

The TOASTMASTER

MARCH 2002

ALSO INSIDE:

Myths about Mirth

•
The Various Shades
of Humor

SPECIAL
Humor
ISSUE

The Wit
and Wisdom of

MARK TWAIN

Reports of his genius are not exaggerated.



VIEWPOINT

Create a Legacy – Build a Club!

Building a club is a wonderful way to leave your mark on the world. By allowing more people to receive the benefits of Toastmasters, you get to build new contacts, develop leadership skills, complete one of the Advanced Leader award requirements and, of course, create a legacy.

Building a new club is easy and your district officers are eager to assist you. I have asked each area governor to ensure that a new club is built in his or her area this Toastmasters year.

First you need a lead. Get in touch with your district governor or Lt. governor marketing. Your district probably has leads that need to be pursued. If not, there are opportunities all around you. If your community has an evening club, why not start a morning club? A business in the area may want a lunch-hour club and open it to anybody. Map current club locations – you might see areas for potential clubs.

First, target communities with a population of 10,000 or more. But many clubs thrive in smaller communities, so don't let population size deter you. In November I visited the beautiful city of Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada, and attended several meetings that should result in the formation of four clubs. However, some may fear that by starting all four clubs, the town will be saturated. The reality is that the more Toastmasters you have, the more people you have to help you find new opportunities. The opportunities are there; you just need to find and act on them.

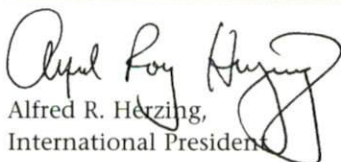
Target companies of 150 or more employees. When starting a company club, it's helpful to get a statement of support from the CEO. Employees need to know that their company leaders see this extra activity as valuable. I'm in the process of chartering a new club at my company, Beckman Coulter, Inc., and our CEO, John P. Wareham, provided an excellent statement for us to use in promoting Toastmasters.

Coordinate your efforts with your district officers. They can help you put on a "demonstration meeting" – an abbreviated Toastmasters meeting that includes Table Topics, at least one speech and an evaluation. Ideally, the speech will be about the benefits of Toastmasters and given by a member who won't make prospective members think, "I could never do that." This is not the venue for showing off. A new club was started in Founder's District after its members viewed the video, "Everybody's Talking About Toastmasters." Sometimes, a demo meeting isn't even necessary!

Along with building a new club, you can also participate in the process by being a new-club mentor. As a mentor, you will coach and encourage the new club's members as they grow and succeed in our program.

We all want to leave the world a better place. Building a new Toastmasters club is a wonderful way to create a legacy. Find that new club today!

For information on building new clubs, visit www.toastmasters.org. Click "Info for Members," then "Forms and Documents." Scroll down to the "Organizing New Clubs" section.


Alfred R. Herzing,
International President

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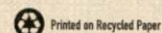
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The Toastmasters Vision:

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

The Toastmasters Mission:

Toastmasters International is the leading movement devoted to making effective oral communication a worldwide reality.

Through its member clubs, Toastmasters International helps men and women learn the arts of speaking, listening and thinking – vital skills that promote self-actualization, enhance leadership potential, foster human understanding, and contribute to the betterment of mankind.

It is basic to this mission that Toastmasters International continually expand its worldwide network of clubs thereby offering ever-greater numbers of people the opportunity to benefit from its programs.

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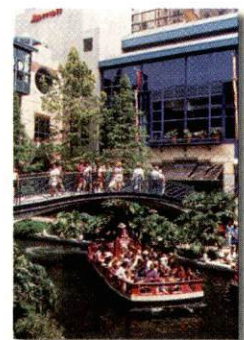
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LETTERS

IN THE BAG

Thank you, Sylvia Zitek, for "Creating Pocket Speeches" (November 2001). I've set up my notebook and am ready to start creating my pocket speeches. The Table Topics idea of selecting something from a bag of toy animals and talking about what the animal reminds us of struck gold with our club. We not only put toy animals in the bag, we also included Pez dispensers, Halloween items, Christmas ornaments, playing cards and golf balls. In lieu of speeches for that meeting, all members picked one item from the bag and then talked about what that item reminded them of. We got to know each other on a more personal level, heard some wonderful childhood stories and practiced thinking on our feet. We will certainly do this again!

Julie Moore • KCM Club 8321-2 • Seattle, Washington

NO MORE TOP FIVE

Please, please, PLEASE, cease the annual highlighting of five outstanding speakers. In your article, Clarence Thomas comes across as a compassionate, reasonable man; his judicial decrees, however, reveal a narrow mind with no compassion. The organization would be better served by just dropping this feature.

Howard Cutler, ATM-B • Portlandia Club 2978-7 • Portland, Oregon

QUESTIONABLE CHOICE

I was disappointed when I received my December issue and saw that Clarence Thomas was one of the five Outstanding Speakers of 2001. Although I disagree with his conservative politics and views, my biggest complaint is the suggestion that he is an outstanding speaker. I have listened to several speeches by Justice Thomas and found his speaking style to be dull and monotonous, and his delivery wooden and uninspiring. I have no quarrel with choosing a controversial figure as an outstanding speaker so long as the designation applies.

Judi McClellan • Lab Masters Club 3043-39 • Sacramento, California

SOUND ADVICE

Your piece on Abby Joseph Cohen is misleading on a few key points, and I believe those who read this publication should get the right perspective. While there is nothing wrong with being optimistic about the U.S. economy, there is much more at stake when someone of Ms. Cohen's stature makes utterances that can lead the uninitiated into making poor investment decisions. Those who followed her advice in the last two years have most certainly seen dwindling portfolios.

Cohen works for a company that makes money by selling stocks, and she tends to make forecasts that will aid that goal. It is a wonder that she still gets airtime. Yes,

predicting where the market will be at the end of the year is a fool's game, and no one has it right all the time, but history should have told Cohen that there was no possibility the market could continue its shell game. It probably did, but she sacrificed that truth to the corporate governance of her employer. Among wise investors, Cohen is more reviled than revered. She should follow the example of Stephen Roach, the chief economist for Morgan Stanley Dean Witter, who tells it the way he sees it, not the way his employer wants him to tell it.

Pete Keber, ATM • Cowichan Club 950-21 • Duncan, B.C., Canada

ANOTHER CHANCE

Thank you for the article, "Don't Waste the Pain" (October). We all suffer degrees of quiet desperation.

More than 10 years ago, my best friend was getting married and I was given the honor of toasting the couple. Although given ample time to prepare, I procrastinated, and at the wedding, I shrank from my duty. I replied, "No, I can't." I failed my friends and myself.

Then, in 1993, I found Toastmasters. What a world of difference Toastmasters has made! To this day, 11 years after my friend's wedding, I still feel bad for letting him down. Now I can't wait for another chance. I wish I had found Toastmasters sooner!

Mitchell Sandler, CTM • Articulators Club 5414-31 • Marlborough, Massachusetts

INTERNATIONAL APPEAL

I would like to say how much I enjoyed reading your article "Meet the Five Most Outstanding Speakers of 2001." I did note, however, that all five were Americans. I also noticed that in the list of past years' outstanding speakers, the vast majority were Americans.

I realize that most Toastmasters members live in the USA, and that might explain why so many American speakers receive the most nominations. In the future, you may wish to have nominations from outside the U.S. as a separate category. Our organization is international, after all, and there are outstanding speakers in other parts of the world.

Mark Schlink, ATM-B • City Tattersalls 5861-73 • Sydney, Australia

While all the Outstanding Speakers are commendable, (December 2001) it surely is time that Toastmasters International emphasized the "international" element of its name. The organization should acknowledge more people beyond the continental United States. Perhaps the finalists should be decided by geographic region, not occupational division?

Adam Johnston, CTM • Forest Club 1541-70 • Davidson, NSW, Australia



By Ellie Marek, ATM

"Humor is not a trick, not jokes. Humor is a presence in the world, like grace, and shines on everyone."

– GARRISON KEILLOR

Why Are We Laughing?

If you want people to remember what you say, no matter how serious, you will succeed far better if you sweeten it with humor. So what makes us laugh, and where can we find this wonderful humor resource? First we have to learn to think funny.

1 **Quotations are an excellent way to begin.** You don't have to be a great wit to bring home your message with a powerful but funny quotation. One of my favorite sources is the series compiled by Robert Byrne: *The 637 Best Things Anybody Ever Said*; and so on, for four volumes and counting. Reading books of witty quotations has been a rich source of ideas and laughs for me. Find the quotes that fit your own style (or weird quirks) and use them to bring home your message.

2 **Look at the world around you.** Then picture it through the twisted neurotic frame of humor. God is the greatest comedy writer of all. Most of us humans just haven't learned to interpret his comedy. Will Rogers became the most beloved comedian of his time, (possibly all time) just by reporting what he saw. "I don't make jokes. I just watch the government and report the facts."

3 **We love to laugh at euphemisms.** This is really another way of reframing reality. Nobody gets "fired" any more or even "laid off." Instead, we have *downsizing*, *rightsizing*, and the newest term: *brightsizing*. Bank of America has a "release of resources." GM offers a "career-transition program." National Semiconductor "reshapes;" Stanford University "repositions;" and Wal-Mart just does a "normal payroll adjustment." A Brit told me (in a very matter-of-fact tone) that he had been "made redundant." It sounded more interesting than some euphemistic terms for getting the boot, but still pretty awful. Surely the ultimate euphemism is "the mortality experience." I think I'd better let this rest in peace.

4 **We laugh because it provides more healing than tears.** Often the victims of oppression have learned to laugh at the stupidity of blind prejudice. Mariam Makeba, the great South African singer, was exiled for 25 years.

Now she laughs when she talks about the book-banning that took place under apartheid. The government banned the book *Black Beauty*, never bothering to find out that it was the story of a horse.

When people work under great tension or deal with matters of life and death, the laughter may be raunchy, and it's apt to be pretty silly. The greater the stress, the greater the need for laughter. We know now that there was laughter in concentration camps and among the POWs in the Vietnam War. Mother Theresa insisted her workers have a time set aside for laughter after their day's labor in India. If it relieves the tension without creating new tension, the laughter serves a good, healthy purpose.

5 **We laugh at ourselves, our follies and foibles.** Only when we can laugh at ourselves can we forgive ourselves for being human and get on with the business of living well. When we can laugh at our obsessions, they assume manageable proportions. It is this kind of laughter that keeps us balanced between fanaticism and apathy.

6 **Move your message forward with humorous stories.** The most powerful way to lighten and strengthen your message is by telling a humorous, but relevant story. The best stories are almost always personal anecdotes that allow the audience to identify with the speaker. Set up your story with a strong visual image. Lead your audience through twists and turns that build tension. Follow the twists to the payoff. Have the punch line tell a truth – but an unexpected, often absurd truth.

Laughter is a habit, and like any good habit needs to be carefully cultivated. Whether you laugh to get oxygen to your brain, to keep from crying or to release the floodgates so healing tears can flow; whether you laugh to ease the pain of helplessness in a sometimes cruel world or because there are still pockets of love and joy all around us – cultivate and cherish that habit of laughter. **1**

Ellie Marek, ATM, is a member of Park Central Club 3527-3 in Phoenix, Arizona.

Exaggeration is the key to comedy.

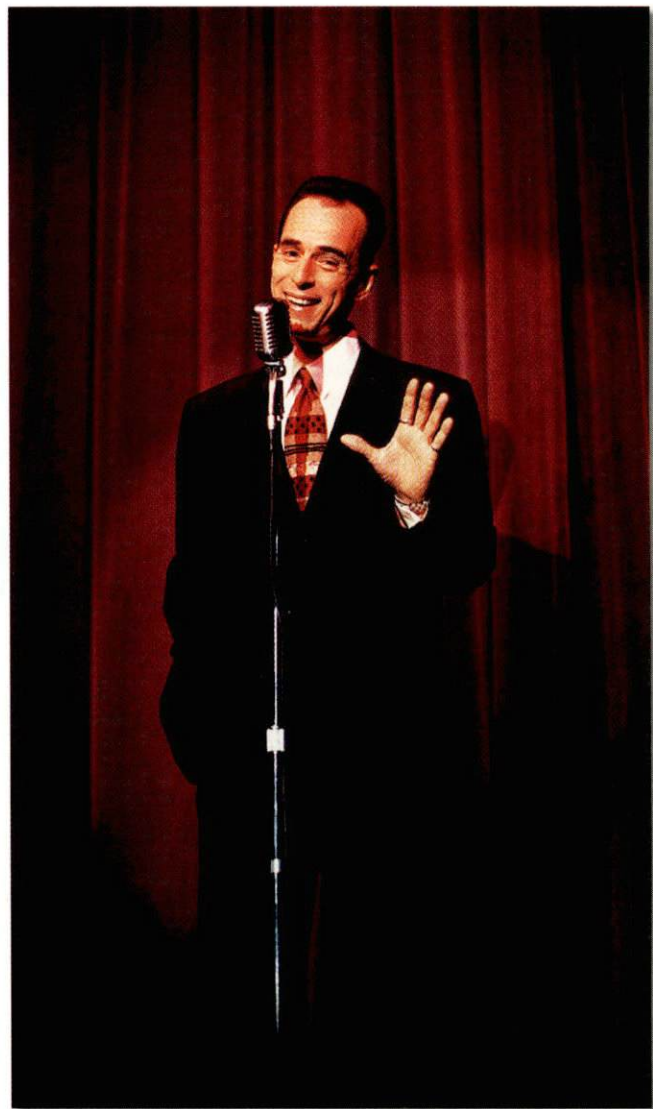
Stand Up and Make 'Em Laugh

What can a Toastmaster learn from a stand-up comedian? I decided to find out. Leigh Anne Jasheway, a motivational speaker who uses humor as a stress management tool, offered a stand-up comedy class at the community college, and I signed up. Of

course, I had no intention of ever getting up on stage with a microphone in hand. I just wanted to learn some techniques to develop the humor in my writing and speeches.

