

the Toastmaster®

february 1996

Oratory:

How it all Began

Learning from the past prepares us
for the future.

RECIPE FOR AN INSTANT SPEECH
Know the key ingredients.

GIVE YOURSELF A CHALLENGE:
Be a high school career-day speaker.



Be... All That You Can Be!



"Education is a growth and a slow growth at that, and all efforts to discover a quick and easy road to knowledge have failed. A full-grown oak tree, fit to weather the storm and breast the gale, cannot be produced in two or three years. Neither can a mind be matured and developed by any quick process. Nature must have time for the operation of her laws."

RALPH C. SMEDLEY

Our organization's founder wrote this in his college newspaper shortly before graduating from Illinois Wesleyan University in 1903. He was concerned about attempts to shorten the college curriculum. In his book, *The Story of Toastmasters*, he recalled expressing similar concern regarding issuing certificates to members who had completed the basic speech manual, because this might give them the impression that they had "graduated."

How do you feel about your CTM (ATM or DTM)

award? Is it an end in itself, or do you view it as an exciting beginning of the next phase of your self-improvement? Today we recognize awards as a positive motivator to reach for even greater heights. Recognition, when handled with discretion and in a meaningful manner, can be a powerful motivator.

A question I am often asked is whether a Toastmaster should ever be "failed" by the evaluator after delivering a manual speech. From time to time I have evaluated so-called "manual speeches" that were so far removed from the goals and purpose of the assignment that the speaker clearly did not meet the manual objectives. In such circumstances I am willing to say, "I would recommend that you repeat the assignment, and when you do you may wish to address the following..." The onus is then on the member, and that person's commitment to excellence. I am reminded of the admonition by Polonius in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*:

"This above all: to thine own self be true, and it must follow, as the night the day, thou can'st not then be false to any man."

Self improvement and personal motivation must come from within. In this age of uncertainty and change in the workplace, learning new skills is a prerequisite for staying continually competitive, both individually and as a nation. We need to take time to "sharpen our saw." Toastmasters provides not only the "communicators' edge" but a forum for lifelong learning.

Business consultant Charles Handy, in his book, *The Age of Unreason*, uses the term "work portfolio" to describe how five different forms of work fit together to form balance in our lives. "Study work" is what we do in Toastmasters to sharpen our skills. "Gift work" is our public service. Dr. Smedley strongly believed that we should use our Toastmasters skills in service to build a better world. Yes, lifelong learning and a commitment to excellence is our chance to "be... all that we can be!"

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Ian Edwards, DTM
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LETS MEET VIA VIDEO

I would like to get in contact with Toastmasters clubs that would wish to exchange VHS video tapes of their club meetings with us. It would give our club an insight into the variety of club meeting styles in different parts of the world. Any respondents may contact me at:

93 Green Acres Drive
Burlington, VT 05401-0425
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Donald Supancic
Greater Burlington Club 4899-45
Burlington, Vermont

DOING IT BY THE BOOK

Although our corporate club is only two years old, we have accomplished some very positive objectives. We have kept our membership at 20+ in a "closed" club within a company of only 240 employees. While our company, Delta Faucet, supports the club activities, membership is our responsibility. We have to find ways to keep current members and attract new ones.

We have done this by presenting the Moments of Truth program, conducting member surveys, and scheduling exciting meeting programs and regular membership campaigns. We also heavily promote our theme, "Toastmasters is SMART business" (S - successful, M - managers, A - appreciate, R - recognize, T - Toastmasters).

One of our most successful meetings in terms of promoting our club was "Invite Your Boss" day. Bosses and supervisors attended with

their peers, and when asked at the end of the meeting to make any comments, they enthusiastically supported the program.

Several of our members attribute their promotions to their Toastmasters training and all members have improved their presentation and communication skills.

I am proud of our club because of the commitment and creativity enjoyed by our officers and club members. The best news is that this can be done by all clubs - we don't spend time re-inventing the wheel. Success lies in using materials produced by Toastmasters International. We read our manuals and use the programs available from Toastmasters headquarters - in other words, we "go by the book." It works!

Karen J. Addington
Polished Brush Club 9666-11
Indianapolis, Indiana

LOOKING FOR WRITERS FROM OUTSIDE THE U.S.

I would like to support Brian Hodgkinson in his comments regarding the American content of your magazine (*Letters*, November, 1995). Like him, I have been frustrated by excellent articles that ignore the presence of the organization's overseas members.

For example, the October issue contained a very useful article, "Get the Facts" by Martha Henderson, CTM, that could have been a lot more useful if the references quoted had been more universal. Even if Martha was

unaware of overseas reference material, a little editorial input could have put this right.

I found it ironic that the same issue that printed Mr. Hodgkinson's letter also featured the article "The Final Touch" by Amy Walton, which mentioned only American quotations and reference books. I cannot relate at all to American Congresswoman Barbara Jordan, and I am getting a little tired of continually being quoted the words of Martin Luther King Jr. and Abraham Lincoln. I do not doubt that they were excellent orators, but other examples must exist.

Perhaps this is an opportunity to urge clubs and members outside the United States to contribute articles to the magazine. I am sure their contributions will be gladly received. Please, help make Toastmasters International a truly international organization and recognize that a significant portion of the members live outside the USA.

Jennifer Musgrave
Explorers C&L Club 9613-73
Perth, Western Australia, Australia

CURRENT MEMBERSHIP FIGURES WANTED

During my 14 years with Toastmasters, I have enjoyed reading the magazine and attending all the activities in Toastmasters.

At every meeting I attend - at least two a week - I hear the Toastmaster giving different figures for the number of club and members in the world. These figures

range from 1,000 to 5,000 clubs and from 1 million to 5 million members.

I am suggesting to have the exact figures updated monthly, at least to the previous month, printed in every issue of *The Toastmaster* so that we are properly and accurately informed. It would be like watching the stock market to see our "company" grow.

Mario Garrolini, ATM
Executives of Makati Club 4086-75
Makati, Manila, Philippines

Editor's Note: *Sorry to disappoint you, but our membership has not quite hit the millions yet. And while the figures vary daily, they have remained pretty much the same for the past four years: approximately 170,000 members in 8,000 clubs worldwide.*

WELCOME TO SOUTH AFRICA'S COASTAL CONFERENCE

District 74 (Southern Africa) will be hosting the first of its 1996 conferences at Amanzimtoti, near Durban, on the KwaZulu-Natal south coast, on May 23-26 1996. If any fellow Toastmasters are likely to be in the area at the time, we will be delighted to welcome you to our Coastal Conference.

Anyone requiring information regarding accommodations may contact Gail-Anne Nothard, CTM, for details. Direct all other inquiries to me at this address:

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If you aren't excited about your own progress, selling others on your club becomes difficult.

by Jill Rowlands, DTM

Talking Toastmasters

■ WHEN YOU FIRST JOINED YOUR CLUB, do you remember stalling when someone asked you, "What is Toastmasters?" Could you adequately describe this worldwide organization in a simple statement? Did you even know about the many different aspects that Toastmasters has to offer? What do you say now when someone asks you to talk about Toastmasters?

Personal experience is a critical point when "Talking Toastmasters" to co-workers, friends and other associates. However, other points can enhance the conversation, such as Toastmasters' worldwide scope, the types of communication training and recognition offered, the opportunities for leadership training, and what happens in a typical meeting. Moreover, you can do all this in two ways: You can share your own experiences, or you can distribute fliers and brochures about the organization.

The obvious benefit of using preprinted material is that you don't have to struggle with the words, if talking to prospective members makes you uncomfortable. The brochures available from TI Headquarters are inexpensive; some are even free of charge. They are small enough to keep on hand and they make a nice starting point for a discussion. Another way to help you "Talk Toastmasters" without a lot of talking is to ask for the prospect's mailing address or phone number and make sure his or her questions are answered by someone who has more information. However, you must follow up to make sure that person's questions were, in fact, answered.

One way to actually "Talk Toastmasters" is to make a general statement about the organization's international status and goal

to improve communications worldwide. Then, you can ask the prospective members what aspects of the Toastmasters program would most interest them (i.e. public speaking, interpersonal communications, Table Topics or leadership training). If the person is unsure, start from the top and work down the list, briefly explaining all the benefits and aspects of the Toastmasters program.

When a particular area strikes a chord with your prospect, you will see that person light up and ask lots of questions. This may be the time when she takes over the conversation and opens up. Remember, communication involves listening, as well as speaking and thinking. So you might have to cut your planned pitch about the rest of the wonders of Toastmasters to let her discuss a personal "failure to communicate" experience. Usually, if she wants more information, she will ask more questions.

Effectively "Talking Toastmasters" requires some practice with Table Topics. Why? If your immediate response to "What is Toastmasters?" appears long-winded, incoherent or inadequate, your club may lose a potential new member. If you don't show confidence and enthusiasm about what you have learned in your own short time as a member, how do you expect to get anyone else interested in the program?

You don't have to be an eloquent orator to "Talk Toastmasters." But you do need to be certain of how you have already benefited by being a member. One way to practice your "Toastmasters pitch" is to have the Topic Master ask general questions about the Toastmasters program during Table Topics. Seeing how different members respond to the same

type of question helps everyone prepare for their next opportunity at "Talking Toastmasters."

In contrast, it's hard to convince someone else to do what you are not doing. If you don't practice your speeches prior to presenting them, then you lose the maximum benefits for which you paid dues. Moreover, if you are the mentor to a new member or sponsor to a prospect, what example are you setting?

"Talking Toastmasters" is not difficult. Each member has more experience in Toastmasters than a prospective member – just talk about what you do know and offer to get the information that you don't know to your prospect later. This follow-up always makes a positive impression. It is OK not to know everything about Toastmasters, it is not OK to fail to follow-up and lose that prospective member. Don't let you, a Toastmaster, be speechless. Can you "Talk Toastmasters?" **T**

Jill Rowlands, DTM, is a member of Metro Club 6045-56 in Houston, Texas.



