

April 1976

# toastmaster



# TALKING ON TELEVISION



# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



## Where's the Manual?

There were two articles in the February, 1976, issue of *THE TOASTMASTER* that I particularly enjoyed. The first, which prompted me to pick up the magazine, was "A Professional Looks at Voice Control," by Al Bernsohn. As a student of singing, I picked up some good pointers about breath control and relaxing the vocal chords.

The second article was "The Spouse in the Toastmasters House," by June McMahan Roy. She certainly covered much of the trauma suffered by the Beginning Toastmaster's wife as her husband goes through the first phase of being a Toastmaster. She left out, however, the one I suffered most (and am still suffering): "Where's my manual?" usually shouted five minutes before he goes out the door to the meeting or on the morning of the day he's going to give a speech. My only good defense is to pretend total ignorance of its whereabouts, claiming, "I haven't seen it since last month. Did you leave it at the office?"

Toastmasters International and the magazine have done wonders for my husband's ability to communicate with more clarity, strength, and organization. Bless you all.

Nancy Wherry  
San Diego, California

## One More Time

It is not often one sees a letter from an English club member published in *THE TOASTMASTER*, but I felt I could not let this occasion pass without comment.

May I congratulate you and all the writers who contributed to the November,

1975, issue of this invaluable publication [Special Time Issue]. There is not one unnecessary or superfluous article in the whole issue, and I especially enjoyed the down-to-earth contribution by Dr. Frank Wagner. He has hit the nail on the head in many respects, and I shall make sure that every member of my own club reads it.

To my mind, "time" properly used is the backbone not only of Toastmasters, but of our whole living. No project, no matter how large or small, can be organized without proper thought being given to timing, and in 32 pages I feel that you have produced almost an encyclopedia on the subject.

Ronald Gosling  
Upper Heyford, England

## One for Yvonne

Congratulations for your fine December, 1975, cover showing tennis star Yvonne Goolagong, a woman and a winner.

Let's have more articles, pictures, and drawings for, by, and about the many women who have joined Toastmasters International.

Jeanette Nishimori  
Camarillo, California

## A Matter of Taste

I was glad to read Winston Pendleton's article, "Don't Risk the Risque," in the December issue of *THE TOASTMASTER*. I recently attended a district humorous speech contest in which two of the three speeches were definitely in poor taste. One dealt with new methods of carrying away human wastes; the other con-

cerned the problems of following a truck loaded with animal wastes too closely.

Three things amazed me about these speeches: (1) that they were given at all; (2) that they generated any laughter (it may have been of the nervous type); and (3) that they finished first and second in the competition.

Instructions to contest judges ask them to take into consideration poor-taste material and to downgrade speeches accordingly. If Toastmasters wishes to project a good image, then it should rigidly enforce the rules set up to maintain the image. It is one way we can discourage speeches which have no place in Toastmasters or anywhere else.

Len Elliott  
Auburn, Washington

*Toastmasters International consistently opposes use of any material in poor taste (see C&L Project 11).—Ed.*

## Sorry, Wrong Number!

Your printing the article, "It Takes Two to Telephone," [January, 1976] was most inappropriate.

Allowing our magazine to be used as a forum for an individual's petty gripes and snide views is in marked contrast to the standard of excellence set by the usual edifying and constructive articles that appear in *THE TOASTMASTER*. The author's personal problems have not been sanctioned by the effect of national dissemination.

John H. Ross  
San Jose, California

*Apparently, you don't get the same kind of callers we do.—Ed.*

"Letters to the Editor" are printed on the basis of their general reader interest and constructive suggestions. If you have something to say that may be of interest to other Toastmasters, send it to us. All letters are subject to editing for reasons of space and clarity and must include the writer's name and address.

**TOASTMASTERS INTERNATIONAL** is a non-profit, educational organization of Toastmasters clubs throughout the world. First Toastmasters club established October 22, 1924. Toastmasters International was organized October 4, 1930 and incorporated December 19, 1932.

A Toastmasters club is an organized group, meeting regularly, which provides its members a professionally-designed program to improve their abilities in communication and to develop their leadership and executive potential. The club meetings are conducted by the members themselves, in an atmosphere of friendliness and self-improvement. Members have the opportunity to deliver prepared speeches and impromptu talks, learn parliamentary procedure, conference and committee leadership and participation techniques, and then to be evaluated in detail by fellow Toastmasters.

Each club is a member of Toastmasters International. The club and its members receive services, supplies, and continuing guidance from World Headquarters, 2200 N. Grand Ave., Santa Ana, California, U.S.A. 92711.





Dr. Ralph C. Smedley  
Founder, 1878-1965

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*So you think you know how to speak in front of any audience? Well, think again. Speaking to a television audience poses a whole new set of problems. And when you face the camera and the red light goes on, you'd better be ready. (Cover and inside photographs taken for KABC-TV by Lon Harding.)*

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# Turn On Those Lights

by George C. Scott, DTM

International President



It has been said that the only book some people will read about Toastmasters will be you, the member. How you act, what you say, and how you say it is a reflection of your Toastmasters experience.

Those people who knew you before you joined Toastmasters have probably noticed a change taking place in you. You are more sure of yourself, speak more effectively, and generally radiate a positive feeling as a result of your club activity. I liken this reflection of success to an experience I enjoyed last December.

It was a dark, cold night. There was a low cloud cover and all

signs pointed to some snow falling before morning. I boarded a small six passenger commuter plane to fly back home after a long day of business meetings. As I looked out the window of the plane, I could see the systematic flash of the white strobe light positioned on the end of the wing. Each time the light flashed, the area around it filled with light.

The small plane lifted off the runway and gradually climbed up into the cloud layer. As we were flying through the clouds a most beautiful phenomenon began to take place. It was actually snowing in the clouds. When the strobe flashed its eerie light each individual snowflake reflected back a small, delicate, sparkling portion of that flash of light. As far as the flash reached, the snowflakes reflected back their blue-white light, like a shower of diamonds in the sky. This beautiful sight continued until the pilot switched off the strobe lights. Then just as suddenly as it began it was gone.

Like the snowflakes, we are but a reflection of our inner self. Many people tend to walk about with their lights flashing, casting a warm and friendly glow upon all they come in contact with, while others seem to have their lights turned off most of the time. Toastmasters should be "turned on" people.

Ours is a very unique organization. We are provided with the finest in communication and leadership training and are given the opportunity to grow and develop in the friendly and helpful environment of a Toastmasters club. We are a growing organization equipped with people wishing to grow in it. Unfortunately, many tend to forget what Toastmasters can really do, not just for us but for the communities in which we live.

An organization such as ours is of vital importance to each and every community that seeks to better itself and its citizens. We often, they need the communication and leadership abilities our members possess. All they need is someone to tell them about it. It's up to us to do just that.

Turn on your lights!

With the help of certain Toastmasters programs designed for use in the community (the Community Contact Team, Speaking Bureaus, Speechcraft, and Youth Leadership) you can make a valuable contribution to your community and the people in it. This involvement not only provides you with an opportunity to put all the things you have been learning at your club meetings into use, but also brings increased community awareness of the Toastmasters program and your club.

When the people in your community find out about the Toastmasters program and see what it has done for you and your fellow members, they'll want to join. The result? Your club's membership will increase, new clubs will form, and your local Toastmasters experience will improve immensely.

Your Toastmasters activities should reflect upon everyone you meet. Let your light shine before one and all so they may see the benefits you have received and, thus, want to participate and take advantage of the same opportunities to grow.

You'll never know how far that flash of light will reach the crowd of people that will pass through your life. People are as individual and different as snowflakes. The Toastmasters program can enlighten the life of every person, but the light must emanate from you.

Keep flashing! □



When you find yourself facing a television camera with the red light on, will you be able to give a good account of yourself? You will . . . if you take the advice of this television professional.

# Talking On Television

by  
**David  
Nowinson**

So you know how to speak in front of an audience. But did you know that speaking to a television audience poses a whole new set of problems? Your friends, loved ones, and business associates will be watching. Consequently, you'll want to give a good account of yourself and not appear like a "boob" on the "tube."

Presumably, you'll be talking about your club, business, or profession, a controversial subject on which you have strong opinions, or on any topic in which you have some expertise. You may be a guest on a panel show, be interviewed by the program host, or find yourself delivering a rebuttal to an editorial voiced by the television station representative.

Whatever the case may be, when making your arrangements for the talk, find out how much time you'll have. Electronic media are pretty rigid about time, often programmed to the second. Therefore, the minutes assigned to you are not flexible. Whether you have three or five or twenty minutes, stay within your time limit.

When you talk to the television camera, you're talking to one person, however multiplied at the other end. Your viewers

believe the monotony. But you may find you have just one camera on you. Don't keep your eyes continually glued to it.

There's some prejudice in the medium against unrelieved, lengthy "talking heads." That's why in filmed news you will often see the film cut away from the speaker to various background visuals—the scene nearby, some facet of what he's talking about, the audience reaction—even while the speaker's voice continues to be heard before cutting back to him.

Television is an entertainment medium. It calls for showmanship. However serious your subject, you can still be entertaining. That begins with your attitude. It means having enthusiasm, animation, and being honestly interested in your subject in order to interest your viewers. Your enthusiasm will be transmitted to them.

Consider the weather. Unless it's extremely unusual, it's generally a pretty dull subject. People want to know temperature and elements so they can tell if they must carry umbrellas, wear trench coats or warm clothing, figure on snow or icy streets while driving, or get set to dive into a storm cellar. But a man who provides weather news on a Los

at the receiving end normally consist of one or two persons in each home. Keep this one-on-one identification in mind. Don't shout at him (you're not in a coliseum). Speak to him as if you were speaking to a friend at home.

## **Don't Stare**

It's unnatural to stare at the camera during the entire session. Drop your head or your eyes as you would if talking to a friend of yours in person. It's disconcerting to have someone stare at you for three minutes or more. Be natural.

In some productions there will be multiple television cameras, offering different angles on what the viewer sees (close-ups, medium shots, profile views), because the human eye tires of watching the same view at length. Variation re-







by tossing in some extemporaneous wordage, and by using the appropriate gesture.

If you must consult a script or notes, your eyes should not be continually fastened to them. Your viewers must feel that you're talking, not reading to them. While consulting a script or notes is not the most desirable practice, if needed you can capitalize on this by taking the audience into your confidence and saying, "I've jotted down seven keys to reaching our goal. The first . . .," as you exhibit a card or page from your notes.

What do you do with your hands? Forget them. After all, you don't worry about them when you're talking with your friend at home. However, people who speak on television for the first time are sometimes self-conscious about their hands, uncertain if they should hang down at their sides, be held behind their backs, or clasped in front. Whatever is natural for you is right. If you normally use your hands to gesture, why not do so here? Your viewers are not too conscious of your hands, anyway . . . not if you have something to say.

That "something" is enhanced, of course, if your audience can relate personally to what you're saying. Your viewer is interested in himself—what's in it for him. The more you can deliver ideas that will be useful, pertinent, and profitable, the more intently he will watch and appreciate you.

### The YOU Approach

One useful method of relating to your audience, gaining their empathy, and getting them participating by feeling a self-interest, is to use the *YOU* approach.

*"Uncle Sam has two hundred dollars for you."*

*"Are you afraid to eat certain foods?"*

*"Here's what you can do to protect yourself."*

*"Is your home properly protected?"*

Does your talk have a strong opening sentence? That's important. Too often, speakers begin in rambling fashion with an extraneous joke or a preamble that doesn't remotely touch upon their subject. A good talk has a beginning, a middle, and an end. Your opening remark should arrest attention. It must get your

viewers wanting to hear more and not strolling to the refrigerator for a beer or turning the dial to another channel.

