Web Sites to Live By

www.toastmasters.org



A Lesson from Georgetown: How to Start a University Club

VIEWPOINT

It's the World Series, But...

Several years ago I found myself in the role of manager for my youngest son's baseball team. On one occasion, we were

participating in a two-day tournament where pitchers were allowed to pitch a total of 10 innings, a common practice intended to protect the health of young baseball players.

The opposing team, the Ravens, had a particularly effective pitcher, Jim, who helped the team win all its games leading up to the final. Our team, the Dragons, had also won all its games. Our head coach, Jerry, had been very judicious in using our players so that no one pitched more than the maximum innings allowed. As we began the final game, we started our best pitcher, Sam, who had only three innings left to pitch. By our calculation, Jim had only two innings left to pitch before he reached the limit of 10.

At the end of the second inning, everyone on our team waited patiently to see who the new Ravens pitcher would be. To everyone's amazement, Jim walked to the mound. Our head coach, Jerry, called time out and protested to the umpire. The umpire called the Ravens' coach, Mike, out of the dugout and a conference took place. Mike grudgingly admitted that Jim had pitched his limit of 10 innings but refused to remove him from the game.

Jerry called the Dragons off the field and told the umpire and Mike that our team would not continue to play if Jim continued as the pitcher for the Ravens. Thirty minutes of debating took place while the players and the crowd grew increasingly restless. Finally, Jerry called the Dragons' players and their parents together and announced that we were not going to continue to play, that we would forfeit the final game, and he asked everyone to return home.

Some parents were visibly taken aback by our coach's decision. However, I had known Jerry for several years and was not surprised by his action. Jerry "walked the talk" that day just as he "walked the talk" every day. He lived his values. And he believed that everyone should abide by the same rules. When they didn't, he simply chose a course of action that clearly demonstrated his values.

The impact on the team was amazing. The boys talked about it for weeks afterward. And they came together as a team, united by the action of their coach that day. They became very focused and very successful, ultimately going all the way to the World Series for 9- and 10-year-olds.

Has your club come together - united in a common purpose? Are all members actively participating with a clear focus on serving the needs of the members? Are you "walking the talk" in your club? Has it reached the World Series?

you R Grainer

Jon R. Greiner, DTM International President



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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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LETTERS

In Search of Humor

Regarding letters about Shula Hirsch's article "Confusing Communication," (August 2004), I thought the article was "a lighthearted effort to capture the amusing differences in usage among English-speaking countries," just like the author said in her response. I also found Robert Arthur Dobbin Crawford's comment (Letters, October 2004) "profoundly depressing." As Toastmasters, we've learned to express our disagreement in a constructive manner. Insulting the author's level of education or knowledge is not what this organization stands for. Besides, the article is Ms. Hirsch's personal opinion. It does not represent the USA. There's no need for Mr. Crawford to offend the whole country. Who is "exceedingly touchy" here? Tuan Nguyen, CL . Fairwinds Club 9427 . Port Hueneme, California

I am always amazed at how quickly people take offense when they perceive their homeland or customs being attacked. Mr. Crawford from England, but late of Australia, had an over-the-top reaction when he scolded Shula Hirsch for her "typically American" attitude of "thinking that all others are either wrong or comical, while being exceedingly touchy about criticism of yourselves." Look in the mirror, Mr. Crawford.

Ms. Hirsch's polite and diplomatic reply was in the same vein as her article, self-effacing and kind. I applaud her for apologizing for any offense, "however inadvertently," and think she deserves the same from Mr. Crawford. I thought her article was right on, and very amusing. As some of the other readers pointed out in their contributions: When we travel, we all go through those instances, which range from mildly humorous to comical and embarrassing. We should laugh at ourselves if we have a sense of humor at all, and not take ourselves too seriously. Ms. Hirsch's

article helped us do just that. Lighten up, people.

Sherrie Klingler, ATM-B • Murray Chamber Chatters Club 603698 Murray, Utah

Too Many Pictures

While it may be said that a picture "is worth 1000 words" and undoubtedly adds to any article, I found the use of three photos in the October issue devoted to one member's U.S. military experience excessive.

Especially so as *The Toastmaster* has determined to cease publishing names of CTM, ATM achievers and undoubtedly omitted articles and letters due to space limitations.

I did not feel this article and its timing was appropriate, especially given the worldwide scope of Toastmasters International. Clifford Fournier, DTM • Golden Club 2672 Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada

Procrastinating No More

I wanted to thank you for including the articles "Defeating Procrastination" by Charles Downey and "Get Off Your but/and Now!" by Susan E. Schwartz (September).

I have a terrible habit of procrastinating. When I first heard about Toastmasters in 2002, it took me over six months to decide to join my company's club. Once I did, it took me several meetings to get up the courage to give my Ice Breaker speech. When I left that job, I had to leave the club, as it is for employees only, it took me several weeks to find my current club, Downtowners Club 2696 in Salt Lake City, Utah.

I appreciated "Defeating Procrastination" for the suggestions at the end and "Get Off Your but/and Now!" for the humorous way it looked at procrastination. Both articles made me think about why I leave things until the last minute.

I feel lucky to have found my club and Toastmasters. Thank you for these wonderful articles... and the other great issues of *The Toastmaster* that I have received.

Jill Bogler, CTM • Downtowners Club 2696 • Salt Lake City, Utah

Good For Our Health

I think it's great and very appropriate that Toastmasters International is recommended for our health. On page 466 in the book *The World's Greatest Treasury of Health Secrets*, by Boardroom Inc., Toastmasters is recommended for those who fear public speaking.

Alice Vaeth, ATM • Silver Spring Club 1314 Silver Spring, Maryland



in our office uses pens anymore."



The colorful spectrum of Toastmasters club names.

What's In a Name?

A few years ago, the members of my Toastmasters club decided it was time to change our club's name to keep in step with the rebranding of our corporate host company. After tossing around a bunch of suggestions, we decided on a logical and obvious choice: Cable & Wireless, based on the new name of our workplace.

But there's no rule that says we had to incorporate the company name into our own. In fact, when I periodically browse through Toastmasters International's Find a Club section, I never cease to be surprised and amused at the variety of monikers by which Toastmasters clubs make themselves known around the world. Let me share some of my favorites with you. worry – you can always link up with the High Noon Bankers or Twilight Talkers instead.

Some clubs are named after the day of the week on which they meet, such as the Monday Mumblers in Chattanooga, Tennessee, and the Saturday Brunch Bunch in Lincoln, Rhode Island. If you're going to be in Palm Desert, California, anytime soon, why not drop in on the T.G.I.F. Singles club – which, by the way, meets on Wednesday evenings.

Many new clubs take their cue from their location when choosing a name. So we have the Chihuahua Toastmasters in Chihuahua, Mexico; the Two Oceans club in Cape Town, South Africa; Top of The World in (where else?) Anchorage, Alaska; and And then there are those very special Toastmasters around the world who announce themselves with a club name that is just plain colorful, funny or memorable. I can imagine that speakers with an excess of verbosity should fit right in among the Babble Ons of Tacoma, Washington, for example. Those who are still working to conquer their speaking fears, however, might at first feel more akin to Rapid Pulse in Vancouver, Canada – and, eventually, later say hello to Goodbye Jitters in the city of Winnipeg.

Similarly, I can never help but smile whenever I see reference to the Chuckle 'n Chirp club in Western Cape, South Africa, or the evocatively named Toastmasters of The Morning Calm in Seoul, South Korea. And

"The Toastmasters experience truly embraces people of all interests and walks of life in almost every part of the globe."

My club is in good company among the corporate set: Many such groups boast a name that is based on their work environment. For example, there is the Heineken club at the famous brewer in Amsterdam in The Netherlands; the Adl**ibm**asters based at IBM in San Jose, California (get it?); the Ford club in Dearborn, Michigan; and Verbal Attax at the Canada Revenue Agency in Scarborough, Ontario.

Although mine is an afternoon club, many other Toastmasters meet early in the morning, at lunchtime or at night. Those in New Zealand seem to have a thing for morning clubs; maybe this has to do with them being among the first persons on earth to welcome each new day. You can find clubs there named Early Risers, Daybreak and First Light. If you're not a morning person, don't Talk of The South in (you guessed it) Queensland, Australia. If you want to hear some really sharp public speakers, drop by the Razor City club in the town of Gillette, Wyoming. And you can get some really good enunciation practice just repeating the name of the Ho'oponopono Pa'ahao club on Oahu, Hawaii!

Of course, every Toastmasters group is unique, but there are some that uniquely focus their activity on a single theme or subject. For instance, in Le Gourmet club in Costa Mesa, California, many of the speeches are on the subject of food – and meetings are all held during dinner at various area restaurants. I wonder if the culinary-challenged speaker might not feel more at home a few miles east in Riverside, California, with the Burnt Toast club. what more apt title for a Caribbean club could there be than Tropical Eloquence in the U.S. Virgin Islands?