More Power For You

Strategies for projecting
personal power.

by Susan B. Wilson

BE RIGHT MOST OF THE TIME

That thought tends to raise eyebrows! But it can happen. Using effective problem solving, decision making and planning skills raises the probability that you will be right. And that impresses people! Presenting an informed perspective while also respecting others' views builds your personal power and raises the probability that you are heard.

When managers at a power plant were asked, "What employee do you most admire and why?", many named a female supervisor whose position was two levels below theirs in the corporate hierarchy. But she was mentioned because the managers appreciated her attention to setting effective goals, identifying problem areas and developing strategies for resolving them. The manager said, "People just listen to this woman because she comes well prepared and seems to know what she is talking about."

ALLOW YOURSELF TO ADMIT MISTAKES

To what extent are you conditioned against being vulnerable and admitting your mistakes? How easily can you admit a mistake, right a wrong, or ask forgiveness? Interestingly, rather than being perceived as weak, those who consistently use honest and respectful communication with both the positive and the negative establish greater trust with others. An executive who

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Remember the quote, "A picture is worth a thousand words"? I'd like to add, "And you are the picture." The impression you make on others is a total package. Your language, your behavior, your perspective – all of these impact the image you project to others. Personal power is often an unwrapped gift. Most of us can benefit from developing a more powerful presence on and off the platform. Here's how:

IDENTIFY YOUR PASSION

What is your passion in life? Take a moment to let that question settle. Consider how you translate your passion into specific, measurable goals. Then ask yourself, "What is it about my goals that makes me yearn to achieve them?" Your answer should fuel your motivation to achieve.

Consider the example of performer Ben Vereen, who had a life threatening accident in 1992 and was expected to die. During a visit with singer and actress Liza Minnelli, he spoke of his shame about his condition. She reminded him that his life was a miracle. Then, impromptu, they began singing, "Accentuate the positive, eliminate the negative." That thought became Vereen's inspiration for setting high goals for his recovery. By 1993, Vereen had recovered enough to star on Broadway in the play "Jelly's Last Jam."

hired me to gauge his effectiveness with his employees accepted the results with a desire to improve. Although employees viewed him as having many positive qualities, his ability to listen was not one of them. He did not ignore their concern. He not only developed a plan for improved listening, he also apologized to employees for his poor listening habits as the opportunities arose. His effort to apologize and right the wrong improved employee morale.

DEVELOP TRUSTWORTHINESS BY IDENTIFYING A WIN-WIN SITUATION

Why is it that, despite our dislike of "loosing," we so often establish positions that set us up for either a win or a loss? Why not concentrate on a win-win perspective? Seeking a win-win perspective establishes that you are as concerned about the other person's needs as your own.

Developing a reputation for fair and honest relationships positions you as a trustworthy person. And the more trustworthy you are perceived to be, the less defensiveness you will see in others. Communication will be clear and your listeners will trust what you are saying rather than wonder about your "real" agenda.

Not too long ago, I was talking with Barbara Pagano, a true professional in the world of speaking. She had been on my "I'd like to get to know list" for quite a while before we finally had our first telephone conversation. When calling, Barbara made clear her purpose: she sought ideas and information for one of her projects. Then she made a point of asking, "What can I do for you?" and took as much time responding to my need as what she had asked of me. Barbara was as concerned for someone else's need as her own. And it conveyed a powerful message about her ability to position a mutually beneficial interaction.

USE ASSERTIVENESS SKILLFULLY

Books, articles and speeches promoting assertive behavior abound. But there seems

to be no uniform definition of assertiveness and how it compares to aggressiveness. In fact, a recent study by a major university suggests that aggressiveness is a skill that new graduates need to take into the workplace. I disagree: Both assertive and aggressive behavior are, in part, defined as open, honest behavior. But the definition of assertive goes further. It is defined as open, honest behavior that is *mutually respectful*. Showing mutually respectful behavior is the first point. And a key way to respect others is to be a good listener. Rarely are you viewed as aggressive (often a negative!) when you are respectful and listen carefully to others.

DEMONSTRATE PASSION FOR YOUR POSITION

Sometimes the facts and data are not enough; people want to feel your passion for your position. Sincere enthusiasm is easily recognizable and quickly mobilizes attention. All other things being equal, the one who exudes enthusiasm is more persuasive. For those of you who attended the Toastmasters' International Convention last August, take a moment to reflect back on luncheon speaker Mary Ellen Drummond. Yes, she was powerful because of her content knowledge. But she captured the audience because of her obvious joy and enthusiasm for her subject matter. People lined up to buy her products and to speak with her. This was personal power and influence at work!

Many of us invest hours and hours in perfecting the speaking craft. Connecting with our audience is an ever-present challenge. The congruency of our behavior, regardless of the situation, strengthens our relationships and helps us focus our time and energy on desired results. And then we get a measure of our true strength. **T**

Susan B. Wilson owns Executive Strategies, a management consulting firm in Newton, Iowa. This article is based on her recent book, *Your Intelligent Heart: Notes to Women Who Work*, published by AMACOM.

"The more trustworthy you are perceived to be, the less defensiveness you will see in others."

Oratory:

How it all Began

Learning from the past
prepares us for the future.

"The man who can
think but does not
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PERICLES

“History is bunk!” That’s what Henry Ford said. But late in his career he changed his mind and had these words placed over the entrance to the Ford Museum in Dearborn, Michigan: “The farther you look back, the farther you can see ahead.”

It may not come as a surprise to you that the art of public speaking wasn’t invented by Dr. Ralph C. Smedley, but in fact dates back to ancient Greece and Rome. By looking back to see how it began, we’ll discover how this classic discipline has evolved into modern public speaking. The study and use of rhetoric has been essential in the fields of literature, history and philosophy for ages. It’s only recently that the word “rhetoric” has taken on negative associations, thanks to less-than-articulate politicians and overblown media circuses. As Toastmasters we ought to treasure the history of rhetoric and aim to restore it to its former glory.

CORAX: FOUNDER OF ORATORY

Circumstance created the need for a systematic study of the subject in 500 B.C. Citizens of the Greek city of Syracuse had overthrown a dictator and replaced the old government with a democracy. Lawsuits were tying up the courts as citizens tried to reclaim property that had been seized by the deposed despot.

The disenfranchised citizens needed help because they had no documented evidence to prove their claims. The Greek teacher **Corax**, living in Syracuse, understood the necessity of persuading the courts with appropriate, reasonable and probable statements. So in writing the first known handbook on rhetoric, Corax earned his place in history as the founder of oratory.

Corax’s treatise contained his formula for a courtroom speech consisting of five parts:

- ♣ **PROEM** (*Introduction*) – Impress the jury with your goodwill.
- ♣ **NARRATION** – Set forth the facts of the case.
- ♣ **ARGUMENTS** – Give reasons for the claim.
- ♣ **REFUTATION** – Counteract possible arguments against your case.
- ♣ **PERORATION** (*Conclusion*) – Summarize.

His method of teaching required his pupils or clients to memorize standard parts of speeches suitable for various types of legal processes. In effect, he was saying, “Convince the jury by choosing or combining these ready-made sentences I have already worked out for you.”

The study of rhetoric spread from Syracuse to Athens where the democratic government spurred a general interest in the new art of speechmaking. **Tisias**, a former pupil of Corax, went to Athens to teach rhetoric. He also wrote a treatise on the subject. Like Corax, Tisias believed the purpose of rhetoric was to persuade with plausible arguments, and he promoted the methods of his former master.

No study of the period can be made without mention of **Pericles**, the great Athenian statesman. A man of foresight and vision, Pericles did much to expand on the cultural and political glory of Athens. His fiery eloquence before the Assembly won him particular acclaim, yet he also could encapsulate the loss of the Peloponnesian War dead with one gentle phrase: “The city has lost its youth; it is as though the year has lost its spring.”

GORGIAS: AN EXPERT ON RHETORICAL DISPLAY

Gorgias, a pupil of Tisias, continued the development and teaching of oratory. But as a Sophist, he took a broader view of education. (The Sophists were a group of professional teachers who traveled from city to city to teach a variety of subjects, including grammar, mythology, religion and rhetoric.) When Gorgias went to Athens as an ambassador from Leontini, his native city, he dazzled not only the common people but also the highly educated class. Having observed that people react more readily to some forms of expression than to others, he initiated the style of oratory called “epideictic” – the Greek name for speeches designed to impress with rhetorical display.

As part of his exuberant style, Gorgias substituted rare expressions for ordinary forms of speech. He also revitalized prose with poetic effects such as punning, wordplay, rhyme and rhythm. Among his favorite devices were *parallelism* – arranging important ideas in similar grammatical structure, and *antithesis* – the juxtaposition of contrasting ideas in balanced or parallel words or phrases. As Gorgias well understood, these devices gave polish to rhetoric while directing the audience’s attention to the speaker’s main points.

Gorgias thus became the first to consciously develop a speech style. Although his prose style seemed excessive, it nevertheless served as a model for future generations.

ISOCRATES: A MASTER TEACHER

Isocrates, who was taught by Gorgias, refined the epideictic style of oratory. By reducing the extravagances of

Gorgias' style, Isocrates gave oratorical prose its own rhythms instead of adapting cadences from poetry. As a master of style and composition in both theory and practice, he occupies a prominent place in the development of Greek prose.

Born in 436 B.C., Isocrates was active in the field of rhetoric until his death at age 97. For several years he composed speeches for the courts. Later he opened a school in Athens, and within 15 years his classes were comprised not only of Athenians, but students from all areas of Greece and several other countries.