At our first class, we mastered a basic equation: Truth + emotion + time = comedy. The secret to stand-up is finding the humor in even the most painful situations. We all get frustrated, annoyed and confused. It's part of life. Our goal was to turn challenging or painful situations into laughs. Leigh Anne, the author of *Don't Get Mad: Get Funny*, encouraged us to ask questions. What's it like to have a first name no one can spell or pronounce? Grow up with an obsessive-compulsive housecleaner for a mother? Survive open-heart surgery? Be held up at gunpoint? Feel like the only conservative in a liberal town (or vice-versa)? Get a lecture from the veterinarian every time she weighs your cat?

EXAGGERATE. Our next step was to generate original material. No fair repeating jokes we'd already heard or found on the Internet. Instead, we blew aspects of our situations way out of proportion. Exaggeration is the key to comedy. My cat, a chubby tabby, morphed into a binge



eater who could put away a 10-pound bag of Friskies in an evening while sitting in front of the TV. My vet (a respected professional in real life) became a sadistic drill sergeant. I turned into the guilty, defensive, neurotic pet owner willing to go to any lengths to help my darling lose weight. Once these characters were in place, it was easy to make claims like "I spend more on flea control than I do on rent."

BRAINSTORM. In class, we developed new material every week, using different joke formulas. Leigh Anne encouraged us to think outside the box. My Top 10 list became *10 Ways You Know Your Cat Is Winning. Number one: For your 25th wedding anniversary your husband gives you a new litter box and a scratching post.*

We wrote wacky definitions of familiar terms. *Feline distemper? A cat that gets mad when you refuse to feed him on demand. Ever wonder what IAMS, that cat food your vet wants to sell you, stands for? I Am a Moody and Spoiled cat who refuses to eat any cat food you can buy on sale at Costco.*

THE RULE OF NINE. A lot of our material just didn't work. That's OK. John Vorhaus, author of *The Comic Toolbox*,

says that, on average, for every 10 jokes you write, nine belong in the trash. When in doubt, throw it out. Think of it as an incentive to keep writing until you get to the really funny stuff.

LISTEN. Some words and phrases are amusing all by themselves. Did you know that “K” sounds tend to tickle our ears? My cat isn’t really named Snackwell, but it’s a funny word. (OK, my vet doesn’t really have a cat named Ally McBeal either.)

MISDIRECTION. Audiences like surprises. In real life, my veterinarian gave me lots of sensible advice about feeding my cat a restricted diet specially formulated for the overweight, middle-aged feline, but what’s funny about that? I took it a step further by imagining what life would be like if I applied advice for people who want to lose weight to a cat. Was Snackwell eating right for his type? What zone should he be in? What if I became his exercise buddy and we started doing the Bird and Squirrel video together? What if we started eating the same things?

Now, instead of meat loaf, mashed potatoes and gravy, we have a small serving of Friskies and just a teaspoon of creamed kidney deluxe. It’s made such a difference! My coat is shinier, my eyes are brighter and I’m here to tell you I haven’t coughed up a hairball in weeks!

WATCH THE PROS. If you want to give an inspirational speech, watch Martin Luther King Jr. If you want to learn how successful stand-up comedians make people laugh, listen to a tape, watch a video or spend an evening at a comedy club. In class, we made a list of professional comedians we liked and looked at some of the techniques that work for them. What is it about the way they deliver their material that makes us laugh? How do they establish rapport with the audience? Set up their jokes? Use their hands? At home, try reading funny stuff out loud, using gestures that accentuate the material. Jay Sankey, author of *Zen and the Art of Stand-Up Comedy*, says that the best comics don’t ask the crowd for anything; they just seem to be speaking their minds.

I still had no intention of standing up in front of an audience and performing a set but, as I watched my classmates hone their material, I started thinking “Well, maybe.” One evening we took turns standing in front of the class and ad-libbing for a few minutes while Leigh Anne sat in the back and took notes. This exercise was designed to help us see how we come across to an audience and to practice using a microphone. Her take on me? A crazy, intellectual speed-talker. (Actually “an Irish Setter with brains” was the way she put it.) Good facial expressions, but I needed to move my lower body more and hold the mike closer to my mouth.

In 10 weeks the class was over. Our “graduation” was to perform at a local cabaret. I kept telling myself I’d just sit in the audience but, by the final week of class, I was inching toward the stage. I knew the audience would be much larger than at my weekly Toastmasters meeting. Alcohol would be served and we could expect more background noise. Leigh Anne even gave us tips on dealing with hecklers, just in case.

The afternoon of the performance I decided to go through with it. What did I have to lose? We were all a little nervous. Backstage, we put on lipstick, made sure our eyebrows were showing so that the audience could see our facial expressions, and reminded each other to stand directly in the pool of light on stage and not to tap the microphone.

When my turn came, Leigh Anne gave me a great introduction – as a person who had taken the class as a condition of my parole! I walked on stage, drawing on the positive energy I could feel from the audience. I knew the animal lovers out there could relate to the trials and tribulations of having an overweight pet and, sure enough, when I asked, “Have you ever tried to get a cat to stick to a diet?” their laughter told me that, for the next few minutes anyway, they were mine. **T**

Nowell King, CTM, is a member of Cascade Club 566-7 in Eugene, Oregon.

What chathink? We want your opinion. For the next few months we're going to ask you about major (and not so major) issues. To answer, visit our Web site at www.toastmasters.org and take our online poll. The results will be posted in a future issue of *The Toastmaster*. This month's question is:

How often do you use a joke to open a speech? What's your favorite one?

On the home page of the TI Web site, you'll find a button labeled: "Online Poll." Click on that button to get to a page of questions.

We look forward to hearing from you!

The Wit and Wisdom of

MARK TWAIN

Reports of his genius are not exaggerated.

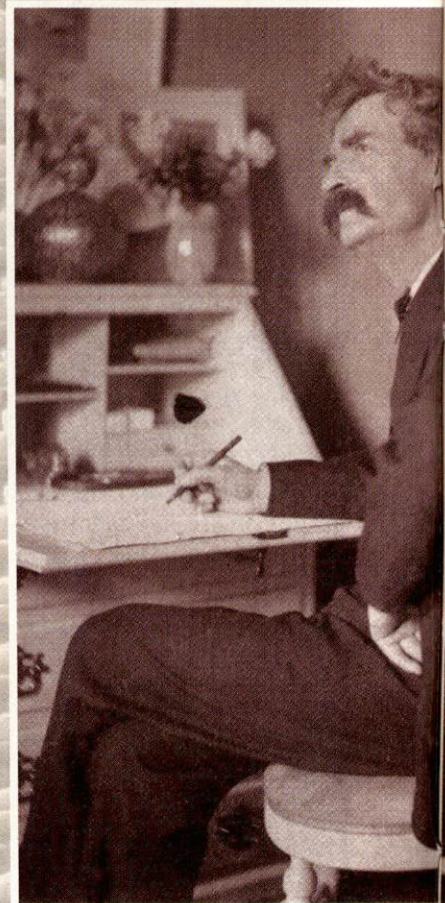
As a barefoot boy sitting on the banks of the Mississippi River, Samuel Langhorne Clemens watched stern-wheeler boats churning the muddy waters, and he heard the leadsmen sounding the depth of the river by calling out to the captains, "By the deep six...by the mark five...by the deep four...by the mark three." When the river bottom was only two fathoms, or 12 feet, down, he would hear the lusty cry "by the mark twain." Long after he left the Mississippi, and after various careers as a riverboat pilot, prospector and printer, Sam Clemens, now a journalist, contributed an article to the Nevada Territorial Enterprise on February 3, 1865, and signed it with a new name – Mark Twain.

In 1876, Twain published *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, a novel that reached back into his Missouri childhood. Later that year, in a casual note written to William Dean Howells, Twain mentioned that he had begun "another boys' book – more to be at work than anything else. I have written 400 pages on it – therefore it is very nearly half done. It is Huckleberry Finn's Autobiography. I like it only tolerably well, as far as I have got, and may possibly pigeonhole or burn the MS when it is done." Fortunately, he did not destroy his text, and on February 18, 1885, 30,000 copies of *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* were released in the United States.

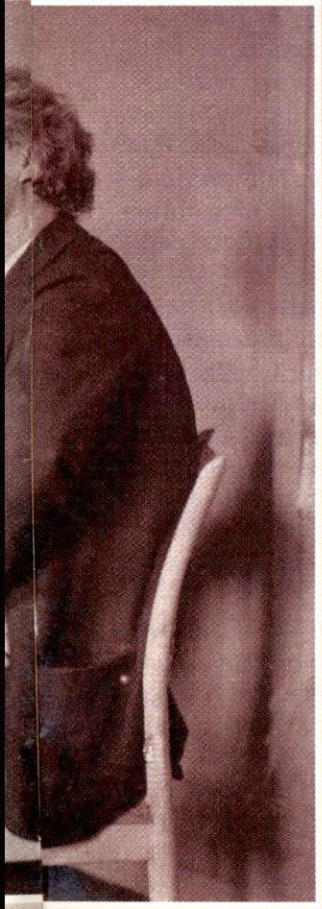
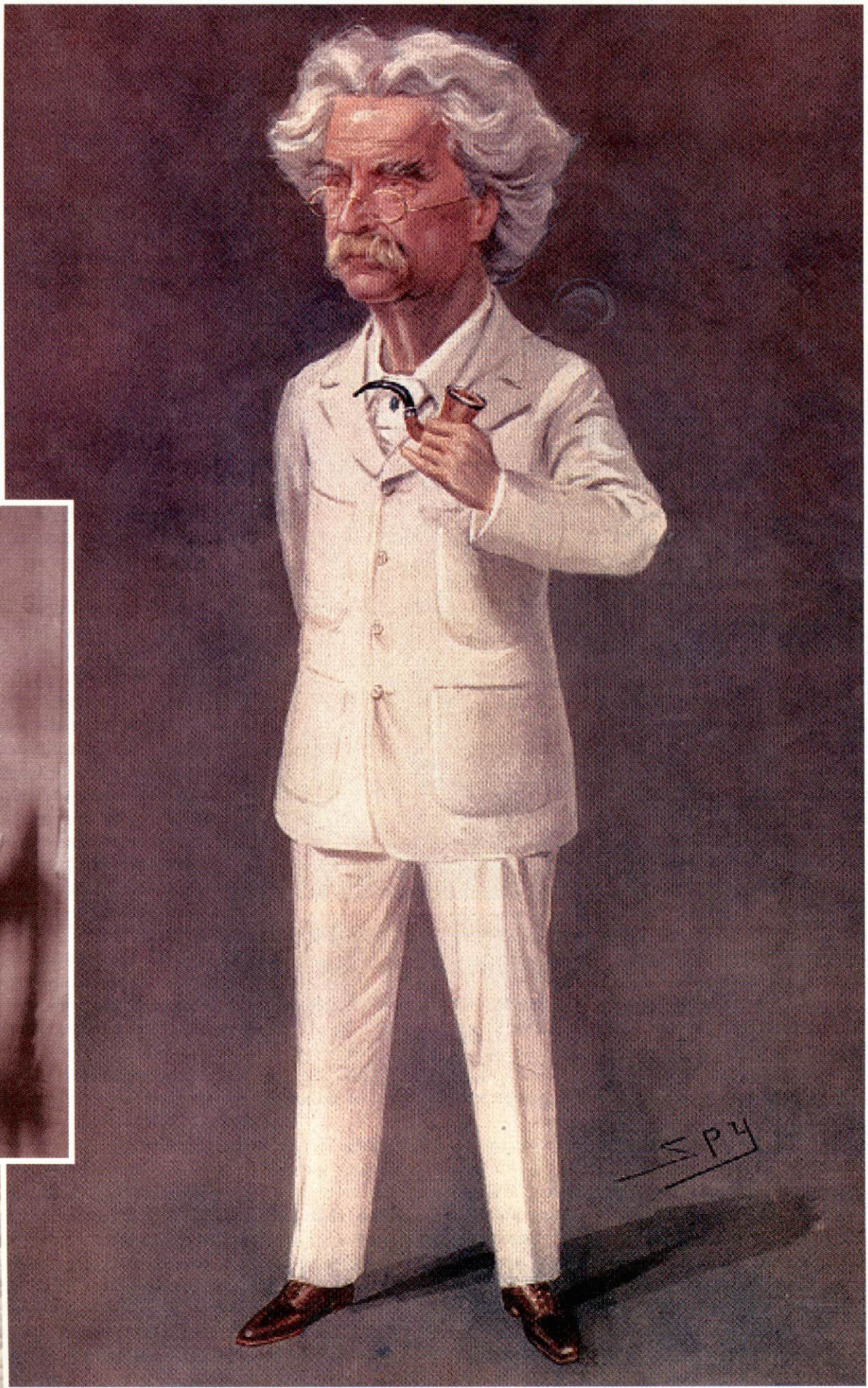
The novel turned out to be Twain's masterpiece, and it changed the direction of American letters. Ernest Hemingway spoke for generations of 20th century

American writers when he said, "All modern American literature comes from one book by Mark Twain called *Huckleberry Finn*. There was nothing before. There has been nothing as good since." With *Huckleberry Finn* American literature came of age.