Wouldn't you stay to hear more after these opening lines?

*"If you're looking for a job, I can give you one."*

*"Are your children getting the best education for today's world?"*

*"I'm here to expose the Fagin who's behind the inflation that's picking your pocket."*

Humor is acceptable if it's relevant to your talk, helping you to make a point rather than being dragged in from left field. An apt, humorous expression lightens a serious speech, but does not detract from its unity. The trouble with too many jokes in speeches is that they're a digression, interrupting a train of thought and a situation of receptivity. You may leave them with a laugh instead of an idea, emotion, or call to action.

Your talk should never include any off-color humor. Even people who may chuckle at risqué material in a dialogue between movie celebrities or from a comic will consider you in bad taste if you venture into this stag humor.

### Do They Like You?

A laugh directed at yourself is a good icebreaker. It indicates that you're human, not pompous, and makes you more likeable to the viewers. And if they like you, they'll be more responsive to what you're saying.

The central theme of your talk should be consistent, sticking to your subject, but with enough variation of expression to keep from boring with monotonous repetition. Like all art, a speech involves repetition and variation. But when varying your comments to new but related material, try to make a smooth transition.

*"So that's how such a club benefits its members. But if that were all, it would be a pretty limited, even selfish, project. This club is not an elite, isolated group. It's part of the community and extends its benefits to our entire community—to you and you and you. Let me tell you how."*

When you're involved in a rebuttal to a station editorial, remember that the audience is loyal to that station. Don't "take-on" the station. You may "turn-

off" the audience. Use finesse, and cushion the blow you're delivering, possibly with something like this: *Normally I agree with your views, but this time . . .* Or, *"I find many of your points valid, but there's one that bothers me."*

If you're a guest on a panel show or being interviewed, forget the camera. Don't look at it. Look at the host or whoever's directing a question at you. Ignore the camera.

You're an individual with your own style and delivery. But remember that your pace and phrasing are important when talking on television. If you have eight minutes of speech and only five minutes in which to give it, don't try to get it all in at breakneck speed, like some commercials do. Boil it down to a comfortable length that fits into your assigned time allotment.

### Watch the Pros

Good phrasing with proper emphasis can be tremendously impressive. Watch and listen to speakers on television who stir and move you with ideas you remember. Notice their phrasing, the use they make of pauses for emphasis. Observe what makes them effective. Paul Harvey, Harry Reasoner, David Brinkley, and Alex Dreier are among those with the ability to give their words a sense of urgency, a sense of importance.

End your talk forcefully, with no apology for taking your viewers' time, by recapping the note on which you've begun, by calling for action, or by inviting your audience to join you in whatever position you have taken.

And most important of all, as you face the camera and the red light goes on, don't be afraid. It only looks like a camera. It's really your friend—sitting back in his overstuffed chair in the living room—waiting to hear what you have to tell him. □

A television and radio news writer, David Nowinson has written speeches for educators, newsmen, and politicians, and has taught college classes in news writing. He has recently retired, after spending 21 years with the American Broadcasting Company.



*In these days of rising prices and high unemployment, more men and women than ever are asking themselves one question . . .*

# How to Keep a Head (Yours)

by Vivian Buchan

Of course you're eager to get ahead (or you wouldn't be reading all those books that tell you how). But in these days when many men and women who never expected to lose their jobs are finding themselves hunting for ones that aren't there, it's more important than ever to learn how to keep your head when others around you are rolling.

## **Are You the One?**

If layoffs are a possibility in your company, what can you do to keep from being one of those who go? In some cases, nothing. If your department is being phased out, or your company is merging with another or closing down entirely, there's not much you can do about it. But if it's a matter of cutting back the number of employees due to automation, loss of contracts or federal funding, or a shift in production policy, how does management determine which employee to keep and which to fire?

To find the answer, I interviewed several personnel directors and asked, "When it becomes necessary to lay off some of your employees, who are the ones to go first and who do you keep as long as possible?"

For the most part, they fell back on the old platitudes found in the "how-to-get-ahead" books that have been more or less scorned by people able to pick and choose their jobs when the supply of employable persons was less than the demand. But today that situation has changed. Unemployment is becoming a real threat to people who've never worried about the security of their jobs.

All the advice the personnel directors offered could be tied into one neat bundle: Think like management thinks and then act that way.

Employees are classified into three categories: 1) those who are dispensable; 2) those who are indispensable; and 3) those who rate higher than others of equal ability and performance because of certain intangibles.

Nothing is more important to management than teamwork. Consequently, "non-team" employees fall into the first category. And they're not hard to spot. One type is the fellow who's late every morning and leaves early every night. He chats constantly with the secretary, stands at the water cooler

telling jokes, and spends 20 minutes of his 15-minute coffee break. He's the butt of good-humored jokes about his happy-go-lucky attitude, and when someone asks, "Bob, what are you going to do when all your sick leave is gone that you've used up going to ball games and fishing?" no one laughs louder than Bob himself.

## **The Critical Employee**

Faultfinders and grumblers are "non-team" employees, too, because they lower office morale. There's only one kind of critic management tolerates, and that's the fellow who offers suggestions on ways to improve production or upgrade efficiency. He doesn't keep nagging about when his ideas are going to be put into action. If they are, fine; if they aren't, it's okay.

On the other hand, the faultfinder who grumbles about how much more work he's putting out than Jack or Marjorie or John and calls attention to every little error others make is someone management can do very well without. The martyr is another "non-team" person who does his job well enough, but tells everyone how much more he's doing



the others, resents having to work time, and mutters about how "some people" won't keep their desks neat or their work fast enough. His work may be satisfactory, but he's another one who upgrades office morale.

In this category, too, is the woman who does what's expected, but is reluctant to do anything more. She's not really a clock-watcher, but she's never late and never stays a minute past quitting time. She's competent, but not brilliant. She's not exactly tarnished, but she's not shining either. She may not be one of the first to go, but she'll never be it to the indispensable category.

### Employee Performance

Levels of performance apply to any job, whether it's turning a screw in a factory or preparing a brochure to present to the City Council for that big consulting job. Management is particularly concerned about production. After all, that's what business is all about. So the employee who needs constant supervision or prodding, makes too many errors, or asks questions about things he should find out or know himself isn't one of the valued employees.

These are typical of the "non-team" employees management gets rid of first. Who are the ones they prize? One personnel director said, "The employee who hates to lose is the one who begins by learning what's expected of him and then keeps learning all he can about his work. He knows the purpose of his job, the importance of it to the firm, and the way his work affects his co-workers. He keeps up with what's going on, studies our competitors' products, and understands our goals. Naturally, he's not going to use all he knows, but he will show up in his production."

Another personnel manager said, "It doesn't hurt to show us that you're not just marking time on the job. If we know a man intends to make his job with us a long-time career, we're impressed. It's the man who considers his job as something to tide him over until a better one turns up who's the one who won't give his job with us very long."

Although new and younger workers often think "the last man hired is the first man fired," it's not necessarily so.

Young workers have a lot going for them, because not as much is expected of them.

The manager of a large publishing house said, "Young men and women have a chance to shine. If they show only the average know-how of the older employees, we consider them somewhat exceptional. But we don't care too much for eager-beavers. New employees should play it cool at first and not come on too strong. Even if they know more than the old hands, it doesn't pay to start criticizing them. The guy they criticize could be my brother-in-law."

Management believes production is the name of the game. The indispensable employee knows this, so he produces. The advice of another personnel officer in a large factory was, "The more a man knows about his job and the more jobs he can handle, the more valuable he is to us. If it comes to where we have to consolidate two jobs into one, the man who can handle both is the one we'll keep. So I'd say that eagerness to learn and the ability to acquire new skills impress me a great deal. I'll keep my eye on an employee like that and see that he's given every chance for a promotion."

### Know Your Machinery

Automation has been replacing people for some time, and it's going to replace more of them in the future. Those who resist it and complain that machines are taking jobs away from people will be proven correct, because it will be their jobs that the machines take over. When automation is inevitable, there's only one thing to do: Get with it. The person who balks at having to learn how to handle sophisticated electronic equipment loses points with management. The woman who says, "Hey, that sounds like a terrific time- and money-saving operation. Show me how to handle that new electronic typewriter, will you?" gets gold stars on her record and impresses the management, even if she isn't going to be in charge of that particular piece of machinery.

Now we come to the third category (the largest of the three), where most employees are. When job performance is equal, attitudes commendable, and

future potential more or less predictable because of past record, it becomes an evaluation of the intangibles that make up a personality.

What intangibles tip the scales? Neatness in appearance and work habits? A smiling face? Interest in the personal problems of co-workers? Appreciation of small favors extended by those both above and below him in the hierarchy? All of these attributes upgrade office or shop morale, improve the image of the company, and contribute to the prized teamwork.

### A Real Friend

Dale Carnegie's suggestions for making friends and influencing others are still valid and appreciated by management. Getting the boss to consider you a staunch and loyal friend is a valuable asset, too. Apple-polishing, of course, will not make it. Trying to be the "Boss's Pet" boomerangs just as it did in school when you were trying to be the "Teacher's Pet." But there are subtle ways of gaining the respect and friendship of your immediate superior.

Refusing to gossip about the boss or his family, keeping quiet about directives that may not be in accord with your own ideas, and being present and prepared when you're needed and absent when you're not needed or wanted are some of the methods that will keep the friendship of your boss after you've gained it.

Knowing how to get ahead isn't as difficult as learning how to keep ahead once you've gotten there. But, according to management, there's nothing really mysterious about becoming that indispensable employee who is valued by his co-workers and the front office alike. It's just a matter of thinking as management thinks and then acting that way. □

Vivian Buchan received her bachelor's degree in English from Coe College in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and her master's in English from the University of Illinois. A freelance writer, she is a former member of the faculty of the University of Iowa, where she taught expository writing, public speaking, and literature.



*Authors have written about it, philosophers have studied it, and many self-proclaimed "lovers" have claimed to have mastered it. But do you know . . .*

# How to Handle a Woman

by Nancy R. More



*How to handle a woman—  
Mark me well, I will tell you, sir,  
The way to handle a woman  
Is to love her, simply love her,  
Merely love her, love her, love her.*

Thus a confused King Arthur ponders the advice of his sagacious friend, Merlin, in Lerner and Loewe's popular musical, *Camelot*. Unfortunately, "simply loving" Guenevere isn't the answer to Arthur's problem with her; and not only is Merlin's reputation for good advice tarnished, but Guenevere runs off to a convent and Arthur goes to war!

We may not be kings and queens romping about kingdoms in which the "rain may never fall till after sundown," but we find ourselves at times, nonetheless, feeling uncomfortable with women who have been newly introduced into an environment that has been primarily male-populated in the past.

This possible discomfort is probably not due to any suppressed wish that we go back to the past and eliminate the problem of dealing with women in male organizations altogether. Despite the current fashion of nostalgia, I find that most men and women like the changes.

The discomfort lies, primarily, in the adjustment that both sexes make to this new situation—a "fine tuning," if you will, that makes everyone feel at ease.

Toastmasters has, of course, undergone this change. Our organization is now co-ed, and we find ourselves having to adjust, to an extent. As part of the freshmen class, women Toastmasters may wonder how the organization will respond to them; and as members of the upper class, male Toastmasters may wonder how the addition of women will change their clubs.

