium to speak *from* a lectern.

Jim Smith, DTM  
District 40 Governor  
Huber Heights, Ohio

## More on Invocations

You have recently published several letters regarding references to deity in invocations (Feb. 89). I submit that the choice belongs to the person giving the invocation. It is unreasonable for anyone, including an atheist or agnostic, to feel unwelcome because someone expresses different religious beliefs. Giving invocations at Toastmasters meetings has been a valuable experience for me, and is a tradition that we should continue to offer to members who wish to participate.

Finally, Jay Johnson should know that Toastmasters International and most (I hope all) Toastmasters clubs welcome everyone. Every Toastmasters club I have attended in the last 20 years has certainly welcomed atheists and agnostics. Any invocation they give is "acceptable" to me and I insist that they give the same respect to others' beliefs, including my own.

Paul S. Masser  
Clubs 4177 and 1675-33  
Lancaster, California

## Love "Toastmasters"

I love the name "Toastmasters!" I'm disgusted with women who insist they aren't being considered with words like "mankind." In comment about Dorothy Mack's letter to the editor in January that was signed by 10 additional club members, I believe the giving of toasts can be done without alcoholic beverages and be just as effective if not more so.

Furthermore, the word "Toastmaster" does not connote "maleness" to me, and "competence" or "mastery" is what Toastmasters is all about. The name Public Speakers International, as suggested by Ms. Mack, sounds like a doublespeak to me, as written about in the April Issue.

Let's stick with Toastmasters International—a great name!

Linda Buckley, ATM  
Gallatin Valley Toastmasters Club 4880-17  
Bozeman, Montana



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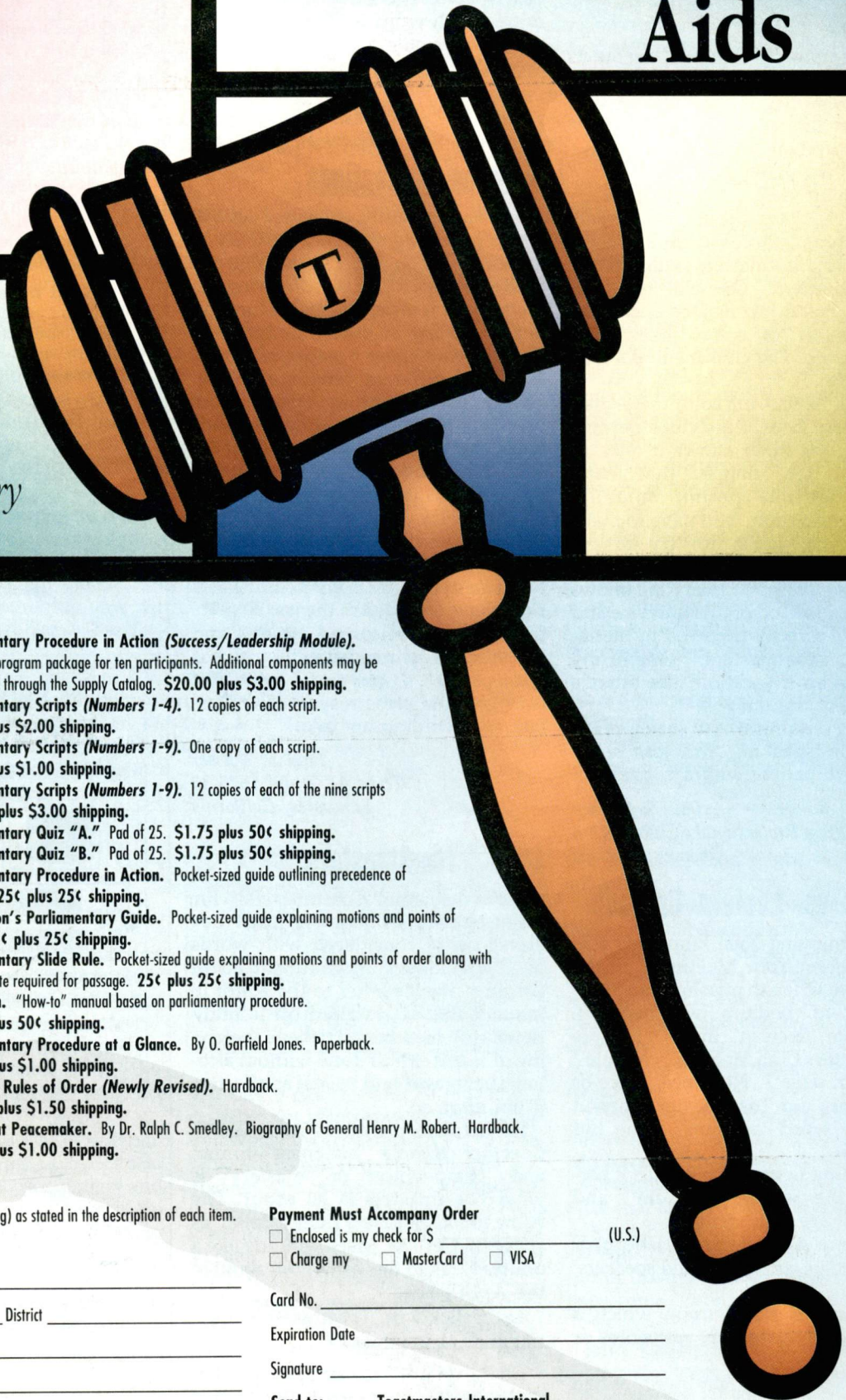
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