This colorful spectrum of club names reflects one thing, at least – that the Toastmasters experience truly embraces people of all interests and walks of life in almost every part of the globe. And what better way for a newly formed Toastmasters group to establish a unique identity and pique the interest of their community than with an apt yet intriguing club name? I'm sure that my fellow Toastmasters in at least one club in Las Vegas, Nevada, will say, I'll Drink To That.

Sam Brathwaite, CTM, is a member of Cable & Wireless Club 9140 on the island of Barbados in the West Indies. E-mail him at sam_brathwaite@ caribsurf.com.

TOASTMASTER PROFILE

You Think **YOU'RE** Afraid of Public Speaking?

By Rob Bloom

Table Topics is a formidable challenge for a member who stutters.

" ow can a whole week have passed already?" you think to yourself as you walk into the meeting room. As you survey the room and quickly mumble polite greetings to your fellow Toastmasters, you inconspicuously shuffle to a seat in the poorly lit corner, hoping to camouflage yourself with the wallpaper.

The meeting begins. So far, Operation Introvert is working to perfection. And then, it happens... You see, I am a person who stutters (PWS). And if you think *you've* got a tough time at club meetings, try on a pair of my loafers for a few paragraphs.

I've stuttered my whole life. I remember being three years old and struggling with all my might to push out the word d-d-daddy. As the years passed, my fight for fluency continued – my stuttering only becoming more severe.

So what is the result of a few decades of stuttering on the psyche? Well, I'm proud to say that I have successfully trained myself to have a fear of talking – in general. Unlike other club members who wrestle with anxiety about mere *public* speaking, I routinely go into panic attacks when confronted by such seemingly easy tasks as ordering food in a restaurant, giving a destination to a taxi driver, and even answering the telephone. While my stuttering is not the direct result of nervousness, I certainly "block up" more in an single bound. Rob Bloom can manifest deep levels of anxiety in a single breath! And if everyday events are enough for my brain to send smoke signals puffing out of my ears, you can just imagine what a friendly session of Table Topics can do.

Ah, Table Topics – the weekly event that should be preceded with a disclaimer of "Be afraid. Be very afraid." Table Topics, the club tradition that carries with it a great legacy of hand trembling, sweaty palms and dry throats. Yes, Table Topics. The portion of the club meeting more commonly known as "Hell on Earth."

I invite you to picture this scenario for a moment. It's a typical club meeting and I'm sitting quietly, awaiting the inevitable doom of Table Topics. My hands are clenched under the table, my eyes are fixated on the _____ (ceiling, floor, door, air conditioner, take your pick), and I'm cursing myself for enduring this painfully agonizing experience. And then my name is called.

Table Topics.

The first person is called on. Not you.

Phew! Time for the second person. Quick. Avert your eyes. Yes! Safe again. And then it happens. The Table Topicsmaster calls on...you.

Time stands still, yet the room somehow manages to spin. Your palms are dripping with sweat. Your throat is dry as a bone. Your head is throbbing from voices offering such helpful quips as, "You can't do it!" and "They're all gonna laugh at you!"

Then again, maybe it's just me.

"I am now a proud member of an organization that has embraced me - the real me - for exactly who I am."

anxiety-provoking, life-threatening situation, such as ordering a combo meal at the drive-thru window.

In spite of the obvious struggles, my stuttering has taught me quite a few things over the years. In addition to discovering that people do not like to be drenched in spittle during a conversation, I've learned that I am, in fact, pretty darn good at stuttering. In fact, I'm an expert at it. Forget leaping tall buildings in a "Why am I doing this?" I ask myself with the same sense of dread that I felt at age 10 when climbing the highdive at the public swimming pool.

"This is a huge mistake," I tell myself, knowing that nothing good can possibly result from this experience.

"I won't do it. I can't do it," I remind myself while quickly scanning the faces of the Table Topicsmaster and my fellow Toastmasters who are awaiting my response. Looking at their faces reminds me of the tiny pool that exists at the bottom of the very tall high-dive.

"If I stand up and talk, I'm going to stutter. Then they're going to laugh at me and I'll be humiliated." It is the latter thought that rings throughout my mind, nagging at me relentlessly. A movie begins to play in my mind. Ten-year-old Rob is climbing down the narrow, silver steps. As I descend on the ladder, I feel dozens of pairs of eyes burning holes into my neck and back. Ashamed at my cowardice, I lower my head, unable to look at the people around the pool.

And then it hits me.

This is not the neighborhood swimming pool and I am not that scared boy. I am an adult. Moreover, I am a member of an organization filled with supportive and caring individuals – all of whom are striving to improve their own ability to communicate. And suddenly I am climbing back up the stairs to the highdive, readying myself to jump off.

I arise from my seat, look around the room at my fellow Toastmasters, and take a deep breath. And then I talk. I

say a few words and am quickthrough that block. And the next. And the next. And the next.

Before I know it, it's over and I sit down. I did it. And at the next meeting, I'll do it again.

Will I stutter? Probably. Will the other Toastmasters care? Not at all.

"I have successfully trained myself to have a fear of talking - in general."

ly confronted by a "block." I remind myself that, despite whatever anguish I am feeling, I am not going to climb down the high-dive steps. I am going to stay right where I am. Moreover, I'm going to continue to make eye contact with the people listening to me.

Moments later, I get through the block and press on. After a few more syllables of struggle-free speech, I am blocked on another word. I force myself to maintain eye contact. I get Do I care? Less and less. And herein lies the beauty of this journey and battle that I've been waging for so many years. As I care less about whether or not I'm going to stutter, I find myself experiencing greater fluency. Has Toastmasters "cured" me of stuttering? Not even close. But it *has* made me more confident about speaking and less self-conscious about blocking in front of others.

But this is not an article about

stuttering, nor is it a commentary on facing fears. What it is, however, is a written testament to the value of this organization. I am a person who has stuttered my entire life and thus developed deep fears about communicating with others. But in making a commitment to overcome my speech-related anxieties, I decided to join Toastmasters. And I am now a proud member of an organization that has embraced me - the "real" me - for exactly who I am. And it is this acceptance that is going to make me more comfortable addressing others and, ultimately, a much better communicator.

So the next time you're slouched down low in your chair, hoping to avoid the darting eyes of the Table Topicsmaster, I ask that you think of my story. And remember that the people around that table are there to support you and help you achieve your goals. You are not alone.

Rob Bloom is a freelance writer and cartoonist from Atlanta, Georgia.Visit his Web site at **www.robbloom.com**.





How to maximize the Internet as a research tool.

n the "old days," if you wanted news, you looked in the newspaper. If you wanted information on a specific product, you called a vendor. To find the vendor, you might ask friends or colleagues for recommendations or note advertisements in trade and professional journals.

If you wanted to network with colleagues, you attended seminars and conferences. If you wanted to hire an employee, you put an ad in the local newspaper.

The "old days" are gone. Today you can do all these things, and more, from the comfort of your office. The Internet has changed the way we work as dramatically as the advent of the personal computer. Still, not everyone has embraced this new technology. And, let's face it, there's *so* much information "out there" that it sometimes seems overwhelming – where to begin?

No doubt, the Internet has a lot to offer. Whether you're an Internet pro or just a dabbler, new resources can be discovered virtually every day to help you be more efficient and effective in your job.

Network With Colleagues Across the World

Today networking means much more than participating in professional groups and maintaining a Rolodex of useful contacts. The Internet has expanded the personal network of business professionals to include not just the practitioner down the street, but people – literally – from around the globe.

Take the Toastmasters International site (**www. toastmasters.org**) for example. The site offers a virtual "meeting place" for Toastmasters with opportunities for connecting with other members as well as access to a myriad of useful resources – whether you're looking for information on building membership in your local organization, searching for an article you read in *The Toastmaster* magazine or looking for a club to visit while traveling.

One of the big benefits of online interaction is the ability to connect with people outside your limited geographic area. Online forums and chat groups make this possible.

Forums allow people with similar interests to post messages, share information, ask questions and "discuss" issues online. There are literally hundreds of forums on the Internet; you can find one that meets your needs at **groups.google.com** – whether you're looking for a professional forum or a group to share tips and ideas about gardening, shopping, sports or other leisure endeavors.

Online Articles and Research

While much Internet information is commercial, you can also find valuable news, information and resources – the same resources that used to require a trip to the library. For business professionals, the resources are many; fortunately, a few stand-out sites provide access to the vast majority of useful and reliable information.

The site most frequently referenced by human resources (HR) practitioners, for a variety of reasons, is **www.shrm.org** – the Web site for the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM). This site is the premiere HR resource on the Internet today. While portions of the site are only viewable by SHRM members, there is plenty of information for non-members. Of particular interest is the extensive and useful list of links to other HR references – broken down by topic area. Looking for something on

training techniques? Training evaluation? Presentation methods? You'll find handy links to these

topics and much more here. And, if you are a member of SHRM, you can take advantage of online white papers and a useful bulletin board service.

Current Government and Legal Information

The U.S. Government offers a wide range of information on the Internet, including forms available for downloading, updates on laws and regulations. At the IRS site (**www.irs.gov**) you can

download forms and find answers to questions. The

Digital Daily, the IRS's e-publication, provides daily news updates. The Bureau of Labor Statistics (**www.bls.gov**) offers surveys and reports on employment, compensation and working conditions, productivity, technology, and employment projections. You'll also find publications like the *Monthly Labor Review* and *Occupational Outlook Handbook*, as well as research papers on a variety of topics relevant to human resources professionals.

