

The TOASTMASTER®

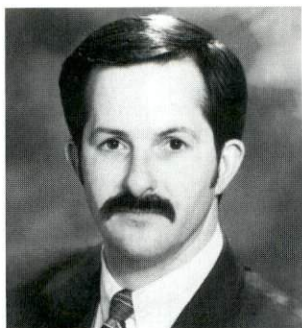
AUGUST 1997



Awaken
Your *Creativity!*

ALSO INSIDE:

Making the Emotional Connection • Where There's a Why There's a Way



VIEWPOINT

One Voice

"...Just one voice singing in the darkness, all it takes is one voice; shout it out and let it ring. Just one voice, it takes that one voice, and everyone will sing!"

BARRY MANILOW

I sang these words during my inaugural speech in St. Louis one year ago. Since that time, I have seen how a Passion for Eloquence can empower a person to become that "one voice" that Barry Manilow sings about. Each of us has a special eloquence, and through Toastmasters, we can discover, hone and share our eloquence just like a singer shares a song.

As International President, I have experienced our organization from every angle. These experiences have taught me that certain principles guide Toastmasters International and must remain at our core. When we deviate from them, we risk losing our focus and impact on the world.

- **First, we are a learning organization.** People join to learn communication and leadership skills. We must constantly provide opportunities for every member to explore and enhance these skills.

- **Second, we believe in the power of the individual.** Each of us is a unique creation. My style and message are different from yours. Toastmasters helps us develop our unique style and message, thus empowering us to share our songs with the world.

- **Third, we respect each other.** Nobody agrees with everything you think or do. However, Toastmasters members willingly cast aside differences of opinions to assist each other in discovering each other's special song.

- **Finally, we are club driven.** The future health of Toastmasters lies in the number of Distinguished clubs the organization has. The more Distinguished clubs, the better we can take our program to the world.

These principles were reinforced during my travels. Whenever I talked to people who were deeply touched by the power of Toastmasters, they inevitably belonged to a Distinguished club, whose members had helped them discover their eloquence and learn how to share it with others.

Never forget that Toastmasters training can help you make a difference in the world. Look deep inside and discover the passion that will enable you to become that "one voice" and begin sharing the Toastmasters' eloquence with those around you. Re-commit to the Toastmasters Promise and dedicate yourself to making your club a Distinguished club.

Thank you Toastmasters everywhere for giving me the opportunity to be your International President. Thank you for all the warmth and love you have shown Jana and me this year. Thank you for allowing me to begin achieving my full potential and realizing my dreams.

Robert E. Barnhill, DTM
International President

The TOASTMASTER

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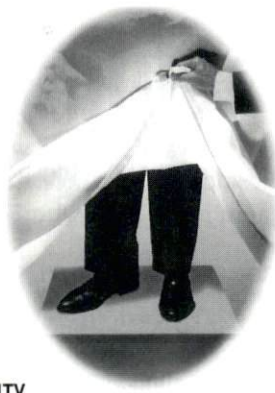
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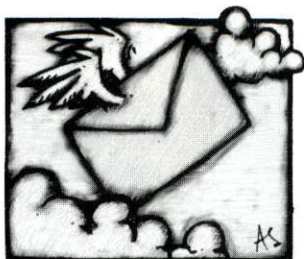
Toastmasters International empowers people to achieve their full potential and realize their dreams. Through our member clubs, people throughout the world can improve their communication and leadership skills, giving them the courage to change.

The Toastmasters Mission:

Toastmasters International is the leading movement devoted to making effective oral communication a worldwide reality.

Through its member clubs, Toastmasters International helps men and women learn the arts of speaking, listening and thinking – vital skills that promote self-actualization, enhance leadership potential, foster human understanding, and contribute to the betterment of mankind.

It is basic to this mission that Toastmasters International continually expand its worldwide network of clubs, thereby offering ever-greater numbers of people the opportunity to benefit from its programs.



LETTERS

A MYOPIC SPEECH CONTEST

During my 11-year membership in Toastmasters, I've won my share of trophies in various speech contests, but I avoid entering the International competition because the types of speeches I enjoy do not fit the conventional winning formula.

Although International contest rules do not require any specific style or subject matter, through the years I've noticed a consistent bias toward inspirational or motivational speeches about personal growth and achieving success. Frankly, not only do I feel reluctant to compete, I don't want to attend these events anymore. I just can't bear to listen to another "Five Steps to Success" type of speech. I'm tired of hearing clichés and generalizations. I'm turned off by overwrought evangelical-style sales pitches, sad stories – complete with tears, and endless patronizing platitudes. Surely, we can do better than this.

I prefer speeches that challenge me to think, teach me something new or present me with a fresh viewpoint, even an unpopular one. Our speech manuals were designed to foster a much broader diversity than we are hearing at every level of the International contest.

On paper at least, Toastmasters is more than just another in a perpetual series of self-help groups. As long as our most prestigious speech contest continues to suffer from a myopic mind set, a much richer spectrum is being denied. Contestants are compelled to pander to the safe, sanitized status quo if they desire to be competitive. This is inconsistent with the spirit and direction of our training goals. Ironically, inspirational and motivational speakers often trumpet that we all should emulate noble qualities

such as risk-taking, creativity and the courage to be different. Why don't contest judges reward speakers who practice these qualities, since they obviously admire speakers who talk about them?

Robert A. Richert, DTM
Freethinkers Club 2620-1
Los Angeles, California

DON'T EXCLUDE THE AUDIENCE

Robert W. Balch's article, "The Power of the Positive You" provided an excellent reminder that the key to achieving interpersonal goals is to concentrate on the needs and desires of our intended audience rather than ourselves.

However, Mr. Balch seems to have forgotten that, in Toastmasters, evaluations are presented to an entire audience – not just to the speaker whose speech is being evaluated. A more appropriate way to present a Toastmasters evaluation is to refer to the speaker either by name or in the third person. For example: "Sally has a unique sense of humor that is refreshing to listen to. Her punchlines were crisp and well paced." This way, no one in the audience is excluded.

Evan Green, CTM
Santa Monica Club 21-1
Los Angeles, California

BACK TO THE LECTERN SHE GOES

Thank you many times over for printing the two articles on lecterns in the June issue. Thank you also for relieving me of the guilt and embarrassment I felt each time I spoke from behind the lectern and as a result was rated down on my evaluations. Many times I've had to decide what is worse: To speak from the lectern and receive criticism for it, or away from the lectern and risk leaving out valuable parts of my speech.

I have noticed that speakers who emphasize well-researched and prepared speeches prefer to speak from the lectern, while those with more general types of speeches tend to speak "off the cuff." But, thanks to your article, it's back to the podium, I mean lectern, for me. (Thanks for clearing that up, too!)

As I often say, the President of the United States speaks from the lectern – who am I?

Dorothy J. Nesbitt, CTM
EEOC Equalizers Club 4516-36
Washington, D.C.

CREATIVE STEALING

Patrick Mott's article, "Creative Stealing," (June) was funny. He tells it like it is when you find yourself aspiring to be a better writer and presenter. The lights come on upstairs when real inspiration crosses your ears. His oxymoron "judicious theft" is truly the essence of education and self-improvement.

Neil Langley
Andrew Jackson Club 704-29
Niceville, Florida

A NEW LEASE ON LIFE

I really enjoyed the article, "Are You Getting the Most of Being Involved?" (July). I am an inmate at Iowa's Women's Prison. By being involved in Toastmasters I not only have learned how to speak better, but I've learned to boost my ego, hold my head high and become a better citizen within my community upon my release. I've recruited several new members and I hope they become as active upon their release. Becoming a Toastmaster is one of the best things I have ever done. I now have a new perspective on life and feel great. I am now a leader and not a follower.

Kelly Sue Day
President, Visions Unlimited Club 9704-19
Mitchellville, Iowa



By Jim Poling, ATM

Caught by Complacency

IT WAS A SPEECH I HAD GIVEN 12 TIMES IN 10 DIFFERENT CITIES. So when the day for No. 13 arrived, I was blissfully unconcerned. Nothing stirred in my tummy, no passion, no butterflies. "No need to sweat," I thought. "Simply flip on the switch and turn up the body language and vocal variety." It was a gig I could do blindfolded.

A few hours before speech time, something from my earliest Toastmasters training began to nag me. It was unidentifiable, but constant enough that I pulled out the speech and closed the office door for a quick out-loud rehearsal. Halfway through, and after the sixth or seventh stumble, I realized I was going to blow this speech and embarrass both myself and my company.

I had broken my own cardinal rule: I had allowed myself to be lured into the spiderweb of complacency.

It was a scare I badly needed. An ATM entering my 10th year as a Toastmaster, I had not reviewed my performance for a long time. It suddenly struck me that I was not alone: Over the years I had heard a lot of ATM-level speeches that should have been much more dynamic. I decided it was time to give myself a thorough public speaking audit. Here are the notes that my personal audit produced:

1 Fight complacency. It's a hidden killer for veteran speakers. Every audience deserves your absolute best effort – the kind of effort you gave as a gung-ho new Toastmaster on the way up.

2 Remember basic training. Follow the rules and routines you set for yourself as a beginning Toastmaster. The skills learned from the basic manual provide the fundamentals for good public speaking. When we stray from this basic training, we lose our edge. Take time to review those CTM assignments and perhaps do a couple again, no matter what your level.

3 Rehearse every speech to the max. In today's time-starved society there is always a quick excuse for putting off practicing. Make time.

4 Shout it out! Rehearse at the top of your voice. Speaking loudly during rehearsals boosts confidence, produces energy and helps me control nervousness.

5 It's the content, stupid! Put some long, hard thought into every message you deliver. Search for new angles, new information, something different. How many times have we heard a speech that sounded good, but 15 minutes later no one could recall what was said?

6 Be passionate. Speak about things you strongly believe in. Say something important in every speech even if the subject is as simple as baking cookies.

7 Paint pictures. Try to create images in your speeches. Too many speeches are simply words strung together. Good public speaking is about painting pictures for listeners.

8 Run a checklist. Research your audience. Never deliver the same speech to another audience until you've satisfied yourself it's a good fit. Know the room. Think about things that might not go as planned and plan for contingencies. Arrive early and check things out.