When I joined our local group this year, I was the second woman in the club. There are five of us now. Although the men outnumber us four to one, we have discovered that our male colleagues are receptive to our membership and supportive of our "frontier spirit."

Still, there are times even in our open-minded group when the men seem unsure of their treatment of us. They seem to be uncomfortable at times while introducing us, or hesitant to tell a favorite joke, or wondering if they were too hard or too easy on us. They *want* to be fair and open-minded, but they don't always know how to convey these feelings.

As a woman taking advantage of the new opportunities brought on by feminism, I find that women are frequently divided themselves on the issue of how they want to be treated. As a result, it is difficult to set any hard and fast rules on how to handle a woman. Yet some do's and don'ts can be formulated. While these ideas may not be *totally* representative of women's feelings, they do point out many generally-accepted concepts. In addition, while these suggestions may make your feminist members more comfortable in your group, they will certainly not offend any non-feminist members if they are followed.

*Avoid cliches.* This is usually a good suggestion anyway, but when a Toastmaster avoids cliches about the sexes, he or she really shows taste. At a recent club meeting, the female speaker and I both groaned a bit when she was introduced as being "sugar and spice and everything nice." Some women I know are also "snakes and snails and puppy-dogs' tails!" Let's not overlook the possibility; just because some women are nice doesn't mean they *all* are. Some women are likely to resent such patronizing labels as "sugar and spice."





ell no jokes that categorize women funny because they're women. Toss the mother-in-law, nagging wife, blond material, and anything else suggests that women as a sex are one to stupidity, nastiness, or irresponsibility.

ever apologize for language because you are "ladies present." If the language is honest enough for men, it should be honest enough for women. Some men suspect that women "want all the quality, but don't want to give up the respect they feel they're entitled to as ladies." Not true! Tastes vary—among women and men. Language used in speeches should be chosen carefully so it best communicates your message and avoids the breakdown of language suited for men as opposed to language suited for women.

Be aware that prejudice exists in all areas in some ways. To recognize that possibility is to strengthen your objectivity. An interesting example of the subtle prejudices which have an influence on us was mentioned in Marc Fasteau's book, *The Male Machine* (McGraw-Hill, 1974). Mr. Fasteau points out the constant: "Women who are good at orga-

nization, follow-up, and detail are assumed to have *only* that ability and are described as having compulsive, tidy, and therefore limited minds; the same abilities in a man make him a prime candidate for controller of the company. On the other hand, inattention to detail, an indication of creativity in men, is only a sign of flightiness and lack of staying power in a woman. What is admiringly described as diplomacy or bureaucratic savvy in a man is denigrated as feminine cunning in a woman. A gift for blunt, articulate analysis gives a man the valuable reputation of having a mind like a steel trap; it turns a woman into a 'pushy broad.'

Avoid referring to women as "girls" or "gals." Such words are casual and diminish females. Girls are very young females, as boys are very young males. To refer to a group of men as "boys" gives a casual flavor to the description, as it does with women described as "girls." Since men are usually called "men" rather than "boys," the same should be true for women. "Ladies" is all right as long as "gentlemen" would be your word-of-choice if the group were male. Never substitute "ladies," "girls," or "gals" for women unless you would substitute "gentlemen," "boys," or "guys" for men.

We've come a long way since the days of Arthur and Camelot, but we're not much further away from Merlin's advice as we discover ourselves in new relationships with the opposite sex. Organizations such as Toastmasters are working on it, however, and our understanding of one another is being continually enhanced.

People relating to each other as *people*, rather than men or women separately, moves us closer to a more humane environment in which we profit from all the possibilities of life. □

Nancy R. More is a freelance writer and is a member of Greysolon Club 217-6 in Duluth, Minnesota.



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**A detailed look at how to find and file those funny stories by one of America's greatest humorists.**

# Now That I've Found It. W

**by Winston K. Pendleton**



“Where do you find the funny stories that you tell?” That question is asked more than any other whenever I speak before a group of Toastmasters. Another question usually follows: “How do you keep track of your stories? What sort of filing system do you use?”

Those two questions go together. Why? Because there is little use in searching out and collecting humorous stories if you don't take proper care of them and if you can't find the one you need when you need it.

Recently, I was chatting with Art Campbell, one of the writers and stars of the *Hee-Haw* television show. I asked him where he found his jokes and stories. He said, “They are everywhere. There are nine million stories. There's no limit. There aren't any new ones—there aren't any old ones, either. An old joke is one you've heard too many times and a new joke is one you haven't heard yet.”

He's right. The answer is, “everywhere.”

I know that answer doesn't help much when you are looking for a funny story to use in a speech you are going to make next Thursday night. To take care of that, you must follow this one rule: “Keep your eyes and ears open. File them and file them.” Yes, keep your eyes open . . . and look!

Once in awhile, you might witness an actual happening or hear a casual remark that can grow into a great humorous story. But those occasions



# What Do I Do With It?

...rare. If you depended on personal experiences for your humor, you could be waiting a long, long time for your belly laugh.

On the other hand, your everyday world is filled with laugh-getting jokes and stories. Just keep your eyes open. Look in your daily newspaper. With few exceptions, newspapers use jokes and funny stories as fillers or as regular features. Cartoons from the comic pages can also be a rich source. If you look closely, you might be surprised to find how many comic strip situations are built around jokes and funny situations that can be told as well as illustrated. Magazines of all kinds, but especially company house organs, make good hunting grounds. Many of them run humor pages or columns.

Humor reference books abound. Some are arranged like dictionaries, with the stories listed by category and cross-referenced. Every speaker should have two or three of these books at his elbow, along with his books of serious quotations.

Next, keep your ears open. Listen!

## Listen . . . and Learn

Listen to other speakers. You not only can pick up some funny stories this way, but you can see how the crowd actually reacted to them.

Listen to your friends as you go about your daily work. I can't remember a day when somebody hasn't told me a joke of some kind. Be a good listener. You have probably heard most of them, but

now and then you run into something worthwhile.

Don't overlook radio and television. The airways are alive with people who are trying to be funny. Some are and some are not. But the material is there. Some of it is excellent, often coming from the typewriters of some of the highest paid gag writers in the world.

Yes, the world is filled with humor. You'll find all you can possibly use if you keep your eyes and ears open.

Where to find it is the easy question. The important question—the big problem—is, "What are you going to do with it after you find it?"

For example, if you should overhear a child's clever remark or see a funny situation, or run across a usable joke in the newspaper or catch something on television, what do you do? How are you going to collect it? How are you going to adapt it to your own individual needs? How are you going to tell it? And how are you going to file it so you can find it when you want it?

Probably no two speakers follow the same plan. Whatever system you set up must fit your own needs and your personal work habits. So the best answer I might give to that question certainly wouldn't cover every person and every possibility. But over more than twenty years of earning a living as a public speaker and humorist, I have developed a step-by-step procedure that works for me—and it might work for you.

These are the steps to follow toward building a great repertoire of humorous stories.

1. *Grab the story.* The moment you hear or see something funny (or even something that can be developed into a story), write it down. Get that punch line while it is fresh in your mind, before the laughter has died away. Catch it while it is still alive. Always carry something to write on. (Don't get caught with nothing more than a matchbook cover.) Go prepared. I use 3 × 5 cards. (You will never find me without a supply in my pocket.) You don't need the details of the build-up of the story as long as you get the punch line.

## The Cutting Tool

So much for the stories you see and hear. What about those you find in newspapers and magazines? I have a darling little pocket knife that a friend gave me—as thin as a half dollar. I prize it highly because when it opens up, there is a tiny pair of scissors. I wouldn't dream of cutting up an old magazine in the dentist's office, but I do find that my little cutting tool comes in mighty handy. You do it your way—I'll do it mine!

No matter how you do it, you now have a funny story in its raw form, like a potato freshly dug out of the ground. And like a raw potato, your story isn't much use until you cook it and season it.

2. *Your grab-bag file.* Once you have your story on paper, put it in your grab-bag file. Don't let it drift around in your wallet or the pocket of that sport coat



# Spring into Action

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**Spring into Action** will recognize those clubs with membership gains in April and May, as well as put special emphasis on club publicity in company or community publications. Here's just a sample of what **Spring into Action** can do for your club:

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- Clubs with a net gain of five members will receive a **Spring into Action** Membership Growth Ribbon, which can be placed on the club banner.
- Clubs whose publicity efforts have paid off with articles in a company or community newspaper or magazine will be eligible for a special award certificate.

Why not make the most of this special time of the year by offering to share your Toastmasters experience with someone else. **Spring into Action** . . . and help someone grow.

you won't be wearing again until next summer. Right now, put it with the other raw stories you have been gathering. This should be in a handy place. A friend of mine uses an old cigar box in his desk drawer. My own grab-bag is a file folder labeled "Stories to Save."

Put your notes where they are easy to reach—but don't forget them.

3. *Rewrite the story.* Yes, rewrite the story in your own words. That's your next step. Change it to blend with your daily activities. Then begin telling it. Tell it to friends and acquaintances. Tell it to your fellow Toastmasters. Tell it to members of your family. Each time you tell it, try to improve it. Each time you improve it, write down the new version and destroy the old. After half a dozen tellings, you will have your story in shape for its final resting place—your master file of laugh-getting stories.

## The Rewrite Process

Let's take an actual example and follow it through this process. Several years ago, I was listening to my car radio. A couple of disc jockeys were chatting about a suburban neighborhood. One said, "I hear they have a pretty good fire department out there. The other day a house caught fire, and instead of it burning down in thirty minutes,

they were able to keep the fire going for three hours." Not too funny, but there seemed to be possibilities. So I made a mental note of it.

When I got back to my office, I put it in my grab-bag. A week later, I pulled it out and wrote it like this: "They have a real sharp fire department in Laketown. The other night a house caught fire. It would have burned down in an hour, if it hadn't been for those firemen. They're good. They were able to keep it going for three hours."

When I tried it out on a few of my friends, I found I had the makings of a good story—but I felt it needed more work. Each time I told it, I changed it a bit. After a dozen tellings, I slipped it into one of my speeches. It was a pretty good laugh-getter, so I worked on it some more. After about ten times, I knew I had a real winner. Now it was ready for the final step in my filing system—my master file.

4. *Your master file.* Once you have a story that you have told and retold and tested and perfected, put it in your master file. That can be a loose-leaf book or several books, or it might be a single file-folder.

My master file is rather large. I have a file drawer with hanging folders. One

is labeled *OPENERS* for those stories I like to tell during the first minute or two of my speech. Another is marked *CLOSERS*. The rest of the folders are alphabetical.

Each story is typed on a separate sheet. It is given a category and a number for cross reference. It works like this: In the upper left hand corner of the page about the firemen, you find this: *FIREMEN-1*. (The 1 is for cross reference. If I ever have another story about firemen, it will be listed as *FIREMEN-2*.)

In another part of my file, I have three stories listed under the heading *EXCITEMENT*. On the bottom part of the page that says *EXCITEMENT-1*, you now find this cross reference: "See *FIREMEN-1*." (You never saw such excitement.) The story is also listed on the page titled *HOMETOWN-1* (when you are looking for stories to tell about the crazy little town you live in).

With my simple but workable system, I can find stories about nearly any subject in the world—stories that have been tested and have stood under fire before real live audiences.

