

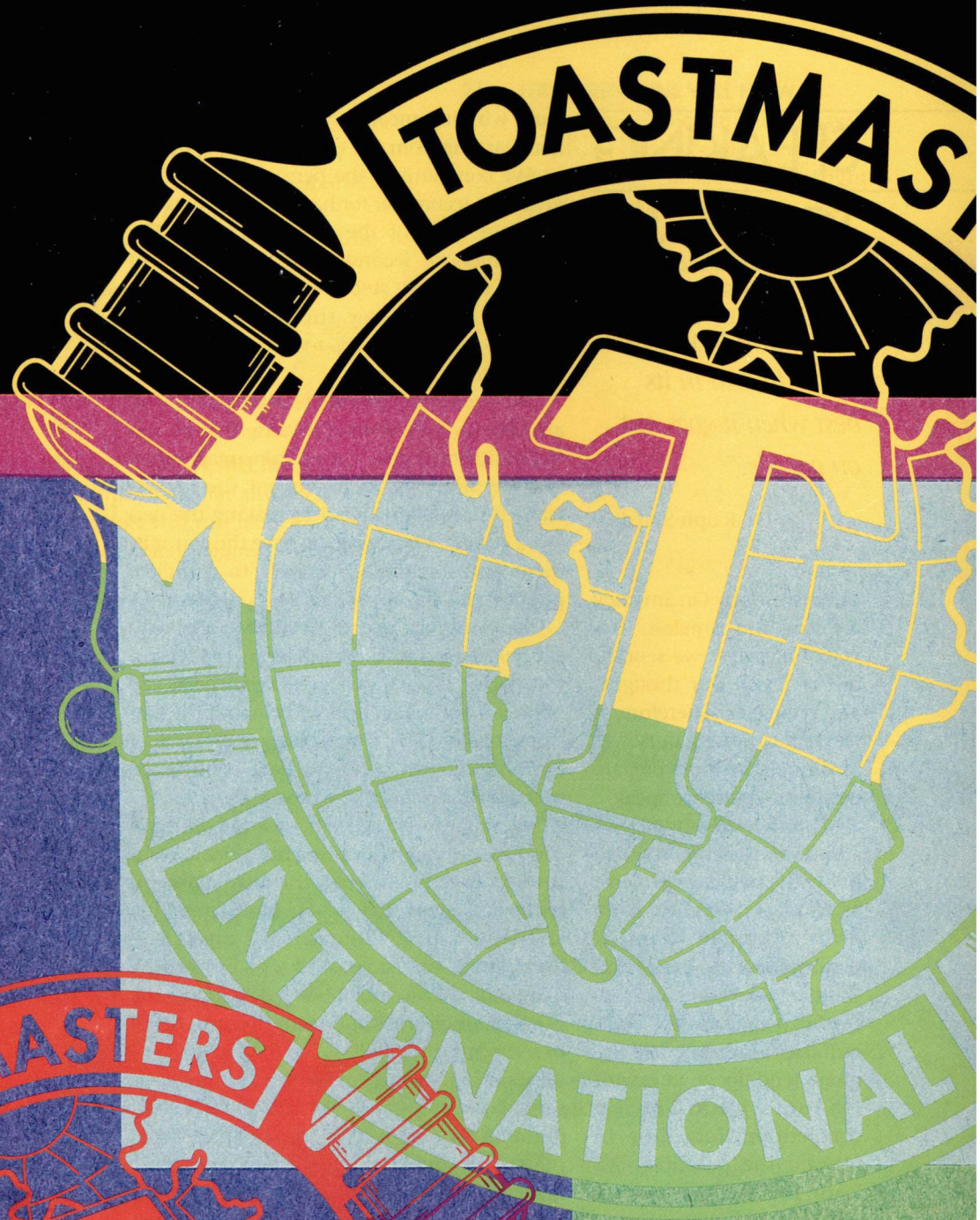
THE TOASTMASTER

JULY 1991

MAXIMIZE
YOUR
MEETINGS

WHAT,
AM I NERVOUS?

TOASTMASTERS
AND QUALITY



SPECIAL ISSUE:
**The Club
Experience**



VIEWPOINT

SPEAKING TO WIN

"Be sure to have your mind dressed in its best when it goes out on parade."

— Dr. Ralph Smedley

These words by Dr. Smedley are true and timeless. The verbal messages we send to others reveal our thoughts and character. Therefore, if we want to present ourselves as winners we must prepare our mind before we speak.

Throughout our lives we admire and attempt to identify with people we perceive as winners. We cheer on a favorite athletic team or personality and admire and want to associate with successful people in the community or industry. We too often tend to equate winning with placing first in competition, forgetting to forward the principles we learn in the Toastmasters club into the rest of our lives. We forget that the true winners are those who stretch themselves and give the best performance they are capable of giving. In the

club, winning means trying something new and learning from the experience.

We congratulate the person who has just given the icebreaker for having the courage to stand in front of the group to speak. The mechanics are secondary to the courage of taking that first step. Novice speakers are winners because they stretch beyond their comfort zones and try to learn from their experiences.

We proclaim someone receiving a CTM or an ATM award a winner because that person has completed a goal. The mistakes made along the way are long forgotten but the lessons learned have contributed to making the person a winner. Only winners have the commitment and discipline necessary to complete projects and accomplish goals.

We honor the coordinators of special educational programs such as Success Leadership for sharing their knowledge with others. The obstacles and challenges of bringing the sessions together give way to the gratification of knowing that the programs have contributed to make others feel like winners, too.

Speaking to win goes far beyond winning contests. Although capturing first prize in competition is very satisfying, there are many intermediate steps that are far more gratifying and long lasting. Conquering a single fear, overcoming one small obstacle, completing one small task all contribute to developing the personal pride and self-esteem that are critical to a winning attitude.

Speaking to win means establishing personal goals and objectives, making the commitment to complete them, and exercising the self discipline to meet those goals. It is through this process that we add the layers of adornment to our mind, dressing it in its Sunday best, and preparing it to lead our parade.

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A. EDWARD BICK
International President

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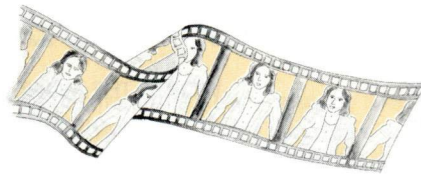


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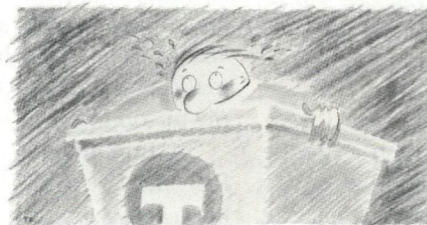


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LETTERS

EYE CATCHING ARTICLE

I just want to say that I truly enjoyed the article, "I'm Manager, Hear Me Roar," by John Cadley (March). I usually peruse the magazine in quick fashion, but this article caught my eye and brightened an otherwise ordinary day. Cadley has a knack for being concise yet clever, which I hope to achieve some day in my own writing.

STEVEN J. PUSATERI
HARAHAN, LOUISIANA

POINTS PLEASANTLY PRESENTED

I greatly enjoyed, "I'm Manager, Hear Me Roar," in the March issue. Many writers have a noticeable tendency to write from a "stuffed shirt viewpoint," which makes their articles less appealing. Most readers probably enjoyed this article, even if they didn't notice the author was hardest on himself. Good points are pleasantly acceptable this way.

GLEN AMONETT, ATM
PLAINVIEW CLUB 44-763
PLAINVIEW, TEXAS

THAT VS. WHICH

Pamela Price, in "The Grammarian with a Heart," (Feb. 1991) demonstrates that not even grammatical experts are immune to occasional misusage of the English language.

In the final sentence of her article, Price recommends *The*

Elements of Style by Strunk and White as "a classic which is user-friendly." Any careful reader of *The Elements of Style* knows that the book is a classic *that* is user-friendly.

MARK FEIERSTEIN
ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA

'APPROPRIACY' INAPPROPRIATE

Like President Warren Harding who coined "normalcy," writer Pamela Price used "appropriacy" in her article, "The Grammarian with a Heart" (Feb. 1991). The *New World Dictionary* and the *American Heritage Dictionary* recognize "appropriateness" and "appropriative," but not "appropriacy" as a standard noun.

And Jim Chase's article in the February issue has me puzzled. He writes: "Your fingers claw into the podium." Are we all so fearful of the mike that we have to get down on our knees to claw at the podium and not the *lectern*?

GERARD FEENEY, ATM
GROTON CLUB 3007-53
OLD MYSTIC, CONNECTICUT

NEW DESIGN 'SPECTACULAR'

People very often take the time to complain but not to praise. I'm writing to praise you for the new magazine – it's absolutely spectacular! I believe the magazine is one of the best ways to get new members and I'd be surprised

if the new look doesn't help us grow even bigger. You're doing a wonderful job with new, interesting articles in every issue and, finally, it all comes in a nice design!

LISA REILICH
ATLANTA, GEORGIA

WORTH THE MONEY

As a new member, I looked forward to receiving my first issue of *The Toastmaster*. I was not disappointed.

The May 1991 issue is packed with information I can put to use right away. I particularly enjoyed the article, "The CTM Pyramid"; it taught, by example, that attaining the CTM is a worthwhile, attainable goal for any Toastmaster. I am looking forward to the next installment.

The article, "Capture that Prospective Member!" showed me that my club is doing the right things right. It also reminded me that I need to encourage prospective new members the same way I was encouraged.

The articles "You've Got to Hand It to Those Gestures" and "How to Tell a Funny Story" contain valuable information I will be able to use in my upcoming speeches.

In short, judging from the first issue I've seen, *The Toastmaster* itself is worth the cost of joining Toastmasters.

JOHN F. SWANSON
INDIAN HILL CLUB 3503-30
NAPERVILLE, ILLINOIS

IDIOTIC GRAPHICS?

For quite a while we've shaken our heads about the graphics in *The Toastmaster* magazine. We didn't react, because we have more important things to do. But now it's reached a critical point. The February issue is a disdain of our taste and an insult to our intelligence. Who do you think we are? Infant-schoolers, lunatics or what? This is not humor, either.

If you now say "that guy doesn't understand modern art," let it be known that I'm an expert in cultural history, as well as the modern "isms." And I attest that your graphics are neither expressionism nor futurism, nor surrealism – not even Dadaism. It is plain *idiotism*.

Please take that serious: As a result of this repeated idiotism, faithful members consider quitting. Potential new members are repelled to join (what sort of guys are *those*?). I recognize the difficulty of graphically expressing the abstract ideas inherent in our programs. I recommend: no illustrations at all. For nothing is better than something bad! Show, for instance, an interesting satellite photo of the Earth as a standard cover. Illustrate events by photos of the area where they took place. And use your space for interesting, intelligent articles.