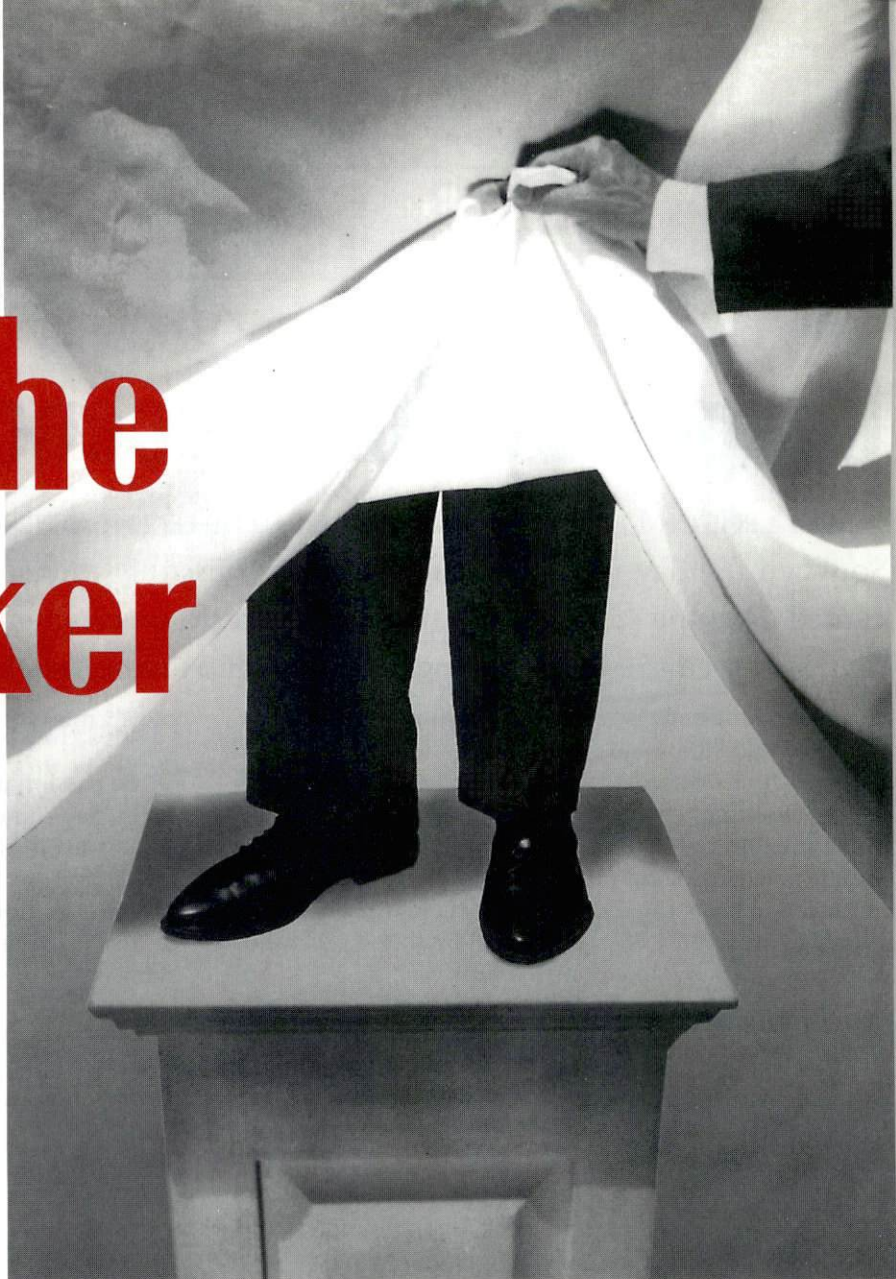
9 Takes notes. Always make notes on evaluations of your speeches. Note your own thoughts on what went well in your speech and what could have been done better. Always take notes in situations when you might be called on to speak. The most impressive people in meetings often seem to be those who have followed the discussion by jotting a few notes. Taking notes helps concentration and gives you some reference points if you are called upon unexpectedly.

10 Never forget Point No. 1. Toastmasters use positive thinking to ensure good performance. We always think in terms of how good we can be. But occasionally thinking about how bad we can be is a good kick in the pants to complacency.

Thankfully, I was able to shake off my complacency in time to redo and rehearse the speech that I had figured I could do in my sleep. It was a near-death experience that taught me that experienced Toastmasters, like pilots, need the occasional check ride. **T**

Jim Poling, ATM, is a member of Confidently Speaking Club 5456-60 in Mississauga, Ontario, Canada.

And the Speaker Is...



Introductions are important. Here's how to do them right.

The introductory remarks by which speakers are presented to their audiences are an important part of public speaking. Introductions typically are so bad that one of America's greatest lecturers, Mark Twain, refused to let anyone introduce him; he simply walked out on the stage alone and introduced himself. There are, however, important reasons why a speaker should be introduced and guidelines that should be followed by both the speaker and the introducer.

WHY AN INTRODUCTION?

Why should a speaker be introduced to an audience, especially if the audience already knows the speaker? There are several reasons:

1 No matter how familiar a speaker is with the audience, the speaker needs to separate himself from the listeners. An introduction aids in the separation; it's a brief ceremony

marking the significance of the speaker's transition from being in the group to stepping forth in front to lead its thinking.

2 The listeners will be more perceptive and appreciative if they understand what the speaker is undertaking. If the speaker's goal is to clarify an idea or persuade the group, the introduction will help to establish the group's mind set.

3 Even when a speaker is well-known, the audience may not know why the speaker is speaking about the chosen topic or what experience or expertise the speaker has in the subject area. A good intro-

duction makes it clear that the speaker speaks from special knowledge, experience or authority.

4 An introduction "builds a bridge" from where the thoughts of the group are at the moment to where the speaker wants them to be.

Thus, the introducer might say, "We have been discussing the details of our club's annual Officer Installation; now we'll be focusing on something more dramatic and different. Henry Jones will speak to us about..."

When you have the opportunity to present an introduction, take the job seriously. It's your opportunity for another speaking experience, even though you are not the featured speaker.

WHEN YOU'RE THE SPEAKER

As a speaker, you should help to prepare a good introduction for yourself. Don't be modest and tell your introducer that you don't care how you're introduced - you could be sabotaging your own speech. Instead, help your introducer by doing the following:

■ Don't take it for granted that the introduction will be properly prepared. Contribute toward the introducer's attitude about the job by offering your assistance and showing your appreciation. Your introducer is working to help you; work with him or her and express your gratitude.

■ Tell your introducer what you think ought to be said in introducing you. You don't want claims that you are especially brilliant, successful or intelligent, or that you are a "good speaker." These things will be evident in your speech. Say to your introducer, for example, "I am going to talk about government bonds as a personal investment, and I intend to analyze them from an accountant's

point of view. It will be helpful if you explain to the group when you introduce me that I have had such-and-such experience as an accountant."

Make sure your listeners are told that you can speak about your topic with reasonable authority.

■ Answer all questions your introducer asks about your general background, but be careful that your

"Be careful that your introduction doesn't include a lot of data that sound impressive but have no relevance to your speech."

introduction doesn't include a lot of data that sound impressive but have no relevance to your speech.

WHEN YOU'RE THE INTRODUCER

Introductions need not be flat, dull or stereotyped. They can be graceful, witty, fun to give and fun to hear - provided you do the following:

■ **Give star billing to the speaker.** Don't be a scene stealer and try to impress listeners with how clever or wise you are. Every sentence you say should be directed to fulfilling one of the functions of an introduction. Direct the group's attention to the speaker, not to yourself.

■ **Know what the speaker will be talking about.** Plan your introduction around the speaker's topic. Don't make a preliminary talk of your own on the subject.

For example, if your speaker is presenting an accountant's viewpoint on the new tax laws and you happen to be a better tax accountant than the speaker, use this fact to help, not to undermine the speaker. You could say, "As an accountant myself, I realize how important Alec's subject is, and I'm eager to learn more about it..." Then let the speaker give the speech.

■ **Emphasize the speaker's expertise** and experience in the topic.

■ **Set the mood** for the speaker and the speech. If Jim Clayton has just given a hilarious speech about his fishing vacation, and the speaker you are about to introduce will be talking about the need to support cancer research, your audience must be mentally prepared for the subject transition. Your introduction should change the atmosphere.

You could say, "Jim's account of the fish that got away was the funniest story I've heard for a long time, and I know that you enjoyed it, too. We know that some aspects of Jim's experience were probably more serious than he indicated.

"Fortunately, they turned out well. However, there are some experiences in life that don't turn out well. Life has its tragedies to match its comedies. Our next speaker is a woman who experienced one of life's tragedies. She recently has spent more time in the hospital than any of us would like to contemplate, and her life has dramatically changed as a result of her experience. Two years ago, Judy Smith discovered that she had cancer. After extensive treatment, it is now in remission. Judy now counsels other cancer patients in coping with their illness. She will speak today about what we can do to help prevent and cure cancer.

"Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome Judy Smith."

■ **Be brief!** If you tell a joke, make it swift and to the point. An introduction should never be longer than one minute; 30 seconds would be adequate. Prepare your introduction carefully, and make every word count.

By following these guidelines, your introductions will be effective and beneficial, whether you are the speaker or the introducer. **1**



Awaken Your Creativity

BY RAY ANTHONY ■ ILL.

I've enjoyed watching hundreds of highly accomplished speakers from all walks of life, including some of the finest professional speakers in the United States. I've found that while each followed certain "rules" of great oratory, such as having great content and using humor, gestures and clear visual aids, the truly exceptional ones added a unique aspect to their presentations – something magical called creativity.

People who attend my "Power Presentations" workshops often ask me how they can develop this special quality. They want to know the secrets of adding interest, pizzazz and sheer excitement to their presentations – how to make their performances outshine all others. Invariably, my answer is: "Use as much creativity as you can in the design and delivery of your speech!" In response, I often get dejected looks from them as if to say, "Me, creative... are you kidding? I'm happy if I can just develop a 'regular' presentation."

A creative presentation is one that adds a new dimension and perspective to your topic. Call it depth, brilliance, showmanship or dazzling energy; the point is this: Creativity will transform your speech from being like an average meal to a sumptuous feast!

To do this, nothing more than your imagination is required. Erroneously, most people feel they are incapable of being "creative." They still perceive creativity as some elusive trait privy only to a select few artists or otherwise exceptional people. Don't believe it! While most of us are not exceptionally creative in the artistic sense, we are all capable of tapping our reservoir of innate creativity. We generate lots of ideas for our speaking performances. Studies show that we use only one to five percent of our brain capacity.

So it's time for us to break this long spell of inactivity. "Imagination is more important than knowledge," Albert Einstein once said, and I believe this applies to speaking as well. Sure, it's true that both are needed, but as you



ativity!

How to make your speech
outshine all others.

ILLUSTRATION BY DANIEL AUBRY

know, solid information delivered in dull, unimaginative ways will quickly fall on deaf ears.

TAPPING INTO A MORE CREATIVE YOU

Creativity is essentially defined as the power to produce ideas. By using creativity techniques we can dig for those "invisible" ideas that always seem to float around right in front of our eyes unnoticed. Thus, we can learn to redesign old speech ideas and discover clever solutions to vexing problems or take advantage of seemingly out-of-reach opportunities. For example, creativity in speech making can make strange information appear familiar and familiar information appear strange. That is, imaginative thinking can help you put a different slant on things your audience previously took for granted. Only creativity can help you to make abstract or complete topics more understandable. And, of course, clever ideas can help to strengthen your persuasive strategies.

