

The TOASTMASTER®

MARCH 2001

ALSO INSIDE:

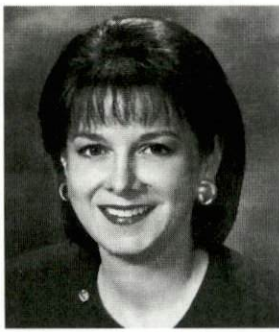
Go For the Gold:
How to succeed in the
Humorous Speech Contest

**How to Resolve
Conflicts**

The Eulogy:

*Honoring a
Life with a
Good
Word*

SPECIAL ISSUE:
Speech
Contests



VIEWPOINT

Every Member a CTM

"Gimme a 'C' — C!!!"

"Gimme a 'T' — T!!!"

"Gimme an 'M' — M!!!"

"What's that spell? 'SUCCESS!'"

"What's that spell? 'SUCCESS!'"

"What's that spell? 'SUCCESS!'"

If I could, I'd use a team of cheerleaders in this column to get across this very important point: Success in Toastmasters begins with a three-letter word: C-T-M!

The Competent Toastmaster award is "basic training" for effective communication. If you achieve your CTM, you achieve a number of positive goals: You've learned how to overcome the natural, normal fear of public speaking. You've learned how to organize a speech and write it for the most dramatic presentation. You've learned to use your voice in a variety of ways and how to use gestures to make a point. And that's only the beginning. By the time you've reached your 10th speech, you've become a well-polished, effective communicator.

The CTM award should be the club's single most important goal for each and every member, because achieving the CTM incorporates all the positive aspects of the club's educational program. If members leave a club before completing their CTMs, the club obviously is not providing the environment most conducive to member achievement. A club that does not urge members to complete their CTMs is not doing their members any favors. Exactly the opposite is true: It is robbing members of their greatest growth opportunity.

When signing up new members, the most obvious and immediate goal is for them to present their Icebreaker speeches. But once that goal is achieved, the second goal should be set as soon as possible: To get those new members on the road to achieving their CTMs. Every member achieving a CTM award should be the standard throughout our organization.

In addition to providing member success, the CTM is the key to member retention. Although nearly 65,000 people join a Toastmasters club every year, only about 15,000 go on to receive their CTM. This is what I have come to think of as a "bottleneck" in Toastmasters, a problem that is keeping our organization from retaining more members and launching them toward new goals: the CTM, all nuances of ATM and even higher achievements.

By using the Distinguished Club Program and by focusing on the benefits of more people achieving their CTMs, you and your club can turn this "bottleneck" into a "gateway" for keeping people in Toastmasters. Be a friend to the members in your club. Help them succeed by encouraging all members to achieve their Competent Toastmaster award.

JoAnna McWilliams
JoAnna McWilliams, DTM

International President

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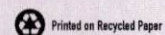
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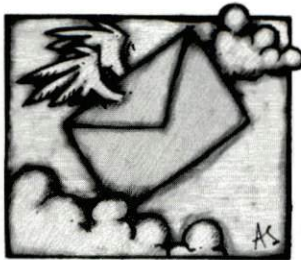
Toastmasters International empowers people to achieve their full potential and realize their dreams. Through our member clubs, people throughout the world can improve their communication and leadership skills, and find the courage to change.

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.



LETTERS

GETTING POLISHED

I joined Toastmasters because my boss suggested it would help me get some "polish." While I'm not shy or afraid of talking to people, my communication skills needed some work. I soon found that I loved the whole Toastmasters process. I learned to prepare and give presentations and to accept praise and suggestions from evaluators and fellow club members. Sometimes it's hard to hear someone criticize you – even gently, but try to remember that evaluating is a two-way street – you learn from the experience and you build bonds of trust and respect. Another aspect of Toastmasters that has been great for me is learning to be a leader *and* a participant – in meetings, as an officer and at club and district events. This is a great organization!

Pamela F. Witt, ATM-B • Uptown Club 627-16 and Speakeasy Club 2066-16
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

WARM THOUGHTS FROM HAWAII

I intercepted the January issue of *The Toastmaster* while distributing the mail. The beautiful sunflower cover with the headline: "Let's Live by the Golden Rule – 20 Ways to Make the World a Better Place" caught my eye! I've always believed in living by "the Golden Rule" – ever since learning it in first grade. I appreciate Victor Parachin's article. Over the years, I've written some of the same ideas in my children's baby journals (should something ever happen to me, I want them to clearly know what my values are and to pass them on in hopes that they, too, will try to be the best persons they can be). Now I am going to photocopy Mr. Parachin's article and staple it into each of their journals, as well!

Thanks again for a truly great and uplifting article!

Rena Bell • Kailua, Hawaii

A TOASTMASTERS' THERAPY

"Friends Helping Friends Succeed" is the motto chosen by Jo Anna McWilliams, TI's International President. When I read the motto, I thought, "Wow, she has summarized, in only four words, what I think is one of the greatest components of Toastmasters!" I have been a Toastmaster for three years and when I miss a meeting, I feel as if I've missed an important learning experience, a meeting with my support group, and a visit with friends. I believe that support, encouragement, praise, coaching and camaraderie are essential to people who don't just want to survive, but to thrive.

As a new Toastmaster, my goals were limited and involved a termination point. Through active participation, my goals broadened as my knowledge of the bene-

fits increased. Because of my increasing awareness of the many components of Toastmasters that serve to replenish, enrich and enhance my life, my "Toastmasters termination point" has been erased.

Shirley A. Mitchell, ATM-S • Paul Robeson Toastmasters Club 4540-28 • Detroit, Michigan.

HAPPY HOLIDAY VISIT

On holiday at Christmas/New Year's in Singapore, we were delighted to attend a Toastmasters meeting with Braddell Heights Advanced Club. The Internet had provided us with information to ensure that a meeting would be held. We were made very welcome and joined the members at dinner afterwards. Thank you Braddell Heights Advanced Club for your hospitality. We recommend that all Toastmasters visit other clubs, especially in other districts.

Nick Theato, CL & Mary Theato • Nenagh Club 7197-71 • Tipperary, Ireland

A WORD TO THE WISE

I want to thank Shelia Spencer for her article "Stamp Out Sleaze" (January 2001). My first Toastmasters meeting was an area speech contest. One speaker's content clearly belonged in a comedy club. I still wonder how he made it out of his club. As an educational organization, we should teach creation of good, clever material. "Pushing the envelope" not only lacks creativity, but it can cause membership loss.

Second, a word of caution to George Torok ("Tips on Presenting with the Overhead Projector," January 2001): Published cartoons are clearly copyrighted. Reproduction without permission is prohibited. As Toastmasters we should respect copyright laws and demonstrate the proper way to present.

James Young, DTM • White Lake Club 7910-62 • Whitehall, Michigan

CONTROVERSY KEEPS THINGS FLOWING

I'd like to respectfully take exception to the letter, "Make Topics Safe for Speakers and Listeners Alike" (January). Since when does controversy have to be confined to politics or religion? I'd hate to belong to a club where controversy is outlawed for fear of stepping on someone's toes, or because there may be disagreement on an issue. What a boring club it would be! I believe in controversy; I think it's the lifeblood of any organization. Controversy keeps us alive, interesting and on our toes. It adds a little spice, a little pizzazz and excitement to what could be an otherwise boring speech. I don't want a "safe place" to express myself; I want to belong to a club that will keep me coming back meeting after meeting – to learn, to grow and to be proud of being a Toastmaster.

Cliff Shellhase, CTM • Boardwalk Club 2677-38 • Ocean City, New Jersey

By Cheryl Finnegan, CTM



A spoonful of sugar helps the medicine go down.

Comedy Isn't Painless

THE SPEECH I ENTERED IN MY FIRST AREA INTERNATIONAL Speech Contest was terrific and I knew it. The speech had reaped a standing ovation from my club and praise from the members who had once raked me over the coals until my whole body blistered.

Furthermore, the topic – child abuse – was important and timely. The speech had taken on a life of its own – grabbing me, shaking me and insisting that its message be delivered. The words ran through my head until I thought I'd go mad. I practiced until I knew every word perfectly and was absolutely sure of my time.

On the evening of the competition, I was ready, although heart-poundingly nervous. I drew number five for place. Listening to the other speeches, I felt confident I would walk away with a trophy.

My delivery was perfect. I even included the pauses that my fellow Toastmasters had nagged me about. Several people in the audience were in tears. I had reached them with the message and torn out their hearts.

When the second-place winner was announced, I wasn't worried. But when the first-place winner was not me, I was truly perplexed. What had gone wrong? No one could tell me. In the week that followed, my fellow club members tried to cheer me up. They told me my speech had been powerful; the scores had been close; if it had been up to them, I would have won.

Nothing helped raise my spirits. I hadn't won. I hadn't even placed. I was devastated. I would never be a motivational speaker and make buckets of money with my incredible inspirational speeches.

I told myself that my message was too strong for some people to handle. Those judges just couldn't face the truth. But sour grapes did not help me understand why my speech didn't win. At last, a revelation hit me. I knew what was wrong with my speech and I felt immensely better.

Yes, it was powerful. Yes, it had an important message. But the serious message was delivered without one bit of relief. The speech was an endless sea of heart-wrenching information without one bit of humor. A message that does not let the listener escape for one second will not hold the listener's attention. A speaker must allow his audience to breathe, to find relief from the tension, or they will

stop listening – no matter how important the message is.

You might object that some subjects aren't funny. Surely child abuse classifies as one of those subjects. Yet, one of the functions of humor is to help us cope with the sorrows of life. Actor and comedian Eddie Murphy does a routine

in which he describes his mother's uncanny ability to hit her target (one of her children) with a shoe, even from the next room. Although he is talking about physical abuse, he makes us laugh. We listen much better than if he took a "poor me, I grew up in a dysfunctional family" attitude.

However, it's not necessary, or even appropriate, to include overt jokes in a serious speech. Irony, a well-placed pause, a disbelieving look, a clever aside and impeccable timing are all elements of comedy that allow people to laugh for a second, then return to the message being conveyed.

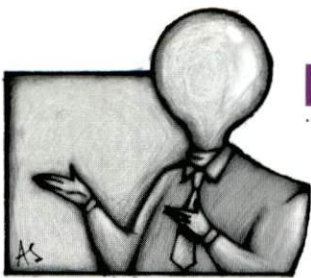
Carl Reiner said, "The absolute truth is the thing that makes people laugh." That applies to serious messages too. Even at funerals, we recall the best of a person and tell stories of fun times.

This year, I entered the International Speech Contest with an entirely different type of speech. The message was serious, but I included plenty of humor. This time, I won the area competition and went on to compete at the division level. At the division level, I didn't get as many laughs and I didn't win. I got the feeling that the audience didn't know whether or not they should laugh. This time, however, I wasn't crushed.

Since that first competition, I have learned that each speech and each competition is another opportunity to improve my skills. Toastmasters is about learning, and it really is true that everyone who competes is a winner. You've won a challenge with yourself.

