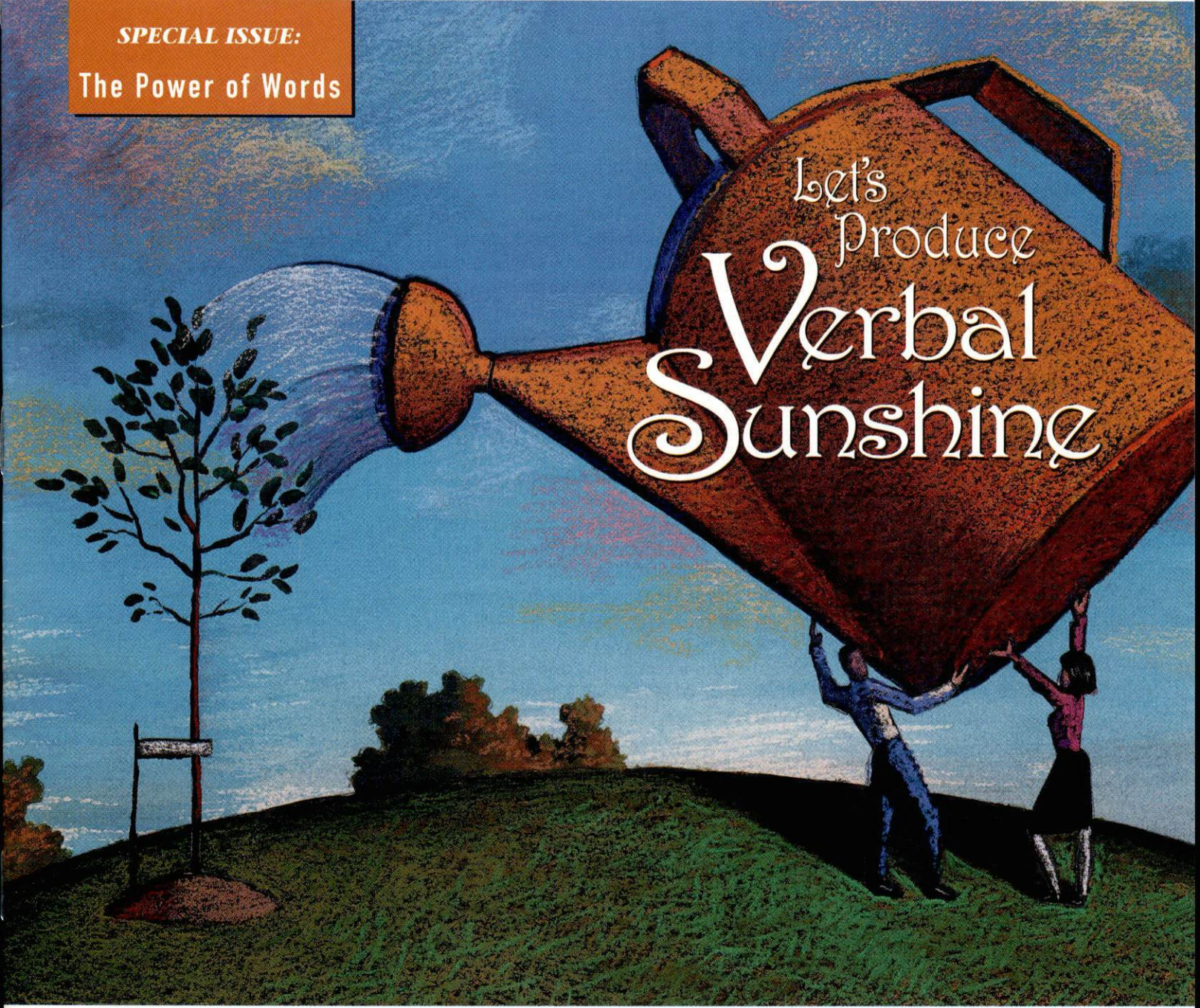


The TOASTMASTER®

FEBRUARY 2000

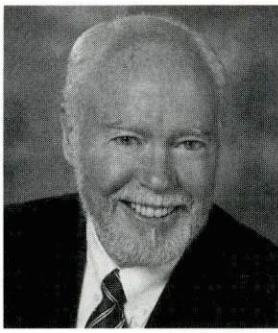
SPECIAL ISSUE:
The Power of Words



Let's
Produce
Verbal
Sunshine

ALSO INSIDE:

Playing with Words • History Can Be Hilarious
That's No Joke — It's a Figure of Speech



VIEWPOINT

Our Vision and Values

Over the past several years, leading organizations everywhere have increasingly emphasized clarification of their values, and they endeavor to incorporate these values as anchor points in every decision they make. Toastmasters International should do the same.

