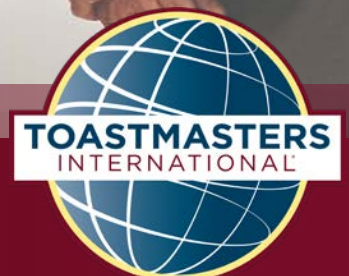


# District Leadership Committee Handbook

A Guide for Effective District Leadership Committee Tasks





**TOASTMASTERS INTERNATIONAL**  
[toastmasters.org](https://toastmasters.org)

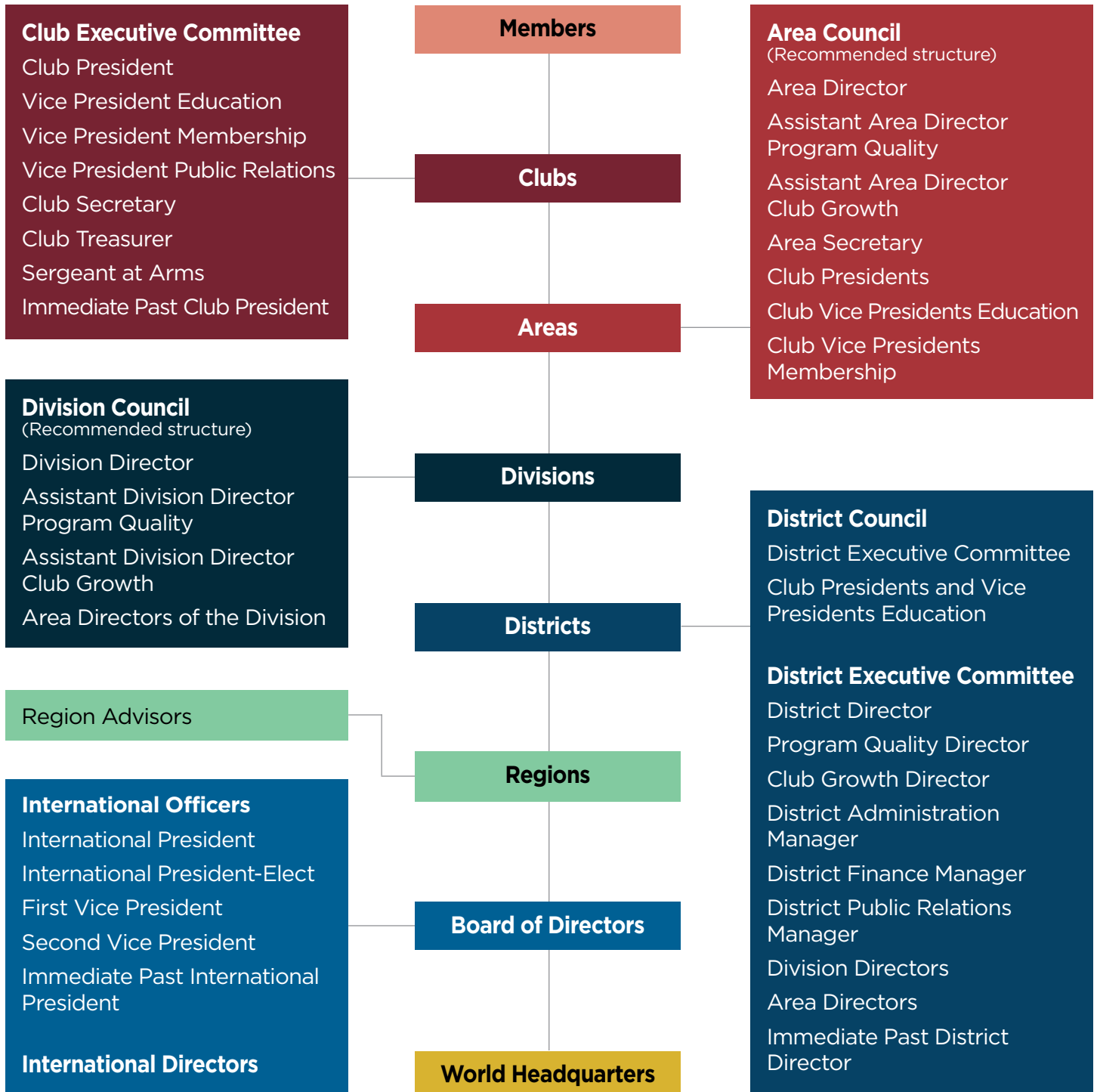
© 2022 Toastmasters International. All rights reserved.  
Toastmasters International, the Toastmasters International logo, and all other Toastmasters International trademarks and copyrights are the sole property of Toastmasters International and may be used only with permission.