## The Final Version

Incidentally, as I work to put the finishing touches on this article, I find that the final version of my *FIREMEN*-story goes like this:

"Let me tell you about some of the excitement we have in Windermere. I think the most excitement I ever saw was last summer. One night, the packinghouse caught fire. It caught fire about nine o'clock. Ordinarily that thing would have burned down in about an hour, but we've got a volunteer fire department. They were there in about ten minutes. Those boys are good. They kept that thing going until five o'clock in the morning."

There's one you can clip. But be sure to change it before you add it to your master file. □

Winston K. Pendleton is one of America's best known humorous after dinner speakers. A former recipient of Toastmasters International's Communication and Leadership Awards, he is a frequent contributor to THE TOASTMASTER



# Get the Support You Need

by J.A. Sweeney

Club 2561-36

A few short months ago, membership in our club (CSC 2561-36 in Falls Church, Virginia) numbered 14. But something was wrong. We discovered that the same six or seven Toastmasters were the only ones showing up for each and every meeting. Even though we re-assign their assignments from week to week, we realized that it would not be long before these dedicated Toastmasters would drift away because of their monotony. We also realized that if this happened, our club would also fade away.

Fourteen members are all right, if you want to schedule a basketball game. But to hold a good Toastmasters meeting, you need more than that. For example, a major league baseball team only had fourteen players and, due to illness, injury, or other circumstances, the team was reduced to six or seven players for a scheduled game, the ball game would be over before it started.

We decided that we did not want our club to fade away, but rather to become more active, not only in Toastmasters International, but within our company (Computer Sciences Corporation) as well. How could we accomplish this?

- *By thinking.* What is our problem? (Insufficient members.) How shall we overcome this problem? (Get more members.) How shall we get more members?
- *By listening* to others with whom

we have daily contact on our job—by listening to them speak.

- *By speaking* to those same individuals and inviting them to attend one of our meetings so they could become more familiar with our program.

Toastmasters had already provided us with the proper tools; it was now up to us to use those tools properly.

We decided to approach the management of Computer Sciences Corporation for their support of our club. We invited them to attend several meetings and to even act as judges of our speech contests. When we finally suggested that we receive some support from management, they were very pleased to accept our

invitation, saying that they would have liked to have done so sooner, but had never been asked. *They had never been asked!*

Has this ever happened to you? Have you been putting off inviting someone to your club meetings because you thought the other Toastmaster would do it? If so, don't put it off any longer. Ask someone today.

When the management of our company visited our club meeting, they enjoyed our programs and recognized the potential of employee-customer presentations. We were requested to submit a budget for the coming year, did so, and it was approved.

In our budget, we stated that we intended to double our membership within a year. Today, not even a year after we submitted that budget, we now have 26 members and have increased our goal to 40. Do you think we'll make it? We do. Our average attendance is now a minimum of 17, plus guests.

We have put notices of our meetings on all our bulletin boards and guests are always invited. In addition, we have also managed to obtain audio-video replay equipment through the support of the company. Our Toastmasters now, thanks to our company, can see themselves as others do. You see, we are trying to improve our image as we improve our speech.

Today, we have a lot more than full company support. We have enthusiasm. □

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# Reaching for a Goal

by

**Chuck Allen, DTM**

While driving home after attending our District Fall Conference, my wife and I were discussing a point I had made during the educational session. In talking about problems facing Toastmasters, I had stated that a high percentage of Toastmasters drop out before completing their sixth manual speech. Mary, who has been a Toastmistress for about six years, flippantly commented that Toastmasters were poor communicators.

"How so?" I asked.

"You haven't convinced the newer member that he or she loses all the benefits Toastmasters has to offer by dropping out," she answered.

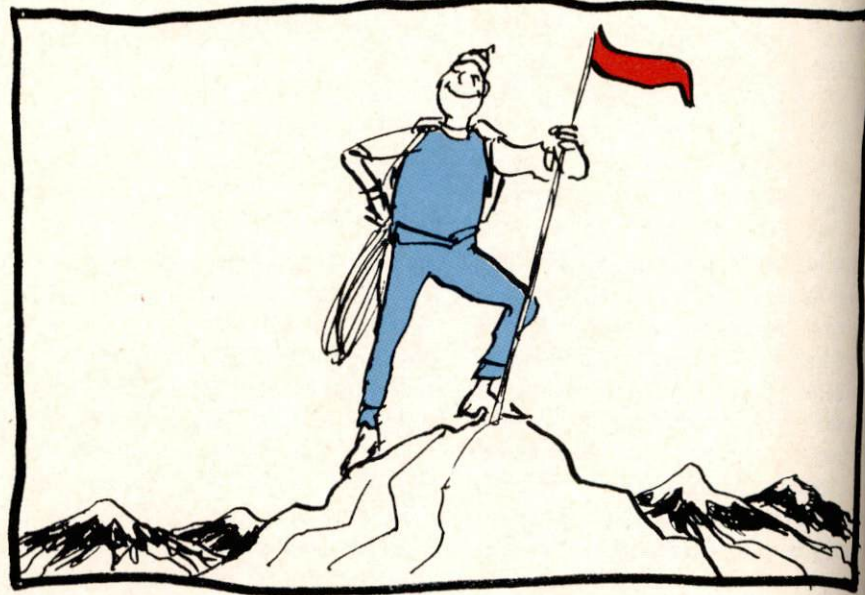
## "Esteem" Needs

We then got into discussing ways to keep Toastmasters active, such as satisfying their needs for rewards and recognition (often called the "esteem" needs). While we were talking, our 11-year-old, Scott, had been quietly listening in the back seat. Suddenly, he leaned forward and said, "Daddy, I know how to solve your problem."

Without hesitating, I asked, "What's your idea?"

"Your members need to set goals for themselves," he replied.

From the mouths of babes oft times come gems, I thought to myself. "Where did you hear that?" I asked. He went on



to tell me that his teacher had talked to them about setting goals in life and their importance to getting things done.

Much has been said and done in Toastmasters to encourage long-range planning, including the setting of intermediate goals and long-range objectives. And that's a good idea. Without detracting from long-range planning for districts, areas, and clubs, the next logical step must be to encourage or motivate the members to set definitive individual goals. Toastmasters International cannot, and should not, attempt to pressure members to do this. The individual member must become convinced it is the best way to gain the self-improvement he or she sought in joining Toastmasters. In my opinion, our most pressing need today is to sell the membership on the effectiveness of goal-setting.

To illustrate the process of goal-setting, a simple example may suggest

a workable method. When asked why he climbed to the summit of a very high mountain, a mountain climber said, "Because it was there." We may never know exactly why he wanted to climb that mountain, because each individual has a unique set of internal stimuli. In other words, what "turns-him-on" may not excite, persuade, or motivate another person to do the same thing. It is almost certain, however, that our mountain climber *set a goal to reach the top.*

## What's a Goal?

The mountain climber's example serves to further illustrate some important factors in the process of goal-setting. Whether you are setting goals for yourself, for your business, or for any endeavor, goals must have these characteristics:

- A goal must be attainable with reasonable difficulty.



- A goal must be specific.
- A goal must be measurable.
- A goal must be time-limited.

Relating these characteristics to the mountain climber, we can say he clearly established a goal which was attainable with reasonable difficulty. It was specific ("I will climb that mountain."). It was measurable ("I reached the summit, and have photographs to prove it."). Assuming that our hypothetical mountain climber established a deadline for climbing the mountain, we can say that he met all of the criteria for setting a definitive goal.

Why is it important for the individual to set goals? Taking an example from the business world may best illustrate the point:

"A recent survey conducted by a National Sales organization revealed the following startling statistics: 60% of the people had never heard of, or practiced, goal setting; 30% were familiar with it, but had only practiced it in the financial areas of their lives; 7% had practiced goal-setting in several areas, but had never written them down; 3% had written well-defined goals in several areas of their lives. The survey further revealed that the top 10% were making in excess of \$30,000 per year. The amazing fact was that the top 3%, with the well-defined written goals, had incomes in excess of \$60,000." (*Rulon Wood, PDG, D-15 Bulletin*)

### The Stumbling Blocks

As Toastmasters, especially the newer members, we need to develop a simple set of definitive goals if we are to progress. But first, we need to know some of the pitfalls of goal-setting.

Most of the stumbling blocks can be avoided if the individual objectively applies the criteria stated previously. Remaining objective is difficult for most of us, but for some it is extremely difficult.

Psychologists tell us that a small percentage—less than 10%—of the population are known as "high failure-avoidance-motivated persons." These people are strongly motivated to avoid failure in any endeavor. A word of caution: *There is, to some degree, an element of failure avoidance in most of us.*

In relation to goal-setting, failure-avoidance types set unrealistic goals for themselves—either too high or too low. If the goals are set too high, they can then rationalize that the goals were so high that no one could have reached them. Setting goals too low makes their accomplishment meaningless. They can then face the outcome of not meeting or grossly exceeding their goals, thus avoiding the stark reality of failure.

### Modify Your Plan

Another common pitfall is to think of the goal-setting process as a fixed-in-concrete commitment. You must not expect perfection at the start. Getting started is more important. Any pro football team knows that the game plan is modified to meet unexpected circumstances. Experience will improve your goal-setting skills, and adjustments can be made as you learn.

If you are a newer Toastmaster—some of the longer term members could profit, too—start by listing your long-range objectives from the Toastmasters program. An objective can be an intangible, such as, "I want to be an effective oral communicator." But in setting your goals, you must be more specific. Goals are the milestones, events, or steps you must take to reach an objective.

You must determine goals and objectives for yourself. However, let me urge you to consider Toastmasters' proven step-by-step progression through the Communication and Leadership manuals. The thirty separate projects are specific and measurable. And it's up to you to set a reasonably difficult time frame for accomplishment. Remember the example from the National Sales Survey and commit your goals to writing; then commit yourself to action.

I know that my son Scott was right. And I am committed to practicing what he preaches by reaching for a goal. □

Chuck Allen, DTM, is a member of Toastmasters International's Board of Directors. A former District 48 governor, he is a member of the Redstone Club 1932-48 in Huntsville, Alabama.

# Let's Get Together

How often do you get a chance to meet and exchange ideas with Toastmasters from your own region? If you're like most of us, this probably doesn't happen as often as you'd like. That's why the June Regional Conferences are so important.

The Regionals provide a time when Toastmasters can come together to discuss club problems, participate in educational programs, or simply extend their hand in friendship to another Toastmaster. But there's much more to a Regional than that.

Besides offering the finest in educational programming, each Regional Conference will host the Regional Speech Contest (with its winner going on to the International competition), a training program for district officers, and the region's nomination of International Director candidates. You'll also get a chance to meet representatives from your Board of Directors and World Headquarters and to discuss with them any problems or successes your club has had.

The following is a listing of the eight Regional Conferences dates and locations (Be sure to ask your club president for further information):

- **Region I**—June 18-19; Eugene Hotel; Eugene, Oregon.
- **Region II**—June 11-12; Town & Country Hotel; San Diego, California.
- **Region III**—June 25-26; Chateau Motor Hotel, Shreveport, Louisiana.
- **Region IV**—June 4-5; Fairmont Hot Springs Resort; Butte, Montana.
- **Region V**—June 25-26; Howard Johnson's (Chicago); Schiller Park, Illinois.
- **Region VI**—June 11-12; Queen Elizabeth Hotel; Montreal, Quebec, Canada.
- **Region VII**—June 4-5; Sheraton Valley Forge; Valley Forge, Pennsylvania.
- **Region VIII**—June 18-19; Carlton House (Disney World); Orlando, Florida. See you at the Regionals! □



by  
**BARNEY KINGSTON,**  
**ATM**

# Why Is Your A

Every speaker, at some time in his career, has had that unnerving feeling he's talking to himself; nobody is listening. When it happens to you, the odds are it will be for one or more of the following reasons.