Remember that the end product of exerting creativity is ideas – any and every idea makes your presentation sparkle. They could be small or large, evolutionary or revolutionary, brilliant or plain. Here are some proven recommendations to help you generate the power of creativity in your speeches:

Recognize your creative potential. Start off right now firmly believing yourself capable of generating more ideas than you realize and you will start to ignite creative fires within yourself. Guess which trait most creative people have in common? While creative people, in general, are considered to be more adventurous, curious, independent, flexible, observant and more willing to take (prudent) risks, the major trait shared by creative people is that they actually believe they are creative! Simple as that. So believing that you can stimulate your natural creativity is a critical first step.

2 Flex your mental muscles. Believe it or not, the brain needs exercise to help build the flow of good ideas. So the more you get in the habit of coming up with ideas (the process is called "ideation"), the easier and faster the flow of ideas will become. It's been proven that practice actually builds the "idea muscle" in your brain. Coming up with good ideas is like selling: It's a numbers game. The more ideas you think of, the greater your chance of hitting a jackpot. Granted, maybe only a fraction of all your ideas will be usable, but that's still more ideas than you'd have if you didn't try. Brainstorm by yourself or with others and watch the ideas spurt out!

3 Open your mind to all possibilities – be a sponge. You can get the greatest ideas for your speeches from places, people and things that seemingly have nothing to do with your topic. The key is to look for the unexpected. I'm a sponge for all sorts of unusual and diverse sources of information or experiences. I get great ideas by browsing in the library, scanning the contents pages of all kinds of magazines, and just looking at book titles on the shelves. I also generate great ideas for props to use in my presentations and training sessions from exploring toy, hobby or the new high tech gadget stores. I'll see something and suddenly get a "connection" to an original idea that I can use. This "Aha!" or "Eureka!" syndrome whereby an idea suddenly pops into your head is the essence of creativity.

Your mind can only use the material you supply it with. In other words, to be more creative, you need to stimulate your mind with a barrage of information. It helps to be an avid reader. I read all kinds of publications, from *Mad* to *National Geographic* to *Scientific American* and the *Wall Street Journal*. Scanning a variety of catalogs and encyclopedias is another great source of ideas. Visit museums, attend seminars, enjoy comedy clubs, watch various types of movies, and (importantly) socialize with other highly creative people. While enjoying yourself, you'll be amazed at the wealth of sources for speech ideas, themes, information or real life stories. The goal is to flood your mind and senses with diverse, well-rounded visual, auditory and sensory experiences. Expect the unexpected, and keep your mind open to any possibilities.

4 Don't judge your ideas. It's human tendency to be harsh on our own ideas and kill them without a fair trial. We'll come up with an idea and then almost immediately say, "Nope, that's not going to work," or "Too risky," or "Someone else tried that before and it bombed!" To help channel your creativity, do some brainstorming by yourself or with respected colleagues and friends. First, try to come up with the greatest number of ideas in a relatively short period of time (start with an hour), and don't discount ideas that appear crazy. The goal is to open your mind's "idea" and let everything flow out full force. Write everything down. Once the ideas start to dry up,

you can begin to judge and select several workable ideas. You'll be amazed at how you can piggyback on some outrageous ideas, which later can be converted into something suitable for a speech.

5 Examine every angle. While most speakers are eager just to get their presentations over with (and thus settle for the first idea or solution they come up with), creative speakers are more daring and venture beyond the often predictable initial idea to develop several options. They try to cover their topics from different approaches, angles, perspectives and outlooks. After they've exhausted every possible option, they carefully choose the best one. Why settle for the first thing that pops in your mind?

Break down your creative quests into various speech-related categories. For example, imagine how the following could be used to spice up your performance:

- Your dress and appearance. What effect would wearing a costume, special makeup, "unusual" jewelry, funny hats, shoes or other accessories have?
- What interesting "props" (e.g., whistles, a cane, stuffed animals, flashlights, etc.) could you use?
- In what novel ways can you design and use your audiovisuals?
- What clever ways (activities, stunts, games, etc.) can you use to get your audience directly involved with your topic?

CREATIVE IDEAS ARE UNLIMITED

Creativity in a speech doesn't cost a lot of money or time. It doesn't necessarily mean coming up with earth shaking ideas. Often a few clever additions to your presentation can make a big difference. Following are just a few examples of the inventiveness of some speakers:

► One speaker did a great job memorizing and speaking (with a poker face) an entire paragraph backwards! The audience had no idea what she was saying until she explained her action and then repeated the paragraph (which contained her key points) correctly. She used this technique to illustrate to her executive audience that the proposal they were considering was a big step "backward." She not only got their attention, but their promise to re-evaluate their stance on the proposal.

► Another speaker spray-painted a big cardboard box black and stuck several signs that read "Danger, Extreme Caution" on all four sides. Placed inside was a battery-operated tape recorder playing various strange sounds (recorded from a "Special Effects" CD he had bought for \$11.95). The tape was started just before the audience filed into the room and was timed to end just as the speaker was introduced. The audience was amused and curious by the mix of sounds vibrating through the box. The speaker immediately alluded to the "danger" inside

the box and built up suspense until he reached inside and pulled out a big bold sign that read: "Waste." The point was to dramatize the danger of waste in their manufacturing operation. Combined with good statistics, the point was well remembered.

► One presenter has a ringing telephone placed on the podium during her presentation and proceeds to have a brief humorous conversation with the "caller" on the other end. Her "dialogue" adds dimension to several points in her talk and builds interest for her audience.

► Another speaker has herself introduced by a cassette recording. Her friend, an expert impersonator, records her introduction using the humorous impressions of four celebrities.

► One speaker, who prides himself on his low-budget craftsmanship and ingenuity, went to an art store and bought a thick foam core board and traced the image of a wide, three-foot arrow and then cut it out with a razor knife and painted it a two-tone color. Now, when he wants to dramatize a point, he picks up this oversize but lightweight arrow and points to his slides or overheads. It certainly gets attention at strategic points in his presentation!

► Finally, a friend of mine uses his love for high tech to add flair and theatrics to his presentations to civic and

business associations. Using his personal computer's animation software, he designs visual sequences for portions of his presentations. He even customizes his animated creatures by using names of people in the audience, specialized language of the group, the organization's logo and

other information needed to support his points. He brings his computer to his presentations and connects it to a large screen video projector. In one session of his talk, his software program depicts an animated figure having an entertaining "heated discussion" with him about a key point (he uses computer voice synthesis for this). I've seen several audiences burst into hearty applause after each showing!

You can discover innumerable similar speech-related ideas. Human imagination is infinite in its ability to

pump out ideas, but the key is to "prime the pump" first. The German philosopher Goethe said, "What you can dream you can begin; boldness has genius, power and magic in it." Take those first important bold steps toward using large doses of creativity in your speaking engagements. Go ahead and try it - you're more creative than you think! **T**

Ray Anthony is a consultant, workshop leader, keynote speaker and author of five books. His book, *Talking to the Top* (Prentice Hall), covers creative ways to give compelling high-level executive presentations. He is president of Genesis Training Solutions in The Woodlands, Texas.

"Imagination is more important than knowledge," Albert Einstein once said, and I believe this applies to speaking as well."

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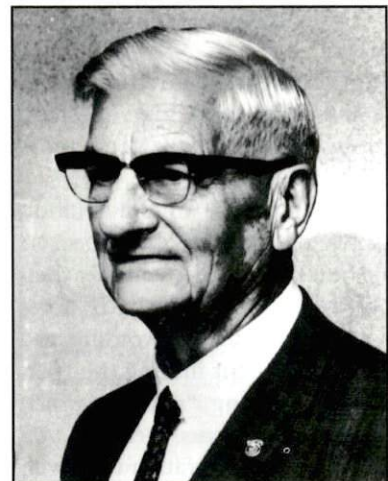
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Ralph C. Smedley



HOW TO

By Dave Gunby, ATM

Approach your final presentation notes as if the ink you are using is extremely expensive.

Duly Noted

Y*ou have to give a speech pretty soon. You've done the research and are about to prepare your notes. You have your favorite pen and 10 or 12 sheets of paper. You're ready to go.*

Stop! Don't write anything yet. I have some tips for using and creating notes that will make you a more natural speaker.

As an instructor of presentation skills, I've noticed that most speakers create notes that actually hinder their ability to speak effectively. If notes are written focusing on wording, too much time is spent finding the "perfect" words. Using "perfect" words can make an audience feel as if you are speaking *at* them rather than *with* them. If you create notes according to the following guidelines, you'll be

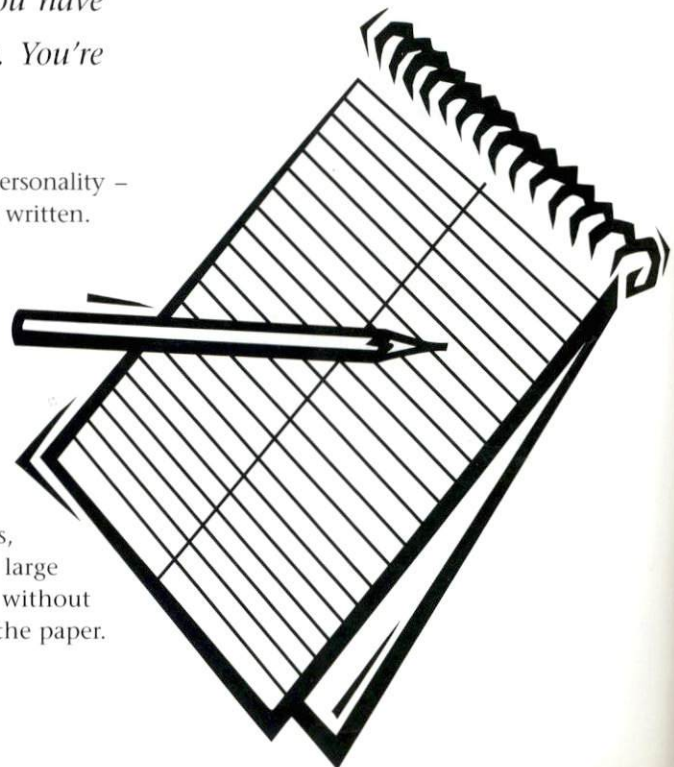
able to bring out your personality – not just the words you've written.

HOW TO PREPARE NOTES

First and foremost, write big! Ideally, you don't want to hold your notes; they can become a distraction for the audience and for you. Since you won't hold your notes, you will need to write large enough to read the text without squinting or picking up the paper.

While some speakers like lecterns, I avoid them at all costs. They create a barrier between me and my audience and reduce my ability to gesture naturally, making it even more difficult to establish rapport with my audience.