"You don't know about me, without you have read a book by the name of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, but that ain't no matter. That book was made by Mr. Mark Twain and he told the truth, mainly. There was things which he stretched, but mainly he told the truth." With



BY RICHARD LEDERER, PH.D. ■ ILLUSTRATION COURTESY OF WWW.VANITY-FAIR-PRINTS.COM



these sentences Mark Twain not only began his finest novel but also uttered a clarion call for a new way of writing. In *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, Twain used seven distinct dialects to reflect the speech patterns of various characters, and he also became the first important author to capture the freshness and vitality of the newly hewn American idiom in narrative as well as dialogue. Just as Geoffrey Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales* is the first significant work written in the English language, *Huckleberry Finn* is the first novel of world rank to be written entirely in the American language.

The year Twain published his saga of Huck Finn, he wrote in his notebook, "My works are like water. The works of the great masters are like wine. But everyone drinks water." He wrote pure, unalloyed American folk poetry, freed from the straitjacket of literary prose. He stripped his style of all illusion and puffery. More deeply than anyone else had thought to, he tapped the easy grace and direct simplicity of American speech.

Twain held strong opinions about a passel of subjects, and he possessed the gift of being able to state these views in memorable ways:

- "It's a shame about youth; it's wasted on the young."
- "Be careful about reading health books. You may die of a misprint."
- "Don't part with your illusions. When they are gone, you may still exist, but you have ceased to live."
- "Man is the only animal who blushes. Or needs to."

Modern novelist Kurt Vonnegut points out, "Twain was so good with crowds that he became, in competition with singers and dancers and actors and acrobats, one of the most popular performers of his time." In fact, Mark Twain was one of the most successful professional speakers of all time, often earning more from speaking than from writing. Anyone engaged in public speaking can pick up valuable pointers from the man who may

have been more in demand as an orator than anyone else who ever lived:

On speaking: "It usually takes more than three weeks to prepare a good impromptu speech."

On timing: "I used to play with the pause as children play with a toy. If the pause is too short, the impressive point is passed, and the audience have had time to divine that a surprise is intended – and then you can't surprise them."

More on timing: "The right word may be effective, but no word was ever as effective as a rightly timed pause."

On storytelling: "Most people who have the narrative gift – that great and rare endowment – have with it the defect of telling their choice things over the same way every time, and this injures them and causes them to sound stale and wearisome after several repetitions."

On reading literary works from the platform: "Written things are not for speech; their form is literary. They have to be limbered up, broken up, colloquialized, and turned into the common forms of unpremeditated talk. Otherwise they will bore the house, not entertain it."

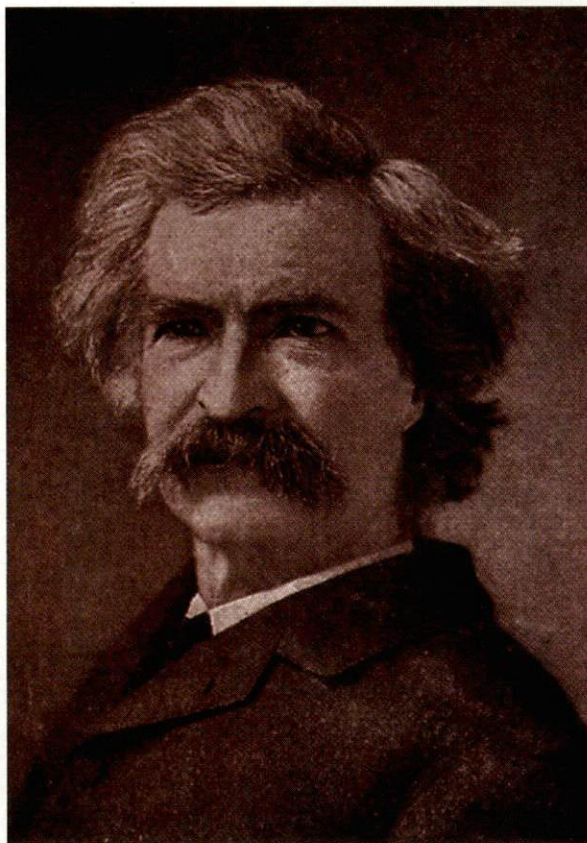
On modulating the voice: "Noise proves nothing. Often a hen who has merely laid an egg cackles as if she had laid an asteroid."

On sermonizing: "Few sinners are saved after the first twenty minutes of a sermon."

Mark Twain's witty remarks about style, literature and language speak to us across a century:

On choosing words: "The difference between the almost right word and the right word is really a large matter – 'tis the difference between the lightning-bug and the lightning."

More on word choice: "A powerful agent is the right word: it lights the reader's way and makes it plain. A close approximation to it will answer, and much traveling is



"My works are like water. The works of the great masters are like wine. But everyone drinks water."

– MARK TWAIN

done in a well-enough fashion by its help, but we do not welcome it and rejoice in it as we do when the right word blazes out at us. Whenever we come upon one of these intensely right words in a book or a newspaper, the resulting effect is physical as well as spiritual, and electrically prompt. It tingles exquisitely around through the walls of the mouth and tastes as tart and crisp and good as the autumn butter that creams the sumac berry."

On style (in a letter to a 12-year-old boy): "I notice that you use plain, simple language, short words and brief sentences. That is the way to write English – it is the modern way and the best way. Stick to it; and don't let fluff and flowers and verbosity creep in. When you catch an adjective, kill it. No, I don't mean utterly, but kill most of them – then the rest will be valuable. They weaken when they are close together. They give strength when they are wide apart."

On being concise: "A successful book is not made of what is in it, but what is left out of it."

On using short words: "I never write *metropolis* for seven cents when I can get the same for *city*. I never write *policeman* because I can get the same for *cop*."

More on short words: "Eschew surplusage."

On the first-person plural pronoun:

"Only presidents, editors and people with tape-worms ought to have the right to use the editorial *we*."

On clichés: "Adam was the only man who, when he said a good thing, knew that nobody had said it before him."

On spelling reform: "Simplified spelling is all right, but, like chastity, you can carry it too far."

On reading: "The man who does not read good books has no advantage over the man who can't read them."

On dictionaries: "A dictionary is the most awe-inspiring of all books; it knows so much...It has gone around the sun, and spied out everything and lit it up."

On writing humor: "There are several kinds of stories, but only one difficult kind – the humorous."

On nonsense literature: "It takes a heap of sense to write good nonsense."

On dialects: "I have traveled more than anyone else, and I have noticed that even the angels speak English with an accent."

Of all the witty statements that Mark Twain said or wrote, none has been quoted more often than his terse response to an alarmist report. Twain was on a visit to London, where he was to be the guest of honor at a liter-

ary club dinner. Early in the day the affair was to take place, the secretary of the club was shocked to hear the news that Twain had died suddenly. The distraught officer sought to verify the facts by a diplomatic note to Mrs. Clemens in which he mentioned the whispers of her husband's demise. Twain got hold of the note and telegraphed the now-famous reply: "The reports of my death are greatly exaggerated."

On April 21, 1910, Twain did, without exaggeration, pass on. At the funeral his friend William Dean Howells came up to say goodbye: "I looked a moment at the face I knew so well; and it was patient with the patience I had so often seen in it; something of a puzzle, a great silent dignity, an assent to what must be from the depths of a nature whose tragical seriousness broke in the laughter

which the unwise took for the whole of him." In *My Mark Twain*, published the year of his friend's death, Howells added: "Emerson, Longfellow, Lowell, Holmes – I knew them all – sages, poets, seers, critics, humorists; they were like one another and like other literary men; but Clemens was sole, incomparable, the Lincoln of our literature."

On the night before Twain's death, Halley's comet shone in the skies as it made its closest

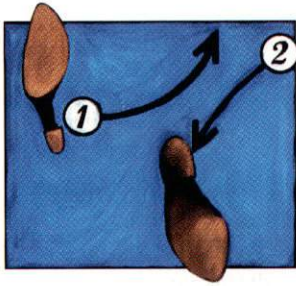
approach to the earth. Just a year before, Twain had said to a friend: "I came in with Halley's comet in 1835. It is coming again next year, and I expect to go out with it. It will be the greatest disappointment of my life if I don't go with Halley's comet. The Almighty has said, no doubt, 'Now here go those two unaccountable freaks; they came in together, they must go out together.' Oh! I am looking forward to that."

The flashing of that fireball in 1910 was a brilliant reminder of the birth, work and death of Mark Twain – humorist, lecturer, storyteller, social commentator and quintessential national artist – the writer who gave a young nation a voice to sing of itself. **T**

"All modern American literature comes from one book by Mark Twain called Huckleberry Finn. There was nothing before. There has been nothing as good since."

– ERNEST HEMINGWAY

Richard Lederer, Ph.D., of San Diego, California, is the author of many book and articles about language and humor, including his best-selling *Crazy English*, and is this year's recipient of Toastmasters International's highest award, The Golden Gavel. He is regularly heard on national public radio and will appear on television for the PBS March pledge drive. Don't miss his presentation at Toastmasters International Convention in San Antonio, Texas, this August!



HOW TO

By Malcolm Kushner

**Use relevant humor
for business success.**

The Light Touch

How many times have you heard a speaker begin a presentation with a joke that has nothing to do with the speech that follows? The joke is irrelevant. What's your reaction? If the joke is funny, it's a distraction at best. If the joke isn't funny, that's called bombing.

The cardinal rule for using humor effectively is to *make it relevant*. The biggest mistake made in public speaking today is the use of irrelevant humor. It's become a national epidemic. Carriers of irrelevant humor come from all walks of business life – managers, executives, salespeople and engineers. They speak at annual meetings, industry conferences, training sessions and employee banquets. After spending weeks or months preparing an important presentation, they take only 10 seconds to throw in their favorite joke. Inevitably, it bombs.

This unfortunate event produces two reactions. One group of business speakers swear off humor forever. They decide they can't tell a joke and revert to the stuffed-shirt school of business communication. Speakers in the other group remain undaunted and continue to inflict irrelevant humor on the world. Neither reaction is desirable or necessary. A few preventive measures can enable anyone to use humor effectively.

Your first step in harnessing the power of humor is to use it for a purpose – to make a point. Relevance reduces audience resistance. A basic principle of audience psychology is that the typical audience attitude is: "You think you're funny – prove it." The professional comedian works hard to overcome this automatic resistance. Even if we don't think the speaker is funny, if the humor makes a point, it moves the presentation for-

ward. We realize that the speaker is using humor to make a point and only secondarily to be funny, and our reaction is generous.

How can you ensure that your humor is relevant? Follow my simple three-step method: Authorize, Analyze and Analogize.

- **To authorize:** Write your serious message first. Don't start with the humor. Add humor after you develop what you're going to say.
- **To analyze:** Carefully review the point you plan to present in your serious message. This step is necessary in making your humor relevant.
- **To analogize:** Make sure your quip or anecdote helps introduce, summarize or highlight one of your points.

The three-step method requires a small investment of time to be effective. Slapdash efforts won't work. Let's examine the process with a real example. An executive had to give a speech to the shareholders at her software company's annual meeting. During the fiscal year the company had lost several million dollars by acquiring a small subsidiary and running it into the ground. The speech had to acknowledge and explain this mistake. When the executive asked me for advice, I suggested using the three-step process.