CARL ABEL, ATM
CRESTON VALLEY CLUB 4949-21
CRESTON, BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA



MY TURN

"MEMBER #65 WILL NOW PRESENT MANUAL SPEECH #2"

By **Laura A. Reinsimar**

IS YOUR CLUB GETTING TOO BIG?

■ You've just presented your icebreaker and approach the educational vice president to schedule your next speech. She checks the club calendar and says "How about right after Christmas?"

Maintaining an acceptable level of club membership is a constant uphill battle for Toastmasters clubs; even the strongest clubs lose members. Despite most Toastmasters clubs' efforts to increase in size by gaining new, dedicated members, there are those rare occasions when a club must downsize due to overcrowding. Since each member pays dues, each should have equal opportunity to improve skills by giving speeches regularly. If a club is getting so big it simply can't accommodate more speakers, it might consider splitting into two clubs.

Having two neighboring clubs that support each other can preserve member interest and stave off attrition by allowing more attention to be spent on each member. The two clubs could join one another to celebrate special

occasions or congratulate each other on individual successes. They could hold joint speech contests and share marketing techniques, leadership styles and problem solving methods. No club should ever close its doors to future members.

Simple as the decision to split may seem, for many long-time members of oversized clubs this decision does not come easily. I recently visited one club whose size has escalated to a whopping 44 members – more than the limit of 40 recommended by Toastmasters International. This club, based in a prosperous business community in Orange County, California, has vowed to remain as one club. Its members have developed more than a sheer devotion to speech communication; they have an emotional commitment to a familiar circle of communicators who each have contributed to the club's legacy. Those members who dislike the idea of splitting the club feel a tradition is being tampered with, and that their club's hard-earned reputation for success and achievement will be ruined.

The club president explained that since most members are business people, they insist they are too busy to serve as officers for a newly chartered club. "If it ain't broke why fix it?" a guest commented at a recent meeting. A logical point, certainly. But when there is a waiting list of people wanting to join a club in this business community, any means to accommodate them ought to be considered.

The repercussions of member overflow in an oversized club far outweigh the loss that may be felt when the club is split. The adage "Too many cooks spoil the broth" is valid for some large clubs. The decision to split

could very well result in unexpected benefits for all members. It may secure the club's commitment to member involvement, and allow for increased educational success, personal growth, and of course – quality club meetings.

Whatever the decision, club presidents should take inventory of their club as soon as

membership begins to creep toward the 40-member limit. Unfortunately, there is no secret recipe for club downsizing. Naturally, there needs to be a consensus among members, and the district and area must be willing to support the newly chartered club. Members must be willing to serve as officers, and they must maintain the same enthusiasm and dedication that made the original club so successful.

How can club members determine if their club should split, and how does it go about resolving a member overflow problem? First, the club should estimate its future growth and determine an optimum club size. Second, the club president should conduct a member survey, maybe just in the form of a group discussion, to measure club opinion and productivity. As long as members agree on objectives that are both measurable and achievable, they can pinpoint what the club needs to accomplish to assure optimum benefits to the members.

Pay close attention to your club environment and ensure that members are treated justly. Don't be afraid to speak up; you may not be the only member who feels as if the walls are closing in. Keeping the club at a manageable size is vital to the club's stability and success. **T**

Laura A. Reinsimar is a former staff member in World Headquarters' Membership and Club Extension Department.

Editor's Note: *Toastmasters wanting to split a club into two can receive help by contacting the Membership and Club Extension Dept. at WHQ.*

THE FINE ART OF EVALUATION

By Patricia Bradley
Hoagland, CTM

THE TRICK IS TO GET THE RECIPIENT

masters is one of the principal ways through which we improve our speaking ability. Pointing out areas needing improvement is not being negative, for it is through discovering our weaknesses that we learn. But it is the manner in which feedback is presented that determines how readily it is accepted.



TO ACCEPT YOUR COMMENTS.

**“Try not to have
novice speakers
evaluate advanced
speakers.”**

■ Criticism. No one likes getting it; no one likes giving it. Pointing out someone's faults accentuates the negative while ignoring the positive. We can learn from criticism, but it can be painful and it usually just makes us defensive. If it's too harsh, the message may not be received.

Evaluation, on the other hand, identifies both strengths and weaknesses and shows ways for improvement. Evaluation is one of the most valuable tools we can employ as Toastmasters. In fact, feedback from other Toast-

WHAT PEOPLE EXPECT FROM TOASTMASTERS

People join Toastmasters to improve their public speaking skills. Although there is some truth to the old adage “practice makes perfect,” if you keep practicing the wrong skill over and over again, a bad habit just becomes further ingrained. After all, if you are not aware that every other word you say is an “um” or “ah” how are you ever going to be able to correct that speech pattern?

You will find much greater member retention when people receive both positive and negative feedback. Nothing will eliminate new

**"Pointing out areas
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members faster than if they feel they are not learning; and it is difficult to identify areas needing improvement without receiving effective feedback. So what are some things that your club can do to improve and expand its evaluation techniques?

VIDEOTAPING PRESENTATIONS

Do not forget that the best speech evaluators are often the speakers themselves. We are often our own sharpest critics. Why not videotape your next meeting and let members observe themselves on tape? It can be an eye opening experience. No matter how many times you are told about some unusual speech characteristic, it never becomes as evident as when you see it yourself in black and white (or color...!)

Videotaping can be especially useful right before a contest, so that contestants can critique themselves and make improvements before the competition.

THE SANDWICH TECHNIQUE

When receiving feedback from others, it is much easier to accept the criticism if it is cushioned with positives. Begin by mentioning a strong point in the speaker's presentation, then point out an area needing improvement. Conclude with another positive point. By sandwiching the negative between two positive comments, it makes the critique much more palatable.

HOLD A SESSION ON EFFECTIVE EVALUATION

Earn extra points for your club while educating your members on effective evaluation

techniques. The Success Leadership Module "The Art of Effective Evaluation" not only helps your club members learn how to be better evaluators, but it helps build team spirit and reinforces effective evaluation as a high priority in your club.

MAKE USE OF SUGGESTION SLIPS

In addition to the regularly scheduled evaluators, encourage other club members to write their comments on slips of paper. This way, speakers receive feedback from a variety of members, not just one.

MATCH PEOPLE OF SIMILAR SKILL LEVEL

Try not to have novice speakers evaluate advanced speakers. An inexperienced member may not be sensitive to some of the nuances on which an advanced speaker is working. Remember that no one gains helpful advice with an evaluation like: "That was a perfect speech. You couldn't have done any better." Although we all like to receive praise, it is equally important to learn a skill which you can continually work on improving.

Although effective evaluation is difficult, it is just as important a learning tool in Toastmasters as giving speeches. Do not overlook its value for preventing old club members from stagnating and for keeping new members interested. **T**

Patricia Bradley Hoagland, CTM, is president of Upstart Club 6330-36 and Director of Training at the Commodity Futures Trading Commission in Washington, D.C.

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MAXIMIZE

By Gerald R. Campbell,
Ph.D., ATM

Plan for the worst

YOUR

*and your club
meetings will run*

MEETINGS!

like clockwork.

It happened again. The meeting started late because the Toastmaster was waiting for the Table Topicmaster to arrive. After 10 minutes, he got someone else as a replacement, only to have the original Table Topicmaster cruise in two minutes later, obviously upset that his assignment had gone to someone else.

Then one of the two scheduled speakers begged off because she was unprepared – she didn't know about her assignment because she had missed the last meeting. The two guests, never introduced or allowed to speak, were put off and never returned. Sounds familiar? Your meetings don't have to run this way. All it takes is some planning and a little work from the educational vice president, administrative vice president and those assigned to the various major assignments for each meeting.

With a handful of active members and a good educational vice president, any club can become vital and active, with a waiting list for new members and extra meetings scheduled to accommodate all of the members who want to speak. New York City's Graybar Club 1436-46 did just that in one year – and was a Top 10 club the following year and for two more years after that. But even if your club isn't ready to put

in this kind of commitment and effort, a little extra effort can make the most of everyday meetings for any club.

PLAN AHEAD

The key to running successful meetings is to plan ahead for trouble. Planning can make meetings run more smoothly, give them a more professional appearance, and allow more club members the opportunity to give manual speeches, along with reaching Distinguished Club Program goals. But most importantly, a well-run meeting is more fun for everyone, which means members will be more inclined to show up for meetings and to renew again next year, and more guests will join and stay. So give those with major assignments (Toastmaster, Table Topicmaster, General Evaluator, and speakers) at least three weeks notice. This way, if a conflict arises, it can be ironed out and still allow the replacement plenty of time to prepare.

“Nothing turns me

off to a new club

faster than sitting

idly, waiting for

someone to finally

start the meeting.”

those who couldn't meet their assignments to call and reschedule well in advance.

This does, of course, require careful planning. But advanced scheduling, and the record-keeping it entails, also has some unexpected advantages. The most obvious is that it lets all club members know what is going on, and this can blunt (or substantiate) any charges of favoritism or preferential scheduling.

Another benefit is that it allows the educational vice president to spot “cherry pickers” – members who show up when they have choice assignments, such as speaker, but not for minor assignments or if unscheduled. Once they are identified, “cherry pickers” can be told that this is not acceptable and can be brought back into line through a variety of means, including not scheduling major assignments unless one or two minor assignments are scheduled and completed.

Of course, passing out future agendas at the meeting doesn't help those who aren't there. It also requires the administrative vice president (or an appointed assistant) to take attendance at every meeting, so that those who were absent can have their agendas mailed to them. More importantly, any absentees with major assignments the following meeting also should get a phone call to confirm that they are willing and able to meet that assignment.

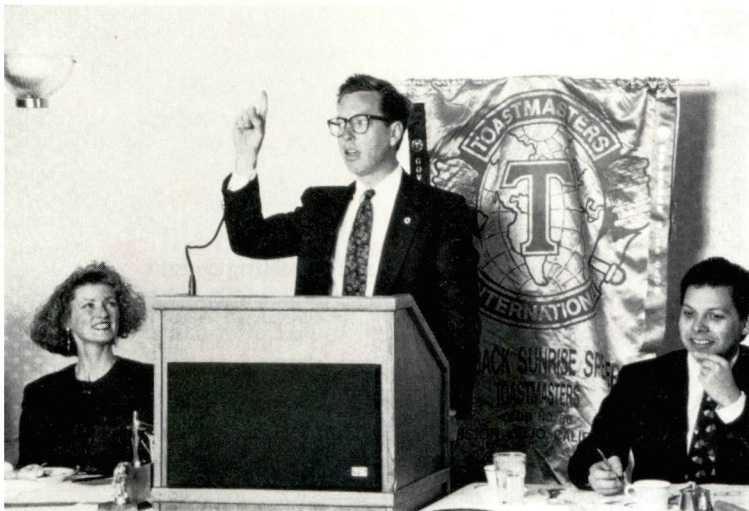
TIMELINESS

In the Graybar club, the timekeeper is responsible for making sure the entire meeting proceeds according to schedule. Thus, another important reminder phone call is to the upcoming timekeeper. A timekeeper who is ready before the meeting starts serves as an excellent reminder to others that sticking to the schedule is important, both for a professional appearance and for those who have other commitments after the meeting. From my own experience, I find that nothing turns me



off to a new club faster than sitting idly, waiting for someone to finally start the meeting.