I prefer sheets of paper over note cards, provided I have somewhere to place my notes. I can write bigger and get more information on one sheet of paper, and I don't have to turn as many pages. Of course, there are times when I don't have a place to set my notes. In these situations, I use note cards that I keep in my pocket and take out only if absolutely necessary.



INCLUDE KEY WORD ONLY

Your notes should consist of key words, usually nouns or strong action verbs. Sentences and paragraphs are too long for your notes. Scripting your notes puts too much emphasis on the wording. Also, we write differently than we speak. Speaking the same way we write can sound stiff, artificial and "canned."

Be concise; keep it short and simple. Approach your final presentation notes as if the ink you are using is extremely expensive.

"Using 'perfect' words can make an audience feel as if you are speaking at them rather than with them."

Part of the reason we write so much in our notes is that we distrust our memory. Since we don't trust it, we write more. This makes it harder to remember. So in a strange and twisted way, we have proven our memory to be untrustworthy! If we kept our notes brief, they would be easier to remember.

USE THEM, DON'T ABUSE THEM

Take your notes with you, just in case – they are your safety net. No matter how much you rehearse, you may forget something you wanted to talk about. This type of memory lapse is natural. Nervousness is a barrier to effective thinking and memory. Having your notes with you simply means you are proactive and ready for the worst-case scenario. If you do get "lost," all you need to do is pause, gather your thoughts, glance at your notes and move on. It is better to pause than to say what I have heard too many people say: "Uhh, sorry... I lost my place."

Set down your notes out of arms reach so you are less likely to "fiddle" with them; this also reinforces the need to write big.

Use different colors. This creates visual "separation" between points in your notes and makes it easier to find where you are in your notes if you get lost (and we all do!)

Notes are a prompt, not a crutch. Look at them only when you have to confirm that you are saying the right thing.

Rehearse. The more you rehearse a speech, the briefer your notes can be. Challenge yourself by making the notes as brief as possible. Only "perfect practice" makes perfect:

When rehearsing your presentation, practice using your notes as little as possible.

MIND MAPPING

The best tool I have encountered for preparing notes is mind mapping. Originally designed as a memory device, mind mapping is much more than that. It is a method of putting key thoughts down on paper that reflects the way our mind thinks. Because mind maps include more of the brain's thinking processes, they are easier to remember.

Duly noting your presentation does not mean writing a script. In fact, many of us have seen how scripts make delivering a speech more difficult. By following these guidelines, you now can prepare notes more easily – notes that will enable you to bring out your personality in your speech. **1**

Dave Gunby, ATM. is a member of Legacy Leaders Club 4767-50 in Plano, Texas.



Snappy humor for speakers

Karl Righter, DTM

Humorous recoveries for when you first notice you've gone way overtime.

- "I just realized my notes are in reverse order, and the longer I speak, the further I'm getting from my conclusion!"
- "I see I shouldn't have paused to explain all those jokes!"
- "I just noticed some of you are shaking your watches to see if they're still working!"
- "Some of these notes I've been reading from were apparently left up here by the previous speaker."
- "Sorry, I'm trying to get my CTM faster by doing two assignments at a time."
- "I love to go before an audience, and I still can if I wrap this up quickly!"
- "I've just been handed a copy of the program with the date circled in red!"
- "I see people are already voting, so I'll wrap this up!"

Karl Righter, DTM, a professional speaker, corporate trainer, and humorist, is a 30-year member of Orlando Toastmasters Club 1066-47 in Orlando, Florida, and a past district governor of District 47.



Checklist For Using

Your image and
your humor should
be consistent with
your message.

As a youngster I was once punished for telling a joke. It wasn't naughty – I just happened to tell it at an inopportune time. I learned early that it's not only the joke you tell, but when and to whom you tell it that influence its reception.

Humor

I was disciplined for telling a good joke at a bad time to the wrong audience. You probably won't suffer for making the same mistake, but your presentation might.

Here's a quick check list to help you determine when to use humor in your speech and which humor to include:

Is the material funny? The humor you use must pass two tests before it should go into your speech. First, do you think it's funny? If you don't, then forget it. You have to believe in it to do it justice. Second, do others think it's funny? You can test this by telling your story in conversations. Try it on some friends over lunch. Tell it at a party. If small groups laugh at it, audiences probably will, too.

Do I understand this joke? Everything in a humorous story leads to the punchline. In order to effectively build to that laugh, you must understand the punchline enough to know why you're building to it. It affects how you tell the story, and how well you tell it.

I once played a farmer in a hokey vaudeville routine where the questioner asked me, "Can you tell me how long cows should be milked?" My comedic reply was, "The same as short ones."

During the performance the straight man said, "Can you tell me how long I should milk a cow?" I had no response.

If he had understood the humor of the joke, he would not have blown the set-up line.

Is it appropriate and inoffensive? Your anecdote may be perfectly acceptable, but when and to whom you tell a story affects whether or not it is appropriate.

To give you an example, I often tell an audience that I look them over during the banquet and try to decide on a story that is applicable to them. Then I say, "I think I have one for this group. There was this very old man..."

This works for a group of middle-aged, mature people because I'm kidding them about their age. It's inappropriate and offensive if I do this same line at a senior citizens' affair.

Of course, obviously inappropriate and offensive lines should be ruled out, but be careful even with the seemingly innocuous anecdotes, too.



Is this humor pertinent? Does this tale fit in with my presentation? Does it illustrate part of my message?

You don't want your humor to be so different from the theme of your speech and so jarring that it distracts from your message. There's nothing wrong with humor that simply relaxes or reinvigorates your listeners, but even then, it should fit comfortably into the flow of your speech.

Does it accomplish its purpose? Your humor should have a purpose in your presentation – to illustrate part of your message, to relax your listeners, whatever. Does it do this without muddying the waters?

If the purpose of a joke is to illustrate a salient point, be sure it clearly illustrates that point. If its purpose is to relax the audience, be sure it fits at an appropriate place in your presentation.

Is the humor consistent with my message? All humor has a serious side to it – a message of its own. You must be certain that the message embedded in your anecdote

doesn't contradict the thrust of your presentation. For example, you can't preach loyalty to the company and then tell five or six jokes about how dumb your boss is.

Know your message well and understand any stories that you relate. Make sure they're compatible.

Is the humor consistent with my image? Part of any speech is the speaker. Your image is part of your message, whether you like it or not. I once heard a professional speaker preach, "You can do anything you want to do." I heard a listener whisper to a friend, "I guess he doesn't want to lose that gut that's hanging over his belt." His message clashed with his image.

Your image should be consistent with your presentation, and any humor you include should be compatible with your image.

Can I tell this joke? Not everyone can tell every joke. Even the professional comedians know their limitations and work within them. Robin Williams can tell dialect gags; Roseanne can't. So she doesn't.

Can you do all that this joke demands to be told properly? If you can't do it effectively, don't do it at all. A good joke told badly is a bad joke.

Have I prepared this material? I read once where Frank Sinatra would not perform a song in public until he had rehearsed it for at least a month. As a writer for Bob Hope, I used to rehearse with him before shows. Often on the drive to the theater, we would read a piece of material together five, 10, or 15 times.

You should have any material you're going to include in your presentation prepared, rehearsed, and finely tuned. You owe it to yourself and your listeners.

Does this humor make my presentation better? Mentally sit in your own audience and listen to the humor you will include in your speech. Does it enhance the speech? If it does, perform it with gusto. If it doesn't, drop it. ①

Gene Perret is a writer living in Westlake Village, California.

"Add humor to your speeches—A laugh is nature's way of telling you people are listening."

Steve Allen

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Making the Emotional Connection

Speakers who touch us emotionally can actually create experiences for us, or evoke long dormant memories.



*K*ennedy had it, Nixon didn't. George Bush did once, but then lost it to Bill Clinton. I'm referring to the ability to make an emotional connection.

The goal of all marketing, of course, is to motivate the consumer to buy your product. But first, they must buy your message. The art of persuasion is often misunderstood. We cannot convince people to believe something they don't already believe on some level. We cannot change minds. Persuasion is about bringing people's convictions and values to the surface. Before we can motivate such an action however, we first must make an emotional connection.

We buy on emotion, and justify with fact. ("I really want this new coat... plus it's on sale.") You may disagree with this notion because you believe you are totally rational and thoroughly research everything before buying. But think back to your last big purchase – a car, house, boat, etc. What first attracted you? Was it the color, size or how it made you feel? After that initial reaction, you then probably justified the price. The same principle applies to the selling of ideas. Before we buy the facts, we buy the emotion.