As a teacher of rhetoric, Isocrates won particular fame. Listen to his views on education:

"The trainer of the body cannot always make a man an athlete, nor can the trainer of the mind make everybody an orator. There are three essentials requisite for success – natural aptitude, proper teaching and long practice, and moreover there must be a will on the part of both teacher and pupil to persevere. Some people expect a marked improvement after a few days of study and demand a complete training in a year. This is ridiculous; no class of education could produce such results."

ARISTOTLE: TUTOR OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT

Aristotle, the next major figure in the history of oratory, had greater long-range influence than Isocrates. Born in Macedonia in 384 B.C., Aristotle traveled to Athens at age 17 to study at Plato's Academy. He remained there for 20 years, first as a student and later as a researcher and teacher of rhetoric.

Shortly after Plato died, Aristotle returned to Macedonia to serve as the private tutor of the King's precocious 13-year-old son, later to be known as Alexander the Great. When Alexander became king, Aristotle returned to Athens and opened his own school, the Lyceum.

Aristotle also wrote a three volume treatise, *Rhetoric*, describing the study of oratory in detail. In Book I, he introduced and explained the close relationship between rhetoric and logic. Both subjects, Aristotle theorized, are concerned with communicating ideas directly from mind to mind through words. And since, he argued, rhetoric is the publically spoken word and logic is rational discussion, the two are complementary.

"Rhetoric," said Aristotle, "may be defined as the faculty of observing in any given case the available means of persuasion." Persuasion is achieved in three ways:

- ♣ By the orator's personal character when his speech is so spoken as to make us think him credible.
- ♣ When the speech stirs our emotions.
- ♣ When the speaker provides logical arguments.

With the wholeness and balance of this three-fold system, Aristotle aimed to correct what he considered the one-sidedness and superficiality of approaches used by early rhetoricians and Sophists.

Aristotle's second book treats the ethical and psychological factors involved in making a favorable impression on listeners and influencing their emotions. He wrote, "The orator must not only try to make the argument of his speech demonstrative and worthy of belief; he must also make his own character look right and put his hearers, who are to decide, into the right frame of mind." He believed an orator wins the trust of audiences by showing he's a good man, knows what he's talking about, and wishes to do what's best for them.

In the third book, which covers style and organization, Aristotle wrote, "It is not enough to know what we ought to say, we must also say it as we ought." For example, elaborating on elements of style, he maintained that:

- ♣ **diction** (the choice of words) should be clear and appropriate,
- ♣ **metaphor** (implied comparison of two different things) and **simile** (explicit comparison of two unlike things) will provide vividness;
- ♣ **antithesis** (direct contrast) will create greater clarity and emphasis.

Regarding arrangement, Aristotle pointed out that there are only two essential parts in a speech: **exposition** (setting forth facts and ideas) and **proof** (presenting convincing arguments or evidence). He added, however, that it's customary to add a formal **introduction** and **epilogue** (conclusion).

DEMOSTHENES: HARD WORD AND DISCIPLINE MADE HIM GREAT

We often hear of the "born speaker," but is there ever such a person? Consider the example of **Demosthenes**, the greatest and most famous of all Greek orators. As a child, he was sickly and overprotected. Moreover, the young Demosthenes stammered, had a weak and

"Cicero stressed
that an orator should
be able to delight
his audience by wit
as well as move
them to tears."

unpleasant voice, suffered from shortness of breath, and was inarticulate in his pronunciation.

So how did he become such a great and mighty orator? By hard work and rigorous discipline. Legend has it that Demosthenes spoke over the roar of the sea with pebbles in his mouth and recited speeches when out of breath, running up steep hills. Learning oratory under a mentor and immersing himself in the study of the best prose writers, he prepared speeches for private clients in lawsuits and represented them in court. Demosthenes also wrote and delivered key orations of national and political interest.

Among his oratorical methods were the following:

- ♣ meticulous attention to composition
- ♣ repetition and re-emphasis of points
- ♣ use of rhetorical dialogues between himself and an imaginary critic or opponent
- ♣ spirited attacks and striking crescendos.

Demosthenes' passionate sincerity about his topic and thorough preparation contributed to the success of his orations. A scoffing critic complained that his speeches "smelled of the lamp," implying that Demosthenes burned the midnight oil when preparing his speeches. But such hard work may have been the secret of his greatness.

CICERO: HIS WORDS FOILED CONSPIRACY AGAINST ROME

So much for the ancient Greek rhetoricians and orators. Now let's look at the second century B.C. Romans who followed them. Cicero, Rome's outstanding orator, was the earliest major figure to put the Greek concepts of rhetoric into Latin. After Aristotle, he was the chief classical writer on rhetoric. His prose works combined grace and elegance with precision and clarity.

Born of middle-class parents, in Italy in 106 B.C., Cicero originally planned for a law career. But when he

Cicero's de Oratore:

A classic approach to public speaking.

Continuing the classical tradition that a speech should consist of five parts, Cicero discussed them in his book as follows:

- ♣ **Invention.** Create by thinking and discover by researching and gathering materials for the selected topic.
- ♣ **Disposition.** Arrange speech materials in logical order under introduction, body and conclusion. Cicero wrote, "The purpose of the introduction is to render the audience benevolent."
- ♣ **Elocution** (style). Use and group words to express ideas appropriately, clearly, accurately and vividly. Avoid over-extended sentences, redundancy and grammatical ambiguity. Obtain power or richness through figures of speech.
- ♣ **Memory.** Put ideas in logical sequence for easier remembrance.
- ♣ **Delivery.** According to Cicero, "Delivery is a sort of language of the body – the management with grace, of voice, countenance and gestures."

achieved public success as an orator in 80 B.C., Cicero changed his mind and devoted himself to the study of rhetoric and philosophy in Greece. After returning to Rome, he was elected to several public offices, and, while serving as consul, accomplished his greatest success: almost singlehandedly, with four brilliant orations, Cicero foiled Catiline's conspiracy against the Roman republic.

Unlike Demosthenes, who was always serious, Cicero was by nature inclined to laughter and pleasantries. He stressed that an orator should be able to delight his audience by wit as well as move them to tears.

Cicero wrote his treatise on oratory, *De Oratore*, in 55 B.C. Structured like a dialogue, this book covers the correct training of an

orator, the style and treatment suitable for individual topics, and the manner of delivery most likely to influence an audience.

QUINTILIAN: THE SCIENCE OF SPEAKING WELL

The last major figure in ancient oratory was Quintilian. Born in Spain in 35 A.D., he lived and studied rhetoric in Rome. In 68 A.D. he assumed the leadership of a publicly established school of rhetoric funded by the state treasury. The school made him famous.

In addition to giving lectures on rhetorical theory and evaluating student speeches, Quintilian appeared in the courts as a pleader for private clients. After 20 years of teaching, he retired and wrote a 12 volume treatise, *De Institutione Oratoria (On the Training of the Orator)*.

After reviewing and criticizing earlier definitions of rhetoric, Quintilian arrived at his own definition: "Rhetoric is the science of speaking well." Taking a larger and wider view than his predecessors, he claimed that almost all of them ignored elementary education in the training of orators.

Quintilian agreed with Isocrates' and Cicero's concept of proper training – namely, the whole person must be

brought to bear in the speechmaking processes. Quintilian stressed the importance of personal integrity and honest conviction of an orator, whom he defined as "a good man skilled in speaking." He cautioned against making speeches sound memorized because, as he put it, "He who speaks as though he was reciting forfeits the whole charm of what he has written."

Throughout the next eleven volumes of *De Institutione Oratoria (On the Training of the Orator)*, Quintilian deals with the three kinds of orators and refers back to Cicero's five parts involved in speechmaking. Orators are divided into specific categories according to the type of audience addressed and the purpose of the speaker:

- **Political orators.** They speak in a deliberative assembly, such as legislatures.
- **Forensic orators.** They're hired by private citizens as advocates to plead for them in courts.
- **Epicletic orators.** They deliver speeches on public platforms outside of legislatures or courts. These

speeches are what the ancient Greeks called "the ceremonial oratory of display." Today we refer to them as "speeches for special occasions."

For 24 centuries, effective public speakers have used the principles and tools of rhetoric developed by these ancient Greeks and Romans. Today we continue to use them, adapting and modifying – just as the original orators themselves did.

While public speaking is an ancient art, let's make sure it doesn't go out of style. In our technologically advanced society, where computers and television "soundbites" do most of the talking, we need to work toward bringing back good old fashioned rhetoric as a refreshing alternative.

Thomas Montalbo, DTM, was for many years a valued contributor to *The Toastmaster* and a longtime member of Sparkling Toastmasters Club 3602-47 in St. Petersburg, Florida. His book, *The Power of Eloquence*, may be ordered through Toastmasters International's Supply Catalog.

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Keep it simple. Complicated charts turn people off.

by Jim Carmickle, ATM

Tips For Using Flip Charts

■ OVER THE MONTHS AND YEARS AHEAD as a Toastmaster, you are bound to use flip charts or easel pads at some time or another. The information you put on them will, of course, depend on the speech you are giving. While there are no specific ways of using flip charts correctly, there are definite wrong ways of using them. A flip chart is used wrongly if it:

- ❖ Is unseen by any part of the audience.
- ❖ Distracts from, instead of augments, your speech.
- ❖ Confuses instead of enlightens.
- ❖ Contradicts the speech.
- ❖ Draws attention to itself instead of to you and your message.
- ❖ Allows the audience's minds to stray.

Let me briefly discuss these five factors:

UNSEEN

- Make sure everyone can see the entire chart. Remove any obstructions or move the easel to a better vantage point.
- Make lettering large enough for all to read. Test the chart by reading it from the back of the room and from where you will speak.
- Use dark colors. Pastels are difficult to see in some lighting; shiny chartboards can create a glare.