The timekeeper should be familiar with how the meeting is supposed to run, and should have an up-to-date agenda. She or he should also not be shy – it is the timekeeper's function to get things started and stopped on time. In the Graybar club, this even involves calling out the time or announcing “Time's up!” in a loud, attention-getting voice. This may be beyond most new members' assertiveness and knowledge levels.



SPREAD THE WORK AROUND

This could be a lot of work for the educational vice president. But the Graybar club found the telephone tree a painless way to cut the burden of this office, while still making sure all of the necessary communication takes place. Under this system, those with key assignments phoned others with assignments in their section of the meeting – the Toastmaster called each of the speakers; the general evaluator called each evaluator and the timekeeper; the president called the Toastmaster, administrative vice president (to make sure guest introductions were covered) and the

Table Topicmaster. This way, each individual makes only four or five phone calls, and the educational vice president need only call the Toastmaster, the general evaluator and the president before each meeting.

In theory, the educational vice president should only need to call the president, but the slight overlap went a long way toward spotting problems early. This general

“New members need to get the chance to speak quickly if they are to stay active in the club.”

scheme can of course be changed to suit the needs of each club, but some version of it seems to be necessary if you want to have an educational vice president next year; it also works admirably to reduce confusion in those intense few minutes before the meeting starts.

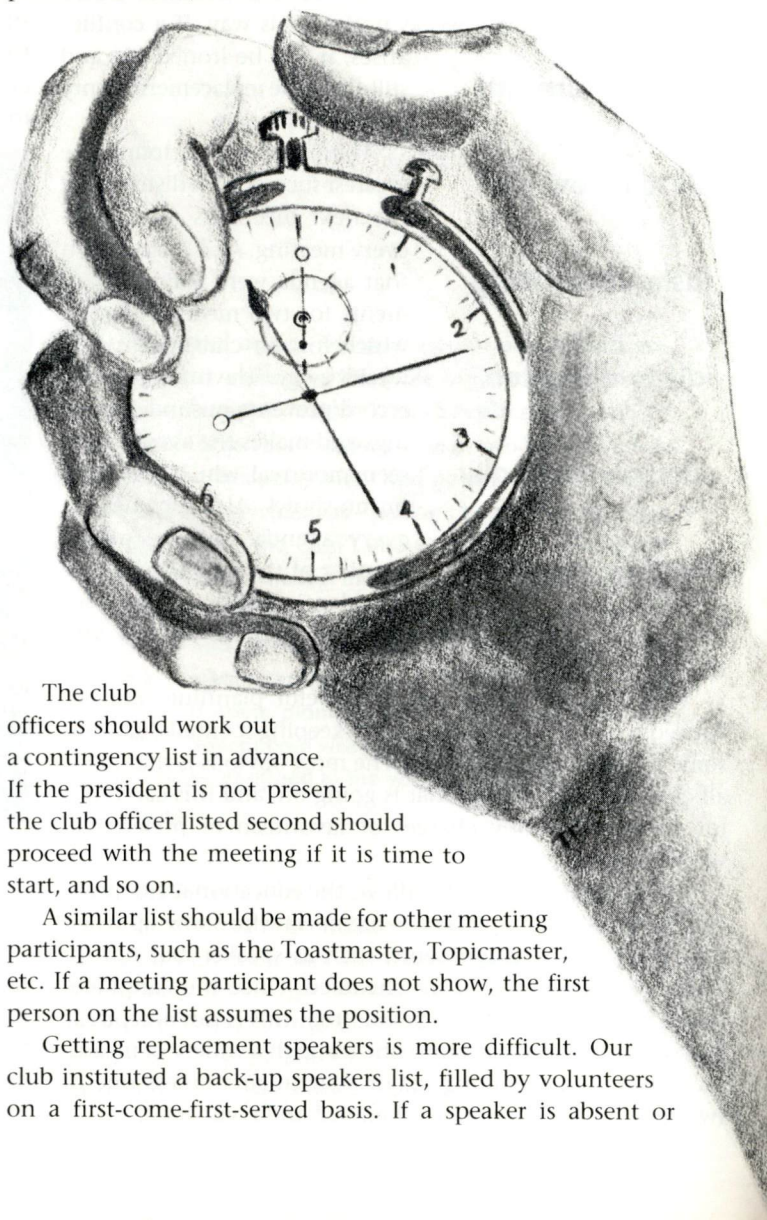
For a telephone tree to work, those with key assignments (and that will be all of the club members over several months) need a list of phone numbers. Our club published a club directory every six months, after dues time. This job was done by the club secretary, but anyone with access to a computer could be responsible. In addition, it is important that the secretary makes sure every officer immediately gets the names and phone numbers of any new members.

New members are also a concern when it comes to scheduling. In a large club, speakers may be scheduled up to three

months in advance (one of Graybar’s educational vice presidents charted out the whole year), with no scheduled holes for new members. New members need to speak reasonably quickly if they are to stay active in the club. It’s important that slots for icebreaker speeches be scheduled well in advance, or negotiated with scheduled members. If no new member needs it, the slot would be available to other club members.

CONTINGENCY PLANS

Running on schedule and on time is fine, but what if the Toastmaster or president is late? What do you do if the Table Topicmaster doesn’t show? These things happen, as we all know. But planning ahead can take the worry out of unexpected no-shows, too.



The club officers should work out a contingency list in advance. If the president is not present, the club officer listed second should proceed with the meeting if it is time to start, and so on.

A similar list should be made for other meeting participants, such as the Toastmaster, Topicmaster, etc. If a meeting participant does not show, the first person on the list assumes the position.

Getting replacement speakers is more difficult. Our club instituted a back-up speakers list, filled by volunteers on a first-come-first-served basis. If a speaker is absent or

unprepared, the first person on the back-up list is expected to fill in. That name is then bumped off the back-up list even if the person does not or cannot speak that night.

Members can put their names back on the list at the next meeting, but must wait for their next turn, thus giving everyone else an equal opportunity to be a back-up speaker. The back-up list serves three very valuable functions. First, it makes the life of the Toastmaster and educational vice president much easier, because they know who to ask first when a speaker drops out. Second, it ensures a full meeting every meeting – our club went for more than four years without an unfilled speaking slot at formal meetings or workshops. And third, it gives those gung ho, enthusiastic members an outlet for more speeches, allowing them to go through many more

speeches and complete manuals in a much shorter time than if a strict rotation were adhered to.

Contingency planning, planning ahead, and running on time are three ways to make sure everyone gets the most out of your club meetings. Even more careful planning and double-checking are needed for special events, contests and any theme meetings. But by being ready for the worst, your club's officers can make sure the worst looks no different than the quiet humming of the best run meeting. ①

Gerald R. Campbell, Ph.D., ATM, is a research scientist living in St. Louis, Missouri. He is a former member of the Graybar club 1436-36 in New York City.

NEW MEMBERS AND ICEBREAKER COACHES

By Gerald R. Campbell, Ph.D., ATM

■ New members may need special care in scheduling their icebreaker speeches, in preparing for them, and in being evaluated on them. One way to bring them into the mainstream gently but quickly is to make sure they have minor assignments as soon as they want – and are pushed into them if need be. Being Grammarian may seem trivial, but it does give the new member a chance to speak, which, after all, is why they joined. Getting up to the lectern to tell a one-minute joke is another good step forward.

But even with this experience, many new members are scared to give a speech, especially about themselves. To help overcome these jitters, it's a good idea to assign each new member a coach, an experienced member to whom the new member could turn for ideas, encouragement, questions and feedback on speeches.

It is important that the coach realizes her or his most important function is to provide moral support. Many new members are not ready for tips on vocal variety or gestures before their first speech, and should not be pressured to try things they are not ready for.

Evaluations of icebreakers is also a touchy subject for the same reason. Icebreakers should be evaluated by experienced members who are noted for their tact, and who can keep in

mind that the object of the assignment is to get the new member to give a speech, and nothing more. A good coach can also provide a boost after the meeting by commenting on both speech and evaluation, especially if the evaluator was overly harsh or the new member seems upset.

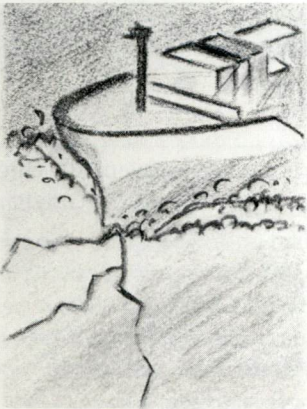
A coach is expected to work with a new member for up to three speeches. In practice, most coaches meet with their assigned new members once or twice to work on the icebreaker, and then again after the icebreaker. A few shy members may want support through the second speech, but most will be ready to go on their own after that.

After our club started its coaching system, new member retention increased significantly. It also gave veteran members a chance to share their expertise one-on-one, and may have led some members to continue their membership longer than they would have otherwise. ①

"After our club started its coaching system, new member retention increased significantly."

B EYOND THE ICEBREAKER

By Jean A.
Woodworth, ATM



THERE ARE
TWO KEYS TO
KEEPING NEW
MEMBERS:
CAREFUL
SCHEDULING
AND TENDER
LOVING CARE.

■ How many icebreakers have you heard? How many of those new members are still members? When I joined Toastmasters four years ago I was so nervous about my own presentations that it took me a while to notice how many of the other speeches were icebreakers.

I was upset when, after joining, my name wasn't listed for any function when the next meeting schedule was given out. The educational vice president apologized – he had forgotten I had joined! I knew I definitely didn't join to sit on the sidelines, but that was what I was doing – until I expressed my displeasure to a senior member. He advised me to go ahead and prepare speeches and expect to deliver them when scheduled speakers didn't show up.

By my sixth speech I was skipped over as an alternate speaker because I had been "speaking too often." I was a member a whole year before being assigned as Toastmaster, Table Topicmaster, Evaluator or General Evaluator. The senior members were always assigned these roles.

During that first year I heard many icebreakers. I began to think it was a form of voyeurism for senior members. Yet, when it was time to choose a slate of officers, I was the only new member available for sergeant at arms. The others had all dropped out.