The Department of Labor site (**www.dol.gov**) is a comprehensive source of information including laws and regulations, statistics and data, and useful news items about current issues that affect employers and employees. Press releases are also archived providing a quick source of information on DOL announcements and activities. The library link includes congressional testimony, speeches, publications and online access to workplace posters. Quick links take you to related DOL agencies like the Bureau of Labor Statistics and Occupational Safety and Health Administration (with data on occupational injury and illness incidence rates). Countries outside the U.S. no doubt have similar sites and links.

"The Internet has changed the way we work as dramatically as the advent of the personal computer."

Information on Vendors and Consultants

The Internet is a ready source of information about consultants in virtually any field. Vendors' Web sites can provide insight into the quality of their services. And, of course, opportunities abound to purchase goods and services. More and more organizations are beginning to con-

sider e-commerce as a way to extend their markets and to compete with online businesses.

The Web has changed the way we work and has provided business professionals with quick access to news, an expanded source of job applicants, access to vendors and the ability to network with colleagues around the world. The key, of course, is finding *credible* information, and that comes through trial and error. But starting out on the right foot can make a big difference.

Finding What You Need

But which sites are useful – and which are little more than personal promotion or "fluff"?

When a search on Google for "speaking tips" pulls up 2,070,000 "hits," it's clear that the potential for information overload is real. What to do?

Many veteran surfers feel that traditional Internet search engines are becoming less valuable than they used to be. There is just so much information; it's impossible to find what you really need. Instead they use other means such as using links from other sites. The Toastmasters site, for example, offers links to vendors and supporters as well as links to local clubs.

Or, consider a "super" search engine like Dogpile, (**Dogpile.com**) which is really a search engine of search engines. Dogpile offers consolidated searches of several popular search engines like Yahoo!, Excite and InfoSeek so you don't have to search each one individually.

About.com provides useful online resources by various categories – including career planning, freelance writing and human resource management. At **humanresources**. **miningco.com** you'll find news and links to information on benefits, compensation, consultants, government, health and safety, labor relations, legal issues, screening and testing, training and more. The "guides" at **About.com** do all the work – scanning the Internet for useful information and compiling it for you.

And, while "bookmarking" sites or establishing "favorites" through your Web browser can help you go back to those sites you've personally found helpful, many Internet super users build lists of useful sites just as they would a directory of useful names and addresses of business colleagues. Here are a few useful sites to get you started:

• www.quotationspage.com is a great Web site for finding good quotations to incorporate into presentations. The site, which was created in 1994, boasts over 19,000 quotes from over 2,400 authors. Quotes can be searched by using the site's own search format, which allows users to look up quotes by keyword, subject or author.

• www.quoteland.com is another useful Web site for finding quotes. While this site is a bit lacking in terms of classic literary quotations, it does a nice job of providing more contemporary quotes that may be more appropriate. Other helpful features on this site include a reference library with a small collection of famous documents, historic speeches and audio clips from classic speeches by renowned orators such as John F. Kennedy and Winston Churchill.

• www.abacon.com/pubspeak: Allyn & Bacon's public speaking Web site provides a good introduction to the basics of public speaking. The site uses a five-step method to help users through every step of the public speaking process, from assessing the speaking situation to actually delivering the speech. Along with helpful tips, the site also allows users to view examples of speeches as they prepare their own.

• www.speechtips.com, like Allyn & Bacon's Web site, has an easy-to-follow step-by-step process for speakers to use when creating their speeches. Three general steps are provided for users to follow: planning, writing and delivery. It also includes numerous tips along the way and a collection of complete speeches and toasts as examples.

• www.ajr.com: American Journalism Review is a national magazine that covers all aspects of print, television, radio and online media. The online site has extensive information, including archived articles, reporters' tools, writing aids and links to helpful resources like **Thesaurus.com**, *The Chicago Manual of Style*, etc.

■ www.profnet.com is dedicated to linking reporters quickly and conveniently with expert sources. Public relations professionals respond to ProfNet search queries transmitted by broadcast e-mail. Experts can create and manage expert profiles in the ProfNet database. Timely sources are spotlighted in weekly e-mail tipsheets (ProfNet Wire). Established in 1992 by public information officers representing 130 North American colleges and universities, ProfNet today links reporters to 800 colleges and universities in North America, Europe and Africa. [•]

Lin Grensing-Pophal is a freelance writer living in Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin.

By Craig Harrison, DTM

My Virtual Coaches: How the Internet Became My Co-Pilot

Sites and services that bring facts, figures and frivolity to Toastmasters around the globe.

good Toastmaster has many tools at her or his disposal. Once upon a time the local library supported members as they researched topics, looked up word origins in the dictionary and otherwise sought out reference materials.

Today the Internet brings us more information faster and from the farthest reaches of the globe. Each week I find facts, figures and frivolity I can apply to my weekly role in my club. What an indispensable tool for Toastmasters success!

Wordmaster

This week I'm our club's Wordmaster. Choices abound. First I'll check my e-mail program's inbox. Like 520,000 others in 201 countries, I subscribe to the free "A Word a Day" service of **www.wordsmith.org**. Today's word is *armamentarium*. Hmmm, I won't win any friends with this one! (It means the collection of equipment and techniques available in a particular field. I wonder if our Sergeant-at-Arms knows it?)

Next I check the free Words of the Month posted by District 56 Toastmaster VJ Singal, **www.verbalenergy. com**. VJ authored the book *The Articulate Professional* and has helped thousands build their vocabulary through his site. His words have added polish and professionalism to my speeches and day-to-day dialogue. Ever since meeting VJ at a Toastmasters convention, my vocabulary, and that of my club members, has expanded exponentially.

Opening Thought

A new member of our club has been given her first assignment: the Opening Thought. She's at a loss to find one that matches next week's meeting theme. She e-mails me, her newly assigned mentor, for help. After a chat on the phone I send her one of many links to quotation pages: **www. startingpage.com/html/quotations.html#bestlistings**. If it's worth quoting, it's here or linked from here. Of course I encourage her by suggesting that she'll some day say something so profound she will be quoted by others. She purrs back with a combination of appreciation and bemusement. Nevertheless, the idea has been planted.

Several weeks ago I was given one day's notice to provide our meeting's opening thought. I wanted to share something inspirational. A double click later I had my

choice of many. **www.realage.com** offers uplifting health-related tips that keep me as centered, balanced and aligned as my car. Another site for inspiration is **www.motivational-inspirationalcorner.com.** Depending on the theme of the day, or my mood, I'll use this site's search engine to find an appropriate quote based on topic or source.

Serving as Toastmaster

Over the years a variety of sites have helped me when serving as Toastmaster. Some I visit on a regular basis for ideas and tips to apply in meetings.

The 3M Meeting Network at **www.3m.com**/ **meetingnetwork** has many meeting resources to help a Toastmaster plan, implement and evaluate meetings. I also learn from its e-mail newsletter (**www.3m.com**/ **meeting network/form_newsletter. html**).

To answer my questions about parliamentary procedure I often surf *Robert's Rules of Order* (**www.robertsrules. com**) for answers to procedural questions that arise in planning and executing meetings. I especially like its question-and-answer forum where I can post questions and view past discussions.

To find out what happened on a given day in history when I am to officiate as Toastmaster, I visit **www. scopesys.com/today**. This site tells you who among famous people were born or died on a given date, and also what other events, including holidays, occurred. On the day I wrote this article, in 1789 the first American novel, WH Brown's *The Power of Sympathy*, was published. On this day in 1941, opera tenor Placido Domingo was born in Madrid, Spain, and in 1950 author George Orwell (born Eric Arthur Blair) died from tuberculosis in London. Who knew? By the way, did you know every day's a holiday somewhere in the world? Visit **groups.yahoo.com/group/ multicultural-holidays** for information on today's holiday!

Writing and Giving A Speech

The Internet is full of sites that archive great speeches, given by statesmen and stateswomen, scientists, artists or poets of any era. There are political speeches, famous commencement addresses and other oratory that has withstood the test of time. Such texts and transcriptions are often revealing and inspiring at the same time.

When it's time to pick a topic to speak on, I am often inspired by subjects featured in television programs aired on the Public Broadcasting System (PBS) in the United States. This site (**www.pbs.org**) lets me dig deeper on any topic a PBS program covers.

> Two other extensive sites for research are the United States' Library of Congress site,

> full of books in print www.loc.gov, and a site for anything related to any branch of the U.S. Government, www.fedworld.gov/firstgov.html. Speech delivery tips are also plentiful on the Web; Toastmasters' own site (www.toastmasters. org) has tips on giving speeches; and many districts around the world offer articles, tips and guides to speechmaking. I've even been known to upload to a few such sites to share my own wisdom. I hope you do too.