Humor is a very human thing. Humor gets us through the grimmest of times – even speaking in competition. So the next time you give a speech, remember what Mary Poppins said, "A spoonful of sugar helps the medicine go down in the most delightful way." **1**

Cheryl Finnegan, CTM, is a former member of Pine Island Club 4535-6 in Pine Island, Minnesota.



An exercise in thought organization.

Quick-Speak

Somewhere between Table Topics and prepared Toastmasters speeches lies a vast arena in which most of our “real life” speaking occurs.

At 11:45 a.m., your boss says, “I want you to give a report at the one o’clock meeting.” Or, as you walk into a board meeting, the chairperson asks you to “say a few words” about a project. Or the scheduled speaker doesn’t show up for your civic club meeting, and because you’re the program chair, you’re forced to substitute. These “opportunities” happen wherever people gather to hear someone talk – at work, at church and at the meetings of various organizations, including Toastmasters.

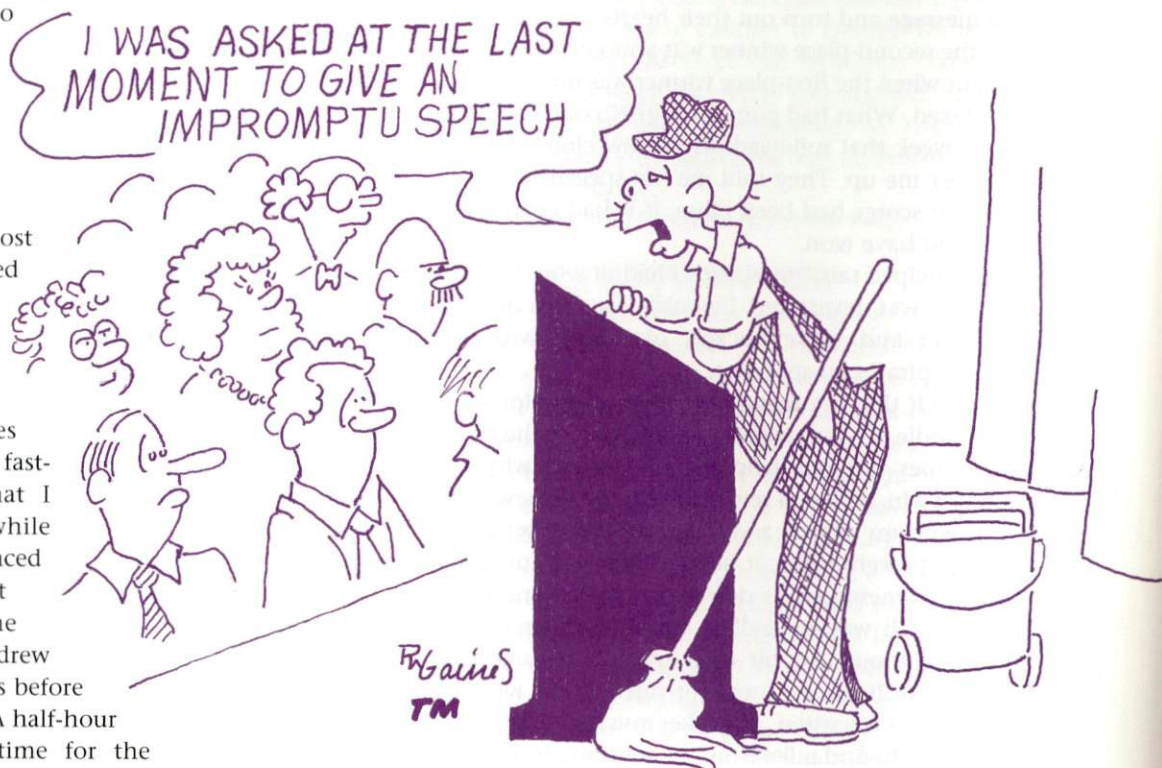
If you’re lucky, you may have an hour or two to prepare. More often, you may have only minutes. Panic-stricken, you borrow a sheet of paper and frantically begin to write a speech. The result can – and most likely will – be a jumbled mess of scribbles that make no sense to you and even less sense to your audience.

To the rescue comes “QUICK-SPEAK.” It’s a fast-preparation method that I discovered in 1989 while competing in the Advanced Speech Contest in District 47 (Florida and the Bahamas). Contestants drew speech topics 30 minutes before the competition began. A half-hour was just not enough time for the

normal speech-building process. Using QUICK-SPEAK, I advanced through club, area and division contests – and won the District 47 competition.

Here’s how QUICK-SPEAK works:

Don’t use your short amount of preparation time writing – whether it be five minutes or five hours. Instead, use those valuable minutes thinking. Under the pressure of limited time, writing often tends to be disjointed, reflecting your panic. Also without rehearsal time, your notes (usually handwritten) probably will not be easy to read and may even prove useless in helping you make a decent presentation.



Here are some steps to follow in spending your limited preparation time thinking: Concentrate on your subject. Examine it mentally, establishing – to your satisfaction – your speech's purpose. Think about your planned speech from the audience's perspective. What do audience members already know about your subject? What do you want them to learn from your speech?

Pick three or four key points to emphasize. More points likely will confuse the audience. Think about each key point and the message you want to convey.

When key points are well-established in your mind, write one, two or three words about each on a 3" x 5" index card. Resist the temptation to write more than a few words to remind you of each point. Otherwise, you'll be back to writing your speech. Jot down just enough words to keep you on track.

Once you've made very brief notes on each key point, think through an attention-grabbing opening and a logi-

cal call-to-action conclusion. As with your key points, write only two or three notes each on your speech's opening and closing.

Usually you'll be asked to speak on a topic you know well, which is why you, instead of someone else, receive the assignment. The secret of QUICK-SPEAK is to organize your thoughts on the subject, to edit your knowledge into a concise presentation.

Since winning the 1989 Advanced Speech contest, I've successfully used QUICK-SPEAK dozens of times in "real-life" situations. So it's with confidence that I advise you to try thinking, instead of writing, your speech the next time you face a speaking assignment on short notice. **T**

Tom Bintliff, DTM, is a former member of Early Bird Club 3651-47 in Tallahassee, Florida. He is a professional speaker who specializes in oral communication training.

I've Got a Little List

By Laura Burns, CTM

At a Toastmasters officers training session I attended, our district governor asked us to answer four questions:

1. What brought you into Toastmasters?
2. What brought you into your particular Toastmasters club?
3. What keeps you in your club?
4. How could your club help you meet your needs better?

I wrote down the questions, thinking as I did so that they provided not only a good way to focus the training but that they would make good Table Topics. And they did!

I used them the next time I served as Topicsmaster for our group. Our club members appreciated the opportunity to express themselves on these subjects, just as I had expected. I might not have been inspired to use these topics had I not already been in the habit of looking for lists.

Toastmasters material contains numerous worthwhile suggestions for creating Table Topics. In my own case, whenever I see a list, I think: "Can I create a Table Topics program from this?"

If you look, you will find lists all around you. Take, for example, the polls and surveys – with answers to questions – that newspapers publish. A respondent in a poll is listed only as a percentage point next to item a, b or c. But giving that question – about immigration, education, the economy or some other issue – to a Toastmaster for two minutes provides him or her with a challenging, yet satisfying, opportunity to explain and clarify an opinion as an individual.

The University of Texas made headlines by drawing people together for "deliberative polling" on political issues before a presidential election. Some of the questions that event dealt with appeared in print. And at our next meeting, Toastmasters were voicing their opinions too.

The lists you use don't have to be questions. You might, for instance, turn to the Harper's Magazine monthly "Harper's Index," a list of diverse statistics published without comment. The list contains interesting parallels and contrasts about topics as varied as race relations, the federal budget, and a number of Americans who say they have eaten pizza for breakfast. Cut out that page of the magazine, let club members draw topics and they will come up with some interesting talks.

Newspaper accounts of interviews also can be good sources of Table Topics ideas. Our club had an interesting Table Topics session based on a reporter's interview with former Texas Governor Ann Richards, who said she has five goals in her life: Making a living, being socially responsible, learning new things, traveling to interesting places and working with people she likes. Each of those goals became an interesting Table Topic.

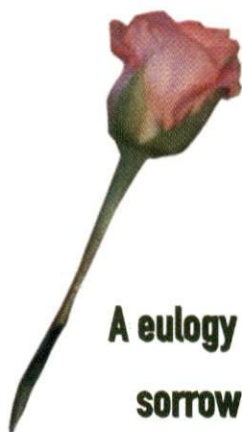
Sometimes Toastmasters dread serving as Topicsmaster because they find themselves stumped for ideas. But once you start looking for lists, you need never face that problem again. **T**

Laura Burns, CTM, is a freelance editor and writer and a former member of Round Rock Chambermasters Club 4591-55 in Round Rock, Texas.

Honoring a Life

with a

Good Word



**A eulogy expresses
sorrow for loss,
yet celebrates the person's life.**

Eulogy means “a good word.” Giving a eulogy is a way to honor a person’s life. It also is a way to provide comfort to those who are hurting. What better use could there be for a speaker’s skills than to offer tribute to a loved one? Yet agreeing that the task is worthy does not make it less difficult. Some people are uncomfortable around tears and grieving, and afraid they might inadvertently say the wrong thing and cause additional pain. Others who might wish to offer a eulogy may be struggling with feelings of grief themselves.

WHAT IS A EULOGY?

A eulogy is a written or spoken tribute, generally to someone who has recently died. For our purposes, we will consider the eulogy as separate from the religious message that often accompanies funeral services, although priests and ministers will often personalize the service with remembrances of the deceased, thereby offering their own eulogy along with their message. A eulogy expresses sorrow for loss, yet celebrates and finds meaning in the person’s life.

There are two times when you might be asked to give a eulogy. One is at the memorial service itself. Often the minister or priest presiding over the service will offer an opportunity to audience members to share remembrances. Here is where your extemporaneous speaking practice pays off. Even if you have given some thought to what you might say, the spontaneity of the situation

remains. The other potentiality is a pre-service invitation, where a family member asks you in advance to share your remembrances. In either situation, the following is important to note: While you may summarize the highlights of the person’s life and accomplishments, the best eulogies are subjective, focusing on the impact that the deceased had on you and others. The ultimate goal is to commemorate the individual’s life, and share memories and comfort with others who will miss him or her.

PREPARATION:

Obviously, if you are not offered the opportunity to speak until the service, you’ll have only moments to prepare. Yet in considering what to say, ask yourself these two quick questions: “What story, conversation or event comes to mind when I remember this individual?” and “Is the remembrance something that would bring comfort to others in the audience?” A story is likely to be welcome if it positively expresses the personality or character of the person being remembered. If the answer to the second question is yes, feel free to share your memory.

“Consider your audience” is the most crucial task when you have been asked to speak ahead of time. Discuss preference in tone and content with the person who solicits your help. As with other speeches, your eulogy will benefit from an outline. As you decide what to include, you can use information from the obituary,

BY VICKI EDWARDS, CTM ■ PHOTOGRAPHY BY FREDERIC ROLLAND/BLACK SHEEP



which is often written like a brief life history. But keep in mind that it's not a person's resume that made him or her important to us. Reflect on the essence of the person. Use these questions to trigger your memory:

- What are some of your fondest memories of this person?
- What did he value most in life?
- What are some traits that you admired in this person?
- What talents did she possess?
- What did this person like to talk about? What made her smile?