Item 450T Rev. 04/2025



# Map of Service To Members

Members are the heart and foundation of Toastmasters International. Below is a representation of each service level in support of the member.



# Table of Contents

<b>Missions, Values, and Promises</b>	1
<b>Introduction</b>	2
<b>Toastmasters International Website Links</b>	3
District Administrative Bylaws	3
Elections Toolkit	3
<b>Calendar, Timelines, and Deadlines</b>	4
<b>DLC Chair and Committee Responsibilities</b>	5
Identifying Candidates	6
Building a Leadership Legacy	6
<b>Interviewing Candidates</b>	7
DLC Report	7
Floor Candidates	7
<b>Scripts</b>	9
Optional Scripts for DLC Chair	9
Nominated Candidate	9
Non-nominated Candidate	9

# Missions, Values, and Promises

## Toastmasters International Mission

We empower individuals to become more effective communicators and leaders.

## District Mission

We build new clubs and support all clubs in achieving excellence.

## Club Mission

We provide a supportive and positive learning experience in which members are empowered to develop communication and leadership skills, resulting in greater self-confidence and personal growth.

## Toastmasters International Core Values

### Integrity

We match our actions with our words, demonstrate honesty and trustworthiness, communicate with sincerity and thoughtfulness, have the courage to acknowledge our mistakes, and always strive to do the right thing.

### Service

We strive to provide high-value, exceptional support by being responsive, attentive, and passionate in fulfilling our duties as individuals and as an organization to all.

### Excellence

We consistently strive to meet or exceed expectations by upholding the Toastmasters Promise, nurturing a collaborative environment, innovating to deliver creative solutions, and optimizing quality to produce superior service.

### Respect

We treat all with dignity, welcome diverse perspectives, acknowledge all contributions, believe that all have positive intent, practice mutual accountability, and critique but never demean service.

## Toastmasters International Brand Promise

Empowering individuals through personal and professional development.

This is the promise Toastmasters International makes to club members. Once we have reached this goal consistently, through all clubs across the globe, we will have achieved club excellence.

## A Toastmaster's Promise

As a member of Toastmasters International and my club, I promise:

- ▶ To attend club meetings regularly
- ▶ To prepare all of my projects to the best of my ability, basing them on the Toastmasters education program
- ▶ To prepare for and fulfill meeting assignments
- ▶ To provide fellow members with helpful, constructive evaluations
- ▶ To help the club maintain the positive, friendly environment necessary for all members to learn and grow
- ▶ To serve my club as an officer when called upon to do so
- ▶ To treat my fellow club members and our guests with respect and courtesy
- ▶ To bring guests to club meetings so they can see the benefits Toastmasters membership offers
- ▶ To adhere to the guidelines and rules for all Toastmasters education and recognition programs
- ▶ To act within Toastmasters' core values of integrity, respect, service, and excellence during the conduct of all Toastmasters activities

## Toastmasters International Envisioned Future

Toastmasters is a thriving and diverse global community. We enhance the personal lives and careers of individuals, enabling them to positively impact their communities. We empower people to develop communication and leadership skills through a welcoming, high-quality, experiential learning environment, resulting in greater self-confidence and personal growth.

# Introduction

The goal of this handbook is to assist the District Leadership Committee (DLC) in developing best practices to provide the most value the committee can offer. Serving on the DLC is intended to be a fun, engaging, encouraging, and empowering experience for all participants.

The *District Leadership Committee Handbook* does not supersede the governing documents and/or decisions by the Board of Directors. Please consult the Toastmasters International website to review the governing documents, District Leader Letter, and communications from the District Growth and Support Team for any relevant updates.

Every District has the option to create a District operating procedures document that outlines best practices specific to their District. The District operating procedures may contain historical listings of District level awards, past District and International leaders, standing committees, District traditions, customs, guidelines for ad-hoc committees as needed, and overall operations that are unique to the District. The District operating procedures are posted on the District website for easy reference. The *District Leadership Committee Handbook* provides best practices for the DLC process. Many Districts have past leaders who take an active role in District activities.



# Toastmasters International Website Links

## District Administrative Bylaws

**District Administrative Bylaws Article VII and Article XI** outline the minimum qualifications for District leader roles and the DLC requirements.