Obviously, there was a problem. I knew I had been disgruntled, so other new members must have been disgruntled, too. I "hung on" because I knew how badly I needed what Toastmasters was supposed to offer.

When it was my turn to be administrative vice president, I set up a system for gaining new members through regular newspaper notices. Now, as educational vice president, my main concern is to keep the new members – beyond the icebreakers.

There are two parts to keeping new members: first, careful scheduling, and second, tender loving care (TLC).

I inherited no system for scheduling, so I devised one that seems to be working. I add

new members' names to the bottom of the list (alphabetical order won't work for this) and ask them when they will be ready to give their icebreaker. Some will do this right away; others will ask for time.

When scheduling (our schedules cover three meetings), I try to give new members some responsibility – Ah Counter, Wordmaster, alternate speaker – at each meeting. This ensures that they feel recognized and needed at each meeting. It also quickly demonstrates who is dependable and who is not.

A system of abbreviations for various duties makes it possible to see at a glance who has done what. For example:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| S = <i>Speaker</i> | T = <i>Timer</i> |
| J = <i>Jokemaster</i> | TT = <i>Table Topics</i> |
| - = <i>Alternate Speaker</i> | GE = <i>General Evaluator</i> |
| G = <i>Grammarian</i> | |
| A = <i>Ah Counter</i> | TM = <i>Toastmaster</i> |
| E = <i>Evaluator</i> | ab = <i>Absent</i> |

It is important to make corrections after each meeting – a person scheduled to do a job may not have been the one actually doing it. By using a highlighter pen to mark who actually spoke, you will know at a glance if someone is falling behind – or if someone is ready for evaluating, being Table Topicmaster or Toastmaster.

If your club is growing as fast as ours is, you may have more members than jobs. Although I have not been scheduling senior members for basic assignments, they do get to fill in for absentees. They are also asked to sit next to any member who is doing a job for the first time.

Now that we are scheduling four speakers for each meeting, both senior members and advancing new members are needed as evaluators.

"We promote ourselves as being supportive; let's make sure we are."

But scheduling is only half the solution to keeping new members. Our club has a mentor assigned for each new member, who is available to answer any questions the new member may have and help with speech preparation and rehearsal.

In the meantime, I observe what happens at meetings – who was absent, who was obviously nervous about speaking or handling an assignment, or who was "shot down" in any way. Usually these people scurry out as soon as the meeting is over, so sometimes I just can't reach them right away to try to smooth the effects of a misunderstood comment or harsh evaluation. I sometimes am appalled at the insensitivity of senior members. To repair the damage, I use the telephone.

Call the absent members and find out why they were absent. Sometimes they have legitimate reasons. Sometimes they are overwhelmed by what they have gotten themselves into. I try to calm them and offer to help them with their next speech.

Occasionally a nervous new member will come to my house for advice, practice and assurance.

If a new member was the victim of someone's insensitivity, console him or her. Explain that sometimes the evaluators are more nervous than the speakers. Maybe the evaluator did a poor job (she or he certainly did if it results in losing a new member).

We promote ourselves as being supportive; let's be sure we are. It's wonderful to see the changes in people as they gain confidence and experience through Toastmasters. It shows not only in their speeches, but also in the way they enter a room, in the way they present themselves to others, and in the way they feel about themselves. Nurture new members until they are strong enough to begin nurturing others. **T**

Jean A. Woodworth, ATM, is a member of Portsmouth Club 1094-45 in Portsmouth, New Hampshire.

RETAIN THOSE MEMBERS!

By Paul Shotts, DTM

■ Successful clubs are nurtured by officers and members who work together to spark the fire needed to keep clubs alive, dynamic and enthusiastic over the long haul. Everyone benefits from this. Members are challenged to become better Toastmasters. Meetings are more fun. The club develops an inherent capacity to benefit its growing membership and a larger guest list.

This igniting spark comes from a different kind of flint and steel: new members and *member retention*. Both must

exist in order for a club to be successful. We seldom hear about member retention, but without it, important sources of talent and knowledge will slip away and the club will lose its growth and sense of continuity. Special efforts must be made by every club to convince non-renewing members that by quitting, they not only stunt their own growth as speakers, they'll also lose important benefits that extend beyond the club itself: special training in management and leadership; possible outside speaking opportunities; networking with friends and associates; interesting and educational inter-club activities; social gatherings; new friends and acquaintances; skills in thinking and listening – the list goes on!

How can clubs ensure that all non-renewing Toastmasters have the opportunity to "cash

in" on the benefits? Form a committee to specifically contact each non-renewing member and remind him or her about the valuable aspects mentioned above. This will benefit everyone by 1) causing some departing members to re-evaluate their situation and return to Toastmasters, and 2) identify the reasons members decide not to continue. The second factor could lead to identifying deficiencies in the club and introducing resolutions for change to eliminate them.

The next time a member fails to renew, ask yourself how much energy will be required to replace that person's expertise and support. Exactly why is the person leaving? If it's club related, can you do anything about it? How many real benefits will the person leaving be losing, perhaps without realizing it? If you face those questions and do something about it, you will bring that extra fire to your club and keep it's coals of success and growth glowing. **T**

Paul Shotts, DTM, was District 57 Governor in 1989-90.

By Raul Munoz, ATM

HINTS FOR NEW TOASTMASTERS



My goals when I first joined Toastmasters were to reduce my fear of public speaking and learn to prepare and deliver speeches. The goals were clear. How to achieve them was not. I hope these hints, derived from my own experience, will help you complete your basic Communication and Leadership manual and attain your goals.

“If you want to improve as a speaker, volunteer to be an evaluator.”

1. HAVE A MENTOR

Your club should appoint a mentor for you when you join. If you do not have a mentor, ask for one! Ask other Toastmasters for information and ideas. Most Toastmasters are eager to help you.

2. PREPARE MATERIAL FOR SPEECHES

When you first receive your Basic Communication and Leadership manual of 10 speeches, **read the entire manual!** Set sufficient time aside to find out the different objectives and requirements of all the speeches. The problem most often mentioned is: What subject am I going to talk about in my next speech? You can avoid this problem by

pencling notes in the margins of each assignment: a tentative subject for each of the 10 speeches — perhaps even a tentative title for each speech.

From then on, any time you find information related to these subjects in books or magazine articles, you can clip and save it for when you are preparing your speeches. This way, you will continuously gather information on all the speeches and be preparing your ideas and main points for each speech. If you find that a subject no longer appeals to you, you can change the subject for that particular speech with ample time to gather new material.

This method also let's you adapt your present mood to the type of speech you are preparing. When writing an inspirational speech, you have to feel inspiring or inspired at that particular time, otherwise you cannot translate your emotions into words. Choose the manual speech that fits your present mood. For example, entertainment sections in your speeches require a high degree of creativity and imagination. Therefore, when you feel creative, take advantage of the situation and prepare your entertainment speeches early!

3. BUILD YOUR OWN TM LIBRARY

You have many sources of information available to you from Toastmasters. The

problem is how to organize the information, store it and retrieve it when needed.

A simple method is to use the practical information in the monthly *The Toastmaster* magazine. On an 8" x 10" sheet of paper, draw nine columns and label them: Speaker, Evaluator, Toastmaster, Humor, Table Topics, Grammarian, Delivery (voice, gestures, etc.), Leadership, and Membership. When you read articles in the magazine that help you in your speeches, write down in the appropriate column the month and year of the issue and the page number of the article. For instance, if you need information on evaluations, you can refer to the issue of 5/90, pages 4, 6, 8, 11, 12 and 14.

4. COMPARE EVALUATIONS

When you start presenting your speeches and are evaluated, compare the evaluations. They are only the personal views and opinions of the evaluators. However, when you find a consensus about your speeches from many evaluators, you know what areas of your presentations you need to improve on. Concentrate on improving only one item at a time, starting with the most important.

5. EVALUATE

The first time I was an evaluator I felt awkward and unprepared. How could I, a new Toastmaster, evaluate someone with far more experience than myself? I found that the most important qualities of an evaluator are listening skills and supportiveness. Speaking knowledge is not as important. Evaluating someone else's speech not only helps the speaker, but also the evaluator. If you want to improve as a speaker, volunteer to be an evaluator.

Put these ideas to work, and before you know it, you'll have met your first goals as a Toastmaster, and be on your way to setting new ones. **1**

Reprinted from the January 1991 issue of District 2's Bulletin The Sounder, with permission from Area 22 Governor Raul Munoz, ATM.

Expanding the Mentor System

By Arnold Levin, DTM

NEW MEMBERS
NEED TO BE
TAUGHT HOW
TO EXECUTE CLUB
ASSIGNMENTS.

Unfortunately, one of the least emphasized aspects of Toastmasters is that of teaching. We all tend to assume that new members know what to do when given a club assignment. But, in order to be a successful and competent "Toastmaster of the Evening," the member needs to be shown how. Reading about the assignment is not enough – they need practical advice from experienced members. This communication between members also builds a greater spirit of camaraderie and makes the member feel that the club "really cares."

All assignments need preparation, and all assignments need to be taught. Members must not feel frightened, and if they do, they should be able to appeal for help. Toastmasters is a learning experience for all members. Those who teach learn a great deal by helping others. Those who are taught gain confidence and experience, and the club meetings will run smoother as a result.

Perhaps one of the more practical ways of providing this win-win teaching situation is by expanding the standard "mentor system" in which mentors usually only assist specific members with their icebreakers or prepared

speaking assignments. Why not appoint mentors who are responsible for teaching each club assignment? For example, one mentor who is responsible for teaching "How to Be a Toastmaster," another for "How to Be a Table Topicmaster," and get another for "How to Chair a Business Meeting," or "How to Be a Grammmarian," etc.

The mentor can be rotated through the different assignments on a regular basis, maybe every four months, and will thus acquire skills in teaching the different club assignments. The mentor can, with the assistance of district officials if need be, conduct a club workshop on the assignment he or she is responsible for. The workshop may be the highlight of the mentor's teaching program.

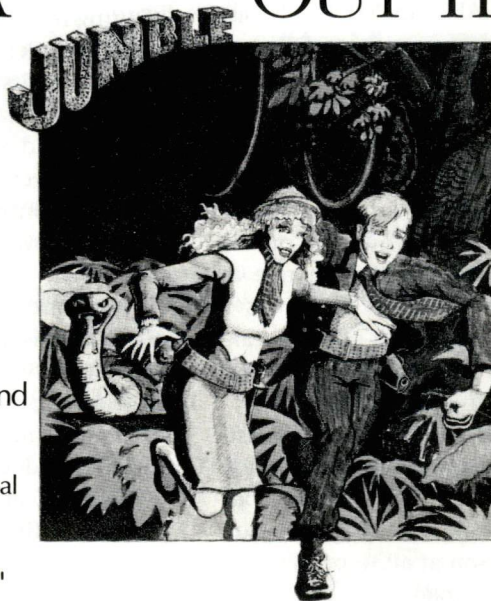
We have all joined Toastmasters to acquire skills in leadership and communication. What better way to achieve this than by teaching what we've learned! ①

Arnold Levin, DTM, is a member of Johannesburg Club 113-74 in Johannesburg, Southern Africa. He's a medical practitioner and author of two books.