STEP 1: She wrote a detailed explanation of how the subsidiary had been acquired, including what went wrong.

STEP 2: An analysis of her explanation quickly revealed the main point that she wanted to make in her speech. She wanted to admit that her company had made a mistake by purchasing the subsidiary.

STEP 3: At my suggestion, she explained the events leading up to the subsidiary's failure and then analogized it to the following story:

"It's like the fellow who went to a florist and ordered a floral arrangement for a friend who had opened a new office. Then he went to the new office, and found there a wreath that said, 'Rest in Peace.' Well, this fellow was mad. He went back to the florist. And he screamed and raved and ranted. Finally the florist said, 'All right, I made a mistake. But calm down. It's not that bad. Just think. Somewhere today, someone in the city was buried under a floral arrangement that said, 'Good Luck in Your New Location.'"

The story had the desired effect. It admitted the mistake while provoking laughter from the shareholders. The story eased their tension and helped them accept the executive's explanation.

The power of the analogy method is limited only by your imagination. After all, any quip or anecdote can be analogized to an infinite number of points. It's up to you to make the connections.

Another good example comes from the sales force of a company that sells storage space for backup tapes of computer data. The company's representatives break the ice with prospects by using this anecdote: One of the most important things to consider with any information system is your backup plan. A consultant asked a group of people how many of them had one. One brave soul raised his hand and said, "I have a disaster plan – complete and ready to go into action. It's real simple – just one page." And the consultant said, "A one-page disaster plan? What would you do if your computer center blew up, or flooded, or caught on fire? How could you recover with just a one-page disaster plan?" The response: "Well, it's a simple two-step plan. First, I maintain my resume up-to-date at all times. And second, I store a backup copy of it off-site."

The story is effective because it illustrates the storage company's key selling point: Be prepared. But that story could illustrate other ideas. It would be equally effective for making points about resourcefulness, looking out for number one, career change and the superiority of simplicity. In fact, the story can be used to illustrate any point to which you can analogize it.

A side benefit of using the analogy method is that it forces you to examine your serious message carefully. It keeps you focused on key points. And it helps you discover the parts of your message that don't clearly make a point. In other words, it's a wonderful editing tool that compels you to stay on track.

HOW TO USE OLD JOKES

What about telling old jokes? First – recognize that part of what your audience will find funny is the way you've analogized a joke to one of your points. Using an old joke

in a new way can produce surprise and amusement. Second – old, funny jokes are like old hit songs; most people enjoy hearing them once in a while. Third – what's old to you may be new to someone else. An old joke will work if it makes a point.

A good example comes from the 1984 United States presidential campaign. Sen. John Glenn of Ohio talked about an old man sitting on a porch in a fenced-in yard watching a dog run around. A visitor came up and asked, "Does your dog bite?" The old man replied, "Nope." So the visitor walked into the yard. As soon as he did, the dog ran up and bit a chunk out of his leg. The visitor said, "I thought you said your dog doesn't bite." The old man said, "It's not my dog."

Glenn then analogized the story to Ronald Reagan and the federal budget deficit: "He says it's not his dog that's biting us." Detailed accusations followed.

The story about the dog in the yard is an old joke. But after Glenn started using it, he received a lot of favorable media coverage about his "newfound" sense of humor. In addition, his campaign message reached new voters every time the media quoted the story. The

old joke worked for Glenn because it made a point.

*"The biggest mistake
made in public
speaking today is
the use of
irrelevant humor."*

WHY PERSONAL ANECDOTES WORK BETTER THAN JOKES

What if you can't tell a joke to save your life? Stop worrying. Even if you can't tell a joke, you can tell a humorous personal anecdote relevant to your presentation. The story may involve something that was embarrassing to you years ago but seems funny now. It may even be a story about something that happened to someone else. Whatever the form of your personal anecdote, it will possess two important qualities: First, it will be real. And second, you will be comfortable telling it. After all, you've probably been telling it for years, so no special comic delivery will be required.

The personal anecdote is one of the most powerful tools in your humor arsenal. It never fails to gain attention, and it can be used by anyone. Take advantage of it. Try to recall key events in your life – your first date, your first job, your first driving lesson. All of them offer potentially amusing stories.

So now you know the secret. Using humor successfully is not difficult. It will work if it makes a point. Whether you're talking to one person or one hundred, you will better serve your audience if your humor serves a purpose.

Malcolm Kushner is a humor consultant living in Santa Cruz, California. This article is adapted from his book, *The Light Touch: How to Use Humor For Business Success* (Simon and Schuster, 1990).



Amusing things overheard
from the platform.

Speakers Say the Darndest Things!

With all due respect to Art Linkletter, speakers say the darndest things! And Toastmasters, fret not! Even professional speakers succumb to misstatements, missteps and foot-in-mouth disease from the platform. Perhaps that's not surprising, given the amount of time we're on stage and the pressure we're under to perform. Actually, the combination of pressure, excitement and nerves has been known to result in some amusing faux pas and malapropisms. In fact, comic relief provided by these misstatements is often appreciated by our audiences and, at times, turns out to be the part of our performance that audiences remember most.

Despite our preparation and rehearsal, sometimes words and phrases just don't come out the way we expect them to. Consider the Toastmaster working from the *Communicating on Television* advanced manual. He was discussing handguns, firebombs and arson. His presentation was serious and his passion evident. He asked the audience to consider "the danger inherent in radicals using *Molokai* cocktails" to inflict damage on property. This speaker wasn't booked by a meeting planner, but he could have been hired for the TV show, *Hawaii Five-0!*

Another time I heard a professional speaker being interviewed on radio. She was extolling the virtues of daily exercise. The host asked if



she really worked out year-round. "Absolutely," she replied, "I exercise 375 days a year!" The silence that followed seemed an eternity. The host finally asked, "Did you say three hundred *seventy-five* days a year?" To the speaker's credit, she regrouped, asking, "Did I say that? See how *much* I believe in it!" They say stretching is good for you, even in conversation!

This same speaker experienced a similar situation during a television interview. She knew what she wanted to say, but in the excitement of the moment, the words didn't flow in the order they usually did. In the span of one five-minute segment she spoke of job openings for recent college graduates as "level entry" opportunities and of a major task being a "burst of beaden." Her comments kept viewers engaged as they tried to figure out what she meant to say, and they hung on to every word to hear what else she might jumble. Don't underestimate the laughter engendered by these misstatements.

Humorist June Cline shared a case of unintended humor she created by bungling a standard statement she usually employs at the start of her presentations. With a completely straight face, at the outset of one of her training sessions, she asked attendees to "turn their vibrators on page." It's not clear whether her misstatement turned her audience off...or on! What is known is that the ensuing laughter did more to facilitate effective training than any planned or contrived technique she could have used.

We all know the value of provocative titles and dramatic openings to capture the attention of our audiences. Speakers beware, however, as you may be laying a trap you or your introducer could fall into. Roseann Sullivan, a past president of the National Speakers Association's Northern California chapter, periodically delivers a workshop on marketing, titled "How to Hook a Booker." One time, her introducer was heard to say "and here's the booker hooker herself..." For speaker and introducer, getting the title right when it matters most, therein lies the trick.

Openings can be fraught with danger. Consider this experience of Toastmaster and professional speaker Michael J. Herman. On short notice, Herman was invited to fill in for an ailing speaker and address a professional society in San Diego on the subject of change. Assuming he'd been hired by the California Natural Society, he prepared his presentation and drove to the San Diego venue. He was met by his introducer and immediately ushered backstage. After being introduced over the PA, Michael strode confidently onstage, shook the introducer's hand, and then turned to the audience, enjoying a wonderful welcoming ovation.

It didn't take him long to notice that a man in the front row was sans apparel. The man next to him was

similarly disrobed. In fact the whole front row appeared to be naked! Michael thought he might be hallucinating. As he scanned the crowd he realized they were all nude! It turned out the group was the California Naturalist Association, and they indeed were buck naked.

Suddenly Michael felt overdressed. His first laugh of the day occurred when he asked if the audience would mind if he took his coat off. For years Michael had heard the advice that to combat nervousness in public speaking, one should imagine the audience naked. For once, Michael tried imagining his audience *had* clothes. Michael confesses this was one time he was ambivalent about receiving a standing ovation.

Michael believes speakers should walk their talk. Yet this was one gig where, though he spoke about change, he himself was unwilling to change. In this case, he was happy to be overdressed.

Humor often derives from pronunciations, and mispronunciations. There was the speaker who was discussing the prevalence of stressed-out type-A workers. And he stated unequivocally that in Silicon Valley, these workers were "You-Be-Qwee-shusss."

Ubiquitous or not, the laughter caused by her mispronunciation filled the room.

Some of the funnier mispronunciations I've heard from the platform:

- LASH-a-Vicious (lascivious)
- Deeter-MINED (determined)
- Ana-THEEMA (anathema)
- Bay-NAL (banal)

And my all-time favorite:

- Pair-ah-DIG-'em! (paradigm)

Toastmasters can take comfort in knowing that at every level of speaking, mispronunciations occur. Our mind may say one thing but our mouth may say another. For professionals and Toastmasters of all levels, while we want to say what we mean and mean what we say, it's nice to know our audiences appreciate humor – whether or not it's intended.

So remember, perfect makes practice, I mean...well, you know what I mean, right? **T**

Professional speaker **Craig Harrison**, a nine-year Toastmaster, is a member of Speakers Bureau Forum #9338-57 in Lafayette, California. Craig began as a humorist at age 11, when he went door-to-door in Berkeley, California, selling "Used Jokes." Contact him at www.craigspeaks.com.

*"Michael thought
he might be
hallucinating.
As he scanned the
crowd he
realized they
were all nude!"*

Myths About Mirth

Making sense of humor.



"There are three things which are real: God, human folly, and laughter. The first two are beyond our comprehension. So we must do what we can with the third."

— JOHN F. KENNEDY

Since 1977, The HUMOR Project has been doing "what we can with the third." In our presentations to more than two million people throughout the world, we have discovered some common mythconceptions about humor. Let's tackle or tickle them one at a time:

MYTHCONCEPTION #1:

PEOPLE WON'T TAKE ME SERIOUSLY IF I USE HUMOR

Myth: People won't respect me professionally if I use humor.

Truth: As shown by the best-selling book, *FISH!: A Remarkable Way to Boost Morale and Improve Results*, "work made fun gets done."

It is important that we take seriously our goals, roles and missions in life – and it is also important that we take ourselves lightly. This is crucial, because there is a cosmic joke being played on all of us. Many best-selling books suggest that we should be not only in search of excellence but that we should have a passion for excellence. This is a good message: that we should strive to meet our individual and organizational potential. At the same time, by definition, human beings are imperfect. So, what do we do with the gap between the perfection we seek and the imperfection we need to live with? Laughing at ourselves is the best way to bridge that gap.

Having worked with many corporations, human service organizations, government agencies and school systems throughout the United States and abroad, I echo the words of Don Seibert, former CEO of the JC Penney Company:

"The most senior people and virtually all of the chief executive officers with whom I'm personally acquainted have highly developed senses of humor. Humor is a common thread I've seen in thousands of meetings in different companies on the most serious of subjects. Humor helps you to keep your head clear when you're dealing in highly technical information or difficult decisions where choices aren't that clear."

"Don't take life so seriously – You'll never get out alive!" is the message on a poster in my office. It suggests that you can be a serious professional without being solemn. Your sense of humor can add an important touch of humanity to your life and work.

*"Cents of humor
might save a
lot of dollars."*

**MYTHCONCEPTION #2:
HUMOR IS NOT SERIOUS**

Myth: We have more important things to deal with than humor. The bottom line takes precedence over the funny line.

Truth: In fact, the two lines can go together. Management expert, best-selling author and Toastmasters' Golden Gavel recipient Tom Peters suggests: "The number one premise of business is that it need not be boring or dull. It ought to be fun. If it's not fun, you're wasting your life."

When I speak to corporations and associations, I offer many reasons why humor is fun, but not for fun. Here is a taste:

1 Jest for the health of it! Perhaps the most significant bottom line is your health – without it, you're dead (literally or figuratively). The old adage, "Laughter is the best medicine," appears to be on target – for you individually and for your organization. The late Norman Cousins' best-selling book, *Anatomy of an Illness*, certainly opened up many people's eyes to the notion that "S/he who laughs lasts." Cousins, an outstanding leader and great humanitarian, describes how he intentionally

used various sources (books, films) to tap his own sense of humor, hope and optimism in recovering from a painful and debilitating illness. Dr. William Fry Jr., who has done extensive research on the physiology of laughter, lends support to Cousins' notion that laughter is like "internal jogging." Laughter positively affects blood pressure and respiration, suppresses stress-related hormones and activates the immune system.