**Protocol 9.0: District Campaigns and Elections** covers details of DLC structure, deadlines, interviewing, and evaluating candidates, District Candidate Showcase, Campaign Communications, Endorsements, Violations, Credentials, and Elections.

## Elections Toolkit

**Elections Toolkit** provides access to the following forms:

- ▶ Nomination Form
- ▶ Candidate Showcase Questions
- ▶ Candidate Evaluation
- ▶ DLC Member Agreement
- ▶ District Leader Agreement
- ▶ Candidate Biography for the DLC

# Calendar, Timelines, and Deadlines

Toastmasters International **9.0: District Campaigns and Elections, Section 1** specifies various deadlines for the DLC Chair and committee. These deadlines have proven effective for the annual District leader elections to be fair, effective, and in the best interest of the entire District membership.

This section expands the deadlines chart to include helpful suggestions and an example to determine dates for Protocol 9.0,Section 1.

Date	Action
Sept 1–Nov 1	District Director appoints District Leadership Committee (DLC) Chair.
Oct 1–Dec 1	DLC members are recommended by the DLC Chair and approved by the District Director.
Nov 1–Jan 15	Call for candidate declarations.
Eight (8) weeks before District Annual Council meeting and elections	Nominations deadline to run for District leader positions.
Six (6) weeks before the District election date	DLC notifies District Director of nominated candidates.
Four (4) weeks prior to the Annual Meeting of the District Council	DLC report and biographical forms are emailed to voting members of the District Council and posted on the District website. Eligible floor candidates shall declare their intent to run in writing to the District Director after the DLC report has been published and no later than one (1) week prior to the annual District Council meeting.
March 15–June 1	District Council annual meetings occur (actual dates set by each District).

Please review the example below for the annual District Council meeting being held on May 20, 2023:

Business Meeting Date	Nominations Due to District Director	Publish Nominations
	(6 weeks prior to Business Meeting)	(4 weeks prior to Business Meeting)
May 20, 2023	April 8, 2023	April 22, 2023

As soon as the District Director confirms the DLC Chair and/or committee, the “Call for Candidates” may happen immediately. The deadline is January 15 of the current program year.

# DLC Chair and Committee Responsibilities

The responsibility of the District Leadership Committee is to seek, identify, evaluate, and nominate the qualified and best candidate and nominate the qualified and best candidates for the elected District leader roles. It is important that the Chair and committee know the current policies and protocols pertaining to the DLC process. All evaluations and information contained is confidential.

The “Call for Candidates” is an important step in identifying the next group of District leaders. In the Elections Toolkit, there is a video by the International President each year. Please consider adding the International President video along with the contact information for the DLC Chair and Toastmasters International recommended forms as early as possible to the District website. Consider sending a District-wide “Call for Candidates” communication when the District website is updated. Missing the “Call for Candidates” deadline can cause the DLC report to become invalid and transition to an advisory report. An invalid or advisory DLC report would thereby cause a domino effect of candidates running from the floor and a complicated District Election process.

In most Districts, the DLC Chair is the Immediate Past District Director. If the Immediate Past District Director is unable or unwilling to serve, a Past District Director may be appointed. Past Region Advisors, Past International Directors, and Past International Presidents who also served as a District Director can serve as the DLC Chair. A DLC Chair and committee members cannot serve successive terms. There must be a one (1) year absence from serving on the DLC for any member of the committee including the chair. The DLC Chair is a non-voting member of the DLC. Equal representation from each Division is required and the voting members of the committee must be a minimum of five (5) members. For example, a District with four (4) Divisions may have a committee of eight (8) members, a District with three (3) Divisions may have a committee of six (6), while a District with five (5) Divisions may have five (5) or ten (10) members.

Per Protocol 9.0: District Campaigns and Elections, the DLC has an option to expand the committee with a member outside the District, but within the same region. The non-District member of the DLC can be either a voting or non-voting member but cannot represent a Division. This option is beneficial for Districts with four (4) Divisions to achieve five (5) voting members. Another benefit is having a perspective from outside the District during candidate interviews. For Districts that have recently reformed, appointing a past leader from the original District may provide additional insight for the committee.

A nominated candidate must receive a majority vote from the DLC. In the event of a tie, the voting members of the DLC must continue discussing and voting until they have broken the tie. The DLC Chair cannot serve as the tie-breaking vote.