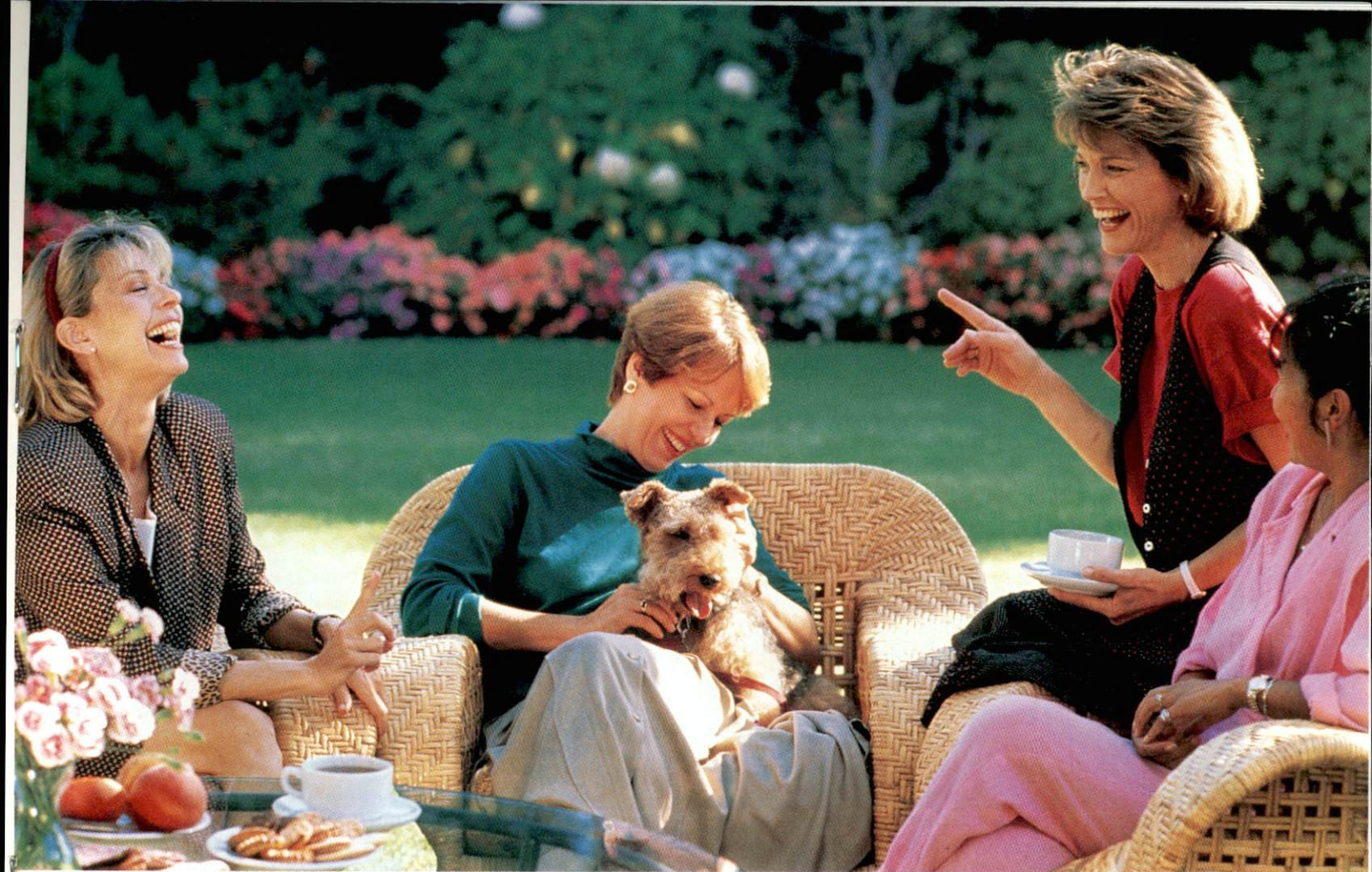
TALKING ON THE RIGHT SIDE

The human brain is divided into two parts. The left side operates in a linear manner controlling language, logic and mathematics. The right side controls the conceptual thought process of art, music, creativity and inspiration. No person uses only half of her brain – contrary to generalizations about right-brained artists and left-brained engineers.

Linear, left-brained thinking seems more prevalent and comfortable in our society, but tapping into the right side of the brain is far more powerful. This is where the emotional connection is made. It is harder to appeal to the right side, because it is often dormant. Many of us are not allowed to introduce creativity, new ideas or inspiration into our jobs. So to appeal to the right side, the conceptual side, we may have to re-discover it in ourselves, before being able to stir it up in others.

Our memories and experiences are held in the right side. When the aroma of homemade cookies instantly takes you back to your grandma's kitchen, or when a song makes you feel the same vivid pain or joy you felt at a high school dance, it's your right brain that has been activated.

BY SUSAN ST. JOHN ■ ILLUSTRATION BY THE STOCK MARKET



LEARNING FROM THE PAST

Speakers who appeal to the right side of our brains, who touch us emotionally, make a lasting connection. They can actually create experiences for us, or touch off a long dormant memory. This is why the person who makes the emotional connection is so memorable and has the power to motivate.

THE LIKABILITY FACTOR

The best communicators in the world are not those who can recite a lot of facts, or who never utter an "um." The strongest speakers have a more important trait: They are likeable. Before our minds will accept a new message, we first have to like the person. Do we have a good feeling about him? Do we like her enough to listen and to trust her? Nowhere does this stand out more than in a political election campaign.

Studies show that 84 percent of the voting public in the United States decides on a presidential candidate within the last two weeks of a campaign. That's when we decide whom we like. Only then do we find facts to support our feeling. Trust occurs only after an emotional connection is made.

WHERE WAS GEORGE?

In the 1988 U.S. presidential campaign, George Bush overcame the "wimp factor" and learned how to connect with

voters. The most telling moment of his campaign came down to one debate question. Bush was asked about his stand on abortion. Everyone already knew the answer: He was against it. The question was expected to score points for the opposition, but Bush turned it around. His voice got soft, and he began to tell the story of losing his two-year-old daughter to cancer. He talked about the pain of watching his baby die, but being unable to do anything about it. He and his wife Barbara went through depression. A little piece of him died when he lost his precious daughter. He knew what it was like to lose a child. George Bush was not a candidate anymore, he was a human being.

What made the approach stand out even more was how Bush's rival, Michael Dukakis, answered a similarly tough question. Trying to be consistent with his views against the death penalty, Dukakis failed to show any emotion when asked whether he would feel differently if his wife was raped and murdered. Without missing a beat, he looked straight into the camera and flatly said, "No." He still could have stuck to his point, if only he had identified with the pain and anger most of us would feel if someone we loved was hurt. Instead his answer became his downfall. Dukakis believed he could win a campaign solely based on intellect and issues. The voters told him otherwise.

*"Before we
buy the
facts, we
buy the
emotion."*

*“Great
communicators
adapt to each
situation with
great flexibility.”*

Whatever communication skills Bush displayed in 1988 were completely absent four years later. He was up against someone high on the likability scale, Bill Clinton. The second debate was the first of its kind with new ground rules. It was to be a town meeting, and all the questions would come from the audience. This was Clinton's forte.

Again, the deciding factor came down to one question. A woman from the audience stood up and asked Bush how he personally had suffered during the economic recession. Bush seemed confused by the question. How had he suffered? You mean the nation? He asked the woman to clarify. She repeated her question. Bush mumbled an answer that nowhere near matched the emotion of the woman's delivery. That answer told many voters that George Bush was out of touch.

Bill Clinton answered next. The first thing he did was to stand up and walk over to the woman (a savvy technique to force the television cameras to use a close-up shot of just Clinton and the woman, with no other candidates in the frame). Next, he asked her a question. What had she and her friends suffered? Yes. He could identify, for he was from the small state of Arkansas, and they had suffered a lot. And in Arkansas, you know everybody by their first name, and you know their families. He suffered their pain. Clinton found the emotional connection and made a slam dunk.

CAN YOU IDENTIFY?

Great communicators are like chameleons. They adapt to each situation with great flexibility. This doesn't mean they change their personality, but that they adapt their style to make others feel comfortable. For example, if you were talking to a shy person who spoke softly, you would make that person uncomfortable by talking loudly and boisterously.

Basically, we all like to be around people who are like us, who share our beliefs. This common bond makes us feel comfortable and connected.

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LIGHT A FIRE

Passion is the key to the soul. Think about a time when you were motivated to take action. Perhaps it was a motivational speaker, a late-night infomercial, a friend's comment or a president's speech. Whatever it was you heard that made you take action, you first had to believe that the person delivering the message was earnest and passionate about what he had to say.

Passion is rare. When we meet passionate people, we often describe them as dynamic, riveting, engaging. We are attracted to passionate people, usually because they are successful. There is the old joke of a novice salesperson who sets up for failure on cold calls by saying, "I don't suppose you want to buy anything from me, do you?" In effect, that's how we come across if we have no passion.

LETTING THE MAGIC RUB OFF

More than anything else, making the emotional connection makes others feel good. Powerful communicators can leave people on a natural high – that's why we want to be around them.

The most successful marketing campaigns work because they make consumers feel good about their purchases. Just like driving your brand new car off the lot – you feel good about the product, you feel smart for making the decision. That initial feeling has nothing to do with intellect; it's emotionally satisfying. Bottom line, you feel good about yourself, and because you feel good, you go back for more. It is exactly the same impact you can have by marketing your message to the right side of the brain. **1**

Susan St. John is a professional speaker. Her training company, Your Spoken Image, is based in Cheyenne, Wyoming. This article is excerpted from her book *Marketing Yourself to the Top: Communicating to Win in a Competitive Marketplace* (Kendall-Hunt Publishing).

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Stop Boring Your Audience

Five proven steps to maintaining an audience's interest.

By Frank Losco. ATM

All of us have "listened" to a boring speech or sat through a drawn-out seminar where we were painfully reminded of the speaker's failure to capture our attention. And as Toastmasters, most of us probably have experienced the agonizing frustration of addressing an audience that looked bored.

How many times have you sat in the back of an audience so you could sneak out just in case the presentation did not interest you? To keep those "sneakers" from walking out early, try the following five keys to maintaining an audience's interest.

These steps will help you develop skills to invigorate, motivate and

captivate your audience! Not only will your audience be more interested, but you will be less nervous. Capturing an audience's attention does wonders to put a speaker at ease. It is like hosting a party in your home – when you see your guests shaving a great time, you stop worrying about what music to play.

■ Know Your Audience

Before delivering a speech, you must determine your audience's appetite – what are they hungering for? Is the audience familiar with your subject? Does the audience already have a particular viewpoint concerning your topic? Will they understand if you use technical jargon? By determining your audience's interest, you will know what to serve. A little homework ahead of time will pay great dividends.

Determine the age, sex, occupation, educational background, professional affiliations and any other demographics available about your audience. Talk to the program

chairperson, the sponsoring agency of your speaking event, or the Vice President Education (if you are speaking before a Toastmasters club) to learn as much as possible.

Focus on areas of interest to your audience. For example, if you are giving a presentation before your local school's parents club on "How to Purchase a Computer," you would need to know the audience's experience with computers. If your audience has little computer sophistication, do not attempt to use technical language. Audiences lose interest easily, and nothing does it faster than speaking at an inappropriate level.

When making a speech, think of yourself as the chef in a fine restaurant. Patrons come to your eatery to delight in the marvels of your culinary talents. Determining what tantalizes their taste buds will enable you to prepare a feast for their enjoyment! Remember, not all your customers have the same appetite. Liver and onions may delight certain people but discourage others from staying for dessert. If you know your "customers" are passionate about eating spicy pepperoni pizza, prepare the thickest, richest pizza you have ever created. Now you're cookin' and your audience will come back for more!

■ Explain The Benefit

Members of your audience come to listen with only one question in mind: "What's in it for me?" Their interest is highest in the very beginning of a presentation as they look for answers to this question. This is the speaker's opportunity to capture the audience's attention. Explain the benefit of your presentation first – give the audience a reason to listen! What will your audience learn that will enhance their lives?

Many speakers give great presentations but never think to mention how the information will benefit the audience. Do not think of your needs – think of what your listeners

need to know about your subject. Do not assume they already know the value of your message.

A colleague of mine recently attended a training seminar about number-crunching. When I asked her how it went, she told me she learned a lot about developing statistical models, but she was unsure of any practical application for her

"Your audience wants to relate to you as an individual. The rapport that you develop with each member is critical to maintaining their interest."

new-found knowledge. She had lost interest because the benefit of the material had not been explained.

Audiences will listen when they understand what's in it for them. If you have already done your homework in Step 1 by determining what your audience likes to "eat," providing the benefit should be a piece of cake.

■ Speak Visually

With the explosion of electronic media, our society is becoming more visually oriented. Television, video and computers are forcing us to process information visually. In Toastmasters, we learn the value of using visual aids, such as overheads and props, to assist understanding and to reinforce a message. Another "visual aid" not to be underrated is "speaking in pictures," using specific, vivid and concrete words in presentations. When you paint pictures with your speech, audiences are encouraged to visualize your presentation.