DETRACTS

- Do not speak to the chart, speak to the audience. Look at the chart, point (if appropriate), then look at the audience before speaking.

- Don't write the entire speech on the chart – only key words, and let your speech expand on them.
- Spell correctly.

CONFUSES

- If you say one thing and the chart says another, you will lose your audience.
- Keep it simple. Complicated charts turn people off.
- Use the information or omit it. If you put something on the chart and don't mention it, the audience will wonder about it.

CONTRADICTS

- Colors, sizes, shapes of objects and lettering all can contradict the spoken word.
- Direction must agree with the speech. Take care not to write on a downward slant if you are giving an uplifting speech; don't indicate movement to the left if you are talking about going forward.

MANIPULATION

- Practice turning pages. Try to be unobtrusive – use inconspicuous tabs placed on the edge of the sheets to locate and turn to the proper page.
- Practice writing if you plan on creating a chart as you go along with your speech. Make your writing legible to everyone. Don't apologize for your spelling or writing ability.
- Stand with your side to the audience, not your back, while writing on or manipulating the chart.

MINDS STRAY

- Don't outline your whole speech – the audience will read it while you speak.

- It is best not to reveal chart information until you're ready to speak about it. Keep words, lines of words or pages covered. Don't write anything until you're ready.

Remember:

- ❖ The flip chart can be your ally or your enemy.
- ❖ It can enhance your presentation or it can ruin it.
- ❖ Keep it simple and keep it legible by the entire audience.

There is much to be learned about chart preparation, the results of which will say as much or more about you than your words will. Learn as much as you can.

So push your "envelope of comfort." Use charts when you can and do your best to make them improve your speech. At some time in your Toastmasters experience you will need this valuable tool. Use it wisely. **T**

Jim Carmickle, ATM, is a member of Sunrise Speakers Club 1449-39 in Red Bluff, California.



Humor is a five-letter-word; it doesn't have to shock or offend.

Humor has fallen into disrepute lately. During my speaking tours, someone in the audience usually asks, "Why does comedy have to be so distasteful today?" My answer is that it doesn't. People enjoy wit and humor as much today as they ever did.

I understand the basis for the question, though. Most professional comedians today would rather shock than entertain, confront rather than amuse. Obscenities have replaced punchlines.

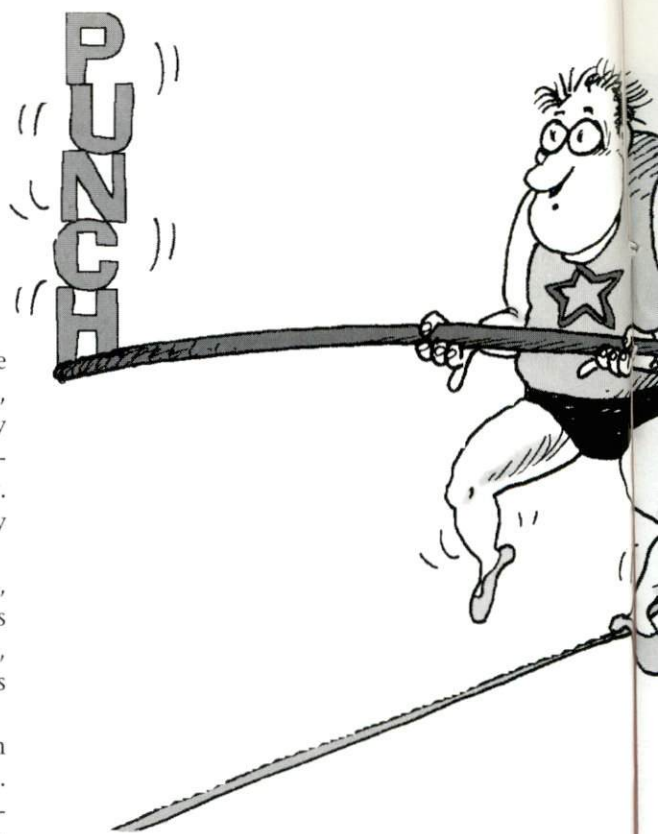
Young comics take pride in how much they shock and offend their listeners. "Wasn't I daring?", "Wasn't I boldly offensive." Not too many years ago, comedians used to say, "Wasn't I funny?"

Television and film humor is not much better. An advertisement for a recent film proclaimed how crude, offensive and disgusting the comedy was.

It's sad to see comedy so abused because humor is a gentle, friendly art. It's designed so people can share fun and laughter, and feel better as a result. I notice this when I travel to various conventions as a speaker. Often I'll see people greet one another in the lobby of the hotel, people who haven't seen each other for a while. If their greetings are sterile, I know they're acquaintances. However, if they immediately begin tossing gentle insults back and forth, I know they're close friends.

Humor doesn't have to be overly respectful, obsequious, square. Humor can be hard-hitting and even insulting, as long as it is done in the spirit of fun. It's when it's meant to harm that it becomes offensive.

by Gene Perret

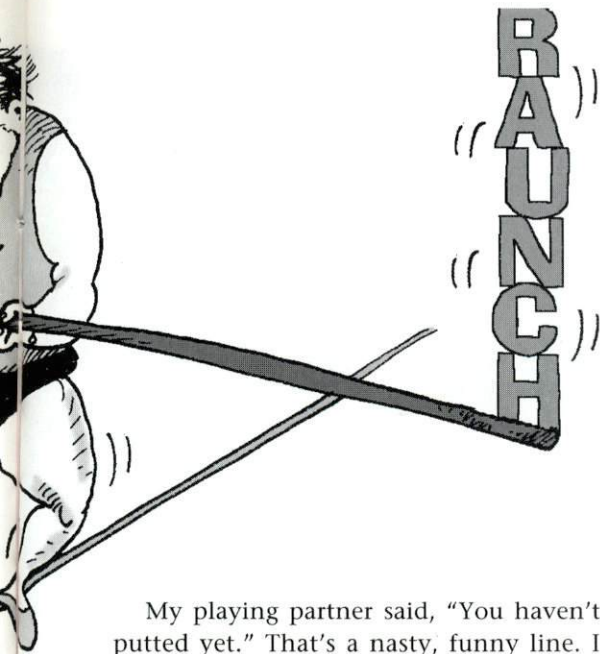


Someone once asked Will Rogers how he could toss his barbs at notable people without offending them. He said, "I've met just about every prominent man in the world, and I've never met a man I didn't like. When there's no malice in your heart, there can't be none in your jokes."

Not too long ago I played golf with a fellow writer. It was not my best round of golf. For some reason I was pulling everything to the left, which is where a lot of trees grow on most golf courses. Why someone decided to build golf courses with trees is beyond me, but they did and the trees were certainly part of my game that day.

It seemed as though I hit every tree on the course. Finally, on one par three hole, I hit a straight shot and the ball landed safely on the green. I exclaimed proudly, "Well, at least I didn't hit any trees on this hole."

Punch vs. Raunch



My playing partner said, "You haven't putted yet." That's a nasty, funny line. I loved it. I laughed at it then, and I've told it to many friends since.

This gentleman wasn't attacking me personally. He wasn't offending me. He got a big laugh from everyone in our foursome without using any four-letter words. He said something clever and witty and we all laughed together. That's humor.

That's also the kind of humor we need from the platform. I attended a seminar for writers in Hannibal, Missouri, last year. At a dinner show, we listened to some energetic young entertainers sing songs from various eras. It was delightful. At one point the stage went dark and we heard a voice from the back of the room say, "This is the sorriest excuse for an audience I've ever seen."

When we turned we saw a spotlight on the town's most renowned citizen, Mark Twain. We applauded. As the applause continued, the actor portraying Twain ambled toward the front, then slowly climbed the stairs onto the stage. When he arrived at the chair center stage, he looked at us again and said, "And you don't look any better from up here, either."

The entire audience laughed and applauded even though we'd been "insulted" twice. We'd been insulted but not offended.

During his performance, "Twain" aimed a few more shots at the audience, but he kidded himself, too. His talk was humorous, entertaining and fun.

We – Toastmasters, speakers, platform professionals – can preserve the integrity of humor. While many professional comics are debasing the art form under whatever guise and for whatever purpose, we can keep our humor light and incisive.

We can step to the podium and have fun with our audience. That basically is what it is – fun. Some of today's comedy professionals argue that if it's just fun, it serves no purpose. Comedy has to have a higher calling, they say. It has to do some social or political good for mankind. However, it's my opinion that humor is its own reward. It has its own agenda.

Once I waited in an airport with a plane load of angry, annoyed people. Our flight had been delayed and delayed again. We finally boarded almost four hours after we were scheduled to. Almost everyone who boarded took out their anger on the flight attendant. She was quickly reaching the point where she'd had enough.

My travelling companion, a fellow humorous speaker, went to the flight attendant and said, "This flight has been delayed for four hours. We all got together and decided it was your fault."

She laughed.

When we landed, she presented my friend with a bottle of champagne with a hand-written note attached. It said, "Thanks for making me laugh when I was about to blow my cork."

That's what humor is supposed to do. **T**

Gene Perret is a professional comedy writer and humorous speaker living in Westlake Village, California.

"Humor can be hard-hitting and even insulting, as long as it is done in the spirit of fun."

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What if you could
give a formal speech
on a requested topic...
without any advance preparation!