The DLC Chair is recommended to be informed with the District Alignment Committee’s recommendations, specifically any additions or removals of Divisions. If a District Alignment Committee recommends adding or removing a Division in the upcoming program year, the DLC Chair needs to know the appropriate number of Division Directors to evaluate if the District council approves the alignment proposal.

The DLC Chair should ensure that nominations are open with enough time for the committee to seek and identify candidates for all elected roles, the candidates to submit their paperwork, schedule interviews, complete candidate evaluations, DLC voting, and submit the DLC report to the District Director (no later than six (6) weeks before the Annual Meeting of the District Council). The District Director must notify the District Council of the DLC report four (4) weeks before the annual District Council meeting. The two-week timeframe allows the District Director or DLC Chair to reconfirm the candidate’s willingness to be nominated, oversee website updates, and distribute candidate biographies.

## Identifying Candidates

The District Leadership Chair and committee's responsibilities are to identify, seek out, interview, and nominate qualified candidates for District elected roles. In addition to the elected roles per the District Administrative Bylaws, some Districts may decide to elect appointed roles such as District Public Relations Manager. In these instances, the DLC would also be responsible for nominating candidates for such roles. Reference the optional District operating procedures for guidance in filling both elected and appointed roles.

District leaders can be discovered while they are serving as club officers. An effective method for identifying District leaders is through mentoring by past District leaders. Some past leaders will suggest to their club officers to step up to District leadership roles of Area Director or Division Director. The Area Director's Club Visit Report is another tool that may be used to identify future leaders. Refer to the optional District operating procedures for suggested practices to find the next group of District leaders.

## Building a Leadership Legacy

Building a leadership legacy requires the District Leadership Committee to focus on recruiting and evaluating candidates for the District Director, Program Quality Director, and Club Growth Director roles. It may be a three-to-four-year commitment in serving the District and its members. It is recommended during the interview process that the DLC Chair and committee members are honest about time commitments for serving in the District leadership roles. The benefits of developing improved people skills and leadership skills while serving multiple years in District leadership is frequently confirmed by past District, Region, and International leaders.

To develop a leadership legacy, recruiting future District leaders is best accomplished year-round. Please refer to the specific qualifications for each District leader role when discussing next steps for emerging leaders. Role qualifications are found in the District Administrative Bylaws Article VII and on the Candidate Application form in the Elections Toolkit.

When a member understands the progression from Club Growth Director to Program Quality Director to District Director, the member can plan and adjust for their self-development. The multi-year commitment provides a cohesive team, excellence, and continuity in leadership.

It is not required that a District leader serve all consecutive years, and there is no guarantee they will be elected to the next role in the following year. There are advantages in leadership continuity and lessons learned that cascade from year to year. An important step in the interview process to develop a leadership legacy is to confirm candidates have read and understand the policies regarding District campaign communications, campaign endorsements, and violations.

A leadership legacy suggestion is to create a file of past Area and Division Directors and check in with them periodically on their leadership journey. This leadership file can be passed on to the next DLC Chair. The process of checking in with past Area and Division Directors can be accomplished year round. Special events, networking, and/or social events can be used to entice past leaders from the club, Area, and Division levels to consider District leader service. Please consider including Past District Directors, Past Region Advisors, Past International Directors, and Past International Presidents to assist with encouraging current leaders to step up to higher leadership roles.

The Club Growth Director (CGD) role is vital to the success of the District and achieving the District mission to build new clubs and support all clubs in achieving excellence. When a member submits their nomination form, consider allowing the candidate to shadow the current CGD. Please refer to the *Club Growth Director Handbook* for more details on recommended CGD committees. It is recommended all Division Directors serve on Club Growth committees.

# Interviewing Candidates

The interview process is best accomplished when the experience for both the committee and the candidate is positive. Serving in a District leadership role is a volunteer experience. Compassion and education are the best tools to build new leaders.

The DLC Chair and committee should decide on the interview length of time, the number of questions for each role, and coordinate schedules to maximize efficiency. A listing of possible candidate interview questions can be found in the Elections Toolkit under Candidate Showcase. Many Districts pass along previous interview questions from year to year. The District operating procedures is a good place to maintain and update the standard list of questions. Interviews of candidates by the DLC are not open to anyone beyond the candidate and the DLC members. All discussions of the DLC are confidential. Any member of the DLC may ask the candidate a question during an interview. DLC interviews may be conducted in person or online.