Our mind operates like a television set – our thoughts are constantly being pictured on the visual screen in our brain. When an audience arrives for a presentation, their TVs typically are not tuned to the speaker's channel. Most likely, audience members are "watching" events in their own lives. Maybe thoughts are focused on the bouquet

of flowers that was just received, worrying about paying next month's rent or thinking about what to eat for dinner.

As presenters we want our audiences to be "tuned in" to our channel. I have developed an exercise in my training seminars that best illustrates the concept of speaking in pictures:

I ask a participant in the class to respond to the statement: "I ate dessert last night." Typically, the response is a dull, "I guess you ate a piece of cake or something for dessert." However, when I ask for a response to the following statement I get a much different reply: "Last night I ate an incredible dessert. It was a banana split piled high with scoops of rich chocolate, French vanilla and creamy strawberry ice cream, layered with dripping, hot-fudge syrup, mounded with a bed of swirling whipped cream, sprinkled with a dash of chopped walnuts and topped with three bright red cherries." The usual response is, "I'm hungry!" Most audiences cannot listen to that description without visualizing the banana split and changing their channel to my speaking station.

This exercise typifies that once your audience members select your television channel, their thoughts are focused on your message, and more importantly, you have gained their attention!

■ Generate Energy

Energy is the magic that carries your message! No one appreciates a lethargic, tired or dull speaker. Audiences want to hear and see enthusiastic speakers who are excited about their topics. It is the same reason fans at a football game get excited and rise to their feet over a thrilling play. Your "fans" are asking you for that same excitement!

An audience reflects the attitude of the speaker. If the speaker appears uninterested and bored, you can guarantee that the audience will

look the same. When you want the audience to radiate energy and show interest, you need to smile and express enthusiasm.

When an inspirational speech is delivered, the audience comes alive. Sometimes while sitting in an audience you may have felt the "electricity" in the air. At that point, the audience starts to invigorate the speaker and the presenter starts thinking: "They really like me."

Energize your audience and they will energize you!

■ Develop Rapport

Public speaking really comes down to establishing personal relationships with an audience. When you present, you are not speaking to a group of people, but rather to many individual persons. When we listen to a speech, we hear it personally from one other person.

Toastmasters learn to develop this rapport with their audiences by using vocal variety, movements and gestures. These techniques allow

the audience to feel at ease and interested.

Studies indicate that 10 percent or less of the message in our presentation is communicated with words. Our voice and non-verbal gestures, including facial expression and movements, account for the remainder of the message. Most untrained speakers do not value and

"If the speaker appears uninterested and bored, you can guarantee that the audience will look the same."

develop these skills sufficiently. As one of my seminar participants remarked, "If words only account for 10 percent of the message, why do most speakers spend 100 percent of their time working on the words in their speech?"

Your audience wants to relate to you as an individual. The rapport that

you develop with each member is critical to maintaining their interest.

Match your voice and movements with your words. Think of your speeches as if you were conversing with a friend. If you are telling your friends about a terrifying or heroic experience, you naturally would use vocal variety and expressive gestures. Similarly, if you are communicating the same experience to an audience, you need to be dynamic and expressive with your voice and movements.

By using these five keys, you will find that your listeners give you more attention than you ever expected. Your audience will greatly appreciate your efforts and will reward you with their interest and the sweet sound of applause! **T**

Frank Losco, ATM, is a member of Golden State Capitol Club 7489-39 in Sacramento, California.



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MANNER OF SPEAKING

By Patrick Mott

In George Bernard Shaw's *England*, the difference between a ditch digger and an aristocrat could be little more than a matter of vocal inflection. One might hear a yeasty Cockney accent alongside the clipped tones of Oxbridge on the street in front of the Covent Garden Opera House, but only the most polished speech could get through the front door.

You Are What You Say

Shaw's book *Pygmalion* (and later Lerner and Loewe's play *My Fair Lady*) is no more than a couple of minutes along before that prickly champion of proper speech, Henry Higgins, fulminates grandly about this gulf between classes, and rails against the sorry state of the English tongue in the hands of linguistic assassins.

It makes for good bombastic comedy. Unfortunately, it's true.

Sloppy, lazy or incorrect personal speech may not be the monolithic social roadblock today that it was a century ago, but poor speech habits can cause a kind of subtle social demotion and can identify us, rightly or wrongly, as careless, ignorant, thoughtless or uneducated.

We may acquire, and perpetuate, these habits unknowingly. We change the way we speak several times during our lives, from childish chatter to the halting cadence of old age, and that constant process of evolution can allow bad speaking habits to creep in without our conscious knowledge. Hearing ourselves day to day as others hear us can be difficult at best.

Because it's so easy to fall victim to these linguistic booby traps, it's a

good idea to periodically reassess the way we speak – not from the lectern but in everyday discourse. A sympathetic – and honest – friend can help, but in the end responsibility for maintaining or fixing your speech habits lies with you.

Recently nine general types of vocal misbehavior were listed by the Gallup

"Poor speech habits can cause a kind of subtle social demotion and can identify us, rightly or wrongly, as careless, ignorant, thoughtless or uneducated."

organization according to the percentage of poll respondents who said they were annoyed by them. They were: interrupting (88 percent), swearing (84 percent), mumbling (80 percent), talking loudly (73 percent), speaking in a monotone (73 percent), using fillers such as "um" and "you know" (69 percent), whining (67 percent), talking fast (66 percent) and using poor grammar or mispronunciations (63 percent).

Be your own Henry Higgins.

See anything familiar in there? Actually, most of us probably transgress in every one of these areas at least occasionally. But for some, these gaffes can be chronic, and a real problem.

What to do? Let's start by agreeing to be brutally honest with ourselves and tackle these sins one by one:

■ **Interrupting.** Has a great idea just occurred to you while you're listening to another person? Is it so terrific that you just have to blurt it out? Unless you're going to inform the person that he's about to be hit with a falling piano, probably not. Wait. Then wait some more.

■ **Swearing.** No one betrays his or her linguistic ignorance more starkly than the chronic swearer. With every offensive word, this person is proclaiming that he is handicapped by a limited vocabulary or, if he does know acceptable words, is simply too lazy and inconsiderate to use them. Slow down. Think. The English language is incomparably rich and powerful enough on its own.

■ **Mumbling.** This is a result of self-consciousness. A person who knows exactly what he wants to say and how, who has command of a broad vocabulary and knows how to organize his ideas does not mumble. This involves, again, taking a moment to think before you speak. And, again, it points out the need for a good vocabulary.

■ **Talking loudly.** Ask your friends about this. The problem may lie in simple ignorance of how to modulate your vocal volume. Or it could indicate the need for a visit to the ear doctor.

■ **Speaking in monotone.** This is the first cousin to mumbling. Most monotonous speakers have no idea they're doing it. If you discover you're one of them, give yourself permission to be a bit more theatrical in your speech. People will listen. Appreciatively.

■ **Using fillers such as "um" and "you know."** Insidious. The result of talking ahead of your brain, and fear of dead air. Pause. Take a breath. Form your idea. Now speak. Just tripped over a thought? Relax. A couple of seconds of silence won't hurt anyone.

■ **Whining.** Hard to define precisely, but you know it when you hear



it. It's simply a complaint with a nasty, juvenile edge. Got a beef? Air it in solid, even tones, like an adult. You'll get better results.

■ **Talking fast.** This is another symptom of the fear of dead air. In music, much of the drama is in the rests, not the notes. It's the same with speaking. Force yourself to develop an even cadence, and watch the ears around you perk up.

■ **Using poor grammar or mispronunciations.** Not sure how it's supposed to hang together? The solution doesn't involve any trick at all: Learn. Go back to the lessons you didn't get in the first place and get them right the second time around.

We are what we say, and we are judged by the way we say it. As we mature physically and intellectually, our speech should mature with us. Fortunately, even if your speech has a few ragged edges, simple self-awareness may be all you need to round them off.

It's entirely possible to be your own Henry Higgins.

Patrick Mott is a freelance writer living in Fullerton, California.

One of the best ways to build your Club's membership is through a Speechcraft Program. This eight-session program teaches potential members the basics of public speaking and is a great introduction to the Toastmasters Communication and Leadership program. In fact, many members began their Toastmasters "career" as a Speechcraft participant.

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August 1997

No matter how busy life gets, this Distinguished Toastmaster always makes time for her club meetings.

**WHERE
THERE'S
A**

Why,

**THERE'S
A**

Way



I joined Toastmasters in 1991. I attended meetings regularly, participated fully, and eventually earned my DTM. And then I still attended meetings regularly and participated fully. Someone at work kept asking me, "Why do you continue to go?" and "How much can you possibly learn about public speaking – aren't you already a good speaker?"

Well, I am certainly a better speaker than I was six years ago, but there is always room for improvement. What brings me back week after week is the wealth of extra benefits I have gained, and continue to gain. So, no matter how busy life gets, I always find a way to get to my Toastmasters meetings.

Toastmasters isn't just about giving speeches; it's about being a communicator and leader. These are two areas in which we can continue to develop, virtually forever. So when that person at work asks me why I continue to go, here's what I tell him I have learned and gained so far:

TO LISTEN

Toastmasters has taught me that listening to people with interest and enthusiasm and an open mind can make a tremendous difference in relationships. I have learned a great deal in the past six years by simply being willing to listen. I am even able to listen to people speak without finishing their sentences or answering their questions before they ask. I was always a terrible "interrupter," and that is one habit I am thankful I have begun to overcome.

TO LOOK FOR THE GOOD IN OTHERS

Being a speech evaluator has taught me there is something good in every speech, every person, every situation. Although it sometimes takes a little effort to find it, the positive aspect is there.

In business we all have to deal with difficult people. I have learned that if I can find the good and say something about it, the difficult person becomes less of a challenge – either because I am looking at him differently, or because he feels appreciated and less threatened.

TO NETWORK

I have discovered that it truly is not what you know, but who you know. As a member of a corporate club, I have met people in my organization, as well as from other companies whom I otherwise would not have met. When I have encountered challenges in my job, I have been able to call on a fellow Toastmaster in another department for help. People have even come to me with their problems, not necessarily because I may have the answer, but because of the network I have built through Toastmasters.

TO BUILD FRIENDSHIPS

Very often in Toastmasters we share personal experiences through speeches and Table Topics. This gives us a chance to get to know our fellow club members on a level otherwise not available. The result is a bond, a friendship, a kindred spirit that develops and grows with every new speech. I have developed friendships with many people in my home club; friendships that will last a lifetime.

TO BE A LEADER

In Toastmasters, the opportunity to learn and practice leadership skills is readily available to anyone willing to try. From serving as club Sergeant-at-Arms to District Governor and many positions in between, leadership opportunities are plentiful. And the wonderful part of all this is that you may learn the skills in a Toastmasters environment, but you can take these new and improved skills to every area of your life. Becoming a better leader has helped me tremendously with other projects I am involved in, and best of all, I have become a better leader for my children.