Recipe for an *Instant Speech*

16 **B**eing a Toastmaster has its rewards... and its dangers! Suppose you are attending an important corporate dinner. Participants include all of your company's executives, managers, employees, important vendors and their spouses. Just as you are about to savor the shrimp scampi while listening to the executives' speeches, the chairman notices you in the audience and says, "One of our staff members is a Toastmaster. I'm sure he'd like to come up here and give us a short speech on today's economy." You probably could give an extemporaneous talk, and get by without covering the subject in depth or perhaps by avoiding it all together. But wouldn't it be better if you could give a formal speech on the requested topic without any advance preparation? A speech with an attention getting opening, a body relating to the selected topic, and an exciting finish.

Building A Skeleton

The secret of giving a formal speech at a moment's notice is to have the structure, or skeleton, already prepared and waiting. The skeleton has all the elements of a formal speech and can be tailored to fit any subject in a matter of minutes. You often can do this tailoring as you walk up to the podium.

Any good formal speech must have an opening that grabs the listeners' attention, a body that presents the major points you want to discuss, and a closing that summarizes the talk or invites the listener to take some action. An effective closing often ties back to the opening.

Thus, the first step in creating a skeleton is to devise a good opening and closing. When you do this, look for two factors:

- An opening that is general. It should be able to relate to any subject. It also should be summarized in a single word or phrase.
- An opening that also can be used as a closing.

The following are three examples of general openings that also can be used for closing a speech.

EXAMPLE 1 - THE BURNING DOLLAR

You slowly pull out your wallet or purse, extract a dollar bill, hold it up for the audience to see and then set fire to it. You watch the audience as the bill burns up and you drop the remnants into an ash tray. With this opening, the key word can be either "cost" or "waste." For instance:

by Bill McLain



RECIPE #6

FORMAL IMPROMPTU SPEECH

INGREDIENTS

"This is what the government does to your money every second of the day."

"Poor business communication can burn up money faster than this."

"Did you ever consider what happens to a company's profits when employees waste time?"

"Buying something you don't need is like burning up your money."

"This is what inflation does to your savings."

Once the speech is finished, you can close by picking up the ashes in the ashtray and slowly let them fall from your hand as you summarize your point. For example:

"I'm not going to let the government do this anymore to my money. How about you?"

"If your business communication is doing this to your money, do something about it now."

"Companies can't last long with profits like this. Isn't it time to motivate your employees?"

"If we give more thought to our purchases, our money won't look like this."

"It's time to evaluate our savings programs to protect against inflation."

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EXAMPLE 2 - "AM I UP OR DOWN?"

You stand on a chair, look at the audience, and then ask the following question: "Am I up or down?" Try to get the audience to respond, poll them if possible. Most will say you're "up." However, you explain: "I'm up with respect to the floor, but I'm down with respect to the ceiling. It all depends on how you look at it. It all depends on your point of view."

This opening can be used in a variety of ways. Some of the key words are: "viewpoint" and "relative." Here are some examples of each:

Viewpoint - "Although most people want to protect the environment, there is another point of view. If we do not cut down trees, what will we use for building houses? If we do not dam our rivers, where will we obtain electric power?"

"Virtually everyone thinks health care should be provided for every citizen. On the other hand, it will take enormous amounts of money to finance this plan and where will it come from?"

Relative - "If you live near a nuclear reactor, you might be frightened and opposed to nuclear power. But if you own a factory and have difficulty obtaining cheap power, you might be an advocate for nuclear power."

"Many people in this state are opposed to the number of new residents moving in because it detracts from the

present quality of life. However, if you are a business owner, new residents can mean more income and profits for your company."

EXAMPLE 3 - THE FEATHER AND THE BOOK

You hold a feather (or some light object, such as a handkerchief) high in one hand and a book low in the other hand as you say, "A feather and a book will never balance on a scale. This is similar to a problem we often face today...a lack of balance." The key words here are: "balance" and "extremes." Here's an example of each:

Balance – "Many environmentalists would protect the land to the point that we would lack lumber for new homes. Their opponents often think nothing of turning the entire country into a wasteland. But I think there must be a sensible point somewhere between these two views."

Extremes – "Some people think the judicial system is too hard on criminals. Others think it is too easy on them."

As you can see by the above examples, the key word – "balance" or "extremes" – could let you talk about morality (puritanical to permissive), television (from source of knowledge to purveyor of violence), personal finances (from spendthrift to tightwad), etc.

Some Key Points

The key for the opening is to be general. Sum it up in a single word that you can use to flavor your speech. You also can use synonyms for the key word. For instance:

- cost = expense, price, toll, rate, charge
- waste = debris, garbage, trash
- viewpoint = angle, direction, slant, outlook, attitude, judgment,
- relative = conditional, comparative, position
- balance = even, proportional, equal
- extremes = radical, excessive, remotest, farthest

When you design your own skeleton or structure, remember that the opening must relate to the closing.

It also is a good idea to avoid props unless you always will have access to them. When someone asks you to speak, you may not have the props available. The objects used in the previous examples are always handy: a dollar bill, a chair, a handkerchief.

The Body – Although the body of a speech varies according to the subject, a typical body simply accentuates your idea and gives examples. It might also provide a solution.

Accentuating your idea – This is easy. It's simply an amplification of your opening remark. In other words, define your opening remark more fully. For example, assume you use the "burning a dollar bill" skeleton and your opening remark is, "Poor business communication can burn money faster than this." Your next step is simply to accentuate that idea by defining what you mean. For example, "If an employee doesn't understand how you want a task performed, he or she might do it completely wrong and cost your company a lot of money."

Giving an example of your idea – This is the only part of your speech you will have to think about on your way to the podium. You will have to think of some "for instance" to illustrate your main point. For example, you might say, "Suppose you need a product shipped immediately to an important customer. You tell an employee to send the product to XYZ company right away. You assume it will be sent Federal Express but your employee understands 'right away' to mean it must be shipped today, so he ships it standard UPS. Your customer doesn't receive the product on time and is so upset that he no longer does business with you. This is how poor communication costs you money."

Presenting a solution – If you have presented a problem, then you should finish the body of the speech by offering one or more solutions. If you have presented a problem with business communications, then you might offer a solution such as, "When you talk to an employee, make sure that he or she understands exactly what you want. Ask the employee to repeat the instructions back to you to make sure you have communicated clearly. Communicate the desired end result and, if possible, write down the instructions for achieving that result so there can be no misunderstanding."

Putting It All Together
If you build a proper structure and keep in mind that the second part of your speech is just a definition of your opening remark, you only will have to do three things when called upon to talk about any particular subject:

Putting It All Together

If you build a proper structure and keep in mind that the second part of your speech is just a definition of your opening remark, you only will have to do three things when called upon to talk about any particular subject:

- Pick the proper skeleton for your opening and closing.
- Select your opening remark.
- Think of one or more examples to illustrate your main point.

If you keep a few "skeletons" in mind and remember these three rules, you can talk on any subject, any time.

Continued on page 27



SELF-REVELATION:

Are You Doing It For Your Audience or For Yourself?

by Linda Cook, CTM

■ WITH A SPEECH TITLED, "YOU CAN DO Anything!" her purpose was to inspire. She'd stumbled a little through her opening but now her nervousness had melted away and enthusiasm for her subject was taking over. Her gestures seemed natural and relaxed, her voice was steady and her eye contact established. I thought this could be her best speech yet! Then, suddenly, and with no lead-in whatsoever, she said, "...and I am a survivor of childhood sexual abuse."

With these nine words, our speaker ended her speech long before its well-thought out, precisely executed, but barely noticed conclusion.

And with these same nine words, I'll open this article. I am a survivor of childhood sexual abuse. I say this only to convince my reader at the outset that I can identify with and have nothing against this speaker, nor anyone else courageous enough to share a personal tragedy. After all, Toastmasters, in addition to being members in an outstanding organization, also happen to be members of humanity, so most of us have survived something. Many a strong message has emerged from a heart-wrenching tale of woe. Yet, it's important for any speaker, before sharing some intimate, possibly disturbing detail about herself, to consider what impact her revelation might have on the audience.

Obviously, there can be value in sharing stories about overcoming serious obstacles in life. But in doing so, a few rules might apply:

1 Any important message deserves its own speech.

Our speaker made the common mistake of trying to give more than one speech at a time. When we have a message we'd like to convey, it's a natural tendency to try to fit

in every little bit of information we feel might strengthen our position or sway our audience. But delivering an effective speech is like using one of those adjustable flashlights – if you use the wide beam in a dark room, you can see a lot, but it's all a bit fuzzy. However, if you focus your beam, you can view what you're looking at in detail.

2 An effective speech must be organized and have a logical flow of ideas.

Our speaker was well on her way to an effective speech. She'd been using anecdotes to illustrate her points, but all were general and about someone else. When she abruptly threw in this statement about herself, I felt like I'd been slapped. From the reaction of the audience, I don't think I was alone. Supporting information is absolutely necessary to prepare the audience for an emotionally charged message, and points made to illustrate that message should have similar emotional "weight." Statements like "I'm a survivor of spousal abuse," "I'm an alcoholic," or "I'm an ex-convict" should never be thrown into a speech as "oh, by-the-way" elements, especially when the overall tone of the speech has seemed lightweight up to that point.

3 The needs of the audience should always supersede the needs of the speaker.

Too often, a speaker has made no effort to learn about the audience. While researching an audience's needs in the public sector might present a challenge, most Toastmasters clubs are intimate and the phone numbers of fellow members are readily available. Take the time to make a few calls to say, "I'm thinking of giving a speech about such-and-such topic. How would my talking about

that make you feel? Do you have any suggestions on how I could make the audience feel more comfortable with my topic or how I could make my speech more effective?" It's a shame when a Toastmaster who intends to move her audience with a story of personal triumph instead ends up leading her own imposed group therapy session; and it's a real turn-off for guests who might be attending the meeting.