Are there letters from the deceased you could look at? Did he keep a journal, or did she write notes inside her Bible? Sometimes these intimate, informal writings reveal the heart of a person.

Part of your mission is to provide comfort to members of the audience. Did this person ever say how proud she was of her children? Did she praise her spouse's talents? Share these words – they will be precious gems to her family.

Realize that if you are preparing the main eulogy for the memorial service, as opposed to one of several tributes, you

can ask these questions of others who were close to the individual. Although this idea might strike you as awkward and insensitive, you should know that most people are glad to talk about their departed loved ones.

STYLE

In *A Labor of Love: How to Write a Eulogy*, Garry Schaeffer suggests several formats you can choose for a eulogy. One style is a list. Begin by listing traits you liked about the person, then go back and flesh out each point with a story or example. Another option is the letter eulogy. Here you write as though you were writing to the loved one, covering points you have decided are important to share. When my own grandmother died, I was unable to make the cross-country trip to attend the funeral, but I wanted the world to know how special she was to me. I wrote her "one last letter," which the minister read at her memorial service. It mentioned specific "firsts" she had provided me, treasured memories and the impact she had made on my life.

DELIVERY

Empathy for your audience should be your utmost concern. There is no need to be overly professional or aloof in this situation. If you are asked to eulogize the deceased, you have a personal relationship or connection with her and her friends and family. Speak as if you are talking to a friend.

Although we feel sorrow when we lose someone, don't assume you must remain somber at all times. Humor can be welcome and even helpful at a memorial service. It is appropriate to recall fun and even funny times with the person you are paying tribute to. Also, keep in mind the honoree's personality. Would this person have hated a sad service? If so, you might mention that, and in his honor keep the tone light. At my grandmother's funeral, I honored her love of laughter and good food by stating, "I thank you for teaching me that great truth – one that I hold dear to this day – dessert is important!"

THE SPEAKER AS GRIEVER

What if you yourself are experiencing deep personal loss. Can you still go forward to present a eulogy? Although this is a personal decision, here are a few things to keep in mind:

This is not a business presentation, and no one expects stoicism. If you find yourself momentarily overcome with emotion, it is perfectly acceptable to pause. Your audience is also grieving and there is comfort in the fellowship of others who cared for your loved one.

Your skills and preparation will aid you in delivering the words you have chosen, even when your emotions are running high. Like an athlete whose training gets him through the stress and rigor of the big race, your Toastmasters experiences will serve you well, even in this difficult situation.

The process of preparing and delivering the eulogy will help you in your grieving process. According to grief educator Victoria Alexander, all grieving persons need to:

- Find words for their loss
- Say the words
- Know that these words have been heard

DO'S AND DON'TS:

- Do be sensitive and non judgmental.
- Don't expect that your words can take away the pain of those in the room. That is not within your power. But in sharing memories with others, you can often provide some comfort.
- Don't spew platitudes, such as "time heals all wounds."
- Do use anecdotes. Writing instructors often say, "Don't tell us, show us." Create word pictures by sharing little vignettes or slice-of-life stories that let others see the person they loved.
- Do be honest. We all have things we are proud of and things we regret. While the eulogy should focus largely on the positives, the audience likely knew the individual. There is no need to create a fictitious saint.
- Don't attempt to speak for everyone who knew this person. Share your own feelings.

"Keep in mind that it's not a person's resumé that made him or her important to us. Reflect on the essence of the person."

A LIVING EULOGY

Isn't it a shame that we traditionally present these beautiful tributes to people only after they've died? Schaeffer suggests the idea of a living eulogy. He recommends contacting people who have valued the person you wish to honor, asking for letters, and then compiling them into an album. Or ask several people to write eulogies, and then plan a dinner for the honoree, allowing all the guests to read or deliver their special message. This highly personal tribute may be appropriate for a retirement banquet or at a birthday party. In any case, a eulogy may be one of the most challenging and rewarding speeches you'll ever give. **T**

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By Glenn Stewart Coles, ATM-S

The Eulogy:

Speak from the Heart

THERE COMES A TIME IN MANY TOASTMASTERS' LIVES WHEN WE are asked to deliver a eulogy. In most cases, this occurs because we were close to the deceased. We are dealing with our own emotions as well as with those of the deceased's

family and friends. We are asking "why?" and now we are expected to give the answer. What in the world do we say?

I recently was put in this exact position. My cousin died unexpectedly at age 39. His body just stopped working when a blood clot blocked his main artery. I was shocked when I heard the news.

Given the responsibility of preparing a eulogy, I determined my objectives. A eulogy can be developed that will make everyone cry. This is a distinct possibility and may provide the release needed by those who remain. However, I believe a eulogy is meant to comfort and encourage the living. The audience will walk away from the memorial service, and you have the opportunity to send something with them.

As I prepared the eulogy, I set five objectives:

1 Let the Audience Know the Person – Every person is unique, and every death is unique. For the audience members who didn't know the deceased very well, it is important to tell something about the person.

What made this person special? If he was caring and giving, don't just tell us, show us. Relay an anecdote about something the person did that proved his or her compassion. Likewise, if the person showed strength in a particular situation, tell us the story and let us conclude the obvious. A good eulogy should make the audience aware of the person's character, and this is best achieved through anecdotes.

The anecdotes must be chosen with care. It is appropriate to tell a story that makes the audience laugh. It is inappropriate to tell a story that focuses on particular weaknesses. Nobody leads a perfect life, and the audience is well aware of the deceased person's faults. They don't need you to remind them. Instead, tell a story that reveals positive character aspects.

2 Address the Audience's Needs – Though a funeral or memorial service is centered on the deceased, it is really held for the living. Your audience needs help, and you can provide it. You must first recognize the pain suffered by the audience, and the loss that they have experienced. Express

sympathy to those closest to the deceased, and to those who have traveled a long distance to pay their respects.

Most of us don't like dealing with death. It brings out our insecurities, our feelings of guilt, and our perception of mortality. When delivering a eulogy you have the opportunity to philosophize about life and death. While any single death is disturbing, it is an end we shall all experience. You can help the audience deal with this circumstance.

3 Uplift the Audience – The people in attendance are open and vulnerable. They want you to say something meaningful and are listening intently to you. Take advantage of this opportunity to help improve your audience's outlook on life.

4 Determine the Lessons Offered by the Deceased – When someone dies, we often ask "Why?" Usually, there is no answer. We tend to look at a person's life in comparison to the lives of others. We identify what was lacking in a person's life and wish our friend or family member would have had time to realize more of his or her dreams. We may wish we had treated the person differently, or we find comfort in the relationship. All of these issues are related to us, not to the deceased. We create any feelings of guilt or judgment, and only we can choose to release these feelings and move on.

In any life, lessons are learned and examples are set. Search for these and share them with the audience. How can you use the deceased's life as an inspiration? What challenges did the person face, and how did he or she choose to address them?

5 Use Appropriate Mannerisms – The atmosphere when delivering a eulogy is not appropriate for many of the common elements of speaking. Vocal variety can be used well, particularly in the volume and tone of voice. While the eulogy requires a somber tone, it is appropriate to use humor, particularly amusing anecdotes that summarize the person's character in a positive way. Always deliver a eulogy from the heart, and it will be successful. **T**

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You know more about
grammar than you
think you do.

The Importance of Being Grammarian

When the topic of grammar is brought up, the image readily comes to mind of an English teacher lecturing on nouns, verbs, and dangling participles. We've all had that same English teacher and wondered what relevance an antecedent could possibly have in our lives.

When encountering the role of Grammarian in your Toastmasters club, your first thought may be that you don't know much about grammar. Anything you learned from that high school English teacher has long since faded from memory.

But you know more than you think you do. And you don't have to identify any grammar terms by their formal names. Unless, of course, you want to. So when asked to evaluate someone's grammar, start by simply listening – not so much to speech content as to each word and sentence. This forces you to pay very close attention to what is being said. If you're having trouble with eye contact, this is a great way to practice while letting someone else do the speaking!

As you hone your listening skills, watch for the following:

■ **Run-on Sentences.** You'll notice that some Toastmasters string sentences together with conjunctions instead of pausing briefly after each sentence. Conjunctions are connecting words, such as "and," "so," "but," and "because."

Chances are you won't find too many run-on sentences during prepared speeches. But they are common during impromptu speaking, such as Table Topics and evaluations.

■ **Word Crutches.** Crutches hold you up when you've injured a leg. Likewise, word crutches hold you up when you're nervous during a speech. They help fill the gap between one thought and the next. "You know" is a common word crutch. The speaker may not be aware he's saying them, but listeners will start to focus on those oft-

repeated words. Audience members may even start counting how many times the speaker uses the words. And suddenly they're no longer focusing on the speech content.

See how important the Grammarian already is? But this is only a start. Pay attention to the following language infractions as you continue to develop your skills:

■ **Gender Usage.** Public speakers should try to use gender-neutral job titles and avoid stereotyping. Look for usage guidelines in dictionaries and newswriting stylebooks.

■ **Taboo Language.** This covers off-color jokes, profanity and anything racist or sexist. Should this type of language creep into a Toastmaster's speech, the Grammarian needs to point it out so that the practice won't continue. What is and what isn't taboo speech is subject to the personal preferences of each audience member; what one may find offensive another may not. When one Toastmaster used the word "toilet" in a speech, his evaluator was so upset that she blocked out the entire speech!

Simple word usage affects how the audience reacts to a speech. As your listening skills grow, listen for the following problems with words:

■ **Redundant Words and Phrases.** You'll be surprised at how many phrases use unnecessary words. Check these out:

INSTEAD OF:	USE:
Absolutely essential	Essential
At a later date	Later
Color of blue	Blue
During the course of	During
If at all possible	If possible
Month of January	January
With reference to	About

Sometimes these "impressive" phrases can actually lessen the impact of a message. And certainly, if a Toastmaster is close to the timing requirements of a speech, such redundancies take up valuable seconds better used elsewhere.

Now that your skills as Grammarian have grown, you're ready to take up a challenge with a few more complex things to look for.

■ **Factual Errors.** One veteran Toastmaster described a general marching into war, with "medals shining on his chest." Having been in the military and to war, I had to point out that soldiers don't actually wear their medals in combat (if he did, the general would be an obvious target!). Even the smallest factual mistake can discredit an entire speech, so it is important to make the speaker aware of it.

■ **Jargon and acronyms.** Every industry has its own buzzwords and technical terms. While using these terms may be appropriate in a specific business environment, an average audience may not know what some of these words mean. To be safe, follow the example of one Toastmaster, who in her second speech defined an acronym for the audience and then used the acronym throughout the rest of the speech, occasionally reminding the audience what it stood for.