*You didn't consider the audience.* Remember the time you gave a great talk to the local PTA group? How could you forget? You got one of those rare standing ovations. And no wonder. You told the school board and all concerned "How to Get More Educational Bang for Less Bucks!" So when the local Kiwanis Club, which meets in a room next to Joe's Bar, asked you if you would like to give a talk to their group, you accepted.

Naturally, you gave them the same talk that was such a "wow" before the PTA audience. But it wasn't long before you began to get that old "where has everybody gone?" feeling. There's no one smiling, you can see the fellows sipping their beer and looking at the contents rather than at you, and gosh, a few even look bored with the whole thing.

## Outwitting the Wife

Let's face it. Joe's Bar is hardly the place to give the same talk you gave to the local PTA. A few years ago, I accepted the opportunity to speak to a local Lion's club that met in a room adjacent to a bar. My subject was, "Seven Easy Ways to Outwit Your Wife." I can still remember the first lines of that talk: "A California golfer was walking out of the house with his golf bag slung over his shoulder. He turned to his wife and said, 'Dear, why don't you mow the lawn today and get yourself a nice tan?' Needless to say, she shot him. But the judge deemed this sufficient provocation, to the extent that he handed down a suspended sentence. Now, I'm here tonight to show you

golfers how to get out of the house without getting killed or even starting an argument."

The fellows really lapped it up and even the bartender enjoyed the talk—although he didn't sell a glass of beer for the next 25 minutes. So *before* you accept a speaking assignment, make sure you not only have a worthwhile talk ready, but also that your talk has the *interest* of that particular audience. Otherwise, you might find yourself talking to an audience of one—yourself!

*You forgot to get the audience into the act.* We Toastmasters know that the word *communication* means more than one person speaking and another individual, hopefully, listening; we want to be sure that the fellow who is hearing our talk gets involved. The surest way to guarantee a dead audience is to forget this cardinal rule of public speaking.

## Ol' Abe

Abraham Lincoln was a master at getting his audience involved. One time in Springfield, Illinois, he was exhorting the crowd to vote for him. He went through a list of things he had done for the citizens of Springfield over many years. Lincoln said, "I gave you the capitol building, I had funds raised for your poor people, I put Joe Swanson through college. . . ." He kept this up for about 20 minutes. Then he asked his audience, "I want everybody who is going to vote for Ol' Abe to raise his

right hand." Then, more in jest than for any real purpose, he asked, "And I want to see if there's anybody here who won't vote for Ol' Abe; just raise your hand." Lincoln was astonished when he saw a man he knew very well raise his hand. "Why, Ed Sanders, you of all people. Didn't I help you raise money when your barn burned down about 11 years ago? Didn't I help you get a job around 14 years ago when nobody would hire you? And didn't I get your money back from that horse thief about nine years ago? And you say you won't vote for Ol' Abe, Ed? Why in thunderation won't you?" Ed Sanders replied, "Yes, Abe, you've done all those things for me in past years, but what have you done for me lately?"

*You didn't get the audience saying "Yes!"* It is surely obvious that if you get the audience against you, they might get so mad they'll want to lynch you—not literally, but figuratively. It always amazes me when I hear a speaker get up and tell the audience in no uncertain terms where he stands on a controversial issue. He starts off with, "Just so everybody knows where I stand, I regard anybody who wouldn't gladly pay one dollar a gallon for gasoline as unpatriotic. This is the only way we can be free from middle east oil. Let's make oil so high nobody can afford it."

That's exactly the way a Toastmaster began his talk on the subject, "W





# ENCE SLEEPING?

Need High-Priced Oil." But the speaker overlooked an important fact; he was only considering *his* viewpoint. He didn't seem to realize that on any controversial issue there are two sides. If you immediately blast the other side, you will automatically alienate at least half of your audience right from the start. You don't have to sell those who already agree with your views on the subject; you have to sell the others! And anyway you do this is to *say something new right at the start* to your opponents. If you do so, you'll see many people nodding in agreement with you. You've got them saying, "Yes!" and you're on the way to a sale.

## That Resounding "Yes!"

Any experienced salesman knows that the quickest way to sell anything is to get the prospect saying, "Yes." He does this by asking questions. "Which one do you like?" "Would you prefer these terms?" Or "When should we deliver—Monday or Wednesday afternoon?" The salesman asks questions that are designed to get the prospect saying, "Yes." So the next time you go in a talk, make sure you have questions that are sure to elicit a resounding, "Yes!"

*You didn't warm up your audience.* No matter what kind of speech you are about to deliver, if your audience is "cold" and you do nothing to warm them up, you might just as well imagine

you're addressing an audience of mannequins.

What makes an audience "cold"? There are all kinds of reasons. It could be something as simple as an ineffective heating system on a cold day. Maybe the previous speaker has put the crowd in an irritable mood. Whatever the reason, you've got to win them back.

You might tell the one about the farmer who walked to the barn on a ten-below-zero morning to milk his cow, Bossy. After he had milked the cow in the extremely frigid barn, Bossy turned her head and said, "Thanks for the warm hand." Or if you've got nerve or gall (or a combination of both), get the audience on its feet immediately after being introduced. "All right, let's see if we can warm up our audience. Everybody on their feet. All right, now, everybody altogether, when I say 'I'm giving everybody in this audience a hundred bucks,' clap your hands!" You could explain later that when you complained about being cold all the time, that was what a doctor had you do for a hundred dollar fee.

## Use the News

There are also other ways to warm up an audience. Do what people like Johnny Carson and Bob Hope do as soon as they are introduced. Talk about things that have been happening lately—particularly in that town. Get your facts from the bartender, the cab driver, the

bellboy, or the local newspaper. That's what an Englishman who visited our club in Chicago did. His first words were, "Everybody asks me what were my first impressions of Chicago. To tell the truth, I was immediately impressed with your beastly traffic. My hat fell off and by the time I picked it up it was beautifully creased. And I read where one of your chaps was indicted for pocketing money that didn't belong to him. That never happens in London. Our blokes don't get caught!" He had us in the palm of his hand for the next 20 minutes.

*You forgot the light touch at the start.* When you meet somebody for the first time, you don't feel at ease until you get to know the person a bit better. To put it another way, it's always harder for a stranger to make friends.

## Try Some Humor

When you are introduced as the speaker of the evening, you are still a stranger to most of the audience. To compensate for this, take a tip from the playwrights; they put in a good deal of movement with few lines at the start, so the audience can adjust their eyes to the scene and ears to the sound, and become familiar with their surroundings. Similarly, it is best for you not to get into your talk right at the start; this is the time for a bit of humor.

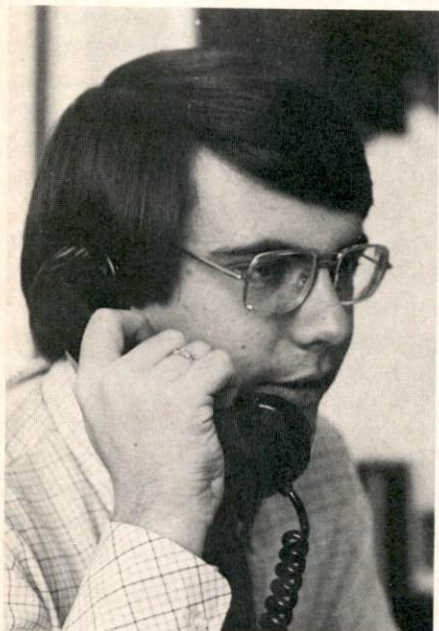
One day, I was speaking before a high school audience, and the wise guy who introduced me said, "I'd love to be a Toastmaster, but I don't want to work at it like our speaker." When I was finally introduced, I turned to my young friend (the Master of Ceremonies) and said, "Bill, there is an easy way to become a Toastmaster in just seven days. First, you buy seven marbles. Then on the first day you talk with seven marbles in your mouth. On the second day you speak with six marbles in your mouth, and so on, until the seventh day comes and you've lost all your marbles. Now you're a Toastmaster." I had that audience with me from the start.

You might tell the audience about the fear of speaking that drove you to become a Toastmaster, pointing out that this fear is not something peculiar





# Membership Manager



**Alan LaGreen**

Alan L. LaGreen has been named manager of the Membership and Club Extension Department at Toastmasters International's World Headquarters in Santa Ana.

A graduate of the University of Southern California, Al received his B.A. in Public Relations with an emphasis on marketing and journalism. At USC he served as president of the school's Public Relations Student Society and also hosted a radio talk show over KUSC-FM.

Prior to joining the World Headquarters staff, Al was Assistant to the Publisher of *Orange County Illustrated* magazine. Previously, he was a public relations specialist for Dames & Moore, a worldwide environmental consulting firm.

An avid railroad fan, when Al's not chasing locomotives with his camera, he may be writing, playing tennis, or fishing. □

to people of this modern generation. That story goes that, in the days of Nero and the Romans, any individual who expressed a contrary political view was promptly handed over to hungry lions at the local coliseum. But one unforgettable Saturday matinee, a strange thing happened. The lion dashed for the unfortunate man who was standing in a corner of the huge arena. As he got within a couple feet of his victim, the man held up his right hand and said a few words. The lion stopped, growled a few times, turned around, and went back into his cage. The crowd roared its approval. Nero asked a guard to bring the man to his cage. When the hero faced the Emperor, Nero asked, "My good man, if you will tell me what you said to that lion to keep him from eating you, I'll give you your freedom." Our hero

replied, "Your majesty, all I said to the lion was, 'Don't forget; when you've had your dinner, the crowd expects a few words.'"

You might ask what is the *best* way to wake up an audience? Actually, I haven't said a word up to now about what I really think is the best way to spark an audience to life. Why? Because it is the most difficult thing to do of anything we have discussed thus far. I'll guarantee that if you are an average speaker, you'll wake up an audience using any of the "five points" I have mentioned. But if you want to be above average, you're going to have to work on your opening, particularly the first minute.

It's a well-known axiom of public speaking: If you don't get the audience interested in your subject in the first

60 seconds, you might as well go home. Your audience will be hearing you, but not really listening.

For example, suppose you are a tax expert and are talking to a group of businessmen on the subject, "Why Pay Uncle Sam More Than You Have To?" You can bet you'll wake up your audience—and with loud cheers, too—with this opening: "Do you realize that nine out of ten people in my audience tonight are literally giving Uncle Sam from two to ten thousand dollars a year they don't have to—money that belongs in their pockets? Tonight, I'd like to show you 25 easy ways that will positively save you thousands of dollars each year on your income tax—and without going to jail." That kind of opening is sure to get more attention than Sally Rand walking out on the stage without her fans!

## A "Sure-Fire" Ending?

Many years ago, I remember a fellow in our club who never seemed to get the audience's attention. His evaluators would say, "Bob, you always put your audience to sleep. You need to do something to get their attention right at the start." One night Bob stepped up to the lectern and, after being introduced, whipped out a large gun. "Nobody is going to sleep during my talk tonight," he screamed. Without further words, he aimed the gun at the center of the crowd and fired. Everybody, almost instinctively, thought Bob had gone nuts and dove for the floor. Fortunately for all concerned, Bob had fired a blank cartridge; unfortunately, his talk was also blank.