We at The HUMOR Project believe so much in the humor-health connection that we have given grants to 350 hospitals, human service agencies and schools to help them tap the power of humor. These grants have helped establish humor rooms and comedy carts in hospitals, "geriatrics" programs in nursing homes, and comedy clubs for "at risk" students.

On an organizational level, humor can be an important health factor, too. It may provide a key to lowering health-care and insurance costs, to minimizing drug and substance abuse (humor can provide a "natural high"), and to reducing absenteeism (by improving morale and the quality of work life). A 1993 report to the President's Science Advisor placed these costs to the economy at more than \$200 billion annually. Cents of humor might save a lot of dollars.

2 “Stress” and “burn-out” have become household words. Humor can be a powerful antidote to stress – it can help us to move from a “grim and bear it” mentality to a “grin and share it” orientation.

This notion is captured well by George Burns, who died in 1996 at the age 100. George said “You can’t help growing older, but you can help growing old.” By using humor, we can prevent a “hardening of the attitudes.” If you stand rigidly in the face of stress, you are much more easily knocked off-balance. If you are flexible mentally, you are in a much better position to “roll with the punches” that life throws you.

This shows up over the long haul, too. In his longitudinal study of what made for “success” in Harvard College graduates, Dr. George Vaillant found humor to be a key coping mechanism in warding off the health hazards of stress. In other words, you can use humor to add years to your life and life to your years.

3 “A smile is the shortest distance between two people,” according to Victor Borge. We have used that quote on our envelopes for the past 25 years, because we believe that humor can be a powerful – and delightful – way to build positive working relationships, increase motivation and improve morale. This has significant implications these days when “teamwork” is an important strategy for “doing more with less.”

Ken Blanchard, Toastmasters’ 1992 Golden Gavel recipient and best-selling author of *The One-Minute Manager* and other books, notes that “Humor and laughter in organizations can increase the amount of feedback you can get, the honesty, and the capacity for people to tell you good things. All the solutions to problems in organizations are within your own people, but the problem is half of them don’t want to say anything, because they usually get zapped – you kill the messenger. It’s through humor that you can open up the lines to communication.”

Regardless of whether we’re six feet under, six feet over, or somewhere in between, humor can help.

4 Finally, humor is power. It can serve as a mirror of what is going on in society and, perhaps more importantly, it can also serve as a vehicle for change. Larry Klein, one of the writers for American television’s popular *The Tonight Show*, noted that humor “is the only form of revolution we have left in this country.”

It may not be the only form, but it can be a powerful formula for helping people work through the challenges of change and conflict. Given the current world situation filled with terrorism, anthraxieties, and international tension, humor could help preserve our sanity and

humanity in the midst of some insane and inhumane realities. In short, humor can transform a negative situation into a positive. This particular point was driven home by a true story told by Norman Cousins in our *Laughing Matters* magazine:

During the Cold War, Cousins and a group of distinguished Americans were meeting with a group of distinguished Soviet citizens at the Dartmouth Conference, which was designed to promote international understanding. What made this goal particularly difficult to achieve was that while they were meeting, the Cuban Missile Crisis erupted. The discussions quickly degenerated. In Cousins’ words:

“The sessions got very tense, and it looked as if they were breaking down. I thought of Dr. Schweitzer and his redeeming sense of humor, and I asked permission to suspend the discussion on the Cuban Missile Crisis and suggested that we go around the table and have each person tell his favorite story. The Russians thought this was a fine idea. The first Russian to speak was Alexander Kornichuk, a friend of Kruschev’s, who asked ‘What is the difference between capitalism and communism?’ After an appropriate pause, he gave the answer, ‘In capitalism, man exploits man. Of course, in communism, it’s the other way around.’

“That completely broke the tension at the conference... We were beginning to think together. And now for the first time, we began to speak to a common problem: How do we get out of it? We’re in it. We both have to get out of it... It was a powerful example of the power of humor to get people to throw off incidental affiliations – incidental in terms of a main affiliation, which is membership in the human race.”

As Erma Bombeck once said, “When humor goes, there goes civilization.”

*“Humor is laughter
made from pain,
not pain inflicted
by laughter.”*

MYTHCONCEPTION #3:

TO BE HUMOROUS, YOU HAVE TO BE A “NATURAL” JOKE-TELLER

Myth: Humor equals joke-telling.

Truth: Humor certainly includes jokes, but it goes way beyond! Humor is much more important than mere joke-telling. Humor is an attitude, a perspective, a set of skills that can help us achieve important goals in our lives and jobs.

We may be born with a certain genetic ceiling and floor when it comes to “humor” – but it’s what we do in our lives that influences whether we end up on the ceiling or floor. In other words, there is hope.

Although joke-telling is one way to transmit humor, it's not the only way. In fact, there are literally thousands of ways to invite smiles and laughter. So, if joke-telling is not your forte here are some alternatives to get you going:

1 Put humor into the physical environment – by osmosis, it may filter into the corporate culture. This could be accomplished by having a humor bulletin board with light-hearted sayings, like this one by Robert Frost: “The brain is a wonderful organ. It starts working when you get up in the morning and does not stop until you get to the office.”

2 Anticipate ways of injecting humor into potential conflict situations. This is called “prepared flexibility,” which is what life is all about anyway. Having available a repertoire of quotes may help you through some sticky situations. The next time you're in a conflict, you can disagree without being disagreeable. Just say with a twinkle in your eye, “Save time. See it my way!”

3 Develop your comic vision. Look for humor and it will find you. Make believe you are Allen Funt (the creator of the *Candid Camera* television show) for five minutes each day – especially in the most serious of places. For instance, one of my graduate students passed along this sign she saw in front of a church announcing the two services for a particular Sunday: “Theme of 9:30 a.m. Service: Jesus Walks on Water. Theme of 5:00 p.m. Service: Searching for Jesus.” You are sometimes expected to “walk on water,” and yet, you may be searching for yourself in the process. Searching for humor is a wonderful way to find yourself.

4 Use humor as a tool rather than a weapon. Laughing with others builds confidence, brings people together and pokes fun at our common dilemmas. Laughing at others destroys confidence, demolishes teamwork and

singles out individuals or groups as the “butt.” In the words of one teacher, “You don't have to blow out my candle to make yours glow brighter.” Humor is laughter made from pain, not pain inflicted by laughter.

5 Laugh at yourself. Set the tone by modeling your ability to take your job seriously and yourself lightly. One of the simplest and most powerful ways of doing this is to “tell stories on yourself” whenever possible and appropriate.

My friend Rose Cellino-Reynolds told me about the time she went to a conference filled with salespeople. The big thing for these salespeople was to wear a beeper. Rose did not have a beeper and was feeling a bit out of place. So she went home that night and came back to the conference the next morning with tongue-in-cheek – wearing her garage door opener. As Rose suggests, “Learning to laugh at myself is the first step in developing a sense of humor.” Your sense of humor can magically open all kinds of doors for you!

Life is serious. Life is a laughing matter. Both are true. By choosing humor and laughter, we can survive and thrive.

If you've ever been in a painful or difficult situation in which someone says, “Some day we'll laugh at this!” you might offer the following suggestion: “Why wait?” Laughing at yourself can have both immediate and long-term payoffs. Invest in jest now! **T**

Joel Goodman, Ph.D., is founder and director of The HUMOR Project, Inc. in Saratoga Springs, New York. For a free copy of the *2002 Humor Sourcebook* and for more info on the positive power of humor, send a stamped (\$1.03), self-addressed envelope to: The HUMOR Project, Dept. TM, 480 Broadway, Suite 210, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866, call 518-587-8770 or visit www.HumorProject.com.

The HUMOR Project, Inc.

Get More Smilage Out of Life and Work!

Since 1977, The HUMOR Project, Inc. has been a leading organization focusing on the positive power of humor and creativity. Its goal is to provide services, programs and resources to help people get more smilage out of life and work.

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MANNER OF SPEAKING

By George R. Gilbert and Dori F. Gilbert

From Stand-up to Standout

How can using a yo-yo make you a better speaker? How can humor add punch to your presentations? I started learning the answers to these questions at the age of 12. My parents, Tulara Lee and George Gilbert, performed as a comedy-variety act for more than 40 years. Jack Benny once said they were the funniest act he'd ever seen. When I was 12, Mom and Dad were scheduled to appear at the Disneyland Hotel. They told their agent, "Georgie is a part of the act." I really wasn't. I had only done a little standup act at school and now suddenly here I was about to be thrown out in front of 800 people. The master of ceremonies asked my mother, "Should I tell the audience that he's your son?" She replied, "Well, let's wait and see how he does first."

That was my introduction to the world of professional comedy. Since then I have made the transition from stand-up comedy to public speaking. I've learned that the difference between doing stand-up comedy and speaking is that in comedy you use humor to get the laugh, while in speaking you use humor to get the audience. Humor can be used to keep the audience interested, to entertain and to make a point. Laughter also creates a bond between the speaker and the audience.

Many speakers are afraid to use humor because they don't know how to use it. First, you need to know your audience. Different types of humor work better for different types of audiences. As Malcolm Kushner, author of *The Light Touch: How to Use Humor for Business Success*, says, "Become an expert on your audience. The more you know about them, the more you can tailor your humor directly to their interests. After all, it's hard to hit a bull's-eye if you can't describe the target." (An article based on a chapter in this book is published on page 12.)

Your humor has to fit your personality.

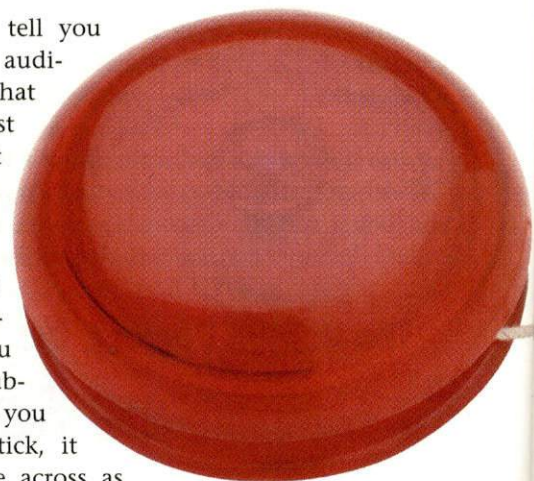
In a business setting you would use humor relevant to the audience's industry. Learn about the latest trends. Learn about any new products or upcoming events. These could all be incorporated into your humor. You also need to learn their language. Accountants, computer programmers, engineers and most professionals have their own jargon. By inserting some of their jargon into your humor you will portray yourself as someone in the know. The audience will be more likely to laugh with you if they feel you are one of them.

As an after-dinner speaker you could use a broader range of humor, such as topical humor. But make sure the topic is universally known. It should be based on a "front-page" event and not a small article in your hometown newspaper (unless, of course, your audience is from your hometown). Also, you should remember that off-color or offensive humor is never a good bet with any audience.

Most experts tell you to know your audience, and while that is important, most of them won't tell you that you also need to know yourself.

Your humor has to fit your personality. If you are a quiet, subdued person and you try to do slapstick, it might not come across as believable. Subtle or dry humor would probably work best for you. Try different types of humor in your speeches and see what feels most comfortable for you. Jerry Seinfeld once said, "The whole object of comedy is to be yourself. The closer you get to that, the funnier you will be."

Where can you find humor to put in your speech? You can write your own material as you compose the speech. And just as you should be an expert on your audience, you should be an expert on your speech subject. Finding a humorous perspective becomes simple when you thor-



oughly know your subject. If you have not yet developed the ability to find humor in all topics, you can refer to joke books such as *Milton Berle's Private Joke File* by Milton Berle, or *10,000 One-Liners* by Henny Youngman. An even safer way of adding humor to your speech is with a funny quote. You can find these in books such as the *Random House Treasury of Humorous Quotations*. You'll discover that the more you use humor, the more your sense of humor will develop.

Don't make the mistake of thinking that only humorous speeches require humor. Humor can be incorporated into any type of speech. Serious speeches can be lightened up with some appropriately placed humor. I often give speeches on the importance of organ and tissue donation, a subject that is not exactly a laughing matter. I describe all of the traumas my wife went through when dealing with kidney failure, such as having a metal plate inserted into her broken ankle. I then go on to say how she's now doing so great that the only way you would ever know she had a problem is when she walks through the metal detector at the airport and the alarm goes off. This is what I call a relief laugh. The audience has been listening to all these horrible things my wife went through and they need a laugh to release the tension.

Sometimes a transition from a serious moment to something lighter is needed. After September 11, I was scheduled to give a speech on the importance of humor. Right before they introduced me, there was a moment of silence in memory of the victims. To start with a joke the way I usually do would have been in bad taste and might have alienated my audience. Instead I quoted Winston Churchill's reply to Franklin D. Roosevelt when asked whether to light the White House Christmas tree right after the Pearl Harbor attack. Churchill said to go ahead and light the tree and "give the children a night of joy and laughter." I then told my audience, "Tonight we need to have an evening of joy and laughter." In this way I let the audience know that it was OK to laugh and I could proceed with my speech.