■ **Clichés.** Clichés are phrases that have been used so many times that they have become virtually meaningless. The easiest way to tell if a phrase is a cliché is if you've heard it before. Usually, when a phrase becomes popular, you will see it on TV, in advertisements, and in newspapers. How many times have you seen "state of the art" or "scored some points"? There's nearly always a better way to say something than using a cliché.

■ **Trademarked Words.** Sometimes a product name becomes so well-known that it actually becomes more common than the generic term for the product. Still try to use the generic name whenever possible. Kerosene, mimeograph and fiberglass are all examples of product names that became ordinary words through everyday usage. Look for trademarked words being used as ordinary words, such as making a "Xerox copy" or "using a Kleenex."

This list of things to look for might seem a little overwhelming at first. Start with listening for one element and then add another one the next time you're Grammarian. Soon both you and your club members will benefit from your newfound skills. **I**

Linda Adams, CTM, is a member of G.U.T.S. Club 5986-27 in Arlington, Virginia.

Mantra for the New Year

1. Take into account that great love and great achievements involve great risk.
2. When you lose, don't lose the lesson.
3. Follow the three R's: respect for self, respect for others, responsibility for all your actions.
4. Remember that not getting what you want is sometimes a wonderful stroke of luck.
5. Don't let a little dispute injure a great friendship.
6. When you realize you've made a mistake, take immediate steps to correct it.
7. Spend some time alone every day.
8. Open your arms to change, but don't let go of your values.
9. Remember that silence is sometimes the best answer.
10. Live a good, honorable life. Then when you get older and think back, you'll be able to enjoy it – a second time.
11. A loving atmosphere in your home is the foundation for your life.
12. In disagreements with loved ones, deal only with the current situation. Don't bring up the past.
13. Share your knowledge. It's a way to achieve immortality.
14. Be gentle with the earth.
15. Once a year, go someplace you've never been before.
16. Remember that the best relationship is one in which your love for each other exceeds your need for each other.
17. Judge your success by what you had to give up in order to get it.
18. Approach love and cooking with reckless abandon.



CAN WE TALK?

By Keith Gordon, ATM-S

The goal is to keep laughter, excitement, and anticipation building until the winners are announced.

When You Are the Contest Toastmaster

It is contest night. The room is packed to overflowing. Judges, fellow Toastmasters and, most significantly, guests are present. It may be their first experience with Toastmasters. What an important time to make a positive impression!

The contestants who come as representatives from their individual clubs are some of the best. Their strengths are typically quite evident. But what about the Toastmaster for the event? Is he or she the best of the best? This, perhaps arguably, is the most important role at the contest and on occasion, is taken less seriously than it should be.

Have you ever had the honor of being asked to serve as Toastmaster at a contest beyond club level? If so, what did you do to prepare yourself? While many of us have been the Toastmaster at a club meeting, when we leave the comfort of that weekly environment, it's a whole new ballgame. Let's examine a couple of key considerations for filling the role of contest Toastmaster.

The first area of concern is the theme. The theme is central to the contest; it sets the tone for a well-run event. It gives the audience a preview of what is to come. For instance, at a recent area humorous contest, the theme was "Laughter, The Best Medicine." That may sound a bit clichéd, but nonetheless, it was a solid platform on which the Toastmaster could build. With that theme, one might expect to be in for some laughter (and boy, were we).

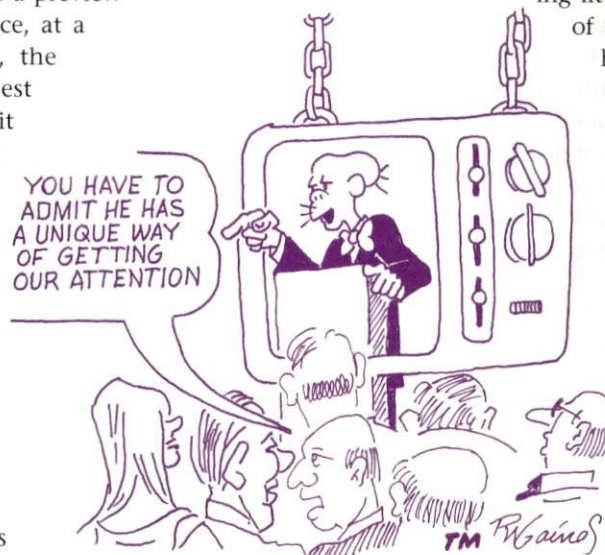
Defining a theme for the meeting offers an opportunity to build momentum as the contest progresses. For example, the "best medicine" theme allowed the Toastmaster to use a number of humorous

medical anecdotes at the beginning of the contest to warm up the audience. Stories, fillers, or more anecdotes related to the subject were useful while ballots were being tabulated. The goal is to keep laughter, excitement and anticipation building until the winners are announced. A theme, whether light-hearted or of a more serious nature, enables the Toastmaster to do this.

A second, and perhaps even more important, consideration is the contestant interview portion of the contest. Unless you are a professional journalist, this can be a particularly challenging task, especially if left until the last minute. Think about it, how many of us get the opportunity to practice this all-important skill at our weekly meetings? Although I'm a member of three clubs and I have visited many other clubs over the years, the only time I have witnessed a speaker interview was during a contest. Interviewing is a skill in itself.

The interview can and should be thought out well in advance of the contest. The Toastmaster can prepare general questions, having never met and knowing little about the contestants. For those of us new to the art of interviewing, here are a couple of suggestions for asking good questions:

First of all, avoid "closed-ended" questions. This means questions that can be answered with a simple yes or no. The idea is to get the contestant to talk. We can use who, what, where and when questions, but even these can be limiting. For example, if you were to ask a contestant, "Where do you work?" that question could be answered, "At the ABC Company." By asking



such a question, we have almost suggested that we do not wish to know much about the contestant. Remember that the objective is to spur conversation.

Consider a similar question, phrased a little differently. "Tell me (or us) about where you work." To the interviewee, this approach indicates that you want some detail. An answer like "At the ABC Company" would never suffice. To create even more dialogue, why not try a question such as, "Why are you competing here today?" or better yet, rephrase essentially the same question by asking, "Can you explain to us how you came to be a contestant here today?" Wow! What a difference a word or two can make in generating a response.

The interviewer has the responsibility to ask good questions and perhaps more importantly, to elicit good answers. To motivate someone to open up, we must make it easy. By prefacing questions with phrases such as, "tell us," or "explain," or "give us some background," you, as Toastmaster, are certain to create conversation. Be as creative as you can with your question openings and put some

thought into the process. When you are in the spotlight with a contestant, you want the interview to go smoothly. Practice your questioning techniques to gain confidence and to give the contest a high level of professionalism.

Just like a good speech, a good contest has a strong opening, body and close. The opening is strengthened by the contest theme. The body is bound to be good, since it includes presentations by some of the best speakers and an exceptional interview session, (thanks to you.) The awards presentation should be the climax of the evening, capped with an energetic closing remark or two, which sends everyone off on a high note.

When you are fortunate enough to be selected to be a contest Toastmaster, give it your best. Your preparation will contribute to the quality of the event and make it a contest both speakers and audience members will appreciate. **T**

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Before You Compete, Read the Rules

By Judy Tingley, CTM

Whether you're a brand new Toastmaster or a veteran, I bet there are many pieces of information that you don't have about speech contests. I ultimately learned them as the Vice President of Education and consequently as Contest Chair. So here's a quick run through of the ground rules and regulations for the International Speech Contest:

- To be eligible to enter, you have to have already completed six speeches toward your CTM. Although your contest speech can count toward your CTM, it needs to be your seventh speech or better. You also need to be a member in "good standing" in a club in good standing. To be eligible, you also need to pay up your dues if they're not current.
- If you win at the club level, you qualify to compete at the area contest, and if you keep winning, you progress through the finals at the division, district, region – and finally the international contest.
- If you've solved all the problems of eligibility, then you can sign up and start to prepare. The contest speech is 5-7 minutes (disqualification takes place if you speak less than 4½ or more than 7½ minutes) and "substantially original." Can you quote someone? Of course, but make it clear whom you're quoting.
- The judging criteria for the International Speech Contest are different from what we're used to every week in the club. If you're going to enter a contest, it would be a good idea to look over the criteria in detail

before the contest. Here are the categories and brief definitions:

- Speech development – an organizational structure with an opening, body and conclusion.
- Effectiveness – deals with whether the speech related directly to the stated theme or purpose.
- Speech value – does the speech relate directly to the stated theme or purpose?
- Audience response – Is the audience interested, engaged, laughing?
- Physical presentation – focuses on appearance, body language, gestures and positioning.
- Voice – addresses volume, variety and clarity of voice.
- Manner – the speaker's confidence, "realness" and interest in the audience.
- Appropriateness – choice of words and language.
- Correctness – use of proper grammar and pronunciation.

New members may not know this, but often the toughest competition takes place in your own club contest. Entering a speech contest of any kind is taking the fast track to becoming a good speaker.

For a complete listing of International Speech Contest Rules, visit the TI Web site at www.toastmasters.org or the November 2000 issue of this magazine. **T**

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Go for

What's keeping you from entering, and winning, a Humorous Speech contest?

Not too long ago, I won my first Toastmasters Humorous Speech Contest. Actually, it was a series of contests – in our club, area, division and district. Winning a Toastmasters contest is a truly memorable feeling. Toastmasters provides an excellent environment for healthy competition – a unique chance to show off what we spend weeks and months learning in our regular club meetings.

The humorous speech contest is arguably the most challenging of all Toastmasters contests. Why? Simply put, it's because the humorous speech requires a speaker to be funny on demand. And not just once, but over and over again – as the speaker progresses from the club contest to the area, division and district contest finals. Comics spend years practicing and refining their material. Actors in comedies on film and television programs get endless takes to make sure their timing and delivery is perfect. Most Toastmasters don't plan to be pro-



For the Gold:

Sure-fire ways to succeed in your next humorous speech contest.

fessional comedians, but the skills required to perform well at humorous speech contests are often the same used by people who do comedy for a living.

I discovered a number of tips on the path to winning my Humorous Speech Contest trophy. They may be useful stepping stones as you consider entering a contest near you.

DO THE OPPOSITE

I'm not the best speaker in the world. For example, I have no idea what to do with my hands. I pace. I have a terrible memory. But I had a secret weapon in my recent series of contests – a great concept. Sure, we all strive to be compelling, engaging speakers. But at times, it's OK simply to fall back on having a clever idea and letting that carry the day.

My speech was titled "The Dying Art of the Complaint." In it, I implored the audience to rejuvenate the practice of complaining, which has been in decline in recent years. (Obviously, the speech was given tongue-in-cheek.) The key to the speech's success was that I was saying exactly the opposite of what I really feel, what many people feel: that complaining diminishes our enjoyment of life. The humor came from speaking emphatically about something that was clearly ludicrous. "If things progress the way they have, there will be no complaining left," I proclaimed in my speech. "And that is simply not the kind of world I want to live in."

When you ponder the topic of your humorous speech, you might try doing the opposite of your first instinct. Give your speech a twist. Want to give a speech on gun control? How about advocating that everyone have guns – even family pets? How about making a speech about eliminating taxes for the rich? Or perhaps take the position that we should watch much more television.