IT'S A JUMBLE OUT THERE!

That's right, a communication jumble: dangerous dangling participles, beastly double negatives, and roving packs of uhms, ahs and deadly uhs, ushering in sweaty palms, knocking knees and quivering vocal cords.

Rescue your comrades from this verbal wasteland by introducing them to Toastmasters during the 1991 "IT'S A JUMBLE OUT THERE" membership campaign.



While you are providing communication salvation to those in need, you may qualify for the following awards from Toastmasters International:

- Toastmasters Membership Building Pin for adding 5 new members
- Pocket-size Evaluation Guide Folder for bringing in 10 new members
- Choice of Toastmasters Necktie, Ladies Ascot Scarf, or Perpetual Wood Calendar for sponsoring 15 members
- The top ten membership sponsors will be honored at the 1992 International Convention in Las Vegas, Nevada

REQUIREMENTS

1. This membership program begins January 1, 1991 and ends December 31, 1991.
2. All Toastmasters are eligible and encouraged to participate.
3. To receive credit as a sponsor, your name must appear on the Application for Toastmasters Membership (Form 400) along with your home club number. Please print or type information so that it is legible. No changes may be made to the applications once

- they are submitted to World Headquarters
4. New, dual and reinstated members count for credit. Transfer and charter members do not.
5. The new member must join during the 1991 calendar year.
6. All applications must be received at World Headquarters by Dec. 31, 1991

WHAT, ME NERVOUS?

A survival guide to public speaking from a formerly tongue-tied Toastmaster.

NERVOUSNESS, ACCORDING TO WEBSTER, IS "A TENSE, EMOTIONAL STATE CHARACTERIZED BY FEAR AND APPREHENSION WITHOUT APPARENT REASON."

WRONG! NERVOUSNESS WAS THE HEEBIE-JEEBIES SETTLING IN MY THROAT WHENEVER I ATTEMPTED TO GIVE A SPEECH. NERVOUSNESS WAS WHEN MY KNEES REFUSED TO SUPPORT MY BODY. NERVOUSNESS WAS WHEN ALL THE OXYGEN IN MY LUNGS DISAPPEARED WITH NO VIABLE INPUT IN SIGHT. NERVOUSNESS WAS THROWING UP.

Toastmasters literature mentions that public speaking is the average person's number one fear – even ahead of death. Now that's ridiculous! I'd put public speaking at least in second place, but I certainly don't enjoy jumping out of

"It took me almost a year to garner the courage to attend my first meeting."

airplanes either, so public speaking might even rate as third. Although there was a time when I felt public speaking would definitely be a contributing cause of death.

When I first joined Toastmasters and finally gave my icebreaker, a member of our club told me "what a good job" I'd done, but "you have no reason at all to be nervous. Just get over it." If only it were that simple!

The encouragement I received from club members was tremendous, but that didn't do the trick, either. Several months later another member, who just happened to be the District 30 Governor, told me he hoped I didn't mind, but he had used me on his radio show as a fine example of just how bad some people can be and how much they can improve. Mind? No, I guess I didn't mind, as long as I didn't have to speak.

By Janet L. McGivern

Finally, our club president gave me the shove I needed. I used to time myself so well that I always arrived at our meetings just after Table Topics had ended. What a shame... One night our astute president was wrapping up Table Topics as I entered and invited

me to take part, since he fortunately had one crucial topic remaining. Dumbfounded, I stood in the doorway, still in my galoshes and parka, with a troubled look on my face and sheer panic in my heart, forced to partake of what was to me a dreaded ritual.

During the break this kind president told me, "Just do it." After all, it took me almost a year to finally garner the courage to attend my first meeting. Therefore, on reflection, I found that if I really was going to put the time into Toastmasters, then I also had to amass the effort to make something of it. Avoiding aspects, such as Table Topics, was never going to allow me to improve. All the jitters, fidgets and frustrations ad nauseam would be there until I could learn to banish them myself.

What I find amazing in all my dealings with Toastmasters International is the tiny percentage of individuals who join to overcome nervousness. Most members appear to be either professionals out to improve the skills they already possess or career minded men or women whose "boss" suggested that they might wish to discover something about Toastmasters.

Personally, since I fall into neither of the above categories, I found a definite lack of available information for those people struggling with nervousness to the degree I did. It's no consolation, but I know there are others out there like myself. For those of you who feel public speaking is akin to a death wish, I have endeavored to come up with some sensible guidelines that may help you on the road to overcoming your anxieties:

1. Enunciate. When we take the time to speak each word distinctly, with good diction, we speak somewhat slower and



our breathing becomes more paced and regulated. Practice by reading any newspaper article out loud until it becomes rote for you to speak clearly. This was the most crucial step for me to overcome. Once I was able to control my breathing by concentrating on enunciation, I quavered less because I had enough oxygen to finish my thought.

2. Speak on what you know. You will find your talk easier to prepare if you draw from the wealth of your own knowledge. If you have a lapse from your prepared text, you will be able to “wing it” with your own understanding of the topic.

3. Shorten the content of your text. It’s common for an apprehensive speaker to run out of things to say before the time limit has expired. This is due to a tendency to rush through the text, or even travel from beginning to summation and omitting the middle just to be finished. But, if you follow suggestion number one and work on your enunciation, you should be able to concentrate on delivering your speech within the allotted time and therefore will need less text.

4. Prepare and practice. Obviously, if people are nervous they are not about to subject themselves to the scrutiny of the public eye without a great deal of preparation and practice.

5. Use visuals. Don’t be afraid to use posters, slides, props — whatever it takes to occasionally distract the viewer’s eye from you for a few moments. This gives you an opportunity to take a deep breath and momentarily relax and collect your thoughts before continuing.

6. Just do it. Get up and speak as often as possible. I know this is difficult at first. I was never one to volunteer for an “off

the cuff” or a last-minute speech — everything I had went into the next speech I was preparing. But participating in Table Topics, volunteering as an officer for your club, speaking out in your community or in work situations and, yes, giving that last-minute speech, are the experiences that will finally help you conquer the “willies.” Acting as club president, running

business meetings and formally greeting guests was probably even more beneficial to me, because it placed me behind that lectern each and every meeting.

One word of caution: we often tend to become comfortable in familiar environments, so it’s a good idea to occasionally give speeches away from that safe territory of your home club.

“Avoiding aspects, such as Table Topics, was never going to allow me to improve.”

These suggestions may not work for all of you, but if you are a nervous speaker, go ahead and give them a try. I just wanted to share with you what, after much trial and error, has proved to work for me. ①

Janet L. McGivern is a member of Ellsworth Park Toastmasters 2745-30 in Downers Grove, Illinois.

Note: You can overcome fear by participating in the Toastmasters program. The Supply Catalog also contains a number of books, including “Talk-Power: How To Speak Without Fear” (Code 24-B) and “Speakeasy – How To Talk Your Way To The Top” (Code 40-B), to help you cope with nervousness and eliminate panic. See the Catalog for descriptions and prices, as well as other tools.

By Tom Bintliff,
DTM, Accredited
Speaker

PREPARATION IS
BEST CURE FOR
TREMBLING KNEES
AND SWEATY PALMS.

FEARLESSLY SPEAKING

Most people experience a fear of failure while speaking before a group that ranges in intensity from discomfort to terror. I've known people who get physically ill at the prospect of making an oral presentation to even a small gathering of friendly coworkers.

You may have read or heard about some superficial methods for overcoming this fear. These remedies vary from downright superstition to deep breathing and physical exercise. I know a young man who actually does 50 push-ups immediately before being introduced. Someone else always wears

her particular "good luck" earrings when giving major presentations. Another friend of mine goes to the men's room and does some rather unbelievable gyrations with his arms, legs and torso. This, he claims, loosens him up and releases tension.

These "remedies" may be effective on a minor scale, but they are superficial. Efforts designed to overcome the fear of public speaking must begin long before the presentation.

Please understand that it's perfectly all right to be nervous about a presentation. When that nervousness begins to interfere with your performance, however, it becomes unacceptable and crosses over into fear. Normal, healthy nervousness helps your adrenaline flow, keeps you alert, and heightens your enthusiasm.

Your goal is to take that fear, that debilitating nervousness, and use it to your advantage. In other words - to turn your fear into energy. Here are four steps to help you do just that:

① BE THOROUGHLY → PREPARED.

- KNOW YOUR SUBJECT
- KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

If you haven't adequately prepared your presentation, you will be nervous, even terrified, and rightly so. You owe it to your audience and yourself to be as well prepared as possible. If it is worth doing, it is worth doing right!

Most of the time, you will be asked to speak only on topics within your areas of expertise. If you are assigned one which doesn't meet that criteria, you can either decline the offer or do enough research to bring your knowledge to an acceptable level.

Too often a presenter forgets to learn about his or her audience. This is an essential part of preparation. Some of the things you need to know are:

- why are they there (what's the occasion)?
- who are they (association, company, management, staff)?
- why were you asked to give this presentation?
- what do they know about your subject?
- what do they know about you?
- what is their attitude toward your subject (hostile, neutral or friendly)?
- what is the purpose of your presentation (in their eyes)?

"Don't expect to ever feel completely calm before a speech. If you do, you're in trouble."

• BE ORGANIZED

- what is their average education level?
- what questions are they likely to ask?
- how long do they expect you to speak?

• REHEARSE

Keep your organization and presentation structure simple and easy to follow. Avoid covering too much material. Notice speakers often pack too many facts into a presentation. Pick out the most important points you want the audience to remember. Develop those points well. If you feel they need more information, create literature to leave with them (distribute it *after* your presentation to keep them from reading it during your speech). A good, simple construction is: OPENING (attention getting), PURPOSE (they should never have to guess), MAJOR POINTS (three to five maximum), SUMMARY (tie it to the opening).

I usually add one additional step, after Purpose and before the Major Points. I call it OUTLINE, because I tell them my major points ("Today we will discuss three major points: 1...") This lets them know what we will discuss and add one more impression to help them remember the major points).

Speak from a minimum of notes. Make your speech easier by rehearsing it in modules rather than in its entirety. The first module would be your opening. This is the most important because you must get the audience's attention. It may be 30 seconds to two minutes long, but rehearse it until you know exactly what you want to say in the opening sentences. Don't try to memorize your whole speech. However, you should know your opening and closing word-for-word.

The second module in your speech is the purpose statement. This may not be much longer than your opening. Each subsequent segment of your speech is a module, so rehearse them separately. Your notes should be brief reminders of each module and what you hope to accomplish with it.