To be effective communicators, we need to know how to reveal issues about ourselves appropriately. Inappropriate personal comments not only ruin our messages, they also deprive us of the opportunity to serve as an instrument of much needed inspiration and healing. Our membership in Toastmasters provides us with the tools to craft our tragedies into triumphs but we must recognize and use the techniques we are shown. We must always choose our words with thought and care, lest we harm rather than help. **T**

Linda S. Cook, CTM, is a member of Kentuckiana Club 5103-11 in Louisville, Kentucky.



TELL ME MORE ABOUT YOU:

Personal Anecdotes

20

As Voltaire said, "The secret of being a bore is to tell everything."

Two people who haven't met sit next to each other at a Toastmasters meeting. A few minutes before the meeting is called to order, they lean over and introduce themselves.

2The story must offer some benefit to the audience; the anecdote should not be shared if its only purpose is to satisfy the speaker.

This simple interaction is a typical example of disclosure matching. When someone shares a piece of personal information with us, we typically respond with similar information about ourselves. In *The Talk Book: The Intimate Science of Communicating in Close Relationships*, Gerald Goodman explains the value of this transaction: "No disclosures, no intimacy." Without disclosure matching, we would all live in perpetual isolation."

In speaking, we invite disclosure matching when we share a personal anecdote with our audiences. True, our listeners may not speak directly to us, but our personal anecdotes set off a dialogue of give and take in our listeners' minds.

To be effective, personal anecdotes must be used appropriately. These three criteria are useful when deciding whether a personal anecdote is suitable:

by Joanna Slan

1 The anecdote must pertain to the subject at hand.

3 The anecdote must be "in harmony" with the mood of the presentation.

For example, if you are talking about tax codes and suddenly throw in a story about your client who died after filing this year, your listener is likely to feel a bit confused.

Many speakers shy away from using personal anecdotes because they perceive that sharing personal information is risky. But without personal stories or references, the speaker is limited to re-hashing anecdotes about famous people or telling stories gleaned from other sources. True, an insightful story about Churchill may be the perfect way to drive home your point about determination. But talking about Churchill may actually be more risky than talking about the time you personally were called upon to show great tenacity in your own life.

When you re-tell another's tale, keep the following points in mind:

■ You invite instant comparison to any other speaker who also might use this story. (Even worse, what if the two of you are invited to the same function and tell the same story?)

■ You may bore your audience because they may already know the story. Unless your listeners are unusually polite, at least one or two people may whisper the punchline to the person sitting beside them.

■ You have dramatically increased your chances of forgetting what you intend to say. After all, you had to memorize this material to present it. Chances are it's only stored in your short-term memory, a place notorious for its poor filing and retrieval system.

■ You have lost the opportunity to build a meaningful relationship with the people who are there to hear *you!*

By contrast, your speaking skills improve when you mine your own life for compelling situations to share from the platform. Your presentation will be better because:

■ The material is fresh and original: It is yours and yours alone.

■ The material is easy to remember. After all, you aren't reciting a piece you memorized, you are sharing an experience from your life.

■ The material lends itself to natural gestures and vocal variety. Just recall how you felt when this situation happened and go from there. If the story is worth telling, chances are you have attached strong emotions to it. These emotions will re-surface and further enhance your delivery.

If you already include appropriate personal anecdotes in your speeches, you may wish to consider developing them more fully. My good friend, speaker/trainer Brian Becker, is a case in point.

During a presentation about leadership, Brian told a snippet – not even a fully developed story – about his son's reaction to his travel schedule. As Brian was heading off to the airport, his child looked at him and said, "Daddy, I hate your job." Brian followed his disclosure with comments on the power of personal accountability.

After his presentation, Brian and I took time to chat. I told him his remarks about his son's comments interested me. I want-

ed to know more. I challenged him, saying, "Brian, that was the most compelling portion of your speech. As a listener, that was my only glimpse into you. Won't you consider expanding that story and sharing it with your audiences?"

A few months ago Brian called to tell me he had done just that with positive results. Several audience members have approached him after his presentations and specifically thanked him for sharing a part of his life.

Please note, I am not suggesting that you spend your entire presentation talking about yourself. As Voltaire said, "The secret of being a bore is to tell everything." But, I am encouraging you to share a part of yourself appropriately from the platform. When we are willing to share, we literally invite our listeners into our lives. The gap between the lectern and the audience narrows, and we both experience greater satisfaction with our interaction.

Certainly we risk more when we talk about ourselves than when we talk about famous people we've encountered in books or movies. We could be rejected, misinterpreted or even disliked for who we are. Goodman says, "These riskier revelations that give away power and leave us vulnerable can paradoxically bring us the strength and protection of intimacy."

So the next time you give a speech at your Toastmasters club, don't just tell me about Churchill; tell me about you, too. I'd like to get to know you. After all, you're the person I came to hear. **1**

Joanna Slan is a professional speaker and trainer living in St. Louis, Missouri.

"The anecdote should not be shared if its only purpose is to satisfy the speaker."

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Another Look At

Gestures



It's quality,
not quantity,
that matters.

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Gestures are important. They can be believable and powerful. But good communication is more than gestures.

Some speakers seem to believe that if the use of some is good, then more is better. Their gestures are dramatic and even gymnastic. And some evaluators and judges seem to believe that it is quantity rather than quality that matters. They automatically applaud the speaker whose arms wave like a windmill even if the gestures are ineffective.

Gestures are powerful tools but they are only tools – not ends unto themselves. The way we are seen determines how we are heard. We use gestures to illustrate our words. We nod our heads to indicate yes and we shake them from side to side to indicate no. We use our hands to draw pictures of things in the air. We imitate movements and move in certain ways to emphasize what we say.

The problem with gestures is that they are ambiguous. They are definitely powerful and believable but by themselves they can be misunderstood. What does a smile mean? It might mean one thing on the face of a child who just got some candy and something else on the face of a used car salesman who wants to sell you a lemon. We can cry tears of sadness or tears of joy. A raised fist can mean anger, defiance, threat, victory or unity.

by Robert Nelson, CTM

1The first key to using gestures well is congruence. Effective gestures contribute to the overall message. They add to and emphasize our words. That means that our gestures should say the same thing we are trying to say with our words. The only time gestures become confusing or distracting is when they are incongruent with our words or with the rest of our gestures. That is why we notice hand wringing and fidgeting. In and of themselves hand wringing and fidgeting are just gestures but when they are incongruent with the message, they become distractions. (Of course, they might be appropriate if you are talking about anxiety or someone who is nervous.)

The easiest way for most of us to make sure that our gestures are congruent with the rest of our message is to focus first and foremost on our words. Even if you are not memorizing your speech, read it over and over again and familiarize yourself with the words and their meaning. Then when you are comfortable with the words, deliver the speech in front of a mirror and notice which gestures come naturally. Do they contribute to or distract from the message you are trying to give? Work with them the same way you would work with your words, pitch, volume and rhythm. Remember that gestures include posture, movement and



ILLUSTRATION: JERMART

facial gestures, not just hand and arm gestures. Building on these natural gestures helps us avoid gestures that detract from our intended message.

2 A second key to using gestures is to use them in clusters. A gesture is like a word. We usually do not speak in words; we speak in sentences. A word is a building block but a sentence is a complete thought. Gestures are the same way. We usually do not use one gesture; we use clusters of gestures. For example, slouched shoulders, lowered eyes and a turned down mouth is a cluster that might mean sadness or depression. But if we change one gesture of the cluster we have a different meaning. Slouched shoulders, turned down mouth and raised eyes might mean pleading. Change one more and we might have shyness – for example, a turned up mouth. And we can make that cluster more powerful by adding more gestures, such as clapping the fingers of one hand in the other hand. It is the effect of the total cluster that matters – not just a single gesture.

Of course it is possible for a cluster to have conflict within itself. Normally a smile means happiness. But what does it mean when someone smiles with sad eyes? What does it mean when someone stands straight, looks in your eyes and uses broad, comfortable gestures but has a nervous twitch? Make sure that the cluster says what you want it to say. Gestures must be congruent within the cluster and the clus-

ter must be congruent with the main message you are trying to send.

3 The third key to using gestures well is practice. Experiment with the effects of different gestures. Try using different facial expressions not only when you give speeches but also in your everyday communications. Notice what happens. For example, use a vacant stare when saying hello to a friend. Give a serious message while laughing. Tell a funny story with a serious face. This will help increase your understanding of and conscious control over your gestures.

Use your television. Turn down the sound and just watch the picture. Look for clusters of gestures. Copy them and notice how they make you feel. Take notes. This is one way of increasing your vocabulary of gestures. One of the things you will notice as you increase your awareness of gestures is that smooth, round body movements are more pleasing and more persuasive than angular movements.

Gestures are important. They can add credibility and power to our messages and they emphasize and illustrate what we mean. But they are tools. To be used effectively they must contribute to the overall message and not become an end unto themselves. **T**

Robert Nelson, CTM, is a member of Downtowners Club 2887-7 in Vancouver, Washington.

“Our gestures should say the same thing we are trying to say with our words.”