What are our values as Toastmasters? Our Strategic Plan identifies them as integrity, respect for the individual, a dedication to excellence, and service to our members. These are values worthy of a great organization; however, they serve as an empty promise of what we believe in and strive for unless we are aware of them and live by them. If we take them seriously, these values provide us with a means of guiding and evaluating our operations, our planning, and our vision for the future. They form the foundation of what I believe to be the great potential of Toastmasters around the world.

All areas of our lives as Toastmasters can and should be guided by these values. Consider the importance of fulfilling our commitments, of serving our members' needs, of developing high-quality club programs and of maintaining a service attitude among our leaders. Anchored in this firm foundation, there is so much we can do. Think of it! In the context of our global mission, we have an opportunity to work together, now and in coming years, toward the day when we become an organization that is, at every level, conscious of its values and factors these values into every action we take. We generally operate from integrity, and we can do more. We can become an organization fully committed to advocating and demonstrating integrity in everything we do.

We can become an organization working in harmony as a team at all levels. We can become an organization radically focused on quality and dedicated to excellence in all aspects of our educational programs. And finally, we can become an organization that exuberantly celebrates the diversity of its members and clubs, actively markets its programs around the world, and is fully committed to making the Toastmasters learning laboratory as inclusive as possible.

I urge Toastmasters everywhere to live these values in our clubs. It is in our clubs that the magic of Toastmasters takes place, where our members gain the courage to change their lives for the better, and where we become empowered to reach out and help and serve others. Let's not rest until each and every Toastmasters club radiates our values. In so doing, we will realize a tremendous liftoff for Toastmasters, as we launch our organization into the 21st century.

Tim Keck, DTM
International President

The TOASTMASTER

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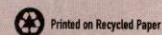
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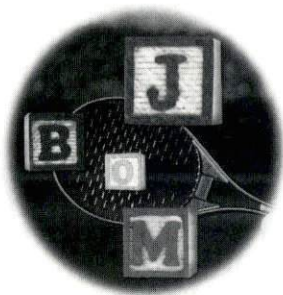
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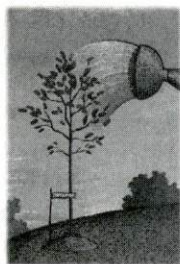
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The Toastmasters Vision:

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

DISABLED DOESN'T MEAN UNABLE

Peter F. Jeff's article "The 7 W's of Effective Speechwriting" (December '99) gives excellent advice to novice Toastmasters, as well as useful pointers for veteran speakers. But I was disturbed by Mr. Jeff's apparent assumption that it is humiliating for an able-bodied person to lose a job in favor of a person with a disability. I think we should rejoice when the self-confidence associated with good communication and leadership skills allows a person to overcome life's difficulties.

As a wheelchair user, one of the things I have always appreciated about Toastmasters is that my abilities as a speaker and leader have been recognized and developed without regard to my disability. Toastmasters is one of the few organizations that welcomed me immediately and consistently. I can assure Mr. Jeff that the skills and confidence I have gained as a Toastmaster have been invaluable assets in my career progress.

I encourage Toastmasters to reach out to people of all walks of life and spread our mission of making effective oral communication a worldwide reality. By so doing, we can make the world better for everyone.

Laura A. Huber, CTM
Valley Club 3181-46
Haworth, New Jersey

'INSPIRATION' INSTEAD OF INVOCATION?

It was interesting to read about "The Invocation" (January 2000) and the various terms the article examined. I wonder if a simple "Inspiration" would do. That's what most clubs I have visited call that role. They explain "The Inspirator" as some-

one who gives club members a thought for the road – a motivational nugget or inspiring concept.

I've also found that the "Inspiration" doesn't always start the meeting. Some clubs deliberately end meetings with it – to leave members with a positive thought for the evening. Prayer and religion never entered into the discussions. During my five years in Toastmasters, I can't recall visiting a single club that used words such as "Dear God" or "Lord."

Perhaps invocations began as a way to start meetings (in America), but that function has changed to where it now is a way to teach speakers to deliver motivational and inspirational presentations.

Vincent Li, ATM-B
Stimulight Club 5449-21
Burnaby, British Columbia, Canada

COMMENTS FROM SOUTH AFRICA

The December '99 issue of *The Toastmaster* arrived late in this part of the world, but it was worth the wait! I am writing to discuss two articles in that issue: "Speaking Across Cultures" by Beth Fowler and the Viewpoint article, "The Greatest Gift," by International President Tim Keck.

First, Beth Fowler's article: It is dangerously close to being condescending to those of us who are not Americans. District 74, where I live, encompasses eight independent nations: Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe. One of them, South Africa, has 11 officially recognized languages, and the entire District embraces more than 30 such languages. I speak of languages, not simply dialects.

I do not question Fowler's intentions, but I do advise any visitor to Southern Africa not to "consult a native to verify..." and not to seek a "dress rehearsal with a native..." The author also stresses the importance of speakers understanding local protocols. Thank you, Beth, for your concern – and your article.