Practice, practice, practice. The difference between a mediocre presentation and an outstanding one is often the amount of time spent in rehearsal. Practice is boring and, personally, I hate it. But it dramatically improves the final performance and it certainly goes a long way toward overcoming anxiety.

② FOCUS ON THE MESSAGE - NOT ON YOURSELF

One of the primary causes of stagfright is that the performer's focus is aimed the wrong direction.

Most beginning speakers focus on themselves - not their performance. In my public speaking workshops, participants almost always focus on embarrassment and self-doubt. They worry about making fools of themselves, "blanking out" and forgetting parts of their speeches, not being able to answer questions, not looking good, and similar self-destruction.

The best cure for speech anxiety is to get excited about your message and about conveying it to an awaiting audience. This may sound easier than it is at first, but it will actually relieve the pressure of your personal performance. Naturally, you want to do your best and look good. You will, if you follow this advice. Cultivate a desire to convey your message, and concentrate on it. You will create

"Fear is within you. There is no external reason for it."

③ DEVELOP THE "I CAN" ATTITUDE. →

the genuine enthusiasm that is the trademark of every professional speaker.

Fear is often a result of an attitude problem: the "I can't" attitude.

As I coach executives who desperately need to become good speakers, I hear over and over the same concerns: "Last time I forgot a part of my speech"; "I stammered through it"; "I was so scared I couldn't think clearly." The more they talk about their failures, the more convinced they become that they will not succeed the next time, either. They are right!

We become what we think we are. Therefore, if our thoughts are negatives, whether they are real or imagined, we can expect only negative results.

If you are guilty of this, change your attitude *now*. Every time you prepare a presentation, include time for visualization in your schedule. Simply close your eyes, relax your body, and think only of a successful presentation. Visualize yourself being introduced, "know" that you are well-prepared and that you know your subject. Imagine quickly and professionally approaching the lectern, pausing, looking into the eyes of the audience, establishing rapport with them, and proceeding to deliver an outstanding speech.

Most importantly, never again let yourself dwell on past failures. Always think positively.

④ AUDIENCE RAPPORT AND INVOLVEMENT. ↓

Public speaking is a two-way conversation – regardless if the audience ever says a word!

While mediocre speakers tend to focus strictly on their own performance, outstanding speakers establish a rapport with their audiences and get them involved in the presentation.

I like using rhetorical questions as opening sentences, questions which do not require a verbal answer from the audience. The intent is to get the audience to begin thinking about my subject. This establishes control of the situation and the audience begins to channel their attention toward my speech topic. In other words, you direct their thinking through questions. For example, one of my speeches opens with the question: "Have you ever wondered why some people achieve what they want in life while others – given the same opportunities, the same education, the same environment – don't?"

It is essential that the audience like you. Eye contact, humor, and meaningful gestures all help to establish that warmth and camaraderie.

Any physical action by the audience tends to keep them focused on your message. It also helps them relax and helps *you* ease your anxiety. The simplest way to do this is to ask a question, such as: "How many of you have ever been unemployed?" Raise your own hand and they will raise theirs in response. Other physical activity is equally effective. Have them stand up, sit down, shake hands with someone, turn around, bend over, change seats, etc.

Have fun with your audiences. They are not enemies. They want you to succeed. They want to have fun. They want to release their tension, skepticism, hostility, or apprehension about you or your subject. So let them!

Preparation, focus, attitude and audience rapport are the areas that need your attention if you are to overcome the fear of public speaking. Don't expect to ever feel completely calm before a speech. If you do, you're in trouble: you'll probably sound dull from lack of enthusiasm. The key is to develop energy instead of fear. To be excited about your message, to focus on the audience and their need to hear it, to get them involved, and to have fun with humor and anecdotes, drama and other oratorical tools.

The fear is within you. There is no external reason for it. Don't you think it's time to rid yourself of this burden? **T**

Tom Bintliff, DTM, is a member of Early Bird Club 3651-47 in Tallahassee, Florida. A professional speaker and trainer who specializes in oral communication training, Mr. Bintliff is one of 26 Accredited Speakers worldwide.



By Robert Rýker, CTM

AND THE ADRENALINE WILL FLOW

This accomplished musician has learned to harness and take advantage of the energy caused by stage fright.

■ Performance is performance, whether it is playing a concerto, running a race or giving a speech. It is the former of these which I know best, so I propose to describe the process from the standpoint of a musician. The reader will surely perceive the parallels.

In day-to-day performance, musicians are not competitive; quite to the contrary, they are mutually supportive, playing alongside one another in a team effort to achieve perfect harmony, perfect ensemble, togetherness, unity. However there is one special aspect of musical performance which is dramatically the opposite—competition, head-to-head, duel-to-the-finish, winner-take-all competition.

Several years ago when I resigned my position with the Montreal Symphony, for example, there were nearly 100 candidates for my chair all in the same room at the same time. I'm sure they all experienced more than their normal share of adrenaline!

In a situation of danger, stress or unfamiliarity, the body prepares itself for "fight or flight" with a flow of adrenaline. An experienced performer knows it well, and comes to depend upon it. He needs it to give life and vibrancy to his performance, to lift it from the routine. But the novice, the student, the uninitiated, can be paralyzed by the unexpected surge of adrenaline. In extreme cases, it can result in numbness, roaring in the ears, even in unconsciousness. We call it stage fright.

When that flow of adrenaline gets the better of you, when you are overcome by stage

fright, you cannot function at your best, if at all. You are not truly competitive. However, if you know what is happening to your body (and why), and what can be done about it, you can harness that marvelous energy to your own advantage.

Imagine yourself walking to the lectern following your introduction, ready to speak, and looking out over the seats in the auditorium filled with people waiting to hear you. No matter who you are, that's exciting. Or imagine yourself walking into a room facing the 99 candidates who all are determined to land the same job you want. No matter who you are, that's pressure. And the adrenaline will flow.

HOW CAN YOU CONTROL THOSE BUTTERFLIES?

If the speech you are to give is important to you, the tension surrounding it is virtually the same as that of playing a concerto or running a race. From time immemorial, professional musicians have passed on to their younger colleagues and students their own individual techniques for harnessing and riding the stress attendant upon performance. Here are mine:

The week before you are to speak (perform), splurge so you can look your best. Buy some brand-new clothes and make a trip to the hair-dresser. That's so when you speak you can radiate that sense of well-being which goes with immaculate grooming and a new outfit.

Continued on page 31

HOW TO

What's Worse: TABLE TOPICS or a ROOT CANAL?

By Bob Malouf, CTM

INSTEAD OF
MERELY
SURVIVING
TABLE TOPICS,
WOULDN'T IT
BE GREAT
TO THRIVE
ON THEM?



The foregoing analogy might seem a bit silly to some of the seasoned Table Topic pros out there. But, think back to when you first joined Toastmasters. And consider the new members (and experienced members) who are still terrified of Table Topics. Let the truth be known: The fear of Table Topics is not only very real, but may very well be the single largest contributor to attrition throughout Toastmasters.

■ Visualize the dentist's office. What thoughts come to mind when you think of a root canal? Perhaps discomfort, fear, pain, nervousness, and an unconvincing voice that bellows, "This won't hurt a bit." Now ask yourself what thoughts cross your mind when the Table Topicsmaster hovers about the club ready to unleash potentially painful topics.

STRATEGIES FOR SURVIVAL

There are a few strategies for Table Topics that are not only tested and proven to be successful, but are also guaranteed to make a difference in any club. Instead of "surviving" Table Topics, wouldn't it be great to "thrive" on them?

“The pitfall most of us fall into is that we critique our first few thoughts, stall for time, and then pray that our ‘light bulb’ goes on!”

CHECK-UP TIME

The first order of business is to get a check-up. Not a check-up in the ordinary sense of the word – no blood tests or needles are involved with this check-up. We all need a check-up from the neck up! That is, we need to pause and assess our attitudes when it comes to Table Topics.

You’re probably wondering what happened to eye contact, gestures, body movement, etc. That’s all secondary to attitude. Attitude is the necessary starting point of any endeavor. Just think of a skilled speaker or a successful individual in your profession. I’ll bet 10-1 that this individual has a great attitude.

Attitude is often a nebulous concept, so let’s break it down and get our arms around it. A positive attitude toward Table Topics simply means we look forward to the topic. We can achieve this attitude by psyching ourselves up beforehand. Consider the adage, “Garbage in, garbage out.” If we feed ourselves mental garbage in the form of a negative attitude as we anticipate speaking on a topic, then why should we expect anything less than a garbage (poor) response?

KNOW WHERE YOU’RE GOING

Now that we are eagerly anticipating the Table Topics Master to call on us, the next step is to decide immediately where we’re going with the topic. We must avoid at all costs the “light bulb effect.” This is where we start talking and hope that our mind will light up like a light bulb due to a bolt of inspiration. Sound familiar? Any experienced Toastmaster will tell you this strategy is simply not reliable on a consistent basis.

The biggest myth about Table Topics is that we don’t have enough time to determine our course from the outset. This simply is not true. What we need to understand is that if we go with our first thought then we can relax and enjoy the topic. The pitfall most of us fall into is that we critique our first few thoughts, stall for time, and then pray that our “light bulb” goes on! Let’s take this burden off of our shoulders by going with our first thought.

ENTHUSIASM

The crucial ingredient to a positive attitude and knowing where we’re going is enthusiasm.