TO SPREAD MY ENTREPRENEURIAL WINGS

I always knew that some day I would work for myself and Toastmasters has given me that opportunity. By learning communication skills and being able to share what I have learned with others, I have built myself a nice little busi-

ness: I give workshops to corporations on much needed presentation techniques. I also have put my experiences down on paper in the form of a reference booklet – tips on giving powerful presentations. Other projects are in the works. I now understand how people who do what they love don't think of themselves as having a job or having to go to work. What an amazing thing it is to look forward to the next day with anticipation and joy!

TO ACCEPT COMPLIMENTS

Like many others, I never knew how to accept a compliment. I was a terrible one for making excuses, or saying, "Oh, this ol' thing." Being comfortable with myself, confident with my communication ability and simply knowing how to respond, I can now "feel" complimented when someone says something nice, rather than embarrassed.

TO ACCEPT FEEDBACK

How many of us fall into the trap of being angry, confrontational and defensive when having our performance reviewed? These used to be my typical reactions, as well. After participating in the "evaluation" process at Toastmasters, however, I have learned a better way. My typical response now is one of appreciation and gratitude – even with people who don't know the finer art of giving "positive and effective" feedback.

TO OVERCOME SHYNESS

Prior to my Toastmasters transformation, I used to be extremely shy. In fact, I was so shy and afraid of strangers that I once stood outside a banquet hall for 25 minutes, terrified to go in because I had never been there before and didn't know anyone. I'm pleased to say I did eventually go in, and I am very, very pleased to say the same situation today would cause little more than a slight flutter in my belly. For me, shyness was mainly a lack of confidence and underdeveloped social skills. By participating in Toastmasters I have had the opportunity to come face to face with many strangers, in many social situations. After working on this fear for many years, I now believe that a stranger is simply a friend I haven't met yet!

INCREASED SELF-CONFIDENCE

I always told myself I was just shy. But in reality, my self-confidence was very low. If there's one thing Toastmasters offers everyone, it's opportunity. And I found that by taking on opportunities and learning new skills, my confidence began to soar. I then noticed that I was more willing to try things in other areas of my life, with friends and family and work projects I was involved in. As I contin-

ued to take small steps and have small successes, my self-confidence grew and grew. Now when I do not take a particular action, I know the decision is based on logic and reason, not on fear and lack of confidence.

INCREASED SELF-ESTEEM

This one should really be first on the list because without enhanced self-esteem, I likely would not have seen half the successes I have experienced since joining Toastmasters. I found very often it was the little things that made a difference – a new member asking for my help with a speech, an evaluator sincere with praise, or a supportive executive member simply saying thanks for a job well done. Once I learned to like myself and be happy with the person I had become, all else became possible.

TO CONTROL EMOTIONS

To say I was "high-strung" would have been an understatement. My whole existence was ruled by emotion. If someone upset me or made me angry in the morning, I would be in that frame of mind all day. All my decisions and interactions with people would be affected by my bad mood. I have learned through my experiences in Toastmasters that life is an attitude, and your attitude is your choice and entirely under your control. Not that I still don't occasionally "lose it," but those times are now the exception rather than the rule.

TO SMILE

If I had to choose one thing that made a dramatic difference in my life, it would be learning to smile more often. I have found that a smile can open a locked door, help a hurting heart, and pave a rocky road. When I smile I feel happy, and when I feel happy, I smile. And it's contagious! If you doubt that, try giggling a little next time you're in a crowded room. You'll be amazed at the people who join you, or at least crack a smile. A genuine smile will do more for you than all the chocolate in the world!

*"Communication
and leadership
are two areas
in which we
can continue
to develop
virtually forever."*

It is my sincere hope that everyone who joins Toastmasters discovers their own reasons for why they should attend regularly, continue with their membership and make Toastmasters a priority in their lives. After all, when we know why we do something, we have no difficulties making time for it. **T**

Dawn Frail, DTM, is a member of Front Street Speakers Club 7282-60 in Toronto, Ontario, Canada.



By Mark Majcher, ATM

Toastmasters share their lessons learned.

Go Beyond the Meeting

FOR THAT HOUR OR TWO WE SPEND IN OUR WEEKLY TOASTMASTERS meeting, there remains 166 hours per week we spend out in the "real world." There we continue to communicate with others through speech, gestures and our writings. What we learn at the meeting is only the tip of the iceberg. The consummate Toastmaster attempts to parlay the art of communication in all endeavors.

This forum shares those ideas and "lessons learned" that empower the Toastmaster to become a more effective communicator. We want to share those specific actions or behaviors for the reader to incorporate and benefit from. Here are some of the latest reader submissions:

■ *After I have written a speech, I record it into a tape recorder and listen to it. It often sounds more like reading an article than giving a speech. I then revise it as often as needed until it sounds like a speech, yet retains the key content. When we write our thoughts down on paper, we tend to write them in a too-stilted essay format.*

RUDOLF CZERNECKI, ATM – TORONTO, ONTARIO, CANADA

■ *When handling notes, place the first and second cards side by side on the lectern at the beginning of the speech. As your speech progresses and you're done with the first card, place the second card over the first with the least amount of distraction as possible. What you should see now are the second and third cards. Repeat this process until the last two cards are at eye's view.*

LAURA DEBRO CARTER, ATM – LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS

■ *New members will ask, "What do I talk about after the Ice Breaker?" To answer this, I suggest they first glance through the entire basic manual. As they get ideas for speech topics, I recommend listing them in pencil in the manual's Table of Contents. Then when progressing through the projects, the*

member will have created a reference of speech possibilities to develop. Scraps of notes can be collected inside the manual. The usual advice is "to talk about what you know." But sometimes it's fun to research interesting, current news items that add to your knowledge and will interest your fellow Toastmasters as well.

JEAN ELLERIE, DTM – BOCA RATON, FLORIDA

■ *Using a computerized spread sheet program, I collect themes, topics and titles. I then sort them under major categories to produce a collection of lists. Each of these lists contains about 40 one-line entries which I use for "brainstorming" to determine the content of my presentations.*

EDWIN M. BEBEE – TUCSON, ARIZONA

■ *We acquire bad habits as our communication skills become more finely honed. As we become more comfortable with gestures, body language and vocal variety, we forget the little things, such as playing with glasses or twisting our rings, that can distract an audience. The evaluations of a second and third-time CTM should take into consideration the speaker's experience and point out these bad habits.*

MALCOLM C. MADDY – SYLVANIA, OHIO

■ *Supercharge your Toastmasters club! Make each member aware of his and her value. New members bring new viewpoints, ideas and enthusiasm that inspire the veterans. The older members provide vital stability, experience and leadership. Let people know how important they are in person, by phone, by e-mail or in writing. They'll appreciate it, and your club will benefit.*

MATT CUTTS, ATM – CLEVELAND, OHIO

■ *I used to worry about forgetting my lines or losing my place during a talk. I discovered that it is not a matter of "if" but of "when," as this seems to happen to everyone at one time or*

another. Whenever this happens now, I pause and ask an audience member a question. This takes the brunt of the attention off of me and gives me a few precious seconds necessary to regroup and find my place to continue.

PETER RICHARDSON – LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

■ Anytime is a good time for publicity. Try this approach:

1. Take a picture of an award, officer installation, a speaker speaking or gesturing – i.e. a speaker doing anything.
2. Send the picture with a two-line caption to the local newspaper. Line one should describe the activity (i.e. May Jones named Toastmaster of the Year). Line two should use the line “For information on Toastmasters clubs in your neighborhood, call 1-800-9-WE-SPEAK.”
3. In a neighborhood newspaper attach a note that says in what community the speaker resides.

This simple process is a painless way to get some publicity. Newspapers love it because it is clear and simple and ready to go to press without having to pay a writer. Do it frequently and you will multiply your benefits. Black and white photos of good quality are preferred.

MIKE WANNER, ATM – PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

■ Be sure to brush and floss your teeth before your appearance! You want to be able to project your voice — not what you ate for lunch. Talking with a clean mouth will give you confidence.

MICHAEL DITKOFF, ATM – LANHAM, MARYLAND

■ Having trouble with gestures and what to do with your hands? As you practice your speech, keep your hands moving at all times. At the beginning stages, most of the gestures will be superfluous and unnatural. As you practice more and more, the unnatural gestures will automatically get dropped and the natural ones will remain.

SUSAN HALL – NORTH BATTLEFORD, SASKATCHEWA, CANADA

■ When I prepare to start a new Advanced Manual, I spend a few minutes to scan the five projects. I write down ideas for

each project. In this way, I have started five or more speeches and may or may not follow up on these ideas. The primary benefit of this short brainstorming session is to help me develop speeches later when I may be too busy for extensive planning.

PAULA A. COPESTICK, CTM – AKRON, OHIO

■ Whenever I find an interesting or unusual article, I clip it and save it in a file labeled “Speech Topics.” Then, when researching for a new subject, there is always something on which I can build a speech. Using outside information as a springboard also forces me to look for new and interesting topics. After all, I wouldn’t want to bore my fellow Toastmasters.

NORA CONDRA, CTM – DALLAS, TEXAS

■ I have found that including a personal story or experience in a speech has made my presentations not only more engaging and memorable for the audience, but it also makes me more comfortable.

THOMAS CORRIGAN – RIVERSIDE, CALIFORNIA

■ Study, prepare and rehearse! I recently learned that the hard way, when serving as Toastmaster in an area speech contest. In between speakers, I was supposed to say, “There will now be one minute of silence while our judges tally their ballots.” Instead, when the time came for me to make the announcement, I said “We will now have a minute of silence.” That was all I said, period. No one knew what to do next. It sounded more like a memorial service than a speech contest.

NELSON DELANO, ATM – SAN PEDRO, CALIFORNIA

Share with us that favorite tip, strategy or action that has made you a more effective communicator. Entries may be edited for clarity and length.

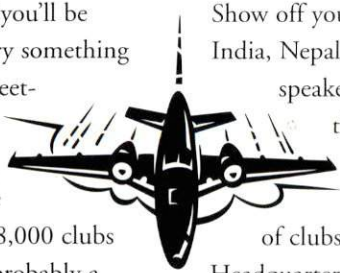
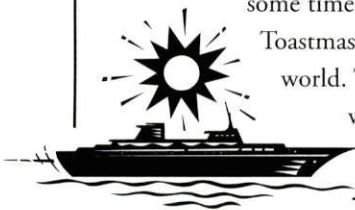
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Your Toastmasters Home Away From Home

Going on vacation? Long business trip? If you’ll be spending some time away from home, try something different – attend a Toastmasters club meeting! Most clubs welcome visitors, so take some time and see how Toastmasters works around the world. There are more than 8,000 clubs worldwide, so there’s probably a club where you’ll be visiting.