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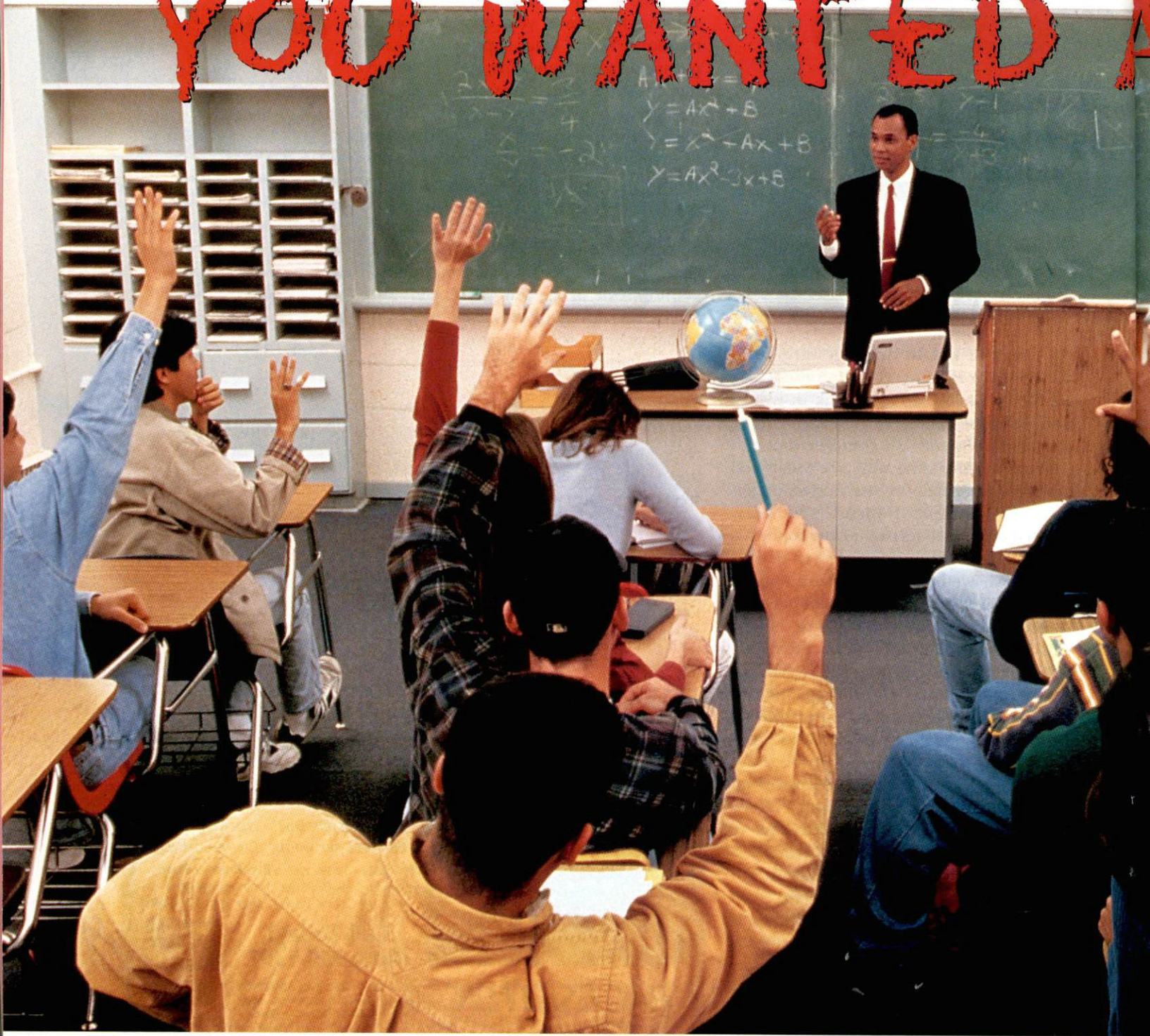
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BE A HIGH SCHOOL CAREER DAY SPEAKER –

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YOU WANTED A



your credit, why not? Out in the community, where you've spoken at church gatherings, business seminars, and acted as master of ceremonies, you're not only talking, you're the talk of the town. Clearly it's all coming together – Toastmasters is working for you.

Yet before you get too confident, before the praise, hand shaking and back slapping from fellow Toastmasters lift you off the floor, I have an oration challenge that

might just keep your feet squarely on the ground.

How about combining the various techniques from your Basic Communication and Leadership manual into a single 30-to-45-minute presentation to one of the toughest audiences you'll ever encounter? How about addressing a group of skeptical, often slovenly teens, some of whom will brood and slouch in their chairs, wanting to be anywhere but in front of you? A group of seasoned, yet

A CHALLENGE!

by Ronald A. Reis

impressible teenagers who, nevertheless, needs to hear what you have to say and see what kind of person you are. A group that, today more than ever, requires guidance and inspiration from a successful adult. How about becoming a high school career day speaker?

WHAT'S A HIGH SCHOOL CAREER DAY, ANYWAY?

At some point during the school year, the high schools throughout the United States make a concerted effort to focus students' attention on life after graduation – it's annual career day time. Speakers, representing occupations from architect to zoologist, arrayed in occupational garb and laden with "show and tell" paraphernalia, descend on local campuses, endeavoring to inspire and direct today's youth.

For students, career day is a break from class routine and a chance to check out a possible career.

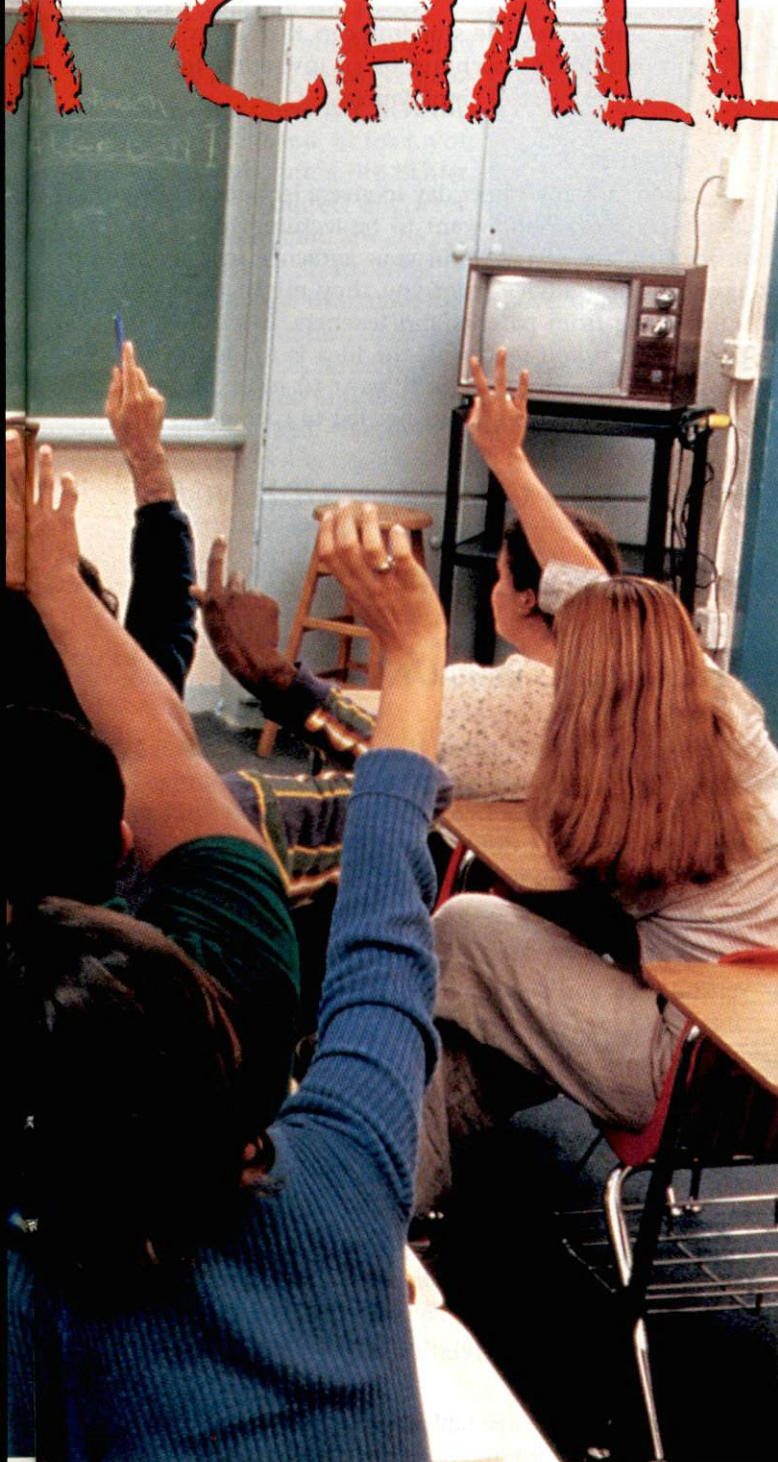
For presenters, successful adults and potential role models (Toastmasters, to be sure), the festive occasion provides an opportunity to promote their professions, network with those in related fields, give something back to the community, touch base with today's youth culture, and just get out of the office and have a little fun.

But most of all, for Toastmasters, career days present a unique speaking challenge. If you can inspire this often finicky and cynical audience, inform them and make them glad you showed up, you'll have reached new heights as an effective communicator. You may not win a club trophy, but you'll feel like a winner, nonetheless.

ARE YOU UP TO THE CHALLENGE?

Bob, an attorney and CTM, felt he was up to the challenge. Hence, six weeks after contacting the local school district, he found himself milling around the Thomas Jefferson High School library in Los Angeles at 9 a.m.,

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consuming coffee and donuts while chatting with other career day participants.

With more than 60-plus guests assembled, Ms. Holt, the school's career center director, called for everyone's attention.

"Thank you so much for taking the time from your busy schedules to come," she began.

"It's extremely important that today's youth have positive role models to identify with. All the virtues I'm sure you will be talking about – honesty, hard work, being on time, seeking advanced training and education – the students, particularly the seniors, will have heard espoused before, by their teachers. Frankly, they're 'numbed out' on it. But coming from you, people in the real world, they'll see such values in a new light," she assured the attentive crowd.

"One more thing, before I let you go off to meet your group of students," Ms. Holt intoned. "Don't just tell students about your career, tell them about you. Share yourself: your attitudes, your confidence, your optimism. That's what students will remember most, that's what they will take with them for years to come."