Enthusiasm can make a marginal speech a good speech, and an above average speech an excellent speech. It is a well known fact that an audience enjoys hearing an upbeat, dynamic speech versus a calm, emotionless speech any day of the week. If we know this to be true, then why aren’t we all enthusiastic? I believe there’s two explanations. First, enthusiasm requires effort and most of us are simply not willing to exert the effort needed to be enthusiastic. Secondly, most of us believe

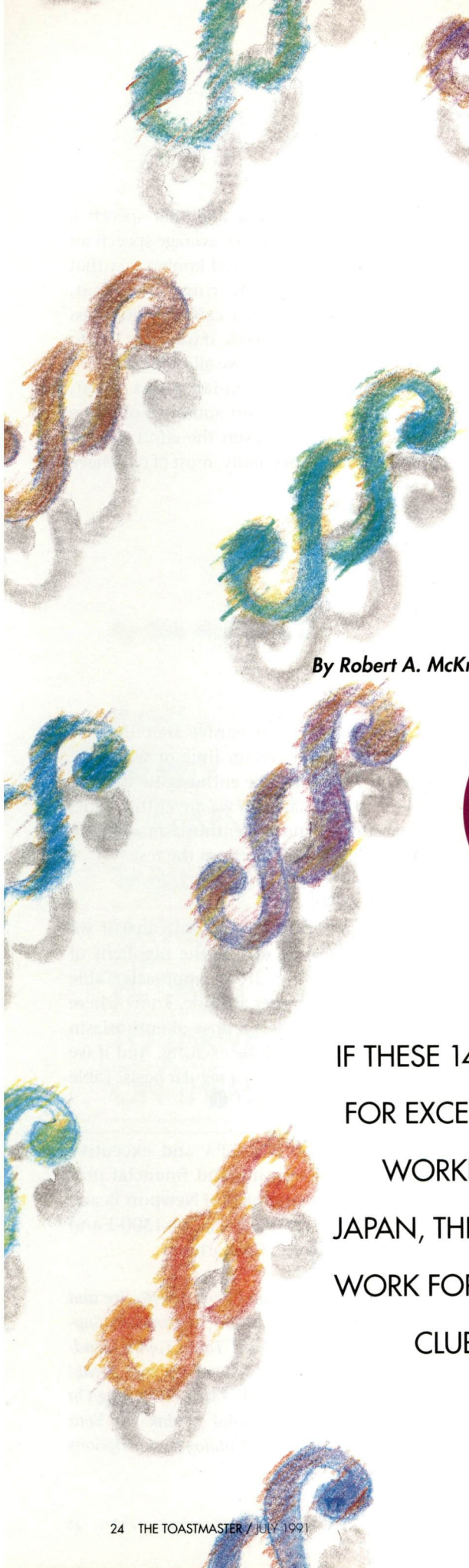
that enthusiasm is an elusive trait that we either possess at a certain time or we don’t. Rather, if we want to be enthusiastic then all we need to do is act as if we are enthusiastic. It’s that simple! And this enthusiasm will truly separate our Table Topic from the rest.

CHOICE IS OURS

Table Topics can be like a root canal if we allow it to be, or it can be the highlight of every club meeting. If we approach Table Topics with the proper attitude, know where we’re going, and inject a dose of enthusiasm then Table Topics will be exciting. And if we apply these strategies on a regular basis, Table Topics will be made easy! **T**

Bob Malouf, CTM, is a CPA and executive recruiter for accounting and financial professionals. He is a member of Newport Beach Distinguished Toastmasters Club 1300-F and lives in Los Angeles, California.

Note: For information and tools for effective and exciting Table Topics, see the Toastmasters Supply Catalog – “Think Fast! Table Topics Handbook” (Code 1315) and “Stand Up and Speak! Table Topics Game” (Code 1316), “Thinking On Your Feet” (Code 27-B) and “Think On Your Feet” (Code 89-B). See the Catalog for descriptions and prices.



By Robert A. McKnight, CTM

W. Edwards Deming is well-known as America's guru of quality management. At the end of World War II, Dr. Deming was called to Japan to help that war-torn country develop a national census. Later, Deming articulated the elements of quality and quality management that helped make Japan the respected successful industrial giant it now is. His philosophy has helped many companies around the world embrace the necessary ingredient for success: quality.

Deming summarized his philosophy of quality in his famous 14 points. Although these points were directed at helping industry become more quality conscious, it's worth looking at how these points apply to Toastmasters. Because Toastmasters is not an industrial organization, I've taken some liberties with a few of these points. I'm sure Dr. Deming won't mind.

T OASTMASTERS AND QUALITY

FOURTEEN POINTS TO TOTAL TOASTMASTER QUALITY

IF THESE 14 RULES
FOR EXCELLENCE
WORKED FOR
JAPAN, THEY MAY
WORK FOR YOUR
CLUB, TOO.

1. ESTABLISH CONSTANCY OF PURPOSE. Know why you are a member of Toastmasters, and what it's all about. Are you here to continuously improve your communication and leadership skills? Is your goal, as one Toastmasters flier states:

"...to develop and improve:

- good speaking and presentation skills
- ability to think quickly and clearly on your feet
- better listening talents
- strong leadership skills?"

Are these or similar words written in your club's constitution? Do they outline how your club is run? As Deming teaches, do you refine and polish your goals so they truly mean what you are all about? Do your meetings exemplify what the club is all about or do guests wonder, "What are these crazy people doing?" If not, you may want to sit down and uncover any hidden agendas or misdirected goals.

2. ADOPT THE NEW PHILOSOPHY OF QUALITY IN ITS ENTIRETY. Once you put it to work, nothing will stop you. Anything is now



possible. That spirit of quality, achievement and competitiveness can become your club's magic ingredient, its secret weapon.

3. CEASE DEPENDENCE ON MASS INSPECTION. This is Deming the statistician speaking. Another way of saying it is, "do it right the first time," then you won't have to redo it. Each person should be his or her own quality control inspector. To Toastmasters, this means we ought to be our own best evaluators. That doesn't necessarily mean we have to be our own worst critics, just that we must set the highest standards for ourselves and our fellow club members. Be a shining light for others by always being prepared.

4. STOP AWARDING BUSINESS SOLELY ON THE BASIS OF PRICE. Deming is telling business that meaningful measures of quality should be the criteria for selecting products or services, not price alone. I'm going to stretch his point here and say that too often we are easily persuaded by flashy high tech graphics or loud theatrics and too little by the true worth of a person's message. Sort of truth in advertizing!

5. IMPROVE CONSTANTLY AND FOREVER. Is something in your club not working the way it should? Do your business meetings drift out of control? Are you taking full advantage of more experienced members as mentors or trainers? Does every meeting stretch every member as far as he or she can go?

6. INSTITUTE TRAINING ON THE JOB. Don't forget, Toastmasters is training! How well trained are all your officers? How effective is your manual speaking program? Does each member who needs a mentor have one? How about your mentor training program? Do you spread the wealth from the district training sessions around? Do you have in-club workshops to work on problems? Do you get members involved in outside speaking assignments?

7. INSTITUTE LEADERSHIP. The job of leadership is to help everyone do her or his best. Toastmasters is obviously much more than speeches, Table Topics, evaluations and Robert's Rules of Order. The entire Toastmasters organization is set up to let every member hold positions of leadership and responsibility. Besides the obvious features of Toastmaster of the day, holding a club office or even being Ah Counter, there are all kinds of opportunities to learn management and leadership skills in Toastmasters.

8. DRIVE OUT FEAR. Here Deming is addressing the authoritarian punitive styles of management that too often hold workers in mortal fear if they don't perform. This point

is especially important in Toastmasters. The club must be a safe place to fail since failure is a necessary step to growth. To allow this to happen, there must be support cushions in your club. People must know they can get the support they need to get back up off the floor.

9. BREAK DOWN BARRIERS BETWEEN DEPARTMENTS. Deming is telling industry that people in research, design, sales, production, etc. must work as a team. How well does your club function as a team? How easily can your officers substitute for one another when needed? How much support do you give the new or faltering member? How open and welcoming is your club toward visitors?

10. ABANDON SLOGANS. Deming didn't instruct management to forget slogans, public relations and numerical goals, but he emphasized that remedies follow from documented causes, not from exhortation and harangue. So, continually reexamine your own and your club's programs. Do they do what they are intended to do? Maybe it's time for a closer look at how you evaluate not only individual member progress, but your club's progress as well.

"Replace management by numbers with leadership. With quality, the numbers will come."



11. ELIMINATE NUMERICAL GOALS AND QUOTAS. Deming doesn't mean that meeting quotas and goals is wrong, but that it's by no means enough. Sure, it's nice to collect those ribbons and points for Distinguished Club Program. But is the collection of ribbons, DCP points or other quantitative indicators of performance done at the expense of true quality? Are you serving all the needs of each member? Replace management by numbers with leadership. With quality, the numbers will come!

Deming said that "production volume without regard to quality is meaningless." Instead of being satisfied with collecting a trophy, did you put out a quality effort? Instead of "just" presiding over a meeting as Toastmaster or as club officer, was

**“Take a closer look
at how you evaluate
not only individual
member progress,
but your club’s
progress as well.”**

that the best meeting or activity that could have taken place with that set of players and conditions? Did you learn how to do even better next time? Sometimes when too much emphasis is put on objective measures, they become ends in themselves.

12. REMOVE BARRIERS TO THE WORKERS' RIGHT TO TAKE PRIDE IN ACCOMPLISHMENT. Deming is saying that if management only emphasizes schedules, rates or annual reviews, workmanship becomes a low priority. A quality driven program says that management is much more than just numbers. A quality driven approach says that you don't wait until the end of the year to fix or change things. A quality driven effort means constantly reviewing the process to ensure that only the best product is the result. Quality waits for no one, not even a Toastmaster! It is also quick to reward good work. In Toastmasters terms, this means recognizing outstanding achievements, educational or otherwise, when they happen – not only at an annual awards ceremony.

13. VIGOROUSLY PROMOTE EDUCATION AND SELF-IMPROVEMENT. This is what Toastmasters is all about. Deming is telling industry that things will change and as a

result, jobs will change and all of this requires retraining. Don't ever be satisfied with the status quo. Everyone must keep on learning and growing.

14. PUT EVERYBODY TO WORK TO ACCOMPLISH THE TRANSFORMATION TO QUALITY. Accomplish the above 13 points and improved quality will result. Organizations and people are inherently resistant to change, but resistance can be overcome by persistence. But who is in charge? In Toastmasters, it's the responsibility of everyone to accomplish whatever change, to expend whatever effort is required to attain quality.

Well, there it is! It's hard to argue with a formula that has been as successful as this. These 14 points may not turn your club into the industrial powerhouse of a Japan, but they will do magic things. Magic not only for Toastmasters, not only for your club, but for everyone who is willing to take them to heart and be a part of the future. ①

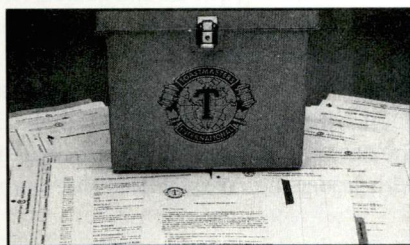
Robert A. McKnight, CTM, is a design engineer, inventor, pilot, writer, and a member of Tarsus Club 532-8 in St. Louis, Missouri.

Dr. Deming was born in Sioux City, Iowa, on October 14, 1900. As of this writing, he lives in Washington, D.C. He teaches at NYU and gives lectures and seminars all over the world. Each year, he travels to Japan where the prestigious Deming Prize is awarded. For further reading about Deming and his life, the following are suggested:

- *Dr. Deming, the American Who Taught the Japanese about Quality* by Rafael Aguayo, published by the Carol Publishing Group.
- *The Keys to Excellence* by Nancy R. Mann, published by Prentice-Hall.

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IDEA CORNER

By Robert Alan Black, Ph.D.

TOO MANY PRESIDENTS AND NOT ENOUGH NEW MEMBERS

WHAT TO DO IF YOUR CLUB HAS BECOME STAGNANT

■ Toastmasters International is one of the finest organizations available for anyone interested in self development. In Toastmasters, you can develop professional speaking and leadership skills while having fun at the same time.