Show off your Table Topics skills in India, Nepal, France or Japan. Evaluate speakers in the United Kingdom, the United States, Mexico, or Indonesia. Contact World Headquarters and request a list of clubs where you’ll be visiting. Call World Headquarters at (714) 858-8255, or locate a club on our web page at www.toastmasters.org.





By Paul B. Thornton

Lessons From the Best Presenters

OVER THE PAST 10 YEARS, I HAVE OBSERVED SEVERAL HUNDRED presentations given by college professors, business leaders and technical experts. What follows are eight "best practices" I believe make for effective and memorable presentations.

1 Provide an overview. "Today I will cover three points..." "My talk will answer these four questions..." The overview provides the audience with a road map of where you're going and the stops you will make along the way. It also tells the audience how to sort and store the information.

2 Have enthusiasm. Think of the words you have uttered with passion and enthusiasm: "It's a boy!" "We won the game!" "I love you!" These words also created interest and excitement in the listeners. Likewise, audiences like speakers who are passionate about their topics. Excited speakers automatically become animated and use gestures. Gestures help emphasize key words and phrases. They also act as powerful visual aids, helping to explain ideas and feelings.

3 Create mental pictures. Pictures allow the audience to see the idea as well as hear it described, making them more likely to stay tuned. Use words or phrases that create vivid mental pictures: "The train has left the station," "the red BMW," "sand bags tied to their legs."

Stories and anecdotes also create pictures. They are the most effective and memorable way to develop ideas. Why do so many people watch and listen to talk shows? These shows present real life stories with drama, emotion and anticipation. As stories unfold, the audience gains a clear picture of what happened.

4 "Say it again Sam." In writing, repeating ideas is redundant. However, in a speech, repetition is desired to emphasize key points. In his famous 1963 speech, Martin Luther King repeated the phrase, "I have a dream" nine times.

Along this line, mentioning three similar or alliterative words or phrases often have more punch and are more memorable than simply using one word. A few examples:

"bloated, inefficient and unimaginative"; "old game, old paradigm, old model"; "we will succeed, we will win, we will prosper."

5 Use signal words. Let's be realistic: People have short attention spans and their minds wander. But their attention can be summoned back when it's especially important for you to have it. The following types of signal words can tell the audiences to pay attention: "The most important point to remember is..."; "Listen carefully to these instructions..."; "If you don't remember anything else, remember this..."

6 Make eye contact. "Look at me when I talk to you" is the cry of every parent, teacher and coach. Eye contact keeps the speaker and audience connected. When you throw a baseball or football to someone, you watch to see if it's caught. In the same way, when you toss out an idea, look at the audience to make sure it's caught. Eye contact tells the audience they're important.

7 Let the message sink in. A baseball catcher can't catch balls if they are thrown rapid fire, one after another. The same is true with ideas. The listener can't catch and absorb your key points if they are presented in a rapid fire approach. Use pauses and say something like, "Take a moment and think about that..." Pauses can be used to emphasize key ideas, to transition to a new point, or to set up a punch line.

8 Explain the information. Explain the information on the visual aid *before* discussing its significance. Many speakers put up a visual aid and immediately begin discussing the significance of the numbers, ratios and percentages. Meanwhile the audience is stuck trying to read and figure out the information on the slide.

If you incorporate these "best practices" in your next presentation, your speech will be both effective and memorable.

Paul B. Thornton is author of the book, *Lessons From The Best Managers*.



HALL OF FAME

Notice: Members who received any ATM award before June 30, 1997, will be listed in *The Toastmaster* magazine Hall of Fame. Members who receive ATM awards after June 30, 1997 will not be listed in the magazine because of an increased number of awards that will be issued under the new recognition system and because magazine space is limited.

The following listings are arranged in numerical order by district and club number.

DTM

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

Barbara M. Crowe, 5858-3
Doris S. Tse, 1435-4
Pure Swingleton, 9493-5
Robert R. Neill, 1938-21
Lawrence C. Edwards, 651-27
Paul Gerstenbluth, 854-31
Karen K. Purple, 2453-31
Carlos A. Tijerina Gutierrez, 5837-34
Douglas Fickbohm, 1294-41
Robert T. Moore, 211-44
Thomas Yamachika, 2076-49
Dudley James Cowan, 3410-69
Joan N. Hook, 7686-72

ATM Silver

Congratulations to these Toastmasters who have received the Able Toastmaster Silver certificate of achievement.

Elise Dee Beraru, 5983-1
Richard Bailey, 9509-2
Doris S. Tse, 1435-4

Ernest P. Hopkins, 7070-5
Eugene L. Van Massenhove, 2491-6
Jean M. Inabinett, 9677-8
Kay Presto, 2330-12
Gayle Engel Lawson, 1827-14
R. James Diegel, 2883-28
Donald K. Macintyre, 2277-31
Elizabeth T. Tsai, 5437-36
Franklin Souza, 2134-39
Michael Blackburn, 3063-43
Kathryn N. Downiny, 1980-47
Michiel M. Bagchus, 6716-60
Patricia A. Bunn, 4559-63
Michael James, 1953-70
John Taylor, 2274-70
Hilda McHugh, 5342-71
Margaret H. Percival, 3473-72

ATM Bronze

Congratulations to these Toastmasters who have received the Able Toastmaster Bronze certificate of achievement.

Paul J. Kaftanski, 2732-2
Layette E. Allison, 2531-3
Ronald James Lee, 4802-4
Lowell A. Slick, 8427-7
Richard R. Snyder, 7213-12
Richard Keen, 2851-18
Hal Dendurent, 684-19
Darren King Marr, 38-21
Mary C. Gallinger, 950-21
Wilma A. Young, 7173-21
Carol W. Ritchie, 6332-25
Cathy Lloyd, 7940-25
Mary A. Marion, 4184-27
Harry P. Davis, 8913-27
Barbara J. Hunt, 9084-30
Diane K. Barnes, 1167-31
Barbara J. Nelson, 2128-38
Robert J. Stitt, 6870-39
Constance Paus, 2849-42

J. David Bavousett, 1071-44
Larry Haug, 6659-56
Steven Abbett, 682-57
Raymond A. Flansberry, 3319-61
Edward R. Borkowski, 5473-65
Bevin C. Irvine, 2987-69
Daryll John Peacock, 3574-69
Brian Joseph Beveridge, 7894-69
Marie Elizabeth Murphy, 5073-70
Olive May Usher, 8190-70
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Brian Tite, 5729-74
Daniel J. Van Heerden, 5729-74

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Yvonne M. Cecchini, 4726-6
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John E. Roberts, Jr., 286-8
Oscar Ozete, 337-11
Danny R. Wright, 5946-11
Tamara L. Miller, 5946-11
Nathaniel H. Pickett, 1124-12
Frank C. Seeley, 1348-12
Lynn McCune, 3152-12
George Mitchell, 4062-12
Jonora M. Claybrook, 4062-12
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Cheryl Emershy, 8950-12
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Earl D. Brown, 5272-14
Rita Callahan, 6972-14
John D. Lewallen, 7260-14
Cassie M. Ferguson, 8256-14
Virginia (Ginger) Corbitt, 8256-14
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Mary Ruggles, 454-16
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Eunice L. Eckhart, 5427-17
Elizabeth Collins, 6715-17
Pete Bruno, 6963-17
Stanley E. McCann, 837-18
Glennette L. Johnson, 2925-18
Simmona E. Simmons-Hedo, 4546-18
Raola M. Giles, 2187-19
Jacqueline Powell, 2791-19
Kathleen Rosemary Huebener, 3515-19
Michele Howard, 6271-19
Michael A. Hulme, 8669-19

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Cindy 'CJ' Calvo, 716-F
Edwin C. Tracy, Jr., 2565-F
Jim Hajimomen, 2717-F
Gail Saltz, 3686-F
Eve Cappello, 9452-F
G. Jerry Plotke, 412-1
Gregory M. Valtierra, III, 4211-1
Josette Valtierra, 4211-1
Murphy Witherspoon, 6072-1
Shirley Sikes, 23-2
Joy J. Golliver, 4401-2
Brian Bigley, 3480-3
Adrian Hal Key, 4705-3
Mary Jo Almendinger, 5241-3
Jean W. Stewart, 5909-3
David Hartwig, 9145-3
Robbie Prohaska, 1435-4
Winnie Shows, 1435-4
J. Rudy Ramirez, 4368-4
Philip C. Johnson, 4547-4
Richard Gaughan, 4802-4
Ned Buratovich, 7430-4
Kathleen A. Worley, 7595-4
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Lee Davenport, 895-5
Jerry Davenport, 1125-5
Therese Tanksley, 1275-5
Saul Silven, 2006-5
Gwendolyn Jansma, 3524-5
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Kimlee Lindgren de Ruyter, 8740-5

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Dorothy Hamilton, 872-21
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Christine Sullivan, 2171-21
Barbara Troxel, 2986-21
Shirley Shorter, 3081-21
Juliana Valdez Lucas, 3197-21
Renate Evans, 3486-21
Felicity Klassen, 3532-21
Joan Parsons, 3620-21
Sanjiv Dyal, 3767-21
Kenneth L. Gilbank, 4050-21
Valerie Suski, 5253-21
Herb Maretz, 9362-21
Constance I. Bryan, 2301-22
Miles W. Thompson, 3990-22
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B. Jean Helmich, 7703-22
Ann D. Shafer, 387-23
James Lee Millender, Sr., 2127-23
Jackie Garcia, 5731-23
Teresa LaChance, 6504-23
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Diane Beasley, 3420-24
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Tom Taylor, 5590-25
Lonny J. Coffey, 7407-25
Rex L. Hogue, 8954-25
Michelle Pregel, 3989-26
Sid Kramer, 4553-26
H. Smith Shumway, 6633-26
Darwin B. Miner, 7329-26
Clement S. Heuer, 8676-26
Robert D. Berg, 8676-26
Peggy Kean, 8832-26
Tom Mainwaring, 8913-27
Ron Pikielak, 573-28
BJ Harmon, 1661-28
Helen Ramirez Odell, 1608-30
Barbara J. Zetsche, 3855-30
Koki R. Shah, 3855-30
Gwendolyn Grice, 9084-30
Paul Doucette, 508-31
Fred Tighe, 2603-31
Jay M. Boudier, 2992-31
Edward J. Alexander, 3908-31
Efrain Liriano, 8653-31
Harry L. Johns, 2462-33
Sharon Lindberg, 3374-33
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Rosa Ilena Santellanes, 3956-34
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Susan Helbach, 570-35
Patricia J. Farber, 2780-35
Julie E. Hawkins, 7589-35
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Freda Levitt, 6528-37
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Thomas J. Powell, 178-39

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Molly MacGowan, 3623-39
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Diane Fanning, 1722-56

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