In the Elections Toolkit, there is a Candidate Evaluation Form the DLC members can complete. Once the interviews are completed, the Chair and the committee will discuss and finalize the DLC nomination report. If the Candidate Evaluation Form is used, it should remain confidential and be destroyed once the DLC work is complete.

When informing candidates of the committee's decision, the DLC Chair may provide them with feedback, without attributing the comments to a specific member of the DLC. It is advisable for the DLC Chair to notify each candidate orally and in writing of the decision. Some Districts have a standard script or letter used by DLC Chairs. Sample scripts are provided in this document.

## DLC Report

There are three different statuses for the DLC report:

- ▶ **Complete** – All requirements and deadlines have been met by the DLC including nominating the minimum number of candidates for each role.
- ▶ **Incomplete** – All requirements and deadlines have been met by the DLC. However, there are at least one or more roles that do not have the minimum number of candidates nominated. The incomplete report is valid. Any role that does not have the minimum number of candidates nominated will allow qualified and eligible floor candidates to run.
- ▶ **Invalid** – At least one requirement or deadline was not adhered to by the DLC. Invalid reports may be presented to the District Council as an advisory report at the discretion of the District Executive Committee. All candidates will run from the floor.

There is no specific format for the DLC report that is delivered to the District Director. The report must contain the nominated candidates for each role evaluated. The candidates who are not nominated will need to be provided to the District Director separately. This will allow the District Director to know who are the eligible candidates to run from the floor for roles that are complete on the DLC report.

## Floor Candidates

If the DLC report is incomplete or invalid, it is important to understand how the floor candidate process works. Floor candidates must declare their intent to run to the District Director no later than seven (7) days before the Annual Meeting of the District Council.

There are two categories of floor candidates:

- ▶ **Qualified Floor Candidate** is a candidate that meets the qualifications described in the District Administrative Bylaws.
- ▶ **Eligible Floor Candidate** is a candidate that has been evaluated by the DLC for the specific role for which they are running and meets the qualifications described in the District Administrative Bylaws.

All floor candidates must be qualified or eligible and have a signed and submitted District Leader Agreement and Release statement.

Floor candidates must be nominated by a member of the District Council or self-nominate if they are currently a member of the District Council. If the floor candidate is not present and the candidate has appointed a representative to speak on their behalf, the representative must not be a member of the District Executive Committee, a member of the DLC, Credentials Chair, or meeting official, as identified by the District Director. Any candidate may be nominated for a maximum of two roles at the annual District Council meeting.

The only situations in which floor candidates can run for District elections are:

- ▶ If a candidate was interviewed by the DLC, but not nominated for a certain role, the candidate may run from the floor for that specific role(s).
- ▶ If the DLC report is incomplete, qualified floor candidates may only run for a role(s) that has an insufficient number of nominated candidates.
- ▶ If the DLC report is invalid, all floor candidates (qualified and eligible) may run for any elective role(s).

# Scripts

## Optional Scripts for DLC Chair

### Nominated Candidate

Hello [First Name], thank you for speaking with me today. I would like to talk to you about your interview with the District Leadership Committee.

How do you think you interviewed? What were your strengths and how could you have improved?

<pause for the candidate's response>

I don't want to keep you in suspense. I'm happy to inform you that the District Leadership Committee has nominated you for the position of **[District Director/Program Quality Director/Club Growth Director/Division Director]**.

<Provide feedback for next steps and/or future growth>

Please keep these results confidential until the District Director has published the DLC report. Please confirm your acceptance of the nomination in writing by emailing the District Director at <email address>.

Congratulations and have a wonderful day.

### Non-nominated Candidate

Hello, thank you for speaking with me today. I would like to talk to you about your interview with the District Leadership Committee.

How do you think you interviewed? What were your strengths and how could you have improved?

<pause for response>

I'm sorry to inform you that the District Leadership Committee did not nominate you for the role of **[District Director/Program Quality Director/Club Growth Director/Division Director]**.

I'm willing to provide feedback on what you did well, and areas for improvements, either now or at a later time.

<pause for the candidate's response>

Please keep these results confidential until the District Director has published the DLC report. If you decide to run from the floor, please advise the District Director at <email address> no later than seven days before the Annual Meeting of the District Council.

When you notify me that you are running from the floor, you can continue receiving correspondence relevant to your candidacy.

We wish you the best of luck as you continue your Toastmasters journey.



[toastmasters.org](https://toastmasters.org)