Humor will come from the absurdity of your position. Presenting a position that's the opposite of what you mean also gets the audience engaged, and gives them something they didn't expect. Surprise, after all, is one of the fundamental tenets of humor.

PLAY IT STRAIGHT

A key aspect of successful humor is for the speaker to not be in on the joke. Think about times when you've heard people laugh at their own jokes. The humor just doesn't seem as funny, does it? Well, it's the same with a humorous speech. The humor is for your audience, not you. Play it straight.

In my winning speech, I spoke with deadpan conviction about the need for more complaining. "Complaining is the glue that holds us together as a society. It's what separates us from the animals." My serious delivery stood in contrast to the silliness of the words I was saying, which elicited a tremendous response from the various audiences. If the tone of the speech had been light-hearted, it's doubtful it would have had the same effect.

KEEP TO THE GAME PLAN

Any comedian could tell you about times when his material wasn't received as expected. It's the bane of a comedian's existence. Like the comedian, the Toastmaster faces potential peril when competing in the Humorous Speech Contest. You prepare for weeks, polishing your opening joke, you rise when your name is called, you begin your speech, the joke is delivered just as it was rehearsed... and nothing. Silence, even.

Now, what?

The most important thing about not getting the results you expect is not to get derailed. Stick to the game plan. Simply move on. (Or as they said in a recent ad campaign: "Never let them see you sweat.") And under no circumstances should you resent the audience for not responding the way you feel they should. Many a performer has made the mistake of commenting on how uptight an audience is, or how they just don't "get it." There's simply nothing worse than being part of an audience that is being berated by a speaker for not laughing in the right places. What frame of mind do you think that puts an audience in? Are they more likely to laugh at your next joke if you've ridiculed them and implied they're "a couple of guppies short of a school"?

Just keep moving. If you've done your homework, you'll have a number of opportunities for the audience to come around. A way to safeguard against jokes falling flat is to not have any jokes in your speech. That's right. Be Bill Cosby, not Rodney Dangerfield. The difference? Dangerfield's style uses one- or two-liners. Set-up, punchline, set-up, punchline. Every joke has to be a winner. Too much pressure, if you ask me. But if you've ever seen Bill Cosby perform, he tells stories. Funny stories, but stories that do not rely on "jokes" per se. It takes the pressure off.

There's actually a prevailing thought in comedy circles, especially in writing for situation comedies, which claims that a joke should never, ever be able to stand on its own as a joke. It should come so organically from the material being delivered that it wouldn't hold up standing on its own. It's something to consider, but personally, I wouldn't dare give a humorous speech without a couple of sure-fire jokes.

DON'T STEP ON THE LAUGHTER

Here's a tricky one. Let's assume all is going according to plan. The audience is with you. You throw out a line: "My car is a convertible. I call it that because when I turn the key, it converts into a piece of junk." The audience responds. There is a delicate balance struck between a humorous speaker and the audience. If you speak during the laughter, one of two things will happen: 1) your next comment won't be heard, or 2) the laughter will abruptly halt so you can be heard. (And from there on out your audience will be inhibited – they won't want to miss anything, so they're less likely to let loose with laughter, which is, after all, the whole point of a humorous speech.

So, here's a good rule of thumb. Say the duration of an audience's response is a period of time measured from one to ten, with five being the peak of the laughter. You can avoid "stepping on the laugh" by waiting until about eight to begin speaking again. Don't wait until 10, as that's nearly silence – and that's too late because you lose your momentum.

Like I said, this is tricky. This is why it's essential you practice your speech in a club setting before going on to a larger contest. You'll find that a small group responds differently from a large group, which is another reason the contest structure – club, area, district, division – works, because you deliver your speech to increasingly larger groups.

In time, you'll develop an ear for laughter, and only through repetition will you gain a sense of what rhythm works best for you. Remember, when you step on the audience's response, you're defeating the whole purpose of a humorous speech.

VARY YOUR JOKES

Avoid the trap of using the same kind of joke over and over. Use a variety of humor techniques, including the aforementioned surprise, exaggeration, juxtaposition and incongruity. Throw in a change-up every now and then.

How can you tell if something's funny? Tell it to five people before you ever set foot in your club contest.

THE RULE OF THREE

Along with varying the types of jokes you use, it's also important to remember the "Rule of Three." That's the timeless guideline that has been used for decades by humorists. Namely, three jokes on a given subject is fine, but no more. The rule of three might also apply to examples within your speech. If you put forth a concept, support it with three examples, then quit.

No one's quite sure why this rule works – it just does. Then again, no one's quite sure why the "k" sound in words is funny. It just is.

SAVE YOUR BEST JOKE FOR LAST

There's a temptation to throw out all your best material right away – to get the audience on your side. But it's far more important to have a great ending. That final payoff is what the audience (or more importantly, the judges) will remember.

MASTER THE 'CALLBACK'

A key comic device is the "callback." The callback is simply a reference to something that was presented earlier in the speech. Callbacks give a humorous speech a sense of cohesion, and rarely fails to bring a positive response from an audience – either because the callback is intrinsically funny, or at the very least because it's something familiar.

In my speech on complaining, I gave some useful tips on how we can complain more effectively – ignore the facts, exaggerate, always compare the present with the past, and never do anything about your complaint. Each of these "pointers" was followed with examples. Then, at the end of my speech, I pleaded with audience members to get out into the world and complain, and perhaps to begin with complaining about what a terrible speech I'd given. I then asked why they should use my speech as an example? Simple, Tip #1 – when complaining, you should ignore the facts. This reference, at the end of the speech, served as an effective callback, giving the speech a sense of circularity and closure.

FIND FRIENDLY FACES

During your speech, seek the support of fellow club members. The soothing effect of looking out into an audience and finding friendly faces can't be overstated.

Contests are an interesting phenomenon. While you sense that everyone wants you to do well, the competition element is apparent. Each club wants its representative to win, and while the unwritten Toastmasters code would never allow a club member to verbalize bias, it sometimes comes out in unsuspected ways.

For example, at our area contest, one of my competitors actually sat at a table directly in front of the stage and munched on food the entire time I was speaking, doing

her best to distract fellow audience members and/or the judges...or me. While this type of behavior is truly rare in Toastmasters, it's a good idea to invite as many friends and fellow club members to your contests as possible. They'll give you the benefit of the doubt when a joke falls flat, and their enthusiastic applause is certain to pump you up before, during, and after your speech.

And by the way, I took absolutely no satisfaction in the fact that the speaker who tried to sabotage me did not go home with the winner's trophy – after all, that kind of petty attitude is not what Toastmasters is all about, right?

KEEP AN EYE ON THE CLOCK

Toastmasters pride themselves on being disciplined when it comes to time. However, humorous speeches, unlike other kinds of speeches, rely on a widely varying component that can have a serious impact on the length of a speech – audience response.

If you do your job correctly, your speech will elicit gales of laughter. The problem? Exactly how much laughter will it elicit? In contests, going over the allotted time can result in disqualification.

In most cases, this will mean that you'll want to build in some time for audience response. If you prepare a speech that runs seven minutes without breaks for audience response, you're in trouble. (The typical time limit in speech contests is five- to seven-minutes.)

A safe bet is to “pad” your speech with lines or ideas that you can easily discard on the spot if you find the audience reaction is unusually good (meaning, you're getting more laughter than expected). Keep these lines self-contained. Run through your speech with and without them. Don't be afraid to drop even some of your best material if you find yourself going over time. Remember that no matter how good your speech is, if you go over the time limit, you're out of the running. Do you want that trophy or not?

DISCOVER THE SEED OF TRUTH

No matter how absurd or silly a topic you choose, the most resonant speeches – while funny and entertaining – also hold a seed of truth for the audience to take home with them. In my speech on complaining, while many of the concepts were outrageous, the core message – about how complaining erodes our enjoyment of life – is something people still comment about. It was clear that the humor helped deliver a concept that people could use in their daily lives.

It's true that some humorous speeches are done purely to entertain, but a winning speech has an underlying core that can stand on its own – even without all the humor and jokes. **1**

.....
Scott Roeben, CTM, is a member of Ernest Speakers Club 9065-52 in Burbank, California.

Seek and You Shall Find

By Jennifer Chivers, CTM

Where to look for your next speech topic.

The next time you find yourself stumped for a speech topic, try this game of Hide & Seek and you are guaranteed to come away a winner. It goes like this: Set aside 30 minutes, preferably when you will not be interrupted, and try to find all the “topic ideas” that are hidden in your home. You can start in any room of the house and stop when you have found the hidden treasure.

Here's a game sampler:

1. First stop – Family Room.

- What's in your video library? (Classic black & whites, horror genre, Walt Disney animation.) The library is full of books on the film industry should you like to tell us more about the subject.
- Where are your photo albums? (Favorite holiday, graduation, family reunion, household renovation.) A picture truly is worth a thousand words.
- Scan your bookshelf. Who's your favorite author, what courses have you taken?

2. Next stop – Basement/Storage Closet/Garage

- Any sports equipment hanging around? I've always wondered about the history of snowshoeing.
- Look for paint cans, mechanical or gardening tools, camping paraphernalia, trophies. If those items could talk, what would they say? Any likes, dislikes, lessons learned?

3. Final stop – Bedroom

- Snoop under the bed first. I recently found a shoebox I'd been saving to use as a storage container for my bills and receipts. There's an environmental topic about recycling just waiting to be explored.
- Check out your clothes closet. If you are like me, there's a lot more than clothes put away in your closet, sometimes for safe keeping, other times for lack of anywhere else to put it.

Personal interests combined with a bit of research can make for an informative, yet entertaining speech. May all your treasures be full of golden speech topics! **1**

.....
Jennifer Chivers, CTM, is a member of Richmond Hill Club 1963-60 in Richmond Hill, Ontario, Canada.



FOR THE NOVICE

By Robin Schroder, CTM

Dancing “in the dragon’s jaws” has its rewards.

The Competitor

Few things in life are more exciting, and ultimately as rewarding, as participating in a Toastmasters speech contest. Why anyone would willingly “dance in the dragon’s jaws” is hard to explain to the uninitiated. After all, there is no obvious compensation. Yet, at least twice a year, many Toastmasters around the globe are brave enough to participate in contests. But most members hang back, particularly at the club level. Let’s look at some of the reasons people hesitate to become involved in what is bound to be a fun, educational experience.

If we pull apart the components of the contest, we can remove some of the mystique from the idea of competition. For example, giving a speech in a club-level contest is really no different from giving any other manual speech. In fact, most first-time contestants use a manual speech. These experiences are different only in the mind. But our fear exclaims, “There are people judging me in contests.” Yet, we are evaluated every time we speak at our weekly meetings. And what is an evaluation but a judgment or opinion? (Actually, aren’t we being judged every time we open our mouths – any time and any place?) A judgment is only one person’s opinion and may be right, wrong or a little of both. You can live with that.