Many speakers believe that too much rehearsing might make your speech look too rehearsed. I beg to differ. Do you ever start to tell a joke and then can't remember the set up or punchline? This most likely happens because you don't rehearse the joke enough. I rehearse

my speeches over and over. I know them so well that when I am giving them I am able to concentrate on my delivery. Every time I practice my speeches I give them as if in front of a live audience. I keep my speeches from appearing too rehearsed by constantly looking for different ways to deliver my material.

One of the biggest mistakes comedians or speakers make is to step on their laughs. You don't want to start telling the next joke or story before the audience finishes laughing. For one thing, this signals to the audience that you're nervous and you just want to get your speech over with and sit down. Also, you want to elicit as big a response as you can when telling a joke or humorous story. When you speak over your laughs you choke them off. The audience stops laughing because they want to hear what you're saying. If you do this often enough in your speech you train your audience not to laugh.

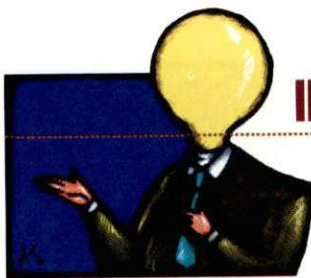
Many comedians use a timing gimmick to avoid stepping on their laughs.

George Burns, Alan King and Milton Berle used a cigar. They would tell a joke and then take a puff on their cigars as a subliminal message to the audience that it was time to laugh. Jack Benny would put his hand on his cheek. The longer they paused, the bigger the laugh. I used to step on my laughs when I was 12. My parents told me I was too young for a cigar, so my mother gave me a yo-yo. I would tell my joke, and then do the yo-yo, which would cause me to wait for my laugh. I used this method until one day my yo-yo was stolen from my dressing room. I told my parents I couldn't go on without my yo-yo. They told me that I didn't need it anymore and to just imagine I still had it. I went out and told my jokes imagining I was still doing the yo-yo. Sure enough, I didn't step on my laughs. Today it is second nature for me to pause and wait for my laughs. Find a trick that works for you to remind you to wait for your laughs.

When it comes to using humor, the best advice I can give you is that given to me by many of the old-time comedians my parents worked with: Get up in front of an audience as often as possible. You don't have to be a comedian to put humor in your speeches. All you need is the willingness to see and appreciate humor in everyday life. Giving your audience a reason to laugh is your gift to them, and their laughter is their gift back to you. So the next time you give a speech, try some humor – with or without a yo-yo. **T**

*"In comedy
you use humor to
get the laugh, while
in speaking you
use humor to get
the audience."*

George Gilbert, ATM-B, is a Toastmasters International Accredited Speaker and a member of several clubs in Las Vegas, Nevada. He tours the country speaking about the importance of humor. His wife, **Dori Gilbert**, is a freelance writer.



Tried and True Topics For an Original Speech

Are you stuck for your next speech topic? Perhaps you have an idea but are unsure whether it will really grab and keep the audience's attention. Here are a few guidelines.

Have you ever ruthlessly reduced the basic plot of a gripping book or movie to a few words or phrases? In so doing, have you noticed that the central themes are the pursuit of love, power, money and immortality? The James Bond series takes these themes to the extreme. The hero, 007, gets away with his life, the girl and the satisfaction and acknowledgement of a job well done. The villain's schemes of gaining immense wealth or world domination are foiled.

The great classics of the big screen and hardcover books such as *Wuthering Heights*, *Gone with the Wind* and even the copious pages of *War and Peace* can be summarized in the same basic story line: the pursuit of love, power, wealth and immortality.

When selecting a speech topic, a natural inclination is to be original, but tried and tested themes do still work. Just look at popular movies or novels. It has been said that there is no original thought, so where does that leave the speechmaker who wishes to be original? Word arrangement, approach to a theme and style of delivery are elements contributing to an original speech.

To ensure audience attention and retention of speech content, here is the "4 R" formula:

■ **Rejuvenation.** Who of us does not want to know how to look and feel younger? You could discuss and compare the numerous diets on the market. Or relate experiences of attending health spas or undergoing cosmetic surgery. You can explain a form of exercise or sport and the paraphernalia that goes with it. Focusing on the benefits of taking vitamins could be an excellent speech topic. Closely related to eternal youth is the desire to be remembered forever. Or weave a speech around a famous person who has left a legacy – an artist, athlete, author or actor, for example.

■ **Reward.** The Bible says, "The love of money is the root of all evil" (1st Timothy 6:10). But money is not the only

type of profit people seek. We strive to gain the favor of a special person through all manner of thoughtful deeds. Athletes aim to win and obtain fame from the media and fortune from prize money and sponsors. People perform feats, sometimes sublime and sometimes ridiculous, just to secure their names in the *Guinness Book of World Records*. The respect for a task well done may be their only recognition. One could also speak about how the search for supreme power led to the downfall of infamous historical characters such as Jezebel, Napoleon and Hitler.

■ **Romance.** Who can deny the need for love? Who of us have not been fascinated or frustrated by its highs and lows? Even the toughest and roughest of people cannot help but be moved by fairytale romances and passionate sagas that have affected the course of history.

Researching and relating the stories of famous people's spouses or partners could be another riveting topic. After all, England's Prince Phillip and former U.S. First Lady Hillary Clinton are people in their own right, each having interesting personalities and pursuits.

■ **Right.** Famous historical figures such as Mother Teresa, Florence Nightingale, Gandhi and Martin Luther King were motivated by what they felt was right in their hearts and minds. Appealing to the audience's better judgment can form the base for a powerful and memorable motivational, inspirational or persuasive speech. Incidents demonstrating love of others above love of self are, in this "me-first" world, a treasure to uncover and a tale worth telling.

While the characters of each story differ, human nature is such that we are intrigued by rejuvenation, reward, romance and what is right. With carefully chosen words and well-prepared delivery, these themes are a launch pad for a great speech. 1

Larna Anderson, ATM-S, is a member of Port Elizabeth Club 2856-74 in Port Elizabeth, South Africa.



By Brenda Caine, ATM-G

Ask Miss Behavin'

Most members – new and old – have questions. And more often than not, they fail to ask them out of fear, embarrassment or shyness. I began to notice this tendency within my own club, and others I visited. One particularly trying afternoon, I observed

another club's meeting (the names have been withheld to protect the innocent) and I was overcome with compassion and empathy for these curious, confused, confounded members. I leaned back, took a deep breath and – BOOM! CRASH! – Miss Behavin' emerged. Floating on the bright light of wisdom, Miss Behavin' is here to answer your questions. Do not be afraid, I am here to help you!

DEAR MISS BEHAVIN': *I've practiced my speech, but I'm not sure what to do in front of the room before I begin and after I'm done. Can you help?*

TONGUE-TWISTED TOASTMASTER

DEAR TONGUE-TWISTED: It's easy to make a smooth entrance and exit. First, walk confidently to the front of the room as you are introduced. Shake the Toastmaster's hand, then wait until he or she sits down before you start to speak. If you do this you'll have everyone's undivided attention as you begin. You don't want anyone to miss that great opening you planned! When you finish your speech, don't end with "Thank you." After all, it is your audience who should thank *you* for speaking. Simply finish your speech, and acknowledge the Toastmaster with a nod or hand gesture and a "Mr./Mme. Toastmaster." Wait for the Toastmaster to return to the front of the room and shake your hand. Don't rush back to your seat and leave the meeting with no one in control (even though your first instinct may be to sit down as fast as you can and thank your stars you simply survived). Follow these steps and you will look calm, cool and collected (regardless of your actual state). Who knows? You may even start to believe it yourself.

DEAR MISS BEHAVIN': *Everybody in the club knows me. Why do I have to give the Toastmaster a bio for my introduction every time I give a speech?*

MYSTIFIED MEMBER

DEAR MYSTIFIED: A proper introduction gets your speech off to a good start. The Toastmaster of the Day has a big

responsibility in introducing the speakers. A good introduction will:

- Set or shift the tone of the meeting. ("I know you're all having fun, but now it's time to get serious." Or vice versa.)

- Build anticipation to hear the speech.
- Give the speaker the authority/ credibility to speak on this topic.

The introduction must answer three questions:

- Why this speaker?
- Why this topic?
- Why at this time?

Think about a presentation you've heard. Didn't the person making the introduction talk about the speaker's credentials and give some history on how the speaker came to talk about this topic? That's so the audience would know the speaker was qualified to speak and the audience would be ready to listen.

Consider this: Brian is going to talk about his hobby, golf. Here's how the Toastmaster might introduce him: "Our first speaker today is Brian Sullivan. Brian works in Information Technology, but when he's not at his desk, you're sure to find him on the golf course. Brian took up golfing just six months ago thinking it would be a good way to unwind after work. (Why this topic?) Today we'll get a status report on his progress (Why at this time?) and find out whether this new hobby might help us relieve our stress or add to it. (Why this speaker?) The title of Brian's speech is 'A Long Drive.'"

As a speaker, make sure to give the Toastmaster the information you want included. Warning! Prepare yourself in case the introduction doesn't come out just the way you expected. You may have to ad lib to fill in a detail or two during your talk.

Work with the Toastmaster to build a good introduction, and you'll have a head start on a successful speech.

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Brenda Caine, ATM-G, a.k.a. Miss Behavin', is a member of Sunrise Bluffers Club 6347-26 in Scottsbluff, Nebraska. She welcomes your questions at BrendaCaine@yahoo.com.

THE
 VARIOUS
 SHADES
 OF
 HUMOR

Not all humor is created equal.

Barry told me about it just a few days after the event. He still looked pale. He'd been asked to "say a few words" at his association's annual convention and he'd jumped at the chance. It was a great way to get in a few plugs for his own company, and besides, he knew the perfect story to start with "to loosen everybody up."

So when he got up to the mike, Barry figured he was all set. The audience was mostly engineers, and his funny story was about lawyers, but he'd altered it to make do. He'd also thrown in the names of some of the listeners to make the story seem authentic. And he'd even inserted a few "gags" of his own to make it funnier. Sure, it ran a little long, but, as Barry said, that was to be expected.

The story seemed to go off without a hitch. As Barry delivered the punch line, he stood straight, smiled, looked out at the sea of faces, and waited for the laughter and applause.

"Art, it was like a funeral," he said. "They just sat there, staring at me. Some of them were glaring at me, I swear, and worst of all, some just looked grim and shook

their heads. It was awful – the worst day of my life. I don't even remember what I said after that. I just got through as quick as I could and got out. I still don't know what I did wrong."

Even without hearing Barry's story, I had a pretty good idea of what had gone wrong. He'd broken at least four of the eight rules for using humor in a presentation. In exchange for a good lunch, I gave him a crash course in the subject.

To begin, some background notes: Humor is entirely subjective. Some people won't laugh on pretext and others don't laugh on principle. The former don't think anything is funny; the latter think humor is frivolous. A smattering of these folks can be found in any large gathering, which is why it is so important that humor be



natural, topical and relevant. If the material you use to liven up your presentation does not connect with the majority of your audience, these gloomy critters get the upper hand.

Most people don't realize (or care, for that matter) that humor comes in several formats. They think of humor as all the same and, as long as it makes them laugh, don't appreciate the differences. But those who use it to entertain – whether as a full-time occupation or as a technique to hold an audience for other purposes – must be aware of the distinctions.

Humor on TV or in the movies is different from humor in magazines, which differs from humor in books, which is not the same as shorts and fillers in magazines, which is a whole different breed from stand-up. The skills needed in a public presentation are much closer to stand-up than they are to the gentle pace of book humor. This was one of the ways in which Barry got it wrong.

RULE NO. 1

Humor must be appropriate to the audience.

A service club auxiliary hired the brother of a well-known comedic impersonator to be the after-dinner entertainment at its annual fund-raiser. The brother, an

established comic in his own right, failed to research the audience beforehand, a precaution that all humorists, professional or otherwise, should always take. His monologue was larded with ribald references and "blue" humor, leaving his audience of conservative and mature ladies decidedly unamused. Unless your venue is a nightclub, avoid risqué, sexist, ethnic and other forms of "edgy" humor. This rule should be obvious, but far too many presenters break it, to their great disadvantage.

RULE NO. 2

Humor should be on-topic for the audience.

A professor agreed to address a gathering of petroleum executives. Partway through his talk, he told them a story centered around an amusing occurrence at a gas station. Unfortunately, these executives were all from oil well drilling companies, far removed from the marketing side of the business. The professor's story was still funny and received a polite reception, but it told his audience he wasn't the expert on their business that he held himself out to be.