All of this is available to any potential member, provided the club doesn't have too many past presidents and too few new members.

Generally, membership turnover is high among members who obtain their CTM awards. By completing the basic manual, many members develop good basic speaking skills and gain enough confidence to pursue a raise, a new position, or even a new career. Unfortunately, these members often quit their club once they've tasted a sample of their newfound potential.

Members who stay usually serve as officers, a requirement for completing

higher achievement levels in Toastmasters. With a high turnover of CTMs – “mid-level” experience level of members – clubs are left with a surplus of new members and ex-officers.

Without ongoing membership drives a club with too many past presidents can become stagnant. Have you ever been to a Toastmasters banquet where 12 past presidents who are introduced happen to be members of the same 20-member club?

This *could* indicate a very devoted membership that includes 12 past presidents committed to their club. In this case, the eight “regular” members have a wealth of mentors to choose from.

It could also mean that apathy has set in. If those 12 past presidents include only one DTM, one ATM-Bronze, one ATM and eight CTMs, it could indicate a lack of club growth.

Perhaps it hasn't happened in your club. But in many clubs I have visited, former club presidents have stopped working on their manuals only to give non-manual speeches. Worse still, they only seem to improve their speaking skills marginally, if at all.

A club with too many past presidents could have these problems:

- being ruled from the sidelines by several past presidents
- lack of encouragement of growth in new members
- members resting on their laurels
- loss of zest
- routine, unimaginative meetings
- a cliquish atmosphere

How can a club overcome these problems? The following techniques have been successfully used by Athens Club 1779-14 in Athens, Georgia, for the past three years:

1. hold creative membership drives

2. encourage all members to pursue educational awards
3. hold “theme” meetings
4. create a speaker's bureau
5. re-elect some of the past presidents to office
6. prepare news releases of all club events
7. hold several Speechcraft programs for the public and at local companies
8. hold videotaped or audio-taped meetings
9. encourage club members to participate in speech contests
10. start a mentor program
11. encourage external speech giving; i.e., to local college, civic and social organizations
12. get involved in local high school speech contests
13. develop a club newsletter
14. hold social events
15. form small groups to discuss individual problems
16. prepare a new member information book
17. get all members working toward specific goals
18. challenge the “best” to get “better”

What else can a club do? With some imaginative brainstorming, the solutions are unlimited.

Encourage members to become five-, 10-, even 15- or 20-year members. But don't let them stagnate. No Toastmaster should give a non-manual speech. None of us is so good that we can't improve.

Look upon Toastmasters as a gift to be shared with guests, new members and “old-timers” at every meeting. ①

Robert Alan Black, Ph.D., is a member of Athens Club 1779-14 in Athens, Georgia.



HALL OF FAME

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Congratulations to these Toastmasters who have received the Distinguished Toastmaster certificate, Toastmasters International's highest recognition.

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Connie Suddath, 89-33
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Glen G. Boire, 6657-33
David L. Schmitt, 2121-35
Juanita M. Parks, 3448-36
Marth A. Tomaro, 1528-39
Julie Geidd, 224-41
Marilynn Jean Berg, 3146-42
David J. Fulton, 7010-42
Mary Moore, 3177-44
Francis J. Houle, 1980-47
James E. Waters, 2092-47
Tim Keck, 2805-49
Frances Colling, 4973-56
Tom J. Meinecke, 6514-56
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Michael Marino Jr., 234-68
Vernon Gilbert Flood, 3388-69
Edward James Schunemann, 7894-69
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Elizabeth Anne Fox, 5335-70
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Nicholas C. Peterson, 226-26
Marc Nagele, 5283-30
Bonnie Mudd, 6004-30
Linda Dowd, 146-33
Jacqueline Covill, 1418-40
H. Keith de Noble, 4901-43
Louise Y. Boyd, 3018-47
M. H. "Herb" Muller, 172-52
Gordon Eugene Parsons, 3137-57
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Jacquelyn Cohen, 5283-30
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Roger Aldridge, 7617-36
Carol Snyder Dufort, 985-39
Rick Sydor, 1070-39
David J. Fulton, 7010-42
Mollie Bradke Phillips, 2287-43
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May L. Imamura, 2805-49
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Michael Lewis Hutchinson, 4058-56
Rosine Redies, 3317-57
Ralph H. Williamson, 2729-60
Chris K. Ford, 3319-61
Irma Perry, 3834-63
Terence J. Bilancio, 1498-65
Reid B. Weidman, 1993-65
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Sarah B. Harvey, 3816-16
Charles L. Morrison, 4281-16
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45 years

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**“Ensuring that you
will be well-rested
and fresh is perhaps
more important to
your performance
than anything else
you can do.”**

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The day before you are to speak. Take plenty of time to rest and refresh the mind and body. Do your final concentrated practice, to be sure, but do it early and then put it aside. If you're appearing in your own town and it's sufficiently important, check into a good hotel and let them pamper you while you take yourself away from every avoidable distraction. In any case, wherever you are, be sure to treat yourself to a delicious dinner, go for a relaxing walk, take a nice hot bath and climb into bed early for a good night's sleep. Ensuring that you will be well-rested and fresh is perhaps more important to your performance than anything else you can do.

The day you are to speak. Continue to pamper yourself to maintain a buoyant self-image. Wear your new things, treat yourself to a healthful meal about four hours before you are due to perform, so that it will be well-digested – out of your tummy, where it slows down your reflexes, and into your bloodstream, where it will be working for you.

Before you are due to arrive. Leave early so you have time to prepare. Look about the site and acclimatize yourself to the situation. That's so you can avoid having your mental energy eroded by some unexpected circumstance. Make a final check of your preparation, and mentally rehearse your performance. Double check your grooming. In a word: do everything you can to feel in control.

When you have arrived. Anticipate that feeling of excitement. You know that stress is a normal part of a new situation. Take it for what it is — normal — and let the intensity work for you. You have only to concentrate on your own brief performance to feel ready, poised and on top of the world. Don't try to practice just before you perform, but simply warm up, as any athlete does, without wearing down your vitality. As for any other speakers, challengers, auditionees or candidates, bear in mind that all of them face the same obstacles you do, and naturally, every one of them will

be nervous, too – just reminding yourself of this in itself gives you an advantage.

When you are about to speak. Be aware that your nervous energies will peak. This is the time to maintain just the right balance of excitement, which *you* control, as opposed to tension, which controls you. That flow of adrenaline is real, it's physical; it is the release of a hormonal secretion into the nervous system of your body, and it affects your muscles. Exercising your largest muscles is the simplest and quickest way to use up some of that adrenal energy which otherwise can swamp you, to keep the level of nervous excitement where you feel you can function at your best. In my own case, I find that about three deep knee-bends is all I ever seem to need. And they sure feel good!

Speaking, concertizing or competing, in the final analysis, all involve three stages which you can control to enable you to perform at your best.

- 1) Your preparation should be done early, as in the case of any foundation, to allow it sufficient time to set before building upon it. Then you can be confident of your skills at the time you need to draw upon them.
- 2) Your mind and body should be refreshed with proper food and rest, and stimulated with a bit of timely pampering, so that you can feel yourself at your best.
- 3) The natural flow of nervous energy must be understood, anticipated and harnessed during performance, the same as any source of energy. Then you can take full advantage of its great power, when the adrenaline flows.

Knee-bends anyone? **T**

Robert Rýker, CTM, is Artistic Director for the Japan Sinfonia and International Director for Mini-concerts International, Inc. in Tokyo. A past president of the ACCJ Club 4334-U in Tokyo, he has served as Chairman of the Japan Toastmasters Council.

A Symbol of Pride



WEAR THE EMBLEM THAT LETS EVERYONE KNOW YOU BELONG TO A GREAT ORGANIZATION. THE TOASTMASTERS SYMBOL SAYS ELOQUENTLY WHAT WORDS CAN'T EXPRESS. IT TELLS ABOUT ACHIEVEMENT — YOURS AND THAT OF TOASTMASTERS INTERNATIONAL. ❖

Pins

- Miniature membership pin (5751), 1/2" diameter, \$2.75; 12 or more (5752), \$2.50
- Large membership pin (5753), 5/8" diameter, \$3.25; 12 or more (5754), \$3.00
- Women's membership pin (5702), 5/8" diameter with guard clasp, \$4.50
- Club President (5801), \$6.50.
- Club President with two zircons (5802), \$16.00.
- Administrative Vice-President (5803), \$6.50.
- Educational Vice-President (5804), \$6.50.
- Secretary (5805), \$6.50.
- Treasurer (5806), \$6.50.
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- Public Relations Officer (5907), \$15.00
- Division Governor (5905), \$15.00
- Past Division Governor (5906), \$15.00

See the Supply Catalog for a complete listing of pins, including past club officer and district officer pins.

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Gold-type CTM, ATM and DTM tags attach to any membership pin.

- CTM tag (5942) has white letters, \$4.50.
- ATM tag (5940) has red letters, \$4.50.
- DTM tag (5941) has blue letters, \$4.50.

See the Supply Catalog for a complete listing of member anniversary tags honoring membership and service.

Identification Badges

- TOASTMASTERS ID BADGE (343 pocket, 343-A pin back, 343-M magnet)...Special white badge with name, office and club name engraved in red, \$7.75 each.
 - CTM ID BADGE (340 pocket, 340-A pin back, 340-M magnet)...special brown badge with name and club number engraved in white, \$7.75 each.
 - ATM ID BADGE (391 pocket, 391-A pin back, 391-M magnet)... special red plastic badge with name and club number engraved in white, \$7.75 each.
- Your ATM badge can show your level of ATM achievement. These polished bronze and silver speaker figures adhere to your ATM badge. \$2.50 each:

- ATM Bronze attachment (391-B).
 - ATM Silver attachment (391-S).
 - DTM ID BADGE (389 pocket, 389-A pin back, 389-M magnet)... Special gold plastic badge with name and club number engraved in black, \$7.75 each.
 - TOASTMASTERS CLUB ID BADGE (339 pin back, 339-M magnet)...Small blue plastic badge, with name and club name engraved in white, \$3.95 each.
- Be sure to print all information for engraving. Blank

badges are not available. You can turn a pin-back badge into a clip-on badge with the clip-on attachment (390), \$1.25 each.

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Provide yourself with some added recognition.

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For Our Women Toastmasters

- Scarf-Pin (5700), \$4.50
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- TI Earrings (5704) pierced only, \$6.95

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__5752 __5754 __5801 __5803 __5805 __5807 __5905 __5942 __5941 __343-A* __340* __340-M* __391-A __391-B __389* __389-M* __339-M* __5920 __5951 __5800 __5798 __5701 __5704