Perhaps it is the thought of speaking to a larger group that foils the potential contestant. But if you can speak to a group of five people, you can speak to 55. The mechanics are exactly the same. Again, the difference is mainly mental. If anything, the amount of energy exuded by a larger crowd will encourage you, and the audience’s response will confirm that they are following your



thoughts. (More than once I have thought, after hearing some audience member giggle at one of my sorry jokes, “Thank heavens someone thought that was funny.”) Letting your eyes bounce slowly from face to face will allow you to collect energy from the individuals in your audience. This will add momentum to your speech. A larger room means larger opportunities to hone your speaking craft.

Some people worry about the other contestants. Everyone will be well-prepared and trying their best, just as you will. Competitions do not make sense without other competitors to try your skill against. Candidates need each other, just as they need an audience, to make the experience meaningful. Few want to win a contest in which they are the only entrant. Good sportsmanship is a hallmark of Toastmasters events, and a goal for which we all strive. I don’t think you will be disappointed at the level exhibited by your fellow speakers. Arrive to play the game, well-prepared, and the others will do the same. More than once, a contest has been won by the new David pitted against public speaking Goliaths.

What else? Do your research and use appropriate material. As well as giving you confidence, good content accounts for a high percentage of the final tally.

Following the guidelines for speech construction is important in contests. Remember the classic approach: The "hamburger" construction style will often be successful in a contest environment. Organizing your thoughts along a timeline, thus dealing with the subject in the past, present and future, is another way. But every good speech has an opening, a body and a conclusion.

Then there are the three little words that create the winning edge, "Practice, practice, practice." You don't have the time to practice much? Go over your speech when you have a long, boring commute, when you are raking leaves or taking a shower. Silent rehearsal is almost as good as speaking out loud. Even contests that require impromptu skills, like Table Topics and Evaluations, can be practiced by participating on a weekly basis at the meeting. One strategy for impromptu contests is to have a short, general address memorized, as well as brief, closing remarks. Your address to the room, including brief generic remarks, can always be prepared ahead of time and give you valuable thinking seconds for the first few moments you take the stage. Being aware of the previously mentioned organizational patterns is a great impromptu contest strategy as well.

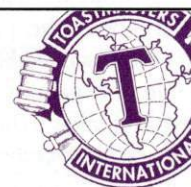
Now you have it. You are used to the idea of being judged. You have prepared an organized effort and you have practiced. Now it's up to the judges. What could stop you now? Only you.

I hope this provides some psychological "handles" for the fear of competition. The rewards for overcoming these are not financial, of course. Nor is the prize or the (let's face it) minor fame a contest brings. How you play the game is important, but not paramount. The plaques and trophies are wonderful to show your mom, but the real reward is not in being declared the winner. As that wise guy said, it is the journey, not the destination, that brings happiness. The miracle is that most of us joined Toastmasters because we were afraid of public speaking, but in entering a contest, we are declaring that fear at least partially overcome. Contests are just one more step in personal development. Win or not - there is no loser in a Toastmasters contest - no matter what slings or arrows that outrageous fortune delivers. The real reward is in being a part of it all. Let the games begin! **T**

Robin Schroder, CTM, is a member of Lakeshore Advanced Club 9912-60 in Grimsby, Ontario, Canada.



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Want to Become a Speech Contest Champion?

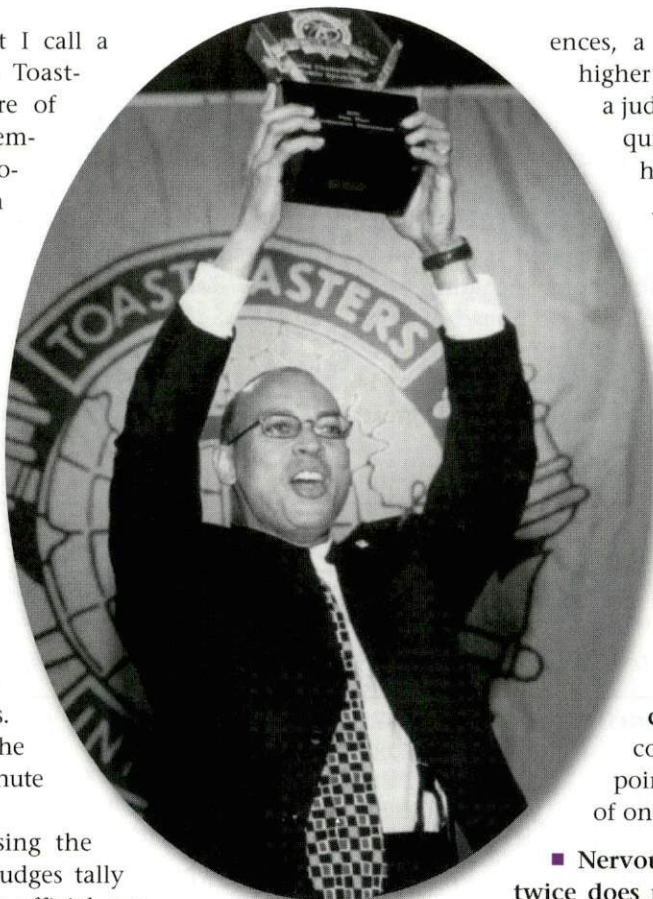
Every year, I organize what I call a “judging party.” I invite Toastmaster friends – a mixture of beginners and experienced members – and we judge the videotaped International Speech Contest finals from that year’s International Convention.

I provide all the “judges” with the formal judging forms that I order from TI Headquarters. We watch a speaker, take a minute to write down our scores, and then we discuss what we like and don’t like about the presentation. These discussions are invaluable for gaining insight on what it takes to become a public speaking champion. We discuss the speeches right away, while they are fresh in our minds. Usually, we take a break after the fifth speech, and after a 10-minute recess we get back to work.

When we are done discussing the ninth and final speaker, our judges tally their points, and following the official contest rules, we rank our top three speakers. We then watch the interviews and the announcement of the official contest results.

These meetings have taught me a lot about speech competitions. I’d like to share some insights with you:

- **Champion speakers have strong basics.** The quality of the verbal and physical language of the finalists is remarkable. We find it very difficult to come up with ways to improve their performance.
- **When we judge, we often focus on the negatives.** These speakers are so good that we are looking for differ-



2000 International Speech
Contest Winner Ed Tate.

ences, a reason to place one speaker higher or lower than another. Maybe a judge will be put off by a speaker’s quirk or style, the way she carried herself, or the way he dressed. Judging a contest is very different from evaluating a speech and can be quite subjective.

- **Judging is consistent.** We usually pick the same three winners as in the real contest. It is easy to think that judging is arbitrary, I know. We have found that the results of individual judges can vary quite a bit, but overall, when the results have been tabulated, there is a consensus.
- **One judge can make the difference.** In a close contest, contestants can be within a point of each other. The opinion of one judge tilts the balance.
- **Nervousness or stumbling once or twice does not affect a speaker’s results.** Small errors usually do not make much of a difference, unless the contestant keeps repeating them. So don’t worry about being perfect. In fact, appearing “human” can appeal to the audience.
- **Content makes the difference.** Because the quality of the language and delivery is so high among the finalists, it is difficult to differentiate the speakers without focusing on the content of the speech. The official TI judging form lists three items to evaluate content: speech development, effectiveness and speech value. Speakers can lose points because their speech lacks originality, because it is hard to follow, or because it is ineffective and the audience doesn’t respond to it.

Some distinctions we have noticed at our judging parties focus on the three elements in the "speech content" category:

TIPS FOR SPEECH DEVELOPMENT (STRUCTURE, ORGANIZATION, SUPPORT MATERIAL)

- Clarify the purpose of your speech! Don't assume the audience will figure it out.
- Strong introductions and conclusions are powerful and leave a lasting impression.
- Satisfy the audience's curiosity. Tell them the whole story. Don't leave loose threads behind.
- State your sources. Avoid generalizations such as "research shows..." The audience knows you can make research say anything. Establish your credibility.
- Beware of quoting research that you have heard informally. Verify the sources yourself.
- Quotes can be powerful. Give the audience time to appreciate them.
- Use material that supports your points, and leave aside cute but irrelevant side stories. Getting that extra laugh may not be worth the audience's confusion.
- Don't have too much or too little material.

TIPS FOR SPEECH VALUE (IDEAS, LOGIC, ORIGINAL THOUGHT)

- Some judges are put off if you come across as a clone of another speaker. Be unique. Be yourself.
- Avoid clichés.
- Let the story make the point for you. You don't have to spell it out for your audience. Avoid preaching or lecturing.

TIPS FOR EFFECTIVENESS (ACHIEVEMENT OF PURPOSE, INTEREST, RECEPTION)

- Mention the city or the place you are competing in.
- Spontaneously comment on the messages or performances of previous speakers.
- Don't use your title word for word at the end of the speech. It's predictable.
- Mention your name – make it easy for people to remember you, your speech and your message.
- Genuine enthusiasm makes you stand out.
- Keep a good flow. Pause. Vary your pace.
- Audience participation can be powerful, but it must serve a purpose.
- If you ask the audience to stand up, be sure to ask them to sit down after you've made your point.
- Champions speak from the heart. Many speeches we watched were perceived as too "intellectual."
- "Speak" – do not "present." This is a speech, not a cabaret routine.
- Dress with care. There will be powerful lights on you (for the cameras). Using a bit of makeup may be a good idea, especially if you have oily skin.
- Don't overuse a point or gesture. It can be annoying and distracting.

- We favored "spontaneous" speakers – even if they made mistakes – over speakers who seemed too rehearsed.
- Avoid being too theatrical or forceful – it is not effective without being balanced with quieter moments.
- Smile.
- Share something that interests the audience.
- Show your emotions. Adapt your body language to display the emotions you want to convey.
- If you speak quickly, use pauses for effect.
- Create suspense.
- Make them laugh.
- Avoid wearing shoes that make a lot of noise on the stage.
- Having a strong accent is not necessarily a problem, but pronouncing a common word several times in a funny way can be distracting.
- Judges seem to favor speakers who appear sincere and congruent with their messages.
- Make use of the space available on the stage.
- Be ready for a long journey. Be mentally ready to make it to the finals more than once! **T**

Eric Guévremont, CTM, is a member of EarthSave Club 8237-21 and Advanced Aurators Club 1709-21 in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada.

Editor's Note: Video tapes of the International Speech Contest finals are available for purchase from Bill Stevens Productions. Call 1-800-322-4422 or 775-322-6292, or visit his web site at www.billspro.com.

Pick a Winner

Judging a speech contest requires knowledge and skill – something that not all judges may have. Now you can help members develop their speech contest judging abilities with Toastmasters International's Speech Contest Judges Training Program (Catalog No. 1190). This two-hour program can be used by districts and clubs

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Help others pick a winner! Order your Speech Contest Judges Training Program from World Headquarters today!





Conflict is an unavoidable part of life, but it doesn't have to be unpleasant.

HOW TO Resolve Conflicts

We all have different personalities, different priorities and different opinions. Thank goodness – otherwise the world would be a boring place! The world isn't boring, but it is full of people who disagree with you, or disagree with one another and ask you to take sides.