To this day, I still can't recall the title or a word or thought expressed in that speech. But how well I remember his opening gimmick! So whatever you do to wake up your audience, make sure it doesn't detract from your talk. Let your audience remember the message, not the gimmick. □

Barney Kingston, ATM, is merchandising director for Salesman's Opportunity magazine. He is a member of Speakers Forum Club 371-30 in Chicago, Illinois, and is a frequent contributor to THE TOASTMASTER magazine.





## Bicentennial Speech Topics

Is America a dream or is it a myth? That is only one of the questions that will be asked by those discussing the American Issues Forum's last topic, "Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness."

Scheduled to run from May 2 through May 29, 1976, "Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness," will examine the promise of America—what it is and how it has affected American lives. The four weeks have been divided into the following subjects:

**May 2 - May 8: *The Rugged Individualist.*** Rugged individualism, the very idea of independence, is one of the most durable motifs of American history. Is this a selfish idea? And how much of a rugged individualist can we be in a country where everyone is presumably treated equally? Is "being me" possible without also being anti-social and anti-democratic?

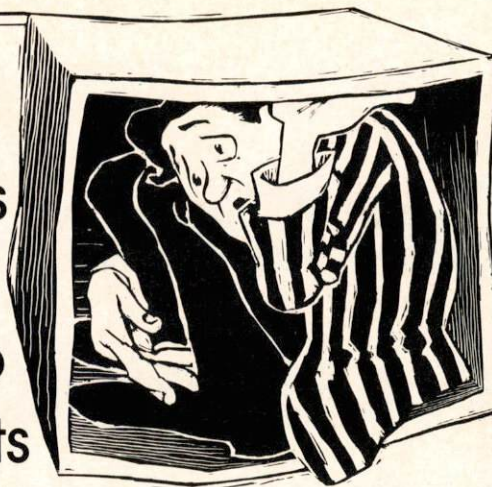
**May 9 - May 15: *The Dream of Success.*** The American dream has been defined as an individual starting with nothing but talent and energy and "making it." It's the persistent, pervasive Horatio Alger dream. Must "making it" always mean winning in a competitive sense? Is anyone who fails therefore a loser, a Charlie Brown—or, worse, merely a nice guy? What is genuine success?

**May 16 - May 22: *The Pursuit of Pleasure.*** America is the only nation in the entire world whose Constitution guarantees the pursuit of happiness as an unalienable right. But just how do Americans go about pursuing happiness? What kind of enjoyment do we want? Do we have to win to enjoy ourselves? Or watch someone else lose—in a stadium, on a TV screen, in a movie house?

**May 23 - May 29: *The Fruits of Wisdom.*** Americans think of themselves as the most energetic people on earth, at work and at play—a nation with the happy experience of solving problems rather than despairing over them, a country with an ingrained optimism, and with an ability to roll up its sleeves to do a job. Have our political mistakes made us wiser as a people? Is it time for America to settle down and draw upon the wisdom of age?—now that we are 200 years old.

This is your last chance to get involved in the American Issues Forum. If you haven't had a chance to talk about America, there's no better time to start than now . . . the Fourth of July is almost here! □

Do You  
Sometimes  
Feel That  
Your Job  
Has Its



# LIMITATIONS ?

Do you ever wonder what happened to the big dreams you once had? Do you often think about the great things you could do if you had a chance?

We know the feeling. The all-too common situation of being the right man in the wrong job has happened to nearly everyone. It's no tragedy — unless you have resigned yourself to accept the situation as permanent.

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# The Gentle Art of Listening

by Anya Peterson

There's one sure way to learn how to listen: Shut up. But many people, impressed with the sound of their own voices, never stop talking long enough to really hear the world around them. If you're a would-be good listener, bite your tongue and let the other fellow rap for a while.

Naturally, the public speaker is expected to talk at length. It's a social custom—a highly entertaining and informative one—which permits a single person time to expound upon his views and is only spoiled for the listener when he chooses to speak at too great a length. The public speaker may have a captive audience, but he cannot force that audience to listen.

## The Listening Tricks

Just as there are tricks to capture and hold, or at least periodically recapture, the interest of a group, there are tricks well worth learning about listening.

*Let the other fellow express himself.* Constant interruptions can cause a person to lose his train of thought. So let your speaker explore his thoughts and roll them around a bit. You may hear a lot more than you wanted to. At the same time, you may learn a few truly amazing facts or gain some insight into something you had never before considered. If you feel you must say something, try to be content with an occasional "uh-huh" or "mmm."

*What he says may not be what he means.* Sarcasm is an obvious example of this, such as walking into a slaughterhouse locker room and saying, "Gee, it's hot in here." A good listener, however, will learn to pick up vibes. The clothing salesman says, "That suit is a great color for you." What he may mean is, "The cut looks awful."

Saying other than what you mean is actually a protective device. It conceals your real feelings and often keeps you out of trouble. Learn to listen between the lines. Practice listening to your friends. In no time at all, you'll be expert at ferreting out the hidden meanings.

*If he's direct and to the point. . . .* A good speaker, whether before a group or in one-to-one dialogue, will try to make his meaning crystal clear. For purposes of illustration, let's assume that those you hear will be expressing themselves in a direct, forthright manner. How do you retain what you hear? You use tools. Here are some tools that will help you toward better listening and, consequently, greater retention.

## Tape It!

The tape recorder, that little portable magic box, will play back whatever you feed into it. It's ideal for lectures on technical subjects, where you're bombarded with facts and figures. While your recorder is rolling along, you won't have to listen so hard. You'll have

the freedom to concentrate on other things, like "What is he driving at?" and "How is he persuading me to his point of view?"

Obviously, a tape recorder can be an inconvenience. Under certain circumstances, it may even appear awkward. And if you don't already own one, it can be a considerable expense.

Should you have access to a recorder, however, you can use it to help you learn. Try this. Record the spoken word as you hear it from the media. Choose a speech or something speech-like, such as the evening news, panel discussion, or documentary. Listen to the program the way you normally would, but record it as well. Wait awhile; then play it back. If you're like most average listeners, you'll be startled by what you *didn't* hear. These are your problem areas: the times when you phased out, when you wondered what was for dinner, or if you'd get that raise. You have to control those attention lapses. A good listener doesn't miss a trick.

Constant note-taking will spoil the effect of a speech for you. You'll be so busy writing you won't be able to watch; and absorbing facial movements, as well as gestures, is important to good listening. If you feel you need in-depth notes, try investing in a shorthand or speedwriting course. It will save you a great deal of work.



Notes are excellent reminders, though, for a few key points, specific facts you want to remember or check out. For example, if you hear a good joke, write down the punch line or what the joke was about in two or three words. That should prompt you to remember the rest. If you're listening to a speaker or perhaps viewing a film, write down what you are least likely to remember, such as the fact that 4,976 persons in your city are peanut butter freaks. That would deserve a brief note. Certain data—such as “Mt. McKinley, North America's highest peak, is 20,320 feet tall”—are not really *worth* recording or remembering. You can always look that up later.

The better you listen, the easier it becomes to remember. Practice listening for key words. Keep a mental list as the speaker goes along. Let's say he's talking about fish.

“Red salmon, also known as ‘Sockeyes,’ are native to Pacific Coastal waters. They are important commercial fish, but, as persistent fighters, also attract sport fishermen.” The list in your head might read:

- Red Salmon/Sockeyes
- Pacific Coast
- Commercial and Sport
- Fighters

Pull the key words and ignore the words and phrases around them. With

enough practice, you can line up the key words automatically. When you get good enough, you'll find you rarely need notes.

Being a good listener isn't something you're born with. It's developed the same way that people learn to observe. There's an old parlor game where a tray of 20 objects is passed. You have perhaps three minutes to look at the objects. Then the tray is taken away, and you must list and describe all 20. If you think that's easy, try it.

#### Selective Listening

Listening is quite similar. Sit in a closed room, alone, and just listen. You may gradually become aware of a clock ticking, of the air conditioning, or the heating system. You may hear muffled voices from the next room. These, generally, are the sounds you would have blocked out. Selecting what you choose to hear is called “selective listening.”

Here's another example. Tune into a melodramatic TV show. It could be a western or a cops and robbers adventure. Now, ignore the dialogue, and listen only to the background music. What is that music telling you? What is it making you feel?

Some Sunday morning, listen to a religious broadcast on radio or TV. After the program, write out what you heard. How many of the speaker's illustrations

can you remember? What were the names of the songs? If you've tape recorded the program, you can go back and check yourself.

Very few people can remember everything they hear. Good listeners choose what they want to know from the vast amount of information provided. A musician might well identify background music that is not important to you. A singer might make a special effort to remember the name of a song he or she likes. You, in your efforts toward becoming a better listener, must decide what you are listening for. Do you want the facts? Then listen for them. Don't let opinions confuse you. If, on the other hand, you're interested in the speaker's opinions, you'll want to know if his facts add up to his conclusions. You're listening for something entirely different.

Good listening is the result of constant practice. The sign on a Bell Telephone booth may read “Hear Here,” but what you hear is entirely up to you. □

Anya Peterson received her bachelor's degree in Speech and Theater Arts from Heidelberg College in Tiffin, Ohio. A former copy chief with Alaska's largest advertising agency, she now concentrates solely on freelance writing.



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## NOMA WINS DISTRICT 30-4 TRAINING AWARD

Conoma Toastmasters Club was 1st Place  
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And our own Richard  
Governor in the trophy for

# THE NEW ZEALAND TOASTMASTER

# Build a Better Bulletin

by Tom Chance

Within the educational spectrum of Toastmasters International, one of the most valuable and effective means of communications is the club bulletin.

Strangely enough, it is also one of the most frequently misunderstood informational vehicles within our organization. It shouldn't be. Editing a club bulletin is a challenging, informative, and educational experience—and just about anyone is capable of doing the job.

If you've been shying away from editing your club bulletin because you're not quite sure how to do it, perhaps these tips will change your mind and help you build a better club bulletin.

### The Right Tools

Building a club bulletin is much like designing a house. Inattention to detail will result in your efforts crumbling in the wind. So, it's important to plan your project from top to bottom and to use the right tools.

At the top of your checklist should be the selection of a reproduction process. It is a good idea to visit local print shops, take a look at the various printing processes available, and then decide which one will best suit your needs and pocketbook.

There are several methods of reproduction available, including Xerox, mimeograph, ditto, letterpress, and

photo offset. I recommend photo offset, because it is clean, simple, and relatively inexpensive. For simplicity's sake, I have based the following mechanical suggestions upon the photo offset process. With slight variations, however, they can be adapted for use with just about any process except letterpress.

You should have a name for your publication. Why not have a contest and let your club members choose the title? The printer can help you design a professional-looking masthead, if you just take time to ask him.

Now that you've selected a title and a printing process, what's your next requirement? There are several, the first of which is getting a good typewriter. Make sure its keys are clean and that the ribbon is in good condition. If it is a new ribbon, be careful not to smudge the ink of your freshly-typed copy.

In addition to a typewriter, you'll need a pair of sharp scissors and some glue or double-stick tape. (I recommend the tape since it is much easier to work with and will not run or smear.) You should also get an 18-inch ruler, a transparent plastic triangle, and an "X-Acto knife."

Other fundamental items to have on hand are a thin-line black-ink pen and a good ink eraser. You might consider

buying some white correction fluid. You'll find this a good, time-saving investment.

For your bulletin's headlines, I recommend that you buy "press-on" letters at your local art supply or stationery store. "Press-on" letters are moderately priced and easy to use, and they give your bulletin a professional look you'll be proud of.