SpeakerNet News You Can Use

My secret weapon as a speaker comes from **www. speakernetnews.com**. SpeakerNet News is a weekly compilation of speaker tips from more than 5,000 professional speakers, trainers, consultants, authors and vendors from around the world. It's free, it's e-mailed to me each Friday, and it's chock full of fascinating tips to help me be more impactful as a speaker. There are platform and performance tips, recommendations on various audiovisual equipment and much more.

Last week alone I picked up a tip on how to be a better emcee, learned some insider secrets for designing and delivering PowerPoint presentations, and even read about a Web site (**www.t-mail.com/cgi-bin/tsail**) that will translate other sites into the language of your choice.

The best part of SpeakerNet News is that you can pose questions to its 5,000 communicators and get a variety of responses to your queries. If you want to research a certain audience, a region or a culture, ask SpeakerNet News. If you want suggestions on powerful speech openings, closings or use of props, ask SpeakerNet News. It's a

"The Internet is full of sites that archive great speeches given by statesmen and stateswomen, scientists, artists or poets of any era." wonderful virtual community full of sharing and support available for you to tap into. Best of all, it's free.

Closing Thought

There are so many sites for closing thoughts to choose from. Some days I prefer Shakespeare: **www.allshake speare.com/quotes**. Other weeks I opt for the poetry of Rumi: **www.allspirit.co.uk/rumi.html**. On occasion I prefer funny or quizzical quotes and ruminations such as those found on **www.comedy-zone.net/guide/quotes**. **htm** or funny things other people, including kids, have said: **www.rinkworks.com/said**.

Joke Master

Several free services that e-mail me a joke a day include **www.joke-a-day.com** and **www.ajokeaday.**

com. The two challenges I find in delivering humor in Toastmasters are picking the right joke and telling it from memory. These sites give me ample content to choose from. Jokes are clean, short and plentiful so the odds of finding the right joke for my club mates, meeting theme and tone are high.

I've bookmarked the late John Cantu's site, **www.humormall. com** and revisit it often. John remains a humor helper to Toastmasters worldwide through his rich humor-laden Web site.

On a monthly basis I receive the warm and gentle humor of Karyn Buxman's

LyteBytes at **www.humorx.com**. There's also the enjoyable Humor Power e-zine from Toastmaster John Kinde's site, **www.HumorPower.com**. I visit **www. familyjokeaday.com** and many topical joke sites and services. Depending on the type of humor you prefer, you may surf the Web for riddle sites, spoonerisms, knock-knock jokes, and more.

Grammarian

I've found various sites over the years that help me be a better grammarian. Wordsmith Barbara McNichol's site (**www.barbaramcnichol.com**) alerts me to word trippers, teaching me which homonym is the right word to use in every situation. Her e-zine brings them to me regularly. One site that offers a portal to over a hundred relevant links comes through Toastmaster-favorite Dr. Richard Lederer (**pw1.netcom.com/~rlederer/rllink.htm**). Sites linking to this page address grammar and usage, etymology, linguistics, puns, oxymorons and much more. For idioms of speech heard in meetings, I use and refer others to **www.phrases. org.uk/meanings.** This site explains turns of phrase and colloquialisms not commonly known by all members.

"The best part of SpeakerNet News is that you can pose questions to its 5,000 communicators and get a variety of responses to your questions."

Speaking Outside of Toastmasters

When I am asked to give a speech outside Toastmasters, I'll do my best to research the group, audience or location using the Internet. When I speak at a new-club demonstration meeting for a local company, I will use **www. hoovers.com** to learn more about them and recent events. I'll also look at related newsgroups found through search engine Google's group category at **www.google. com** to learn more about companies or organizations. You can too!

After Meetings

I often hear figures of speech that I am unfamiliar with during meetings. Various sites offer etymological information on idioms and vernacular – these sites allow me to learn between meetings. I've been known to

send out a postscript to our meeting with follow-up information and clarifications on topics addressed in our meeting.

> It's a form of lagniappe I believe in, giving Toastmasters "a little something extra" to enhance the meeting experience.

Ideas for your Club

I've become a big fan of newsgroups. When I want further dialog on a topic broached at a club meeting, I use Google's talk search for appropriate online discussion forums to interact with: **groups. google.com/groups?group=talk&hl=en**.

As a member of this free cyber-community you

can pose questions of Toastmasters worldwide and learn from thousands of others who've traveled the path you're on. Check it out!

Many clubs, districts and regions have their own virtual groups to share information, opinions and resources. Tap into these virtual Toastmasters communities for local and regional news and nuggets.

Since 1924, Toastmasters has been making effective oral communication a worldwide reality. Now the World Wide Web helps us all connect to each other. Let the Internet be your virtual coach as you matriculate within Toastmasters. Happy clicking!

Professional speaker **Craig Harrison, DTM,** of Berkeley, California, turned a virtual group, Laugh Lovers, into an advanced club in Oakland, California. Craig received a Presidential Citation from Toastmasters at its recent annual convention in Reno, Nevada. You can surf Craig's site at **www.ExpressionsOfExcellence.com** Male and female presenters communicate differently. Truth or stereotype?

By Dave Zielinski

ot very long ago, two persistent stereotypes dogged public speakers – stereotypes that have shaped the communication between men and women since our days in the sandbox. If you were a man, you got instant credibility points, whether you deserved them or not, and it didn't much matter what you wore as long as it was expensive and clean.

If you were a woman, what you wore supposedly mattered a great deal, and you had to overcome the lingering suspicion that because you were a woman, your credibility and authority had to be proven – to the satisfaction of the men in the room. As actress Pauline Frederick once put it: "When a man gets up to speak, people listen, then look. When a woman gets up, people look; then, if they like what they see, they listen."

A funny thing happened on the way to the 21st century, though. Men discovered that their veneer of confidence could easily crack, and that being a man was not necessarily an advantage in all business situations. Women discovered they could be quite comfortable in the boardroom, that they were much savvier in many aspects of business than their male counterparts, and that credibility on the podium has more to do with who you are and what you say than what you're wearing. Indeed, the pendulum has swung so far the other way that many experts now herald women as more natural innate presenters, and a woman's style of communicating – consistent eye contact, sensitivity to the audience's needs, the



use of more inclusive language, putting the audience's needs before one's own ego – as the model to which we all should aspire.

True to Type

Still, there is a grain of truth in most stereotypes, even if we don't want to admit it. On any given playground in North America, for example, one can observe boys gravitating toward the football field and the basketball court, where physical aggressiveness and a minimum of verbal sintaitnethddiu ooamrlsieodtbhat thdnaiiotn9ioSe elamcediaeit t4yooumoseor

sintaitnethddte ooamrlsieodtbhat thdnaiiotn9ioSa elamcediaeit t4yooumoseot

communication are amply rewarded. Meanwhile, the girls – despite a few generations of women's liberation – are more apt to be using their imaginations, talking to each other, and generally working together to entertain themselves in ways that don't involve an elbow to the eye socket. When girls jump rope or play hopscotch, for instance, they sing and clap and encourage each other to try ever more challenging combinations. While the girls are singing, it is safe to say, the boys are not. Never have, never will.

"Most of us have been indoctrinated to recoil instinctively from labeling of gender-related behavior."

These are gross generalizations, to be sure – and most of us have been indoctrinated to recoil instinctively from such labeling of gender-related behavior. But despite a more level professional playing field and decades of being conditioned to overlook the differences between men and women, most gender communication experts agree there are still very real differences in the way men and women develop, deliver and receive speeches. Furthermore, ignoring these differences can potentially blind otherwise promising speakers to the very factors that may be preventing them from connecting completely with their audience. Fortunately, we live in the 21st century now, so these differences don't need to divide us. Indeed, when it comes to succeeding as a presenter, there is plenty men and women can still learn from each other.

Genderflexing Then and Now

In the mid-'90s, psychologist and long-time Toastmaster Judith Tingley, ATM-G, caused a stir with the release of her book, *GenderFlex: Men and Women Speaking Each Other's Language at Work.* Among the book's tenets was that, like marketers who tailor advertising campaigns to appeal to certain sexes, presenters should customize their approaches to better appeal to the opposite gender in their audiences. Credibility and authority were the two primary "male" qualities that women wanted most to project in their own communication. To get it, Tingley suggested women do things like "borrow power" by always having a man introduce them (even to all-female audiences), to frequently quote or reference prominent male figures, and use more humor to project an aura of being relaxed and in command. Men were encouraged to use similar cross-gender appeals.

The book was controversial because many women interpreted her message as an attempt to turn back the clock and cater to male communication preferences. Such criticisms are a misinterpretation of her work, Tingley insists, and she still believes both sexes can benefit by tweaking their messages for broader appeal to mixedgender audiences.

If a woman is speaking on a "female" topic like forming relationships, for example, and the audience is half men, all Tingley is suggesting is that the presenter might benefit from using examples from the business world to make her point, rather than from her personal life. "Talk about the euphoria among an entrepreneurial work group that's worked long and hard to launch a project, forming tight relationships with team members along the way," she says.



A t the risk of being ticketed with misdemeanor generalizing, we offer this list of gender-specific strengths, predilections and tendencies that the opposite sex might consider adopting:

What men might learn from women...