Members who handle conflict well are an asset to any club. They provide invaluable leadership throughout Toastmasters as well as in their workplaces, families and communities. Although few of us are born diplomats, we all can improve our conflict resolution skills by learning some basic techniques.

ASK THE RIGHT QUESTIONS

Conflicts are by definition upsetting, so naturally we try to solve the problem (or avoid it) right away. However,

by reacting immediately, we don't always give ourselves enough time to understand the situation. Instead, before rushing to end a conflict, first take a few moments to answer the following "Five W" questions:

Who is in conflict? The answer isn't always obvious. Let's consider Sara, the club treasurer. Her fellow club officers operate in a freewheeling way, and Sara gets frustrated with them. However, when she examines the situation, she realizes her conflict lies not with all the officers, but with the club president. Mark has been a member for many years and, in his fourth term as club president, knows Toastmasters inside and out. He feels so comfortable in his role that the other officers, who are less experienced, have adopted his attitude.

What is the conflict about? In our example, Sara and Mark disagree about the importance of doing things by the book. Sara wants the officers to attend training, but Mark says he'll tell them everything they need to know. Sara wants to measure the club's performance against the Distinguished Club Plan, but Mark believes

that achievement will happen without goal-setting and tracking. Sara wants meeting roles assigned in advance, but Mark thinks it's better to just assign roles to whoever shows up. And so forth.

Where does the conflict show up? A conflict isn't necessarily expressed in loud arguments or slamming doors. Often, as in this case, it barely shows at all. While Sara grows frustrated during disorganized meetings, she doesn't want to embarrass Mark in front of the members. When she follows up with the other officers individually to find receipts and member dues, she comes across as unpleasant because she feels she's doing something she shouldn't have to. Not surprisingly, she gets snippy responses in return. She tries to raise her concerns at executive committee meetings, but the others roll their eyes and exchange "there-she-goes-again" glances – she comes across as a real shrew, while Mark is such a fun guy – and Mark changes the subject. She can't stick to the agenda because there isn't one.

When did the conflict start?

Answering this question often reveals the heart of the matter. Mark was Sara's mentor when she joined the club last year. She enjoyed working with him and benefited tremendously from his expertise. Conflict started only when they started working together as officers. This is important, because it shows that even though Sara would occasionally like to throttle Mark, she doesn't have a personality conflict with him or hold any old grudges. The conflict is about how he performs his duties as club president.

Why is the conflict happening? Upon reflection, Sara decides that she could be more tolerant of Mark's working style if only he'd understand how disorganization affects her. Because Mark has so many years of experience and was her mentor, she hasn't felt comfortable initiating a dialogue. Feeling unheard and powerless, she can't work well with her teammates.



Think about a recent conflict in your own life. Try to answer the Five W questions. After you've answered them, give your responses some thought. Have you identified with whom you're in conflict? Do you better understand the underlying issues? Can you clearly describe the effect the situation has on you and on others?

TAKE APPROPRIATE ACTION

Answering the Five W questions often gives us a pretty good idea how to resolve the situation. But we can't do it alone. We have to deal with the other person or persons involved. Here are some approaches that Sara might use:

- Find an appropriate time and place. It may feel as though there will never be a good time to bring up a touchy subject! Remember, you owe it to yourself to make the time. Sara sets a lunch date with Mark. She can talk to him freely when they're alone, and the restaurant offers neutral ground.
- Discuss the issue, not the person. Sara prepares for her lunch with Mark by reviewing her answers to the Five W questions. She could accuse him of not liking her or accuse him of poisoning other club members against her. She could rant, "You've been in Toastmasters so long you've forgotten the basics of how to get things done!" Instead, she says she has understood that her job is to keep good financial records, to deposit dues promptly, and to forward dues to headquarters on time. She asks if he feels the same way. She explains that giving top priority to these tasks is difficult when the other officers don't see them as important, and she asks if he wants her to

have other priorities. She suggests one specific action he could take to help her out.

DEFUSE DEFENSIVENESS

You're behaving like an adult, but maybe the other person isn't. Now it's critical to know exactly what you want and stay focused on that.

Defensive behavior falls generally into two categories: passive and aggressive. Passive tactics include:

- crying
- refusing to speak
- uncooperative body language such as eye-rolling, toe-tapping and watch-checking.
- leaving the room

Aggressive tactics include:

- yelling
- accusations or threats
- invasive body language (such as shoving one's face close to the other person's or stomping into his office without knocking.)

Some people combine passive and aggressive tactics. For example, some years ago a fellow we'll call Michael joined a club. During evaluations of his speeches, Michael would sulk and he wouldn't speak to his evaluator at the next meeting. Once, he stormed from the room halfway through an evaluation. Those were his passive tactics. When it was his turn to evaluate someone who had evaluated him, he would focus entirely on the negative and use a sarcastic tone of voice – an active tactic.

The story has a happy ending. The Vice President Education, Trey, and Michael shared a passion for running. Trey invited Michael to join him for a Saturday morning run. Running along a stream on a beautiful spring day, Michael relaxed. Trey mentioned that Michael seemed very uncomfortable during speech evaluations. Michael tried to change the subject by complaining about the club and its members, but by defining the issue through the Five W's and sticking to it, Trey kept the conversation productive. Finally, Michael and Trey agreed that Toastmasters wasn't a good environment for Michael's development right now, and he decided not to return. The two have kept in touch and still occasionally go running together.

Even if you find yourself dealing with defensive behavior – passive, aggressive or a combination of the two – you can deal with it effectively if you've answered the Five Ws. When you know what you want to talk about, who you need to address and what you want, then you can stay focused no matter how the other person tries to sidetrack the discussion.

MASTERING CONFLICT

This is all fine in theory, but the fact is that conflict brings out the fight-or-flight instinct in us. Even the most self-assured person feels nervous in conflict situations. Fortunately, you don't have to learn these techniques all on your own. By watching others in action and by partnering with a trusted mentor, you can boost your confidence and speed up your learning curve.

Think about someone you know who handles conflict well. Maybe you took on a special assignment at work, and the project leader had a gift for getting things done while addressing everyone's concerns. Perhaps you volunteered in your child's classroom, and the teacher dealt with rowdy students in a constructive way. Your mother-in-law may be able to pull the whole family together for a reunion, or your club president may have a knack for achieving consensus.

Once you've identified someone with strong diplomatic skills, think about what that person does that works so well. How does he listen? What does she say, and how does she say it? How does he prepare to address conflict? Now compare and contrast your own reactions. Are there some things you could do better? By adopting a role model, you can improve your own skills quickly.

You can also enlist someone's active support. Choose someone you trust and who has the opportunity to observe you to give helpful feedback. Let the person know what you think your strengths and weaknesses are, and ask if he thinks you're missing anything. Then tell him you're trying to improve and ask if he'd be willing to evaluate your skills from time to time. Make sure to give him room to back out if he feels uncomfortable – he may fear that evaluating you would create conflict!

Finally, take advantage of your Toastmasters membership.

- Volunteer for leadership positions in your club and district. Inevitably, different people want to do things differently: leaders (like Sara and Trey) have plenty of opportunities to practice conflict management.
- Give a speech about handling conflict. You can use a compare-and-contrast or a storytelling structure. Preparing the speech will reinforce your learning.
- Does someone in your club meet the criteria to mentor you? Who better to evaluate your skills than someone who's practiced evaluation in Toastmasters?

Conflict is an unavoidable part of life, but it doesn't have to be unpleasant. By learning to resolve conflict constructively, we increase our ability to contribute to Toastmasters and our chances for success at work, at home and everywhere we go. **T**

Paula L. Fleming, ATM-S, is a former member of Antlers Club 725-6 in Minneapolis, Minnesota. She is a management consultant and freelance writer.



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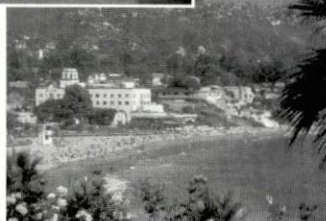


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Look for complete convention program details in the April issue of The Toastmaster magazine. Make plans now to join other Toastmasters at this spectacular event!

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Seating Preselection Procedure

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3. Assignment of preselected seat locations will be at the discretion of Toastmasters International.
4. All preselected seat locations are **final** and **cannot** be changed prior to the convention or on site.
5. Toastmasters requesting preselection of seat locations and who wish to sit in a group must mail their registration forms together in the same envelope. World Headquarters will make every attempt to accommodate such requests.
6. World Headquarters will make every effort to seat larger groups (*registrants purchasing six or more tickets for any single event*) at the same table. However, it is possible groups of six or more may be seated at separate tables.
7. **Deadline:** Advance registrations must reach World Headquarters by **July 7**. Cancellations and refund requests will not be accepted after **July 15**. Cancellations will not be accepted on site — no exceptions!



Hilton Anaheim
Welcomes

TOASTMASTERS INTERNATIONAL® 2001 CONVENTION AUGUST 22-25, 2001

MAIL THIS FORM TO:
Hilton Anaheim
777 Convention Way
Anaheim, California 92802
(714) 750-4321 or (800) 222-9923
Fax (714) 740-4737

HOTEL REGISTRATION FORM

Arrival date: _____ Departure date: _____

Number of nights you will stay: _____

Number of people in room: _____

Approx. arrival time: _____
(CHECK-IN 3:00 P.M. - CHECK-OUT NOON)

Method of transportation: Car Air Other

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

Please Note: Special conference rates are based on reservations received by July 20, 2001, and room block availability.

PLEASE RESERVE ACCOMMODATIONS FOR: (please print or type)

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

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

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

Special Requests: Prefer non-smoking room Other (specify) _____

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

To guarantee your reservation we require first night's deposit or credit card guarantee. Please include 15% occupancy tax and 30 cent California resort tax per night. DO NOT SEND CASH. Make check or money order payable to the Hilton Anaheim.

Credit Card type _____

Credit Card # _____ Exp. _____

Check # _____ Amount _____

SIGNATURE

DATE

Special Conference Rates (circle rate desired)	
MAIN BUILDING	SUITES
\$125.00 single/double/	Phone hotel directly if suite is desired. Cost and availability varies.
\$30.00 extra per person	

Check here _____ if rollaway is needed. (no charge)

After July 20, all subsequent reservations will be subject to availability at the current hotel rack rates.

DON'T BE A NO-SHOW

To cancel your reservation call (714) 750-4321 or (800) 222-9923. Deposit refunded only if reservation is cancelled **10 days prior to arrival** and you have your cancellation number. Fax: (714) 740-4737

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

DO NOT MAIL THIS FORM TO TOASTMASTERS INTERNATIONAL

T O A S T M A S T E R S  **I N T E R N A T I O N A L**[®]
70TH ANNUAL CONVENTION
 AUGUST 22-25, 2001 ♦ HILTON ANAHEIM, ANAHEIM, CALIFORNIA, U.S.A.

MAIL THIS PART TO: Toastmasters International, P.O. Box 9052, Mission Viejo, California 92690 U.S.A. (This form is not to be used by International Officers/Directors, Past International Presidents, Past International Directors, or District Governors elected for 2001-2002.)