If you're going to tell relevant humorous anecdotes to your audience, know who your listeners are. Again, do your research.

RULE NO. 3

Use the correct humor style for the audience.

Whereas Rule No. 1 relates to comedic taste – that is, what sort of material is suitable for the crowd – this rule is about your mode of expression. Dry humor, puns, humorous literary and learned references are very hard to deliver successfully to a large audience. Just as dangerous as the “broad” humor of No. 1, “narrow” humor should be avoided except for specialized gatherings. In a seminar for master electricians, the speaker recounted a story about a young woman who was learning the trade from her father and called it “Electra-fying.” Whether anyone understood the joke at all or simply didn’t find it funny, no one laughed.

RULE NO. 4

Pick your targets with care.

Years ago, a comedian named Don Rickles made a career of ridiculing members of the audience. People flocked to see him and be abused, but they knew what they were getting into. Presentations to business audiences are a world apart. If you know the individuals involved very, very well, you can risk a personal humorous reference. But note: It’s still a risk.

The secret solution? Stick to self-deprecating humor. If you know the perfect humorous anecdote, say where someone really messed up and that messing up is the ideal illustration of the point you want to make, tell the story making yourself the screwup. Audiences find self-deprecating humor refreshing and endearing. In contrast, many people find humor at another’s expense downright offensive.

RULE NO. 5

Keep them short.

By all means, perk up your talk with funny stories, but keep them brief. It is a comedic fact that the longer the build up, the bigger the punch line the audience expects.

In the 1950s, “shaggy-dog” stories made the rounds: long-winded, rambling jokes with generally weak endings. Typical of the type was the story of the train official who caused a derailment and was sentenced to death for it. They tried to electrocute him three times but each time nothing happened. When they finally asked him if he knew why it didn’t work, he said he guessed he was just a poor conductor.

Cute enough summarized in a single paragraph, but some shaggy-dog stories went on for what seemed like hours before their modest endings. Humorous presentation stories should take no longer than one minute to tell. More than that, and you’d better have one “boffo” ending.

RULE NO. 6

Make sure there is a joke.

This is not a dictum to add humor to every presentation. Rather, this rule says simply: When you’re making a joke, be sure what you’re telling is funny. We’ve all been there: Someone says something and then laughs uproariously, while the rest of us look at each other with puzzled expressions on our faces, trying to figure out what we’ve missed.

Don’t assume that your stories are all material for an HBO special. Try them on someone else before you try them on the public.

RULE NO. 7

Dish them out judiciously.

Contrary to popular belief, it is not necessary to start a presentation with a joke. Often other openings are appropriate or more effective. One speaker on behalf of an international charity starts her talk with what can only be described as a horror story. For the message she has to deliver, it’s far more effective than a joke would ever be.

But generally speaking, an upbeat anecdote is the preferred takeoff point for a presentation. It just needn’t be (and shouldn’t be) the only point in the talk where you use humor. If you load the front end of your speech with all the good stories, the rest of the talk drags in comparison. Space out the fun parts so that the audience gets a “break” every few minutes.

RULE NO. 8

Don’t overdo it.

It’s a spoonful of sugar that helps the medicine go down, not a bucketful. Use too many jokes and the audience will enjoy your stand-up routine, but they’ll forget your message. Humor should be used to drive your points home, not displace them altogether. An insurance executive I know can lay them in the aisles – like Jerry Seinfeld. He has a million funny stories about the things he’s seen in the business over 40 years – weird claims, incompetent fraud artists, investigation sneakiness, all the truly hilarious goings-on in a business most people don’t think of as interesting at all. Audiences laugh ‘til their sides hurt. Unfortunately, hardly anyone goes away remembering what his talks are all about, which is how to protect yourself from suffering losses of the sort he recounts. But they all know they had a good time.

Armed now with the Eight Rules, how do you go about preparing yourself so that you don’t break them? Here are some practical tips:

1. **Keep a card index or computer file of jokes that you think you might be able to use.** File the jokes under subject headings. I suggest you use the section headings from the weekend edition of a large metropolitan newspaper. They often reflect current social interests and concerns, such as homes, cars, food and health.
2. **Practice your delivery until it's easy and natural.** If no family member or club member will agree to audition the same material over and over, use a tape recorder and listen to yourself improve.
3. **Research your audiences** by attending a meeting before your own presentation. Ask the chairman for details about the audience, such as average age, gender, occupation. Also check for the number of people expected to attend, length of the meeting, equipment available, seating arrangements and whether or not

- food or drinks will be served before, during or after your talk. All these points can affect the presentation.
4. **Test your material on others.** Tip 2 is about delivery; this one is about content. Pick neutral people, not family members who may humor you to spare your feelings. Run several tests to make certain a positive reaction wasn't a fluke.
 5. **Don't ad-lib.** Nightclub comics can get away with this because even if the quick retort is offensive, it's not a career-altering event. But if you embarrass your host or your president, well, it doesn't bear thinking about.

That's it Barry. Next time, they'll laugh. T

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Arthur Kirkby, of Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada, is a freelance writer and humorist.

I'm Glad I Mentioned It!

By Camille Crandall, ATM-B

I recently visited a group of esteemed, talented, professional women – artists, writers, speakers and composers. We introduced ourselves, and some read their writings, others displayed their drawings, paintings and assorted works in process. Comments, suggestions and evaluations were welcome. I thought, how did I get here, and what can I offer? Well, there's no doubt about it, Toastmasters brought me there! I went as a writer and confident speaker. I knew I could offer constructive evaluations – all skills I gained through Toastmasters.

During lunch I visited with an accomplished artist. Her recent, commissioned portrait of a German shepherd looked like a photograph! You could almost see every hair of his furry coat.

The artist, in a soft-spoken, timid manner, said, "I heard you mention that you're a Toastmaster. I've been thinking about looking into it, but I don't know..." She said she often was "steamrolled" when speaking with family members – they talked right over her as if she hadn't said a word. I immediately encouraged her that *Yes!* What she had to say was valuable, and she could learn to speak so that others would listen. I told her of the



wonderful advice, guidance and camaraderie a Toastmasters club offers, and how the manual assignments help teach speaking skills – one at a time. After our meeting, I followed up with a phone call to encourage her to visit a club in her area.

A month later, out of the blue, I got a call from the artist. "I've joined Toastmasters!" she said very proudly,

"And I'm giving my Icebreaker speech tomorrow." She asked if I'd offer a tip or two. "Of course!" I said, and she gave her speech over the phone while I timed her. Her speech had great "bones," so with a few suggestions, she was eager to go! I asked her to let me know how it went, and she did. "Nervous at first," was the report, but things got better as she went along. The evaluation

was positive and encouraging, and she was happy. I'm delighted to say that I mentor this new member and watch her confidence grow as she approaches her fourth manual speech. Am I glad I mentioned Toastmasters? You bet! T

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Camille Crandall, ATM-B, is a member of King Webster Club 2491-6 in Roseville, Minnesota.

SAN ANTONIO:

A Revolutionary Experience!

Join Toastmasters from around the world at the San Antonio Marriott Rivercenter in San Antonio, Texas, for the 71st Annual International Convention, August 21-24, 2002. Make new friends, hear dynamic speakers, and enjoy all the excitement and pageantry that a Toastmasters International Convention offers. This convention will be spectacular!

THE SAN ANTONIO MARRIOTT RIVERCENTER welcomes Toastmasters and their guests. Located in the heart of downtown on the River Walk, it's easy to see why this hotel is at the center of it all. Cobblestone walkways lead visitors to the river-level attractions that include unique shops, restaurants and nightclubs. Hotel rooms are filling up fast! Reserve your room by completing the hotel reservation form on page 30, or call the hotel directly at (210) 223-1000.



THE ALAMO – Mission San Antonio de Valero (The Alamo) was established in 1718 as the city's first mission. It is famous as the scene of a strategic battle against Mexican troops in the Texas Revolution in 1836. The chapel, one of the most photographed facades in the U.S., and the Long Barrack are all that remain of the original fort. The Alamo is located in the heart of the city, inside beautifully landscaped grounds, and is open daily.



SEA WORLD OF TEXAS – The world's largest marine-life adventure park, Sea World of Texas is four parks in one – marine animal park, rides and slides park, water park and show park – with more than 25 shows, educational exhibits, rides and family attractions. For park hours and admission prices call (210) 523-3611.

YANAGUANA CRUISES – Ya-Wanna-Go-Onna cruise? A great way to see the River Walk is aboard a colorful Yanaguana Cruiser. Enjoy a historical tour along the River Walk. This attraction is pure San Antonio. Ticket booths are on the River Walk. For cruise hours and admission prices call (210) 244-5700.

JAPANESE TEA GARDEN – Visit this old rock quarry, which produced the limestone used to build the State Capitol and many of the homes in San Antonio. Winding pebbled walkways, stone bridges and tranquil pools are highlights. Irregular shaped ponds with giant goldfish and water lilies reflect flashes of color from plants and trees. A waterfall drops 60 ft. from a high cliff into a pool. Hours: 8 am-dark. Admission: Free.



SHOPPING - Antique shops abound in the central city and in charming towns on the outskirts. Art galleries cover a wide spectrum of artistic achievement, including contemporary and Western styles and Latin American folk art. Ten major shopping malls dot the city and three large outlet malls are within an hour's drive of downtown. No serious shopper would miss La Villita and Market Square in the historic heart of the city!

Save money by registering early online at www.toastmasters.org!

Look for complete convention program details in the April issue.

AUTOMATIC SEAT PRESELECTION

World Headquarters will automatically preselect your seats for the *Golden Gavel Luncheon, Denim & Diamonds Party, International Speech Contest, and President's Dinner Dance*. If you DO NOT want your seats preselected and want to select your seats on site, simply check the appropriate box on the convention registration form. World Headquarters will preselect seat locations in the order in which it receives convention registration forms – so, register early! Those individuals who wish to select their own seats may do so at the Convention beginning on Wednesday, August 21, at 10:00 a.m.

Seating Preselection Procedure

1. World Headquarters will assign seating locations in the order in which it receives convention registration forms.
2. Preselected seating will be offered on an "all or none" basis only. Registrants may purchase tickets to one or more of the events which have assigned seating. However, if preselected seating is requested, World Headquarters will select seat locations for **all** tickets for event(s) that have assigned seating.
3. Assignment of preselected seat locations will be at the discretion of Toastmasters International.
4. All preselected seat locations are **final** and **cannot** be changed prior to the convention or on site.
5. Toastmasters requesting preselection of seat locations and who wish to sit in a group must mail their registration forms together in the same envelope. World Headquarters will make every attempt to accommodate such requests.
6. World Headquarters will make every effort to seat larger groups (*registrants purchasing six or more tickets for any single event*) at the same table. However, it is possible groups of six or more may be seated at separate tables.
7. **Deadline:** Advance registrations must reach World Headquarters by **July 22**. Cancellations and refund requests will not be accepted after **July 22**. Cancellations will not be accepted on site – no exceptions!



San Antonio
Marriott Rivercenter
Welcomes

TOASTMASTERS INTERNATIONAL® 2002 CONVENTION AUGUST 21-24, 2002

MAIL THIS FORM TO:
Marriott Rivercenter
101 Bowie Street • San Antonio, TX 78205
(800) 648-4462 or (210) 223-1000
Fax (210) 554-6248 - Attn: Group Housing

HOTEL REGISTRATION FORM

Arrival date: _____ Departure date: _____

Number of nights you will stay: _____

Number of people in room: _____

Approx. arrival time: _____

(CHECK-IN 4:00 P.M. - CHECK-OUT NOON)

Method of transportation: Car Air Other

Late departures will be charged a full night's rate plus taxes.

Special Conference Rates (circle rate desired)	
MAIN BUILDING	SUITES
\$135.00 single/double	Phone hotel directly if suite is desired. Cost and availability varies.

Please Note: Special conference rates are based on reservations received by July 25, 2002, and room block availability.

After July 25, all subsequent reservations will be subject to availability at the current hotel rack rates.

PLEASE RESERVE ACCOMMODATIONS FOR: (please print or type)

Name (last) _____ (first) _____ (initial) _____ Company _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone () _____ Fax () _____ Sharing room with: _____ Email _____

Special Requests: King 2 Double Beds Non Smoking Smoking Other (specify) _____

(Note: Every attempt will be made to honor your request, however we cannot guarantee a special request.)

To guarantee your reservation we require first night's deposit or credit card guarantee. Please include 16.75% occupancy tax per night. DO NOT SEND CASH. Make check or money order payable to the San Antonio Marriott Rivercenter.

Credit Card type _____

Credit Card # _____ Exp. _____

Check # _____ Amount _____

SIGNATURE DATE

DON'T BE A NO-SHOW

To cancel your reservation call (800) 648-4462 or (210) 223-1000. If you fail to arrive by midnight the day of your scheduled arrival, your room will be released and may not be available. You must cancel your reservation 48 hours prior to arrival to avoid being charged one night's room and tax. Fax: (210) 554-6248.