Temper the talking head – While not appropriate for all presentation scenarios, replacing a monologue with some audience dialogue is a great way to energize an audience. Ask questions. Get feedback. Make conversation with the audience; don't lecture.

• Use inclusive language – Women tend to use words like we, our and us, while men tend to say *l*, me and mine more often. Check your ego at the door and you'll get better results.

Cater to the audience – Men more often present from their own perspective of what they think the audience should know, rather than thoroughly researching what the audience wants to learn or hear. Men are also slower to shift gears if they sense they're losing an audience. Women, it seems, are better at accurately gauging the emotional temperature and interest level of a room.

Be genuine – In a survey by GenderFlex author Judith Tingley, she asked respondents to evaluate certain sales presentations. The consensus was that male salespeople's greatest strength was product knowledge. Their greatest perceived weakness, however, was a lack of genuineness and honesty.

• Emote every now and then – No matter how the genders evolve, women are probably always going to be more comfortable expressing their emotions than men. But times have changed for men. Crybabies aren't exactly in vogue, but displaying honest emotion is now associated more with inner strength than weakness.

Don't drone – Whether it's to avoid showing emotion or seeming too enthusiastic about something – anything – they don't know, men tend to be the champions of vocal monotony in the speaking world. The answer isn't to talk more like a woman, but the least you can do is be a less, ah, boring man. While men and women share many traits that help them excel as speakers, each gender has some areas of natural advantage.

...and women might learn from men

• Quash the qualifiers – Women often tend to soften their statements by qualifying them with such phrases as "I sort of thought," "in my opinion," or "this might be a better way." Consider the subtle but different impact of these two statements: "In my opinion, the project will work better if we bid separately," versus "The project will work better if we bid on each part separately." The latter is more powerful.

Beware of non-verbals – Sure, men jingle pocket change and unconsciously lick their lips, but coaches say women often do more to sabotage their authority by tilting their heads, touching their hair, using flowery gestures or signaling their lack of confidence with other tics.

Go by the numbers – When organizing a message, many men like to announce a number before each point: Point I is X, Point 2 is Y, Point 3 is Z. Some studies show that men use less verbiage or asides in presentations, and get to key points faster. This isn't always great for personal conversations, but it works well in presentation settings, where audiences have less patience for rambling or digression.

Don't personalize things – Starting sentences with "I" when you're not talking about yourself can cause problems, says consultant Phyllis Mindell. The sentence, "I have a problem with my secretary; he never gets to work on time," is about the secretary, but by starting with "I," speakers inadvertently make it about themselves. Phrasing such as, "My secretary has a problem; he never gets to work on time," is more direct and powerful.

 Accessorize minimally – Because women have more clothing options than men have, the odds are greater they'll make decisions that distract an audience.
 Presentation coaches suggest simple but classy wear and minimal accessorizing. That enables the audiences' first impression to be about who is inside the clothes, not the clothes themselves. Likewise, a man talking about economics to an audience of women might consider using analogies based on personal and home finances rather than purely business examples.

Addressing the Hippopotamus

Today's ultra-sensitive gender politics make it more difficult to find ways of appealing to opposites in the audience without stereotyping or alienating them. But it is possible - and sometimes necessary.

A few years ago, Nick Morgan, head of Public Words, a presentation-skills coaching company in Arlington, Massachusetts, and author of Working the Room: How to Move People to Action Through Audience-Centered Speaking, was helping a female consultant prepare to speak to the top 250 executives of a financial services firm, all of whom happened to be male. If that wasn't challenge enough, her message was that the company's prized new marketing strategy was bombing, and that the executives had to quickly decide

Nick Morgan also believes women have certain innate skills that make them effective speakers. "Many women tend to be better at striking up a dialogue with an audience and getting people to open up," he says. When presenters initiate such a dialogue, rather than simply lecturing (as a man might be more likely to do), "the whole audience feels more drawn into the presentation, and there is a stronger sense of inclusion," he says.

Voice Your Authority

Men, too, have natural advantages that work in their favor more often than not. Their voices, for one, tend to be deeper, and, according to Morgan, both men and women are predisposed to think of a male voice as more authoritative than a woman's - whether we like it not.

"We all want to think this is changing, but when you hear those voice-overs on trailers advertising the latest movie, it's still usually a man talking," he says.

on a new direction.

"It was a case where we had

to think through the gender politics quite carefully," says Morgan. "We had to get men

past the fact that she was the only woman in the room, and not dismiss her message based on that." Morgan advised her to address the "hippopotamus in the room" right up front, which she deftly did with some selfdeprecating humor about the gender discrepancy.

Real Progress – And Real Differences

Indeed, more women than ever rise to similar challenges every day. High-profile speakers such as Hillary Clinton, Madeline Albright, Condoleezza Rice and Elizabeth Dole are proof that women can hold their own in even the most ego-saturated bastion of masculinity - politics. And countless other lesser-known but equally polished women turn the credibility myth on its head each day with outstanding performances in boardrooms and ballrooms around the world. Some presentation-skills coaches go as far as to argue that many of the things women speakers do best - the innate tendencies that define their communication styles, the inclusiveness of their interactive impulses, even the give-and-take of their playground politics are the sort of thing speakers who want to be really good, regardless of gender, should emulate.

"A more inclusive and softer style is more available to be listened to than an aggressive or unilateral approach," says Phyllis Mindell, president of Well-Read, a communication consulting firm in Pittsford, New York, and author of the book How to Say It for Women. Mindell says a town supervisor she knows in upstate New York is a good model of this light-but-firm approach. "She has a calm, pleasant and very feminine speaking style, but she says very hard things in a way that gets people to follow her because she doesn't exclude or set up barriers," Mindell says. "She speaks softly but powerfully at the same time."

"Women are more likely to downplay their certainty and men to downplay their doubts."

- Deborah Tannen

To be sure, many women have naturally appealing and sonorous speaking voices. Those who struggle with voice quality, however, can work on altering the pitch of their voices to ensure greater resonance and strength. "Men tend to drive their voices lower when they feel they are off their basic pitch, but when women have a problem, my experience is they drive their voices higher into the 'little girl' voice, which undercuts credibility," Morgan says. The antidote? Women should practice opening up lower registers to add more heft to their voices, he says.

Men, on the other hand, are more likely to be nasal droners who speak in a monotone. Such guys could learn a few things from the women in their lives, because those women are more likely to use a broader range of volumes and inflection in their voices - something every speaker should learn how to do, says Morgan.

Still, having a booming bass or melodious alto isn't everything, reminds Mindell. "If the language is strong, the pace is appropriate and the statements are confident, even a sweet, musical, small, thin voice will be heeded."

Certain Doubts

Another trait of men that often gives them an advantage in the business world is their desire (in general) to use fewer words than women. This "get to the point" mentality, which puts a premium on decisiveness and lack of equivocation, makes many men seem more decisive than they really are. Women, on the other hand, are more likely to qualify statements and are more willing to digress if they think it's necessary to clarify a point. Indeed, when it comes to language-weakening qualifiers, women tend to be bigger offenders, coaches of both sexes say.

(Continued on page 28.)

A VOICE OF MY OWN

It's your insights and experience people want to hear.

Speak, Sister

There," my client told me, "I've given you enough to write a book." In his mind, he had "aced" the interview and made my job as the speechwriter almost laughably easy. And of course it was a be. No female executive I know would be so arrogant and egotistical, or so blind to the need for further development in her ideas and thinking. More often than not, the women I work with agonize over whether they have *anything* to say that might be of interest to the prospective audience.

With first-hand experience of this amazing difference between many top male and female executives, I was struck by this passage in a recent article in the Harvard Business Review:

"Far from celebrating their achievements in newly available professions, women too frequently seek to deflect attention from themselves They refuse to claim a central, purposeful

selfish, mean, manipulative behavior; in a nutshell, it implied an absence or rejection of feminine behavior, which is largely defined by a concern for others. "I hate to promote myself," they would say. Or, "It's not about me; it's about helping others," or "I'd rather be in my workshop alone." In contrast, when Fels interviewed a group of men, she found that they all regarded ambition as a necessary and natural part of their lives. It was part of being strong, self-reliant and indeed, masculine.

From childhood, ambition contains two main elements. The first is the desire to master a difficult subject or skill - writing, art, dance, engineering or whatever. And the other is the need for recognition. However, as a number of studies have shown (and Fels quotes chapter and verse), from preschool on, teachers (including female teachers) praise boys more than girls, and are far more likely to

tions on several different occasions and I have had a hand in writing half a dozen speeches by female executives that have been reprinted in Vital Speeches of the Day. I say that not to promote myself, but to add some credibility to my advice for female speakers.

It is good to credit others, but give yourself (your travails and your journey of discovery) a central, purposeful role in the most important stories vou tell - whether it is about climbing the corporate ladder, learning to motivate and inspire people, promoting teamwork, instilling financial discipline, fostering innovation, opening new markets, dealing with discrimination or becoming a leader.

Forget all the buzzwords and "message points." It is your insights and experience that people want to hear about and your ideas about making your company or industry a better place. Speak in plain lan-

> guage as one human being to another.