As Bob was being escorted off to a class of 30 Marsha Clark and Johnnie Cochran wanna-bees, pre-speech jitters

4 Keep your voice at a low pitch and move quickly through key ideas. Speak with "controlled urgency." Use language high school kids understand. But remember, you are not one of them. Don't use phrases foreign to you just to be "cool." Students, like any of us, don't appreciate being patronized.

5 If your presentation lasts more than a half-hour, try to make it as interactive as possible. Ask the audience to mingle with each other when appropriate.

6 Bring something the students can take away with them: handouts, brochures or an invitation to visit your company or place of employment.

TELL IT LIKE IT IS

While you're not at a career day to give a lecture, and the students certainly don't want to be lectured to, as Ms. Holt implied, the teenagers in your audience will accept suggestions and advice from you they might tune out when coming from parents and teachers. Regardless of what profession you represent, the idea is to share your wisdom and experience. You'll want to help students focus on the factors and habits needed to succeed in any

"IF YOU CAN INSPIRE THIS OFTEN FINICKY AND CYNICAL AUDIENCE, INFORM THEM AND MAKE THEM GLAD YOU SHOWED UP, YOU'LL HAVE REACHED NEW HEIGHTS AS AN EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATOR."

began to set in. Even with all that Toastmasters experience behind him, Bob was glad for the extra pointers the school's career center had faxed him earlier in the week. In addition to the Toastmasters "10 Tips for Successful Public Speaking" that Bob had virtually memorized, the following half-dozen guidelines proved helpful:

1 Start your session with a strong positive note. Avoid being tentative. Devise a hook – an appropriate attention-grabber – to begin your presentation. Personal anecdotes will increase audience interest and your credibility, particularly with teenagers.

2 Interrupt the flow of your presentation every 10 minutes or so by varying your presentation with audio-visuals, body movements, or changes in your speech pattern. Some effective career day presenters like to move among the students during their presentations.

3 When using visual aids, be sure they're used to enhance the key ideas in your presentation, not to outline your presentation. Keep overheads as simple as possible. For the most part, students are overdosed on visuals.

occupation. Strive to stress the following (from Los Angeles High School's career day guidelines):

- ✓ The importance of doing your best, both inside and outside school.
- ✓ The importance of a personal definition of success you update when necessary.
- ✓ Setting goals and developing a plan of action to achieve those goals.
- ✓ The importance of communication skills – reading, writing, speaking – and the idea that developing such skills is a continuing, life-long process.
- ✓ Managing your time well so you never miss a deadline.
- ✓ A positive attitude and confidence in yourself.
- ✓ Building a network/support group of others who can assist you in being successful, and whom you can assist in turn.
- ✓ Developing a mentor relationship with a successful adult.
- ✓ Finding out what is available in the workplace by seeking out part-time, internship and volunteer work.

- ✓ Finding the post-secondary institutions available to you: community colleges, four-year institutions, training centers.

Come to think of it – some of these points are worth conveying to any age group.

THE CAREER IS THE THING

After all the moralizing and motivating is done, remember, it is a career day. Students are assembled before you because you are a fire fighter, fashion designer, engineer, actor, accountant, law enforcement officer or attorney. As

you emphasize the values listed above, don't slight the particulars of your field or career.

In particular, be prepared for the number one overriding question: "How much money do you make?" Bob was hit straight on with that question when he sought audience feedback. Having observed the O.J. Simpson trial, like all of us, the students assumed lawyers are dripping with money. Bob set them straight on that one, as well as on a few other

HERE'S WHAT TO DO

■ Getting invited to be a career day speaker is easy: Just contact a local high school and offer your services. I guarantee they'll be thrilled to have you participate. Most high schools have a career counselor in charge of the school's career center. Just call and ask to speak to him or her. Tell the school what you're willing to do, and ask them in turn for dates, times, format and any literature they can send you about their career day. Prepare your speech and then show up and have a great time.

By the way, you don't have to wait for a career day. Volunteer to address a class of interested students any time throughout the school year. Why wait for the speaking challenge of a lifetime?

myths of his profession. Though some in the audience were a bit dismayed and deflated as a result, all emerged with a more realistic understanding of a career they hoped some day to enter.

For Bob, being a high school career day speaker allowed him to stand and deliver to a new type of audience. In the process, he not only improved his speaking ability, he made an impact on his audience.

As a high school career day speaker, you, too, can expand your speaking horizons and,

at the same time, give something back to the community. Who knows, you may even wind up doing so at your own alma mater. The accompanying sidebar gives suggestions on how to contact a local high school. Go for it! **T**

Ronald A. Reis, a former Toastmaster, is a writer and professor of electronics at Los Angeles Trade Technical Community College.

RECIPE FOR AN INSTANT SPEECH

Continued from page 18

A Sample Speech

The following is an abbreviated example to give you an idea of how the "skeleton" works. If you were to actually give such a speech, you should spend more time defining your subject and explaining the examples of your idea.

Setting – You are sitting in the audience when the moderator notices you and asks if you will get up and give a short talk on "military spending."

First thoughts – You say to yourself, "I'll use the 'burning dollar' skeleton for my opening. My main point will be 'need for social spending instead of defense spending.' To illustrate my main point, I'll use the example of 'health care costs.'"

Opening – You stand before the audience, burn the dollar bill, and say, "This is what the government does with your money every second of every day. In fact, it wastes more than that. And most of our money is spent, not on social programs, but on the defense budget. We spend more on weapons of war than we do on taking care of our citizens."

Accentuating the idea – Now you say, "We know how much waste there is in military spending. We read about it daily: canceled contracts, large cost overruns, weapons sys-

tems that won't work and weapons that are obsolete before they are finished. I think we should take that money and use it for the welfare of our citizens. Use it for health care."

Example of the idea – "The cost of health care today is astronomical. It is beyond the reach of many of our fellow citizens. Our local hospital is overcrowded and in dire need of more modern equipment, yet the hospital cannot afford it. Nor can this town, or its citizens, afford to help the needy here because of the burden of federal taxes.

"There are countless people in this country who work very hard at their jobs, yet cannot afford health insurance. Nor can they afford to pay for care during a major illness or accident. Yet cutting the cost of medical equipment, prescription medicines and doctor services will only decrease the effectiveness of health care."

Closing – "We need to redirect the monetary resources of the government into social channels. We need to spend less on defense and more on the needy of this country. We need to spend more on schools, health care and law enforcement. If we don't, (pick up ashtray and slowly sift through the ashes with your fingers), then this is what will continue to happen to our hard earned tax dollars." **T**

Bill McLain is a business consultant and former Toastmaster living in Santa Clara, California.



can we talk?

by Mary McNamara

The Importance of Being Earnest(ine)

***“Nothing is more
ludicrous than see-
ing the work of
writers and editors
who have grasped
the letter, yet not
the spirit of gender-
inclusive usage.”***

So I am perpetually surprised when these self-same people (who are actually a whole lot more fun than I’m making them out to be) find nothing wrong with using “men” as a substitute for “people” (or “citizens” or “consumers”). Without a thought, they will paint the page gray with faceless indiscriminate use of “he” or “his” in an article about, say, voter apathy, disregarding the fact that 60 percent of those voters go about their daily lives under the assumption that they are, indeed, “she”s.

This is an old argument, I know. I can imagine brows wrinkling in distaste even as I write. Every editor has an opinion about gender-exclusive usage. (If you don’t believe me, hand in a story in which every inclusive pronoun is a “she.”) And I realize that I, as a woman and (“ye gods, Harry, not another one”) feminist, may be particularly sensitive to the issue. But to me, insisting that writers and editors use “firefighter” or “mailcarrier” is not an issue of politics, it’s an issue of accuracy. After all, what is a “fireman”? A man composed of flames? A pyromaniac? And we all know how this simplistic labeling affects the folks in the sanitation industry. I really don’t know how we got away with it for so long.

I realize that even the most curmudgeonly among us concedes that we can’t call all those folks in the Senate and the House “Congressmen.” The real, everyday debate emerges in stories where writers are characterizing a large group of people – taxpayers, or parents, or Johnny Dep fans – with generic examples. On my magazine, we spend a lot of time talking about children. And

when we aren’t illustrating our point with a specific example, it would be nice if there were a generic pronoun. But there simply isn’t. When you read the word “he” – whether it’s referring to a child or a Wall Street shark or God (in which case it would be He) – it conveys, if the story is worth anything at all, a certain mental image.

The argument is that there is no graceful way to be gender inclusive – “she/he” (why should “he” always go first?) looks and sounds strange; “her” or “his” is clunky and “one” is pretentious. First, I say, a tenet of journalism is that form follows function – grace trails accuracy on my list of priorities. But I really don’t see why we can’t have both – why can’t we just use our imagination? If the story is long enough, why not just alternate the use of “she” and “he”?

Sometimes it’s best to re-work the sentence to avoid the whole mess altogether. Of course, I recognize the margin for abuse here. Nothing is more ludicrous than seeing the work of writers and editors who have grasped the letter, yet not the spirit of gender-inclusive usage. It leads to such illuminating statements as “More than 30,000 people had vasectomies in 1985” or “The majority of Americans who have abortions do so during the first trimester.” I mean, let’s not get carried away. **T**

Mary McNamara is a former editor with the Special Reports family of publications.

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■ AS AN EDITOR, I COUNT among my friends and colleagues many bright and interesting people who are quite conscious of their vocabulary. They are, in a word, precise. Okay, okay, downright picky. The sentence “I have to leave because I’m nauseous” (instead of the proper “I’m nauseated”) elicits far more concern over accuracy than health; the wrath of a thousand second grade grammar teachers greets an errant apostrophe; and a misused “hopefully” causes true physical pain.



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