A room confirmation will be mailed to you as soon as possible.

DO NOT MAIL THIS FORM TO TOASTMASTERS INTERNATIONAL



71ST ANNUAL CONVENTION

AUGUST 21-24, 2002 ♦ SAN ANTONIO MARRIOTT RIVERCENTER, SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS, U.S.A.

MAIL THIS PART TO: Toastmasters International, P.O. Box 9052, Mission Viejo, California 92690 U.S.A. (This form is not to be used by International Officers/Directors, Past International Presidents, Past International Directors, or District Governors elected for 2002-2003.)

To attend general sessions on Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday, a registration badge will be required. Preregister and order event tickets now! **You must be registered to purchase tickets to any events, including the International Speech Contest.** ATTENDANCE AT ALL MEAL EVENTS AND THE INTERNATIONAL SPEECH CONTEST WILL BE BY TICKET ONLY. Advance registrants will receive a receipt by mail. Tickets can be claimed at the registration desk beginning at 10:00 a.m. Wednesday, August 21. On site registration fees will be higher.

ALL ADVANCE REGISTRATIONS MUST REACH WORLD HEADQUARTERS BY JULY 22.



FULL CONVENTION REGISTRATION only \$390.00

SAVE \$25 compared to "A La Carte" Registration

SAVE \$50 compared to "On site" Registration

A Full Convention Registration Package includes the following:

- One Convention Registration
- One Golden Gavel Luncheon ticket (Thursday, August 22)
- One "Denim & Diamonds" Party ticket (Friday, August 23)
- One International Speech Contest ticket (Saturday, August 24)
- One President's Dinner Dance ticket (Saturday, August 24)

_____ One Person @ \$390.00 \$ _____
 _____ Spouse/Guest @ \$390.00 \$ _____

A Full Convention Registration Package also includes one admission to the Club Leadership Luncheon **OR** one admission to the Toastmasters & Guests Luncheon. You may select only one event ticket for every member/spouse/guest that is purchasing a convention registration! Please indicate the number of tickets you require for each event.

_____ Club Leadership Luncheon ticket (Friday, August 23)
OR
 _____ Toastmasters & Guests Luncheon ticket (Friday, August 23)

You may purchase tickets to the following optional events. Please indicate the number of tickets you wish to purchase for the events listed below:

_____ Interdistrict Speech Contest ticket (Tuesday, August 20) @ \$20.00 \$ _____
 _____ Overseas Dinner ticket (Tuesday, August 20) (Open only to delegates outside U.S./Canada) @ \$57.00 \$ _____

SECTION A - TOTAL \$ _____



"A LA CARTE" REGISTRATION

SAVE \$25 compared to "On site" Registration

"A La Carte" Registration allows you to attend all general educational sessions during the Convention. Event tickets are not included and must be purchased separately.

_____ One Person @ \$175.00 \$ _____
 _____ Spouse/Guest @ \$175.00 \$ _____

EVENT TICKETS:

_____ Interdistrict Speech Contest (Tuesday, August 20) @ \$20.00 \$ _____
 _____ Overseas Dinner (Tuesday, August 20) (Open only to delegates outside U.S./Canada) @ \$57.00 \$ _____
 _____ Golden Gavel Luncheon (Thursday, August 22) @ \$48.00 \$ _____
 _____ Toastmasters & Guests Luncheon (Friday, August 23) @ \$43.00 \$ _____
 _____ Club Leadership Luncheon (Friday, August 23) @ \$43.00 \$ _____
 _____ "Denim & Diamonds" Party (Friday, August 23) @ \$62.00 \$ _____
 _____ International Speech Contest (Saturday, August 24) @ \$25.00 \$ _____
 _____ President's Dinner Dance (Saturday, August 24) @ \$62.00 \$ _____

SECTION B - TOTAL \$ _____



"ONE-DAY" CONVENTION REGISTRATION

"One-Day" Convention Registration allows you to attend general and educational sessions and purchase event ticket(s) that take place the day you are registered. Please check the box for the day you wish to register.

Wednesday/Thursday (Aug. 20 & 21)
 Thursday (Aug. 22)
 Friday (Aug. 23)
 Saturday (Aug. 24)

_____ One Person @ \$105.00 \$ _____
 _____ Spouse/Guest @ \$105.00 \$ _____

Please indicate the number of event tickets you wish to purchase. You may purchase only one event ticket for every member/spouse/guest that is purchasing a convention registration!

EVENT TICKETS:

_____ Interdistrict Speech Contest (Tuesday, August 20) @ \$20.00 \$ _____
 _____ Overseas Dinner (Tuesday, August 20) (Open only to delegates outside U.S./Canada) @ \$57.00 \$ _____
 _____ Golden Gavel Luncheon (Thursday, August 22) @ \$48.00 \$ _____
 _____ Toastmasters & Guests Luncheon (Friday, August 23) @ \$43.00 \$ _____
 _____ Club Leadership Luncheon (Friday, August 23) @ \$43.00 \$ _____
 _____ "Demin & Diamonds" Party (Friday, August 23) @ \$62.00 \$ _____
 _____ International Speech Contest (Saturday, August 24) @ \$25.00 \$ _____
 _____ President's Dinner Dance (Saturday, August 24) @ \$62.00 \$ _____

SECTION C - TOTAL \$ _____

TOTAL FROM SECTION A \$ _____
TOTAL FROM SECTION B \$ _____
TOTAL FROM SECTION C \$ _____
TOTAL AMOUNT DUE \$ _____

World Headquarters will preselect your seats only for the Golden Gavel Luncheon, "Demin & Diamonds" Party, International Speech Contest and President's Dinner Dance. All other events are "open seating." All preselected seat locations are final and cannot be changed prior to the convention or on site. If you do wish to select your own seat(s) when you arrive at the convention from remaining available seats, please check this box. (See page 29 for Seat Preselection Information.)

Check enclosed for \$ _____ (U.S. Dollars) payable to Toastmasters International. **Cancellation and refund requests will not be accepted after July 22. Cancellations will not be accepted on site. NO EXCEPTIONS!**

WHQ Use Only
 T- _____ GG T- _____ SC
 T- _____ FN T- _____ DD

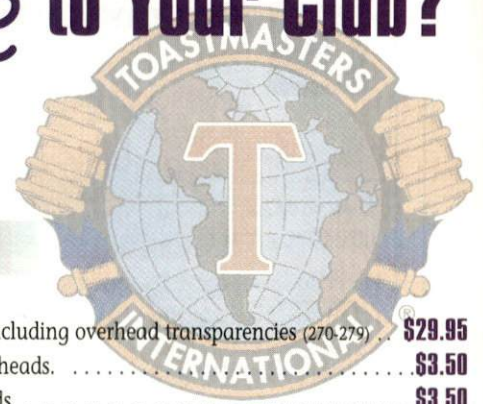
(PLEASE PRINT) Club No. _____ District _____
 Name _____
 Spouse/Guest Name _____
 Address _____ City _____
 State/Province _____ Country _____ Zip Code _____
 Daytime Telephone () _____ E-mail _____

PAYMENT METHOD (U.S. FUNDS):
 MasterCard VISA AMEX
 Card Number _____
 Expiration Date _____
 Signature _____

I need special services due to a disability. Please contact me before the Convention.
 This is my first TI Convention.

Looking for a Way to Add New *Life* to Your Club?

Present one or two of these 10-15 minute modules in your club each month and you'll be surprised how your meetings will improve, and how your club's members will incorporate the tips into their speeches.



The Better Speaker Series

- ___ **269 The Better Speaker Series Set** - A complete set of *The Better Speaker Series* modules, including overhead transparencies (270-279) ... **\$29.95**
- ___ **270 Beginning Your Speech** - Suggestions for starting off your speech right. Script and overheads. **\$3.50**
- ___ **271 Concluding Your Speech** - Tips for ending your speech with power. Script and overheads. **\$3.50**
- ___ **272 Take the Terror Out of Talk** - Techniques for overcoming nervousness when speaking. Script and overheads. **\$3.50**
- ___ **273 Impromptu Speaking** - Don't be caught off balance when speaking off-the-cuff! Script and overheads. **\$3.50**
- ___ **274 Selecting Your Topic** - Running out of speech ideas? Here's how to develop new ones. Script and overheads. **\$3.50**
- ___ **275 Know Your Audience** - If you can relate to your audience, they will relate to you. Script and overheads. **\$3.50**
- ___ **276 Organizing Your Speech** - Once you know what to say, consider next the when and the how. Script and overheads. **\$3.50**
- ___ **277 Creating an Introduction** - Great introductions should precede great speeches. Script and overheads. **\$3.50**
- ___ **278 Preparation and Practice** - Techniques for preparing and rehearsing your next speech. Script and overheads. **\$3.50**
- ___ **279 Using Body Language** - Explains how to use facial expressions, gestures, and body movement to enhance a speech. **\$3.50**

The Successful Club Series

- ___ **289 The Successful Club Series Set** - A complete set of *The Successful Club Series* modules, including overhead transparencies (290-300) ... **\$39.95**
- ___ **290 The Moments of Truth** - How to recognize and deal with situations critical to club success, from a visitor's first impressions to recognition of member achievement. Includes script, overheads and a club evaluation chart. **\$10.95**
- ___ **290-B Additional Club Evaluation Chart** **\$.35**
- ___ **291 Finding New Members for Your Club** - Proven methods to help you seek out those vital new members! Script and overheads. . . **\$3.50**
- ___ **292 Evaluate to Motivate** - Your club members will learn to give evaluations that benefit the speaker, the evaluator and the audience! Script and overheads. **\$3.50**
- ___ **293 Closing the Sale** - Exercise your powers of persuasion during those moments when a guest is deciding to join. Script and overheads. . . **\$3.50**
- ___ **294 Creating the Best Club Climate** - Techniques for creating and maintaining a healthy club environment. Script and overheads. . . **\$3.50**
- ___ **295 Meeting Roles and Responsibilities** - How members can successfully fill each meeting role. Script and overheads. **\$3.50**
- ___ **296 Mentoring** - A mentor program offers many benefits for your club and its members. This program defines mentoring, explains benefits, and discusses responsibilities of mentors. Includes a Club Mentor Program Kit (Catalog No. 1163) for starting a mentor program in your club Script, 11 overheads and Club Mentor Program Kit (Catalog No. 1163). Script and overheads. **\$14.95**
- ___ **297 Keeping the Club Commitment** - Discusses the 10 standards the comprise "A Toastmasters Promise." Includes 25 promise cards. Script and overheads. **\$3.95**
- ___ **298 Going Beyond Our Club** - Find out about learning and leadership opportunities available to members in addition to regular club meetings and activities. **\$3.50**
- ___ **299 How to Be a Distinguished Club** - A terrific tool to use to explain and promote the Distinguished Club Program to the members of your club. Script, overheads, and 1 copy of Distinguished Club Program booklet (Catalog No. 1111) **\$3.50**
- ___ **300 The Toastmasters Education Program** - What does it take to receive the Competent Toastmaster (CTM) award? What about the Competent Leader? This module provides a terrific education program orientation. The information is valuable to new and experienced members. **\$3.50**

PAYMENT MUST ACCOMPANY ORDER

- Enclosed is my check in the amount of \$ _____ (U.S. FUNDS)
- Please charge my MasterCard / Visa / AMEX (CIRCLE ONE)

Card No. _____
 Exp. Date _____ Signature _____
 Club No. _____ District No. _____
 Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State/Province _____
 Country _____ Zip _____
 Phone _____ E-mail _____

Mail to:
Toastmasters International
 P.O. Box 9052
 Mission Viejo, CA 92690 USA
 (949) 858-8255
 FAX (949) 858-1207

Merchandise Total _____
 Shipping _____
 CA residents add
 7.75% sales tax _____
TOTAL _____

Standard Domestic Shipping Prices - 2002

TOTAL ORDER	SHIPPING CHARGES	TOTAL ORDER	SHIPPING CHARGES
\$0.00 to \$2.50	\$1.65	35.01 to 50.00	\$7.75
2.51 to 5.00	3.30	50.01 to 100.00	9.00
5.01 to 10.00	4.00	100.01 to 150.00	12.00
10.01 to 20.00	4.75	150.01 to 200.00	15.00
20.01 to 35.00	6.75	200.01 to —	Add 10% of total price

For orders shipped outside the United States, see the current Supply Catalog for item weight and shipping charts to calculate the exact postage. Or, estimate airmail at 35% of order total, surface mail at 25%, though actual charges may vary significantly. Excess charges will be billed. California residents add 7.75% sales tax. All prices subject to change without notice.

See the Supply Catalog for more information.