Just be yourself. Don't try to conform to the

"Women too frequently seek to deflect attention from themselves ... eagerly shifting the credit elsewhere and shunning recognition."

place

in their own

stories, eagerly shifting the credit elsewhere and shunning recognition."

I agree 100 percent. There are implications here bearing on women and public speaking. Before addressing those, however, let me tell you a little more about the article, "Do Women Lack Ambition?" which appeared in the April 2004 issue of Harvard Business Review.

The author, Anna Fels, a psychiatrist and faculty member at Cornell University, interviewed a wide range of women who had achieved outstanding success in different fields. Almost to a one, she discovered, they hated the very word "ambition." To them, it implied

- Harvard Business Review

accept boys' comments in classroom discussions, even when the girls as a group clearly outperform the boys in terms of actual test results.

As Fels concludes, there are deepseated reasons for this dichotomy. "In both the public and the private spheres," she writes, "women are facing the reality that in order to be seen as feminine, they must provide or relinquish resources - including recognition - to others, particularly men. The expectation is so deeply rooted in the [American] culture's ideals that it is largely unconscious."

As a speechwriter, I have helped female executives win standing ovaidiom of a male-dominated corporate hierarchy. To do so would be to render a disservice to all your colleagues - male and female. As more than one speaker has said: A company has two choices: It can change or die. You are, I hope, on the side of change - concerned not just with forging ahead, but with helping others realize their potential.

Andrew B. Wilson, a freelance speechwriter in St. Louis, Missouri, regularly writes for the CEOs of several large and well-known companies. Contact him at www.abwilson.com.

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CAN WE TALK?

Do Tears Belong in Public?

By Charles Downey

Why a good cry can be good for you.

Using a summer performance of the gripping play, *Death* of a Salesman, a crying child interrupted the lead actor periodically.

After a handful of interruptions, the actor walked to the front of the stage and announced: "Ladies and gentlemen, unless the play is stopped, that child cannot possibly go on."

A second actor, picking up on the spontaneity, walked to his side and loudly announced: "Well, I personally like to hear a baby's cry!"

"Why?" asked the irritated actor. "Because then there is some hope of him being taken away."

The audience roared, the child stopped crying and the play went on.

Of course, children have always cried just about everywhere and anywhere. But more adults, including celebrities and sports stars, are publicly turning on the waterworks.

"Until the Industrial Revolution, crying in public was

pretty normal, even for men," says Tom Lutz, Ph.D., professor of English at the university of Iowa and author of four books, including "*Crying: The Natural and Cultural History of Tears*."

Says professor Lutz: "Heroic epics from Greek times through the Middle Ages are soggy with weeping of all sorts. Dry eyes have not been the standard of manliness throughout most of history."

For instance, when Roland, the most famous warrior of medieval France, died, 20,000 other knights wept so profusely they fainted and fell from their horses. Long before that, the Greek warrior Odysseus turned on the waterworks in almost every chapter of Homer's *Iliad*, and St. Francis of Assisi was said to have been blinded by weeping. Later, in the 16th century, sobbing openly at a play, opera or symphony was consid-



ered appropriately sensitive behavior for men and women alike.

But the industrial age needed not emotional, but diligent workers. Crying was then delegated to private places behind closed doors. Children began to be taught that weeping itself was the problem, and not the result of a problem. Consequently, people everywhere became uncomfortable with tears in public.

"Dry-eyed workers can't make emotional demands on bosses and co-workers," Dr. Lutz says.

But baseball greats Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig both defied convention and made headlines by blubbering in public when they retired.

In 1972, public crying was still so unacceptable, candidate Edmund Muskie was driven out of the U.S. presidential race when he shed tears during a speech. But the experts say there is no shame in tears – weeping is exclusively human. No other animal produces emotional tears. Throughout history and in every culture, people have cried bitter, salty tears.

"Weeping often occurs at precisely those times when we are least able to fully verbalize complex, overwhelming emotions and least able to fully articulate our feelings," Lutz writes.

Crying can also be an escape; it allows us to turn away from the cause of our anguish and inward toward out own "C bodily sensations.

"Thinking about sobbing replaces thinking about what made us cry in the first place," Lutz says.

Crying is probably necessary to the overall scheme of things human because no behavior has ever continued unless it somehow contributed to survival.

"Science has proven that stress is terrible for the health of your brain, heart and other organs," says William Frey II, Ph.D., a biochemist and tear expert. "We haven't proven it yet, but weeping has most likely served humans throughout our evolutionary history by reducing stress."

One study showed that a group of people with stress-related disorders like ulcers and colitis were less likely to cry in a variety of situations than others of the same age and sex who cried more but did not have those ailments. The *Journal of Abnormal Psychology* reported a group of clinically depressed patients were no more likely to cry than nondepressed people.

Dr. Frey, author of *Crying: the Mystery of Tears*, studied weepers and found that 85 percent of women and 73 percent of men report feeling better and more relieved after a good cry. Dr. Frey's lab also chemically examined tears produced by onions and compared them with emotional tears. While all tears are 98 percent water, emotional tears contain more toxins.

But the times, are they a-changin'? "In just a few short decades, we've gone from the view that crying is just a loss of control and a sign of weakness to a common perception there might be some value in open emotional crying," says Dr. Frey. The workplace is one arena where men and women are supposed to be more fully in control. "Crying at work has become more common because there are more women workers and executives in the workplace," says Dr. Frey. "Our testing revealed that men weep an average of 1.4 times a month while women cry about 5.3 times monthly."

But experts now say tears on the job indicates, not a lack of control,

"Dry eyes have not been the standard of manliness throughout most of history."

For instance, a weeping, unashamed New York Yankee Darryl Strawberry fell into the arms of manager Joe Tore on national TV; U.S. presidential candidate Bob Dole choked up while recalling how people in his home state helped him with his war injuries, and Gwyneth Paltrow clouded up so badly she could barely speak when awarded an Oscar for best actress. President Clinton sniffled openly at the funeral of Democratic bigwig Ron Brown. USA Today reported that men all over the nation were sniffling during the heart-wrenching moments of the hit movie, Seabiscuit.

"It might even be a plus for politicians to cry," says Dr. Frey. "Many now like the idea of our leaders being open about their feelings."

One of the main dangers to good mental health from stifling the urge to cry is that a person must also hide or shut down his valid feelings and emotions. And when legitimate emotions are not fully recognized and expressed, insensitive acts – from rudeness to school shootings – can result. but a high degree of caring. While many people are still uncomfortable with a person who openly weeps, the thing *not* to do is say "don't cry." Nobody, except perhaps St. Francis, has cried forever. When the emotion passes, so will the tears. "When composure is regained, ask: 'What was it that upset you?'" Dr. Frey suggests. "The *real* problem at work are people who do not care."

Most jobs today involve a high degree of human interaction. When many people interact, some will become emotional. Tears and crying may just pinpoint hurtful problems that drive business away and require repair.

Crying can also serve other relationships. "Close interpersonal communication requires knowing and communicating what you feel and what you think," says Dr. Frey. "If you stifle honest tears, you'll also eventually shut down the relationship too."

Charles Downey is a Californiabased staff writer for **Plastic Surgery.com.** Reach him at *downeyc@plasticsurgery.com.*

TI BOARD REPORT

TI: 1924-2004

Celebrating Achievements, Planning for the Future



t the August Board of Directors meeting in Reno, Nevada, 2003-2004 International President Ted Corcoran, DTM, reported on the organization's progress during his year in office. "Overall, it has been a very successful year," he said, noting that the organization exceeded a record number of 200,000 members in 10,000 clubs. "These two achievements are tremendous watersheds in the history of our organization. How fitting that it happened in the year we celebrate our 80th anniversary," he said.

President Corcoran also said 36 districts reached Distinguished status or better, and that the number of Distinguished clubs increased by nearly 4 percent over last year. The number of educational completions and new club charters were up as well over the previous year.

He said his travels during the past year to districts and regions in the USA, Canada, Germany, South Africa, the U.K and Ireland "confirmed once again that we are blessed with wonderful people who give much of their personal time in serving others and working for our organiza-

 2003-2004 International President Ted Corcoran, DTM, speaks at the Toastmasters' Board of Directors meeting in August. tion, without any reward except the satisfaction of helping others turn their dreams into realities."

BOARD ACTION

The Board of Directors made the following decisions to ensure the continued progress and growth of the organization:

Reviewed and approved a request to form a Territorial Council, consisting currently of a group of 40 Toastmasters clubs located in India and Sri Lanka. It will be known as the Territorial Council of South Asia.

 Reviewed the status of the provisional district and recommended that District 79P be granted full district status. Reviewed the format and structure of a new leadership manual and gave direction to World Headquarters staff for further development and field testing of the material.

• Approved the proposed Toastmasters International budget for 2005.

• Updated policy to enable the organization to consider sites for the International convention outside North America. Because sites are selected years in advance, the Board did not recommend any particular time frame for holding a convention outside North America.

Changed policy regarding assignment of clubs to areas within districts. Previously, areas could consist of four to seven clubs. The Board revised the policy to say: "Areas should consist of four to six clubs, except where special circumstances exist."