You can get additional art work from a variety of places to add more style to your publication. First, check some of your back issues of THE TOASTMASTER. You'll find them filled with headlines, practical illustrations, and some interesting cartoons by Phil Interlandi.

You can also send to World Headquarters for "Ready to Use Artwork" (Code 358), for 25 cents. Then, if you know someone who has a flair for doodling, ask him if he'll illustrate some articles for you.

### Watch Those Copyrights

A word of caution: *Never* use copyrighted material without proper authorization. It could be very costly to you should the holder of the copyright decide to sue.

Now that you have your method and tools, what do you put into your bulletin?

First, it is a good idea to have an article by your club president, education



vice-president, and/or administrative vice-president in each issue. Information is also available from your district bulletin, THE TOASTMASTER, and TIPS.

Another source of material is Toastmasters manuals and pamphlets. You'll find this a good shopping place for "interesting" short excerpts.

Check with some of the more experienced Toastmasters in your club. Many of them would be glad to write a short article. These could include tips on speechmaking, evaluation, leadership, "how to's," inspirational themes, and so on.

Don't forget to give credit where credit is due. Who won the best speaker and evaluator awards at the last meeting? Who's leading in the club's competition for the Toastmaster of the Year Award? Did someone get a recent promotion at work? Is there a newlywed or a new member in the club? Who brought the most guests to your last meeting? Who were the guests? (Don't forget to mail each guest a copy of your completed bulletin.) You might have a Word of the Week, properly defined and used in two or three sentences.

### Discuss the Programs

Don't forget to include the plans and programs that your club, area, district, and region have lined up for the future. How is your club achieving its goals for membership and attendance? How do you stand in your Distinguished Club Contest?

Be sure to have your educational vice-president provide you with the meeting programs for at least the next three meetings, so your fellow members can plan ahead. It is also advisable to include the name, title, and phone number of each club officer.

Some things to *always* include in each bulletin are: the editor's name, return address, phone number, and deadline for the next issue; your club's name and number; district number; and the time and place of your club meetings.

These are just a few ideas. You can think of more if you set your mind to it.

Now it's time to take all of these items and ideas and use them to build your bulletin.

Choose a format (size of each page, how many pages, how many columns, etc.). After you've decided on a format, you'll need a dummy sheet for your planning and layout.

Let's say that you've decided upon a 7" x 8" format, which is simply a piece of 8" x 14" paper folded in half. Printed on both sides, that would give you four pages for each sheet of paper—an economical move. On a 7" x 8" piece of paper, measure one-half inch borders all the way around, and connect them to form a rectangle. Next, measure 2 7/8" in from the left-hand border, mark it, measure another quarter inch, and mark that. Then, draw two straight lines from the top to bottom border. This gives you a dummy sheet for a two-column, 7" x 8" format.

Have your printer make a hundred or so copies of this for future use. Make sure that the lines are heavy and easily seen when another sheet of paper is placed over it.

Place a clean sheet of paper over your dummy sheet, put them both in your typewriter, and type slants the width of one column (depending upon your typewriter, you should end up with about 30 slants, or spaces). Count the slants. This is the number of figures you will have to work with in each column of your bulletin.

Now set the margins of your typewriter so they correspond with the number of figures you'll be allotted in each column. For our purposes here, let's say thirty spaces. Once you have your margins set, it's time to type your first draft of the bulletin; just type all of your copy within these margins.

### Your Final Copy

When it is time to prepare your final copy, you'll find there are two ways to do this. The easiest way is to simply type your copy into final form as you have typed your rough, then cut it into columns and paste it up. If you are pressed for time, this is the quickest method.

I recommend, however, that you take a little more time and opt for the second procedure.

Cut your rough-typed copy into column strips. Lay it out on your dummy

sheets, leaving room for headlines and artwork. Next place a clean dummy sheet over your layout page. Take your black pen and draw lines on your clean dummy sheet that correspond to the position on your layout where you will be typing.

Once you have everything marked, take a clean sheet of 7" x 8" paper, place it over your dummy sheet, look at your layout sheet, and type your bulletin into smooth form.

Whichever method you choose, be sure to proofread your final copy for mistakes and correct any you may find. And don't forget page numbers.

### Writing the Heads

Now it's time to put in your headlines. Headlining is a fine art, far too complicated to explain within this article. Basically, each headline should convey to your readers, in as few words as possible, the idea of the story. Study your local newspaper's headlines to get a better idea of how it's done. When you think you're ready, draw a heavy, straight line on a piece of paper, or use your dummy sheet. Place this under your bulletin as a line guide, and attach your press-on letters.

Finally, put on your artwork and it's ready to take to the printer.

When your finished bulletin comes back from the printer, be sure to mail a copy to each guest who has attended one of your recent club meetings. Also, be sure to mail a copy to World Headquarters, your International Directors, your district and area governors, and to the District Awards Chairman.

I suggest you go one step further and mail a copy to your local newspaper. Who knows what may happen because you took the time to do that? Finally, if you're ready to take on that job as club bulletin editor, be sure to order "Your Club Bulletin," (Code 1156) from World Headquarters.

And good luck, Editor. □

Tom Chance is a member and past president of the CBC Club 2858-33 in Port Huemene, California. He has also served as an educational assistant area governor and editor of the District 33 bulletin.



# Having Trouble With Table Topics?

by  
**Edward J. McNeill**  
**Club 2581-46**

Table Topic sessions can go over with a positive bang or drop like a bomb. Between these two explosive extremes lie any number of gradations. Unfortunately, our club was listing at about 85 degrees toward the negative end of the scale before we consciously realized we had Table Topic troubles.

## **The Discovery**

The club's potentially disastrous tilt was discovered quite by accident one evening during an executive committee meeting. The subject being discussed was the failure of the majority of our guests to return for a second visit and why, when one did, it was usually without a completed membership application in hand. We couldn't fault our promotion campaign, which was superior by any standard, being responsible for attracting an average of three guests to each of our twice-monthly meetings. Extending these figures over a full year of meetings gave us a grand total of about 72 guests per year. Signing even 20% of these people would have put us close to 40-member club status. A quick glance at

our roster, however, revealed that we lost as many members as we gained in a year, about five.

One of the officers remarked that several of the newer members were even beginning to arrive late for meetings, which usually was a preliminary indication of the member dropping out. Almost as an afterthought, he added, "Sometimes I'd like to arrive after Table Topics myself." That was it! There was instant agreement among all members of the committee. If present members were reacting negatively to Table Topics, why not guests as well? The remaining agenda subjects were tabled, and we began to analyze this one problem. We first, somewhat sheepishly, agreed that as far back as we could remember, Table Topics within the club had been pretty stale, unimaginative, and unchallenging. We accepted blanket guilt for our failure to capitalize on a valuable educational tool. With our apologies out of the way, we went to work.

Certainly none of our long-time mem-

bers were experiencing any difficulty in filling up two minutes with words. In fact, that was part of the problem. These members pointed with pride to the fact that they were never stumped and could speak for two minutes on any imaginable subject.

But could they? Here's an example: George (all names have been changed to protect the guilty) would be called upon to give a two minute discourse on the "life style, mating habits, and nesting cycle of the Cassowary bird of Australia, New Guinea, and adjacent islands." Do you think this unusual subject could possibly stop old George. Not for a second! He was off at a verbal trot instantly, with a 50-second introductory statement. He first thanked the Table Topicmaster for singling him out to address the members and guests on a topic of such significance, one upon which (it just so happened) he was well qualified to speak, because he had just finished doing a doctoral study on the previous day. After further digressions, the 50-second warm-up mercifully came to an end. But he still wasn't ready to get into the subject.

Next he felt obliged to crack one or two unrelated jokes, finishing strongly by poking some good-natured fun at his favorite whipping boy, Bob. When it came Bob's turn (you guessed it), he followed the same pattern; so did 90% of the other members.

## **A Lack of Creativity**

Understandably, the member selected for Table Topicmaster of the evening usually forgot about creativity (since no one ever addressed the topic, anyway). Each speaker had developed his own timewasters, so his response to a topic was usually predictable. With this behavior as a model, very few guests attempted to participate when invited.

One of the reasons for this failure, we now realize in retrospect, was that the Table Topicmasters were failing to briefly outline the function of Table Topics. Without this guidance, our guests were understandably hesitant. Taking on a Table Topic because of the need for spontaneity is never easy, but for a guest who may have a dread fear of speaking in public, to begin "cold"



could be devastating. In all too many cases, it was. Our executive committee concluded we were in a state of crisis and that relatively drastic measures were needed for if we were to turn the club around. We realized that our major hurdle would be to get the members to disengage the topic given them by the Table Topicmaster, since avoiding the topic would be each speaker's goal. Our first step would be to temporarily limit Table Topicmaster's freedom to continue the session, as well as the speaker's freedom to respond, by setting some ground rules.

### New Ground Rules

First, each Table Topicmaster was required to thoroughly explain the Table Topics segment at every meeting for the benefit of the guests. Next, it was required that all Topicmasters must come prepared with topics that they felt the average Toastmaster might reasonably expect to know something about. In other words, the topics should be those that could be commented on at a cocktail party, a business gathering, or conversation on a plane, train, or bus with a seat mate. We didn't want anyone to ask a speaker to give a two-minute discourse on the Ainu Civilization of Japan, or to explain the various methods of extracting oleoresins from ginseng barks. There are, undoubtedly, some Toastmasters who could handle such topics, but they would be the exception. We felt that such subjects served no purpose, unless presented in a well-researched speech, and probably were the type of Table Topic which led to the condition we were trying to exorcise. Incidentally, these new rules in no way precluded the use of humor, either in the topic or response, providing it was pertinent.)

Finally, it was decided that all speakers must talk on only the subject given, limiting any introductory remarks to 15 seconds. Going off the subject in excess of 10 seconds during the two-minute talk called for an automatic extension of the talk by the timer for the amount of non-relevant verbiage.

We promulgated the rules at the next meeting and in our club newsletter. Sur-

prisingly, there was no grumbling and all members responded positively to the newly-mandated format for Table Topics.

Admittedly, there were a number of slip-ups and extended speeches during the next several meetings. Soon, though, our Table Topic sessions began to take off. Members began arriving on time, guests were voluntarily participating, and everyone appeared to be deriving some beneficial experience from remaining on one subject for two minutes. We also signed a number of guests in the next few months and feel this was partially the result of the new spirit reflected in Table Topics. In a short while, because of the successful response, all restrictions were removed, leaving Table Topicmasters once more in complete control of the session.

### A Different Approach

Although we feared some recidivism, our fears were misdirected. Table Topicmasters became a bit more creative, offering such highly motivating sessions as:

*Improvisational skits* which call for participation by two Toastmasters at one time. One member plays the role of a particular person, such as an authoritarian clothing store owner. The other member, a clothing salesman in the store, is then given a slip of paper which tells him what he is supposed to do. For instance, it may be an attempt to get the owner to admit that the styles on his racks are not the "in" thing and to persuade him to change them, diplomatically making him think it's his idea.

A "Here's Johnny" approach is done in this manner: Two Toastmasters seat themselves at the front of the room. One is the host, the other the guest. The host is then told the guest's name (real or fictional) and his occupation. "Johnny" then attempts to conduct an interesting interview.

*Both sides of the question* is actually a debate format. The difference is that a subject is given for debate with each of two Toastmasters playing the role of adversaries, such as a Russian and an American diplomat offering their respective side's views on detente.