To attend general sessions on Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday, a registration badge will be required. Preregister and order event tickets now! **You must be registered to purchase tickets to any events, including the International Speech Contest.** ATTENDANCE AT ALL MEAL EVENTS AND THE INTERNATIONAL SPEECH CONTEST WILL BE BY TICKET ONLY. Advance registrants will receive a receipt by mail. Tickets can be claimed at the registration desk beginning at 10:00 a.m. Wednesday, August 22.

ALL ADVANCE REGISTRATIONS MUST REACH WORLD HEADQUARTERS BY JULY 7.

FULL CONVENTION REGISTRATION allows you to attend ALL general and educational sessions during the Convention. *Full Convention Registration* also allows you to purchase tickets to any events of your choice. **Event tickets are not included and must be purchased separately.** (See below)

- _____ Full Convention Registration for Members (Wed., Thurs., Fri., & Sat.) @ \$130.00 \$ _____
- _____ Full Joint Registration: Husband/Wife (both Toastmasters) (Wed., Thurs., Fri., & Sat.) @ \$245.00 \$ _____
- _____ Full Spouse/Guest Registrations (Wed., Thurs., Fri., & Sat.) (each) @ \$115.00 \$ _____

ONE-DAY CONVENTION REGISTRATION allows you to attend general and educational sessions and purchase event ticket(s) for one day of your choice (Wednesday/Thursday, Friday, or Saturday). If you wish to attend general and educational sessions or purchase event ticket(s) that take place on more than one day, then you must purchase a Full Convention Registration. No exceptions can be made.

- _____ Wednesday/Thursday (August 22 & 23) Convention Registration for Member/Spouse/Guest @ \$65.00
(With this registration, you may purchase ticket(s) only for the Golden Gavel Luncheon.) \$ _____
- _____ Friday (August 24) Convention Registration for Member/Spouse/Guest @ \$65.00
(With this registration, you may purchase ticket(s) only for the Toastmasters & Guests Luncheon, Club Leadership Luncheon, and Bowzer's Rock 'n' Roll Party.) \$ _____
- _____ Saturday (August 25) Convention Registration for Member/Spouse/Guest @ \$65.00
(With this registration, you may purchase ticket(s) only for the International Speech Contest and President's Dinner Dance.) \$ _____

EVENT TICKETS. To attend any of the events below, you must purchase a Full Convention Registration or purchase a One-Day Convention Registration for the day of the ticketed event(s).

- _____ Tickets: **Interdistrict Speech Contest** (Tuesday, August 21) @ \$19.00 \$ _____
- _____ Tickets: **Overseas Dinner** (Note: Open only to delegates from outside U.S./Canada) (Tuesday, August 21) @ \$55.00 \$ _____
- _____ Tickets: **Golden Gavel Luncheon** (Thursday, August 23) @ \$45.00 \$ _____
- _____ Tickets: **Toastmasters & Guests Luncheon** (Friday, August 24) @ \$42.00 \$ _____
- _____ Tickets: **Club Leadership Luncheon** (Friday, August 24) (Open only to DTMs, 2000-2001 and 2001-2002 Club Officers) @ \$42.00 \$ _____
- _____ Tickets: **"Bowzer's Rock 'n' Roll Party" Dinner and Show** (Friday, August 24) @ \$61.00 \$ _____
- _____ Tickets: **International Speech Contest** (Saturday, August 25) @ \$24.00 \$ _____
- _____ Tickets: **President's Dinner Dance** (Saturday, August 25) @ \$61.00 \$ _____

Check here if you want World Headquarters to preselect your seats. If you do not check this box, you will select from remaining seats on site. (See page 28 for Seat Preselection Information.)

TOTAL \$ _____

Check enclosed for \$ _____ (U.S. Dollars) payable to Toastmasters International. **Cancellation and refund requests will not be accepted after July 15. Cancellations will not be accepted on site. NO EXCEPTIONS!**

WHQ Use Only

T- _____ GG T- _____ SC
 T- _____ FN T- _____ DD

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

PAYMENT METHOD (U.S. FUNDS):

MasterCard VISA AMEX

Card Number _____
 Expiration Date _____
 Signature _____

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

Jim Cathcart:



Success is yours if you nurture your potential.

“Success is not a contest, nor is it a mountain you must struggle to climb. Success is your birthright. It is your natural state of being.”

So says Jim Cathcart, and he should know, having spent more than 20 years working in the field of human development and training people to improve their lives. But mainly, he knows from first-hand experience. In 1972, as a clerk with the Little Rock Housing Authority in Arkansas, Cathcart dreamed of becoming a professional public speaker – but he had never given a speech and he had no particular message. What he did have, however, was a determination that he could do anything he set his mind to.

He gave himself five years to make his dream a reality and asked three questions:

- What do I need to know?
- What skills do I need to acquire to be worthy of being paid for presentations, and what’s my plan for acquiring them?
- How will I be different, once I’m a professional speaker, from who I am today?

Cathcart devoted at least one hour a day to acquiring the skills needed to reach his goal. After two years, he joined the staff of a small company as a professional trainer. In June 1977, five years after setting his goal, Cathcart opened his own business in La Jolla, California, as a full-time professional speaker and trainer.

By now he ranks among the top in his field. His 12 books and audio and video tapes have been translated into many languages. But this motivational speaker and trainer still dreams up five-year goals, writes them on a wallet-sized card and daily renews his commitment to reaching them.

“I have found that the people at the top of every field have a different way of looking at life from those who are

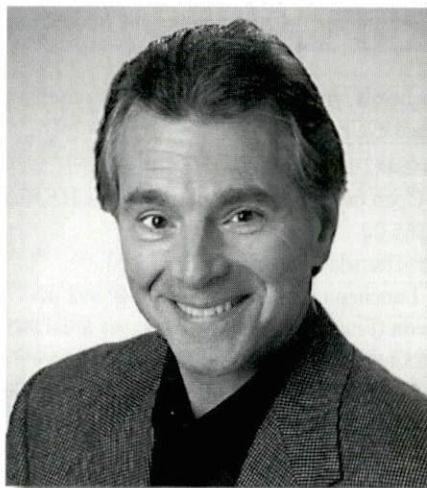
still struggling to keep up. It is not a difference in talent; it’s a difference in outlook,” Cathcart says. “One thing I’ve learned over the years is that luck really does come to those who commit to a goal...I believe there are some universal principles at work.”

“When any person makes a decision to bring about a certain outcome, the entire universe starts the process of making it happen. As long as the person persists in the belief that they are creating the desired result, the process continues. When doubt, hatred or fear dominates the person, the process stops and other forces direct the world’s energies in other positive directions. This is why there is power in positive thinking.”

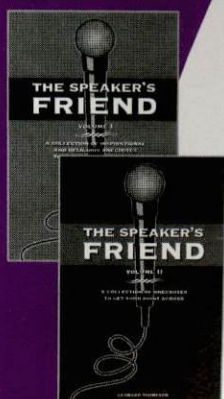
Of course, Cathcart concedes that success isn’t instantaneous; it requires discipline and hard work, involving defining what kind of person you want to become, then developing the habits and traits of that kind of person. His latest book, *The Acorn Principle, Know Yourself – Grow Yourself*, outlines thoughts on personal growth: “The seed of your future successes already lives within and around you. The seed’s only job is to grow; to live fully. The oak sleeps within you. Growing season is here.”

Widely considered an industry leader among public speaking professionals, Jim Cathcart has served as President of the National Speakers Association and been inducted into the Speakers Hall of Fame. This August at Toastmasters’ 70th Annual International Convention in Anaheim, California, Cathcart will be honored with the Golden Gavel, the organization’s most prestigious award for excellence in the fields of communication and leadership. **T**

Don’t miss the opportunity to hear Jim Cathcart speak at the Golden Gavel Luncheon on August 23! For registration information, see page 29.



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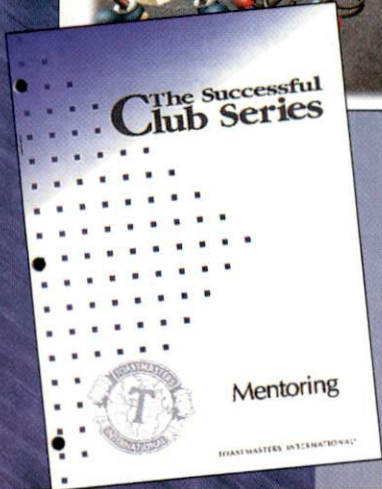
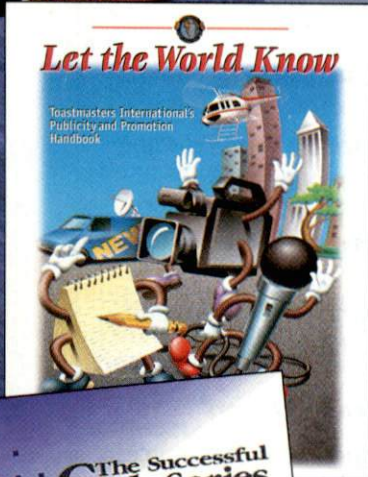
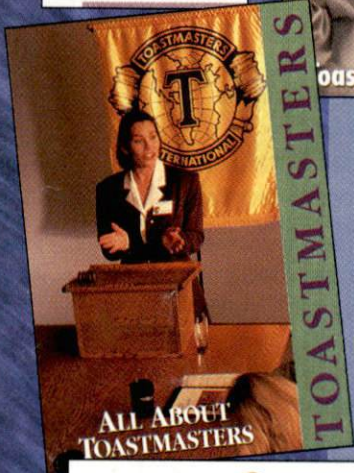
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First Aid for your Club

Membership Growth Materials



All Toastmasters Clubs need new members. Even though your Club may currently enjoy a healthy membership roster, a few months from now that could change as members move, change employment, or reach their speaking and leadership objectives. Toastmasters International has created a variety of materials to help:

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- ___ 103 Bringing Successful Communication into Your Organization50 cents
- ___ 124 All About Toastmasters25 cents
- ___ 114 Toastmasters Can Help! (Pkg of 50 fliers) \$2.50
- ___ 115 Toastmasters. It's More Than Just Talk (Pkg of 50 fliers) \$2.50
- ___ 367 Toastmasters. It's More Than Just Talk (Five full color posters) \$4.00
- ___ 108 From Prospect to Guest to Member3 free*

QTY SUPPORT MATERIAL

- ___ 84 Guest Book \$8.95
- ___ 231 Guest Invitation Cards (set of 25) \$3.50
- ___ 348 Invitation to Membership (set of 25) \$5.25
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*Your club can order the specified number of copies free of charge every six months when placing an order. Additional copies are available for an additional charge.

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- ___ 1158 How to Rebuild a Toastmasters Club manual \$1.00
- ___ 1159 Membership Growth manual . . \$2.25
- ___ 1160 Membership Building Kit . . . \$5.00
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See your Club's copy of the Toastmasters International Supply Catalog for complete details about each item.

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