 Reviewed and approved district boundary changes.

Discussed whether candidate showcases should be required at regional conferences and recommended that international director candidates be given an opportunity to be heard by all conference delegates at regional conferences, at a time and in a format of the regional conference committee's choosing.

Made the mandatory three-year review of the assignment of Toastmasters clubs to the eight geographic regions to determine whether any region had more than 15 percent of the total number of Toastmasters clubs in the organization. The Board determined that the current regional distribution of districts – and the revised assignment of undistricted clubs – is within the requirements as stated in the organization's bylaws.

• Keeping in mind the values, vision and mission of the organization, the Board brainstormed some strategic principles to guide the organization's decision making. Some examples include:

- The 50l(c)(3) tax exempt status is one of the organization's most valuable assets and must always be protected.
- Adequate funding of critical success factors always comes first.
- New programs will be given time to mature.
- After an agreed-upon period of time, programs that do not meet their objectives will be revised or discontinued.

- TI will maintain a balance between organizational and economic viability.
- Fiscal viability must always be preserved.

Reviewed a draft of the revised Discussion Leader advanced manual and offered suggestions for improvement, including changing the title to "Facilitating Discussion." The revised manual will be available in 2005.

• Discussed granting manual credit for presenting modules from *The Better Speaker Series*, *The Successful Club Series* and *The Leadership Excellence Series* and decided that the benefits of the modules can be better realized by adding an evaluation guide to each module rather than by allowing manual speech credit for the presentation.

Reviewed Toastmasters materials for their suitability in marketing to corporations for the purpose of creating an enhanced awareness of the Toastmasters brand. The Board determined that many existing Toastmasters materials, from both the communication and leadership product lines, would be of interest to corporations and other organizations. However, modifications to the content, structure, graphics and even media of those materials would be necessary to meet customer expectations. The goal of this new strategic direction is to create a greater awareness of Toastmasters in general and to open new channels through which organizations can benefit from Toastmasters' products and programs.

Discussed district club-building and determined that many districts would be more successful in starting new clubs if a properly organized clubbuilding structure were in place. The Board recommended a structure that includes the following:

- A club extension chairman who coordinates club-building efforts and provides progress reports to the lt. governor marketing and the district governor.
- Assistant division governors marketing who assemble and lead teams responsible for seeing that one or more clubs are formed in each area during the year.
- The Board also recommended that the *District Club-Building Strategy Guide* be modified to become a practical club extension handbook for lt. governors marketing, club extension chairmen and assistant division governors marketing.



Start a Ruh Whara?

A lesson from Georgetown: How to start a thriving club at a university.

By Jennifer Blanck, ATM-B, and Brett Howe

Farting a club at a college or university is full of challenges: natural student turnover, scheduling conflicts and workload cycles are just a few.

Establishing and maintaining a successful club can be difficult anywhere. But while educational institutions have their unique challenges, they have natural advantages as well. Having chartered a club at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., we have learned some of the pros and cons from first-hand experience. In this article, we'll try to navigate the issues and help you achieve a thriving club at a university near you!

Pros: Plenty of Potential Members

In a university setting, people are motivated to learn and develop skills. In fact, it is the very mission of higher education to foster learning and cultivate leadership. For this reason, a Toastmasters club on a university campus is on fertile ground. The club is an asset to the university and a draw to those who realize the value of public speaking and leadership skills. There are plenty of potential members for a university club and a natural influx of new members, particularly in the fall term when new students arrive. At Georgetown Toastmasters, alumni, graduate and undergraduate students, faculty, staff and people from the surrounding community are all welcome. The diversity of the membership gives the club character and has been essential to its success.

University members are e-mail adept, so it's easy (and free) to keep members informed. E-mail is also a great tool for building and announcing the agenda, providing a quick method of notifying members of meeting roles that are open, reminding those who will be speaking, and making other important announcements. Most members check their e-mail several times a day. Because Georgetown Toastmasters has an e-mail distribution list to reach current and potential members, we rarely need to pick up the telephone.

Advertising your club can be instrumental to its growth and maintenance of charter strength. On a college campus, it's easy to advertise. Fliers are easy to distribute and display. It may also be possible to send e-mails to all students in the university or in a particular department. You can also publicize your club at new-student orientation by getting on the speakers list or adding a handout to an information packet. Georgetown University provides Webbased calendars to groups. Our club created its own e-calendar, which is programmed to upload events to the university's master calendar. In addition, the faculty and staff newspaper automatically advertises our events in its master calendar. An e-calendar can have multiple benefits!

Just about every campus has at least one school newspaper that can promote the club. In all likelihood, you won't have to pay to advertise. Georgetown Toastmasters has been the subject of two in-depth campus newspaper articles. Once, the reporter initiated the article. Another time, a telephone call sufficed to encourage a student reporter to write a piece on the club. To give the storywriters a glimpse into what being a Toastmaster is all about, assign them a simple meeting role, such as Ah Counter. You can even submit press releases or entire articles directly to the campus press. With so many opportunities to promote club awareness, you may actually find yourself with a problem most clubs would envy – too many new members waiting for a chance to give speeches!

A university campus offers many places to meet. A variety of boardrooms, conference rooms, auditoriums and classrooms give people the opportunity to speak in different settings.

Too Many Speakers: Surprisingly, we also found that a club can have too many motivated people. Our prepared speaking roles fill up quickly, especially during the academic year. We are never at a loss for speakers. Because our highest priority is to provide as many speaking opportunities as possible to members, we look for creative ways to ensure that all the members are speaking. We held a speak-a-thon to accommodate the number of interested speakers, giving priority to people presenting their Ice Breakers. Another idea we have considered but have not yet implemented is connecting a member with another club for a speech. Toastmasters are allowed to present two *Communication and Leadership* manual speeches to a non-home club. Moreover, we hope to demonstrate that all meeting roles provide speaking experience.

Scheduling is also problematic at a university. While our club continues to meet twice a month on Tuesdays from 12 to 1 p.m., we can't guarantee that all members will have consistent schedules. Students are particularly impacted. We have had members become unofficially inactive because they had a course at the same time for a semester. Fortunately, semesters are short – typically less than four months. Unfortunately, some don't renew their membership in April because they won't be around during the summer. Workload increases, such as midterms and finals, also affect student participation.

One of the best aspects of a university can also work against you. Universities offer a wide range of events and activities. There always seems to be at least one event beyond classes that conflicts and draws attention. Of course, most people have this challenge – it's called life – but universities seem to have even more opportunities in a concentrated area. Selling Toastmasters as a priority can be particularly challenging with undergraduates who tend to be less career focused until the end of their university tenure. They can also view the activity as more of a semes-

Cons: Challenges with Scheduling

Meeting Space: While this might not be an issue for all

university clubs, we have challenges reserving meeting space. During the summer, we have one classroom for our meetings. During the academic year, the club meets in a different room from meeting to meeting. Classroom space is free. However, finding an available room can be difficult. We aren't able to request a classroom at the beginning of each semester until the course schedules are final and rooms have been reserved for the classes. Fortunately, various staff members have connections to rooms they can reserve rooms that otherwise would cost money to use.

Georgetown is Distinguished

n October 2004, Georgetown Club 6750 celebrated its two-year anniversary. During the summer, the club also celebrated achieving Distinguished status during the 2003-2004 year. Although the pros and cons of a universitybased club still apply, Georgetown Toastmasters has seen particular success in two areas: location and budget. One school at Georgetown, which originally paid the charter fee, recently moved into a new facility. As a result, the club gained regular access to the school's new conference room. Also, due to the large number of graduate student members, the club successfully submitted a funding proposal to a Georgetown graduate student organization. With the money, the club has purchased key supplies and is considering paying for graduate student membership during the April-September dues cycle, when many students become inactive because of summer break.

ter-by-semester commitment. Turnover: Undergraduates typically attend college for four or five years. Graduate students might be in their programs for one to seven years. After graduation, most students move. Even if they stay within the Washington, D.C. area, other Toastmasters clubs might be more conveniently located. Therefore, staff, alumni and local residents are a key base of our membership. They provide stability and institutional memory.

Recommendations

Those are the major issues we have found in establishing

Georgetown Toastmasters. As in every situation, your college or university will have its own challenges. If you're interested in chartering a university club, here are some lessons we've learned that might help you:

• Don't limit your membership to students. Open your membership to staff, faculty, alumni and local residents, as well as graduate and undergraduate students. This is probably the most important point in establishing a successful university club. Members who are not students provide stability and offer insight into how to do everything, from setting up a university e-mail account to available resources in the university or surrounding community. Staff members might give a club easy access to meeting rooms and insight into university policies and potential funds.

One of the elements leading to the demise of the first Toastmasters club at Georgetown was that the club only comprised students in the graduate business school. After the few student leaders who established the club graduated, interest quickly faded and the club fell apart.

• Elect committed officers. Another key element to our success was the commitment of our initial slate of officers. While some charter members dropped out of sight after the first few meetings, fortunately, none of our officers were in that group. It also helps to have officers representing the diversity of your membership to ensure that all members' issues and perspectives are considered. You must have committed officers if you want to establish a university club – or any new Toastmasters club for that matter!