*Gesture, Gesture, Gesture* is a session

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in which each Toastmaster is asked to throw off all inhibitions and really exaggerate each gesture. We've found that this one, if entered into in the right spirit, really helps during formal speeches.

Many other types of approaches to our Table Topic sessions have been tried. Some have been less successful than others, but all have had the effect of generating a new enthusiasm for Table Topics.

Rarely is a member late; we like to attribute this to their anxiousness to participate in Table Topics. We do know that guests are impressed by our enthusiasm and now more readily offer to participate. And that's how it should be! □

Edward J. McNeill is president of the Bergen Club 2581-46 in Hackensack, New Jersey. An active Toastmaster for five years, he is also a member of the American Society of Association Executives and the Association of Food and Drug Officials.



**Here's another batch of ideas and opinions from Toastmasters club and district bulletins around the world.**

# the **Bulletin Board**

## **What Did You Say?**

*By Marco DeFunis. From District 2's "The Sounder," North Washington.*

As Toastmasters, we are constantly striving to improve our communication skills. While few of us will ever be experts, one way in which we all can improve is to understand some of the basic principles underlying communication. A principle that I try to keep in mind is the symbolic nature of words. Words simply have no meaning of their own and really are only symbols that trigger ideas in the brain of the listener.

How we understand and comprehend words is based upon our beliefs and attitudes, which in turn develop out of our own personal experiences. Friends, teachers, family, and occupation are some factors that constantly enter the communicative process, probably without our even being aware of it.

Recently, I had occasion to see this principle in operation in a conference I had with a State attorney. We met to discuss some very detailed provisions of state law and administrative procedure. Although both had common legal training, I sensed a communication gap. I was not triggering the right ideas in his brain and vice versa: I argued that my client had certain legal rights and that there were consequent duties on the State. The State attorney, on the other hand, viewed my words simply as demands on a system of resource allocation. Rights existed only so long as there were resources to provide for the right. We reached a point where these two ideas hit head on. We both realized the problem and even got a chuckle out of it and, more importantly, communication improved tremendously. Even though we could not reach an agreement, at least we understood what the other fellow had to say.

The above example illustrates a simple point: each of us lives in our own private world of thought, experience, perceptions, and emotions. Others may share similar worlds, and to this extent, we can communicate easily. The real test is to overcome the differences of people, so that even if we don't agree, we will at least be understood! □

## **The Last Degree**

*By Art Flood, ATM. From the "Cap City Toaster," Capitol City Club 2953-35, Madison, Wisconsin.*

At 211 degrees, water is just hot water, inert, powerless.

At 212 degrees, water is live steam, with more power inherent within it than man has ever been able to harness with true and full efficiency, even with all his engineering knowledge and skill.

At 211 degrees, the water in a locomotive boiler exerts not one ounce of pressure.

At 212 degrees, the water in that locomotive boiler gives it the full power to haul a mile-long train of cars across a mountain pass. With its water at 211 degrees, the locomotive is as powerless as if the firebox were empty and cold; at 212 degrees it has the power to rattle along the tracks at 70 miles per hour.

So it is with human beings. And so it is with those of us who are in Toastmasters, even more than with men and women in other activities. Thousands of people are talking at 211 degrees; people who, for want of one more degree of temperature, are inert and powerless. Many a communicator is talking at 211 degrees, who, if he would but throw another log on the fire, another lump of coal, could raise his temperature to 212 degrees and increase his power by infinity.

That one last degree out of 212 degrees seems insignificant by itself, yet it is of infinite importance. The man who never lifts his temperature to the boiling point will never achieve anything worthwhile in this world; the man who can do so will keep his temperature above the 211 degrees, who can and will keep his boiler at full steam by keeping the fire of enthusiasm at white heat, can achieve anything in this world to which he may reasonably aspire. □

## **Just Let Them Know**

*By Jim Doak. From District 64's "Mirror Manitoba and Northwest Ontario."*

Many clubs experience the problem of members not showing up, or begging off of doing their assignments on the evenings they are scheduled. They just don't seem to have the courtesy to telephone a few days ahead so that someone else can fill in. Ever had that feeling?

Consider for a moment how others feel disappointed and confused when this happens. It puts a great deal of unnecessary pressure on the "regulars" and tends to confuse the meeting. And what do you think it does to your image?

Here is a suggestion for improving the situation. If you cannot attend a meeting or a group of meetings, spend five minutes on the telephone and call those who will be responsible for your activities, or program chairman. Just let him know and you will be excused.

If you are chairman, call the people at your head table a week before. If you are the Toastmaster, call the speakers and the general evaluator. If you're the general evaluator, call the evaluators, and so on. It takes a little time, but the result is rewarding.

Cong  
Toast  
  
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Clifford  
The  
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# hall of fame

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(continued on next page)



(continued from page 29)

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Moore, Oklahoma—Mon., 6:45  
p.m., Dodson Cafeteria, 2150 SW  
59th St., Oklahoma City, (799-

4278). Sponsored by Mid-Del  
2257-16.

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Conference Room, Westinghouse  
Auditorium, Baltimore, (765-2373).  
Sponsored by Westinghouse Gav-  
eliers 3160-18.

295-52 UNIVERSAL CITY  
Universal City, California—Wed.,  
12 Noon, Sheraton Universal Hotel,  
Universal City, (782-1112). Spon-  
sored by Lockheed Knights  
1118-52.

3350-61 ST. LAWRENCE VALLEY  
Massena, New York—Wed., 7:00  
p.m., Toby's, Main Street, Mas-  
sena, (769-6429).

3511-72 OTUMOETAI  
Tauranga, New Zealand—Wed.,  
7:30 p.m., St. Margaret's Hall,  
Windsor Road, Otumoetai, (88-  
617). Sponsored by Tauranga  
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56. John L. Staha, 5004 Jeffery Pl., Austin, TX 78746
57. Greg Robinson, ATM, 413 Kinross Dr., Walnut Creek, CA 94598
58. Edward Y. Ulmer, DTM, 25 Sussex Dr., Charleston, SC 29407
60. E. E. Doyle, 3088 Don Mills Rd., Willowdale, Ont., Canada
61. Frank J. Hofstetter, 720 Mille lles Est, Ste. Therese-en-Haut, Que., Canada
62. R. E. Trent Peterson, 929 Balfour, Midland, MI 48640
63. J. Gordon Petty, P.O. Box 1433, Chattanooga, TN 37401
64. H. Edwin Tackaberry, DTM, 26 Sayer Ave., Winnipeg, Man., Canada R2Y 0C6
65. Kenneth C. Spiegel, Box 8727, Rochester, NY 14642
66. Dick Byrne, 46 Greenwell Court, Lynchburg, VA 24502
68. Jack F. Mesh, 2506 Seventeenth St., Lake Charles, LA 70601
69. Frank J. Bell, ATM, 6 Baxter St., West End, Townsville, Australia 4810
70. Piers Foa, 2 Worrall St., Croydon, Victoria, Australia 3136
71. Niall O'Riordan, "Roncalli" Cahergal Lawn, Ballyvolane, Cork, Rep. of Ireland
72. Peter Cooper, DTM, P.O. Box 3305, Wellington, New Zealand

## MOVING?

Notify World Headquarters of your new address eight weeks prior to the scheduled move. Complete all the necessary information. This will assure you of uninterrupted delivery of The Toastmaster and other TI material.

Club No. \_\_\_\_\_

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Paste current address label here OR complete the following:

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If you are a club, area, division, or district officer, indicate complete title: \_\_\_\_\_



# SMART PROGRAM CHAIRMEN and MEETING PLANNERS

Can Get Top Speakers for the Next 20 Years  
at the Spectacular Professional Speakers Showcase  
May 3-7, 1976 in Atlanta, Georgia

More than a hundred of the most dynamic personalities on the platform today will make presentations during that one jam-packed, moving, exciting week.

- \* 25 inspiring speakers every day for 5 consecutive days
- \* fast-moving sessions from 8 a.m. until 9 p.m. every day
- \* wide range of colorful personalities, constant change of pace
- \* how-to sessions for program planners, many special features
- \* photos and recordings will be made of all sessions, all speakers
- \* famous editorial cartoonist "Baldy" drawing caricatures of all participants
- \* display of films, books, tapes, other materials by performers appearing on the program.
- \* information about the nation's largest, fastest-growing speakers bureau, now offering more than 200 top performers
- \* inspiration for better living, more effective management
- \* ideas for hundreds of powerful programs, exciting meetings of all kinds

Don't miss this opportunity to see, hear, and meet the most forceful platform personalities on the professional circuit today, all in just one week!

**Send Your Check  
Today While Space  
Is Still Available.**

### Low Registration Fees\*

1 day	\$80
2 days	110
3 days	130
4 days	145
5 days	160

\*Before March 30, higher after that date if space is still available.

The range of talent, the breadth of experience and expertise in this exciting group of dynamic speakers is indeed impressive. But to have so many of such a high level, all appearing in rapid succession in the same convenient location, is a real feat never before accomplished. This offers you a rare opportunity, one you should not miss if you use speakers for any purpose — for meetings and conventions, training programs, special occasions of any kind.

Many more details are given in the special publication enclosed with this mailer, but here are four facts of great importance, and the answer to three questions we are frequently asked.

1. This whole week will **cost you nothing** — indeed, could bring you a financial profit along with the many benefits of finding new speaking talent — if you are booking any of the many gifted performers you hear at the Atlanta Showcase in May. Regardless of what you pay for your registration fees, those costs will be refunded in full right after you use one of these speakers.

2. You have never before had a chance to hear 135 top level speakers show what they can do, in just five consecutive days in the same location. This fast pace may be dizzying, but it can certainly save you a great deal of time and money, while opening to you a wealth of new talent. You will also have an opportunity for personal contacts and private discussions with top meeting planners from all over the country, along with the top speakers.

3. No city in the United States is more convenient to all the other major cities of the country than Atlanta. You can get direct flights from all large cities, and Atlanta — always beautiful — is at its best in early May.

4. Our meeting place is new, conveniently close to downtown, and surprisingly economical. All sessions will be at the Ramada Central, just ten minutes from the heart of the city, near public transportation, many other excellent restaurants and shopping facilities. You won't find more for less anywhere in Atlanta, or in any other city.



## 3 Significant Questions

1. While we understand that all the speakers performing during the May Showcase are affiliated with Success Leaders Speakers Service, we know that many of them handle direct bookings personally. Would we save anything by dealing with these individual speakers?

No. All those speaking in Atlanta in May — and all others working with SLSS — have a very definite agreement that their charges are always the same for a given assignment, whether the arrangements are made through SLSS, or directly with the individual speaker.

2. If that is so, then there should be some advantages dealing with SLSS, correct?

Yes, indeed. There are many distinct advantages, and no extra costs involved, in dealing with SLSS. Several of these are mentioned in the enclosed publication, and in other materials you receive without cost from SLSS. You can always get the kind of speaker you want for any occasion — every type, talent and price range.

3. What special or unique services do you offer?

Several, again spelled out in more detail in the enclosed publication, and in our other materials. However, there are three specific advantages which have already proved most valuable to all the organizations we serve:

(1) Back-up insurance for every occasion, guaranteeing you top performance every time, in spite of any illness, accident or other quirks of fate.

(2) An annual Speakers Directory, with information on all performers, backed by complete files with many detailed references.

(3) The annual Professional Speakers Showcase, starting in 1976, giving alert meeting planners an opportunity to meet and audition many top platform personalities in a very short span of time.

## Success Leaders Speakers Service

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