• Understand that summers are slow. For the most part, students aren't on campus, and many people take summer vacations. Meetings will involve fewer people. For those who attend, however, this can be a time to gain increased speaking experience. It's also important to recognize that

resources. Ensuring that you have at least one or two veteran Toastmasters as members of your club can make a significant difference.

Consider having a department sponsor the club. Having a college department adopt your club may give it the momentum it needs to get off to a good start. The department might pay the chartering fee, keeping costs lower for charter members. It is important, however, not to have a particular department or segment of the university population dominate the program.

• Use multiple advertising approaches. Use all the technology available to you to maximize your club's visibility. But don't forget that old-fashioned fliers can be quite effective if they are placed strategically throughout campus. Connecting with campus newspapers to have an article written about the club can result in free, in-depth publicity.

Be flexible and creative. All clubs have their own special challenges. Recognize your own club's barriers to success and approach those barriers in creative ways that work for your members. Speak-a-thons, theme meetings and joint meetings with other clubs are just a few ideas.

• Recognize your club's limits. Many aspects of Toastmasters – such as establishing a mentor program, achieving Distinguished status and holding club contests – must typically wait for a club to be at least two years old or have members who have reached specific speaking goals. Also, your institution may impose parameters that you don't anticipate. We are considering moving our meetings to 12:15 – 1:15 p.m. rather than 12 – 1 p.m., because classes begin 15 minutes after each hour. With a new starting time, it might be easier to reserve classrooms if we set our meetings to the class schedule. Having meetings in sync with class schedules, rather than overlap-

"Universities offer a wealth of resources that make them natural locations for Toastmasters clubs."

ping two class times, may also help increase student partici-

the beginning of a new academic year can bring an influx of new members, which might be a shock after a quiet summer period.

Don't schedule meetings during key events. Orientation, spring break and graduation are times when most university community members are busy. If you can, schedule your meetings around these events to maximize the number of people able to participate.

• Know that you're not alone. New clubs have mentors and club sponsors. District officers can help. There's even a Club Coach Program for struggling clubs. Toastmasters has a built-in infrastructure to help clubs grow and thrive. Don't be afraid to reach out and ask for help from the Toastmasters leadership. Your members are wonderful pation. Set realistic goals for your membership and overall club, and enjoy the success of reaching those goals and seeing your club blossom.

All clubs face challenges. In that way, university clubs are no different. However, universities offer a wealth of resources that make them natural locations for Toastmasters clubs. We hope you start a new club at a university near you. If you do, keep in mind the lessons we learned and be open to the new ones you will encounter. And heed the wisdom from U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell: "There are no secrets to success. It is the result of preparation, hard work and learning from failure." Good luck!

Jennifer Blanck, ATM-B, and Brett Howe are both charter members of Georgetown Club 6750 at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C.

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The Gender Gap

(Continued from page 17)

Common phrases like "sort of," "in my opinion," "we'll try to," or "we'll do our best," suggest uncertainty and timidness. "They're relational words that people use in one-toone conversations to share authority, but they don't always transfer well to the presentation context," Morgan says.

Author and gender communication expert Deborah Tannen says women are more likely to downplay their certainty and men to downplay their doubts. A woman's statement of, "From what I can tell, I think it'll work, but we never know for sure until we try" becomes "This is a winner. We've got to go for it!" in malespeak, Tannen explains.

Claim Authority, And Keep It

On the playground, whoever has the ball is the one who gets the most attention, however briefly. In the working world, whoever has the microphone or is at the front of the room is carrying the ball, so to speak, And as every schoolyard veteran knows, a certain amount of authority comes with having the ball in your hands; what you do with the ball in that moment is very important.

"The last thing you want to do is immediately give up the provisional authority you're granted by the audience when you first get up to speak," says Morgan. And yet, that's what many speakers do: By fiddling with papers or their microphone, seeming disorganized, apologizing for not being prepared or for being late, opening with a story that's just a little too self-deprecating – these are all familiar destroyers of authority. And men, it seems, are innately less prone to handing over their power unwittingly.

Patricia Fripp, a San Francisco-based speech coach who specializes in sales-presentation training, says that while both sexes struggle with non-verbal practices that distract from their messages, the problem tends to plague women on a larger scale. "I watched one very senior executive client make an otherwise good presentation, but when she was done I asked her if she realized how many times she touched her hair in those 20 minutes," Fripp says. The answer? More than 30 distracting touches.

Mindell says one senior executive she knows introduced herself at a meeting and said she managed a \$52 million budget; then she unconsciously shrugged her shoulders, downplaying her accomplishment. Again, while they may seem insignificant, and can plague either gender, such non-verbal cues send strong messages to audiences that often conflict with the message the speaker is really trying to convey. Both men and women need to understand this important principle of authority and make a conscious effort to nurture rather than squander it.

Basically, It's the Basics

In fact, though much is still made of the differing styles of men and women in the workplace, effective speakers – be they men or women – share more important qualities than not. As presentation coach Phyllis Mindell says, "Good planning separates the women from the girls, the strong from the weak, the confident from the fearful, and the men from the boys."

Indeed, whether you're shooting a three-pointer, skipping double Dutch, or presenting to the board of directors, it always comes back to solid preparation and good fundamentals – basics our kindergarten teachers tried to teach us, and we are still learning to this day.

Dave Zielinski is a freelance writer living in New York and Minneapolis. Contact him at **zskidoo@aol.com**.

WHQ Employee Celebrates 40 years with TI

At Toastmasters World Headquarters, long-time employees are Athe norm. But Finance Supervisor Marcie Powers recently set a record: She has worked for the organization for 40 years.

This was cause for a celebration, and at a recent staff luncheon in her honor, Marcie mentioned she has worked for four executive directors and seen a lot of changes in the organization – mainly, the admitting of women to the membership in 1973 and the ensuing growth in membership and infrastructure at her work place.

For example, in April of 1962 when Marcie started as a parttime employee in the original California offices on Santa Ana's 8th Street, helping out with the processing of membership dues, TI

tour executive on - mainly, the the ensuing k place. d as a partnta Ana's 8th ip dues, TI puarters building and celebrated having

proudly announced the completion of its own headquarters building and celebrated having "36 employees who provide supplies and services for over 3,500 clubs and more than 80,000 Toastmasters throughout the free world."

Both Toastmasters and Marcie Powers have come a long way since then. As Marcie says, "40 years goes by in a flash when you work with great people for a great organization." Marcie Powers (center) with her daughter and son-in-law, Pam and David Swets.

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Dress in Toastmaster





6682 LADIES WATCH

\$40.00

\$40.00

\$12.00

QTY

Elegant two-tone watch features stainless-steel band and waterresistance dial. Toastmasters International is imprinted on watch face. Comes in a durable steel case.

6683 MEN'S WATCH

Handsome two-tone watch features stainless-steel band and waterresistance dial. Toastmasters International is imprinted on watch face. Comes in a durable steel case.

7022 TOASTMASTERS T-SHIRT

100% cotton preshrunk T-shirt available in cardinal with Toastmasters embroidered in natural on left chest.

7022B Medium	7022C Large
_ 7022D X-Large	7022E XX-Large

7023 FLEECE JACKET

\$27.00

Charcoal-colored fleece with Toastmasters embroidered in black on left chest.

7023B Medium	7023C Large
7023D X-Large	7023E XX-Large

7024 WINDSHIRT

\$40.00

\$29.95

\$29.95

Water-resistant stone windshirt with navy accents features a polyester/ nylon microfiber shell that feels as soft as suede. Other features include a full nylon lining, two on-seam side pockets, split sleeves, rib-knit cuffs and bottom and a high V-Neck.

7024B	Medium	7024C	Large
7024D	X-Large	7024E	XX-Larg

7025 MEN'S PIQUE POLO SHIRT IN STONE

Clean cut and simple best describes this classic polo shirt. Made out of 100% cotton to give it that extra softness and strength. Available in stone with Toastmasters embroidered in navy on left chest.

 7025B	Medium	7	7025C	Large
7025D	X-Large	7	7025E	XX-La

X-Large

7026 LADIES PIQUE POLO SHIRT IN STONE

Stone colored pique polo shirt made out of 100% cotton for extra softness and strength. Available with feminine Y-collar with Toastmasters embroidered in navy on left chest.

7026A Small	7026B Medium	7026C Large
7026D X-Large	7026E XX-Large	

7027 MEN'S PIQUE POLO SHIRT IN DILL

\$29.95

\$29.95

QTY

Clean cut and simple best describes this classic polo shirt. Made out of 100% cotton to give it that extra softness and strength. Available in dill with Toastmasters embroidered in black on left chest.

7027B Medium	7027C Large
7027D X-Large	7027E XX-Large

7028 LADIES PIQUE POLO SHIRT IN DILL

Dill colored pique polo shirt made out of 100% cotton for extra softness and strength. Available with feminine Y-collar with Toastmasters embroidered in black on left chest.

7028A Small 7028B Medium 7028C Large 7028D X-Large 7028E XX-Large

/er (CIRCLE ONE)
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