I also say "thank you" to Tim Keck for his "Greatest Gift" article. I enthusiastically endorse his views regarding "our most precious resource: our children" and his encouraging all Toastmasters to maximize their involvement in our Youth Leadership and Speechcraft programs. We know their value, and participants soon come to share that knowledge!

Trevor Shaw, DTM
East London Club 2711-74
East London, South Africa

A TOASTMASTER IN TRAINING

As a college music professor, I am often asked to provide commentary along with my performing as a soloist or chamber musician. Recently our faculty woodwind quintet was playing for a middle school All-County Band in a packed band room. In announcing musical pieces, I added some comments about composers and style.

My 13-year-old daughter, who had heard at home about my involvement in Toastmasters, was a student in the band. When I asked after the performance how she liked my presentation, she replied, "It was good, Dad. You only had one 'ah.'"

Keith Koons
Trailblazers Club 9013-47
Orlando, Florida

By Stephen B. White, CTM



The Art of Showing Up

DID YOU EVER WANT SOMETHING BECAUSE YOU THOUGHT YOU couldn't get it? I have a 7-year-old half-brother, Willie, who lives with my father and stepmother, and occasionally I take the long trip to visit them. We play together, and he likes to show-and-tell about his latest acquisitions.

During a recent visit, Willie took me to his room to show me his stuff. An entire wall was covered with ribbons, plaques and trophies. I said, "Good God, Willie, how did you win these?"

I'm thinking I am 42 years old, six times Willie's age, and I have *never* won a trophy. Never before had I come to terms with the fact, a fact I could now taste: "I want a trophy!" Years of seeing the victory cache of the sprinter, the swimmer, the sweating cyclist had finally caught up with me. "I want one."

I said, "C'mon, Willie, how did you do it?"

Looking at me as if I were some strange creature from a Sunday morning cartoon, Willie must have thought, "How could I have *anything* my big brother wants?"

"How did you do it, Willie?" I persisted.

"I don't know... All you gotta do is show up."

Many would say he had just uttered the most modest and profound statement a 7-year-old could make. For that matter, that anyone could make. But I thought, "The conceit of this smug little brat, to whom everything comes so easily. All he does is 'show up,' and the world unveils a trophy." I began to hate him, as I hated the star quarterback, the class president, all of those who got the recognition I couldn't – until now – even admit to wanting.

"Check out my new Legos!" he called across the room. And I reluctantly marveled at his latest engineering achievements, struggling with the demon that had overcome me.

Later, I told friends of "Willie's Trophy Wall." I admitted awe to our father, who said, "He picked up some more this weekend at a horse show. Everyone gets them. All you've got to do is show up."

There it was again, a piece of gristle I couldn't bite through, swallow or spit out. What did this "showing up" even mean?

I had whittled out my little place in the world, but now I was having a startled awakening. If I had shown up more, I could have been a star. Well, *at the very least* I would have a certificate, a plaque, a ribbon, or even... a trophy! Had I shown up, I would now be blissfully boring people in my trophy room

with long-winded tales of "Ah yes, it was a minor role, and the academy was very generous..." Could it be that simple?

A little research revealed that trophies are now given out like breath mints, a practice new since my childhood, and often all you've got to do is "show up." But after years of *not* showing up, could I open my arms to this lavish abundance? Did I dare to want this? But I'm no athlete, celebrity, champion. So where could I show up to claim my prize?

I couldn't find an answer, and soon other matters filled my thoughts. My life went on as always, and Willie continued to accumulate winnings. Sibling rivalry is tough, even with a 35-year advantage.

Not long after, some friends asked me to compete in a Toastmasters contest. I didn't think of trophies – I didn't know there was a trophy – and I immediately turned down the offer. On the night of the event, the contest was short on competitors, and I reluctantly agreed to participate, feeling the pressure and guilt of years of not showing up.

I'd like to tell you I won, to reveal my first trophy and Hollywood ending. ("But it was a minor role, and the academy *was* very generous.") But more important than whether I won was what I lost – namely my reluctance to even want a trophy and to show up. That reluctance is gone. These days, if I hear they're handing out trophies, I'm showing up!

And you know something? I'm gonna go home to call Willie and thank him for being the big brother I always wanted. Maybe we'll talk about his new monster truck. That kid's a tough act to follow, but I'm ready. **T**

Stephen B. White, CTM is president of Norwalk Club 2785-53 in Norwalk, Connecticut



MANNER OF SPEAKING

By Paul L. Raikes

Chairmen can always find new and different ways to mess up speaker introductions. The wise speaker does nothing to aid and abet that situation.

Ban Boring Bios

Why do so many interesting people have such lackluster biographies? That may sound like a rhetorical question. However, the odds are great that it's asked thousands of times a week every week of the year. The askers? Chairmen and chairwomen for organizations, committees and programs around the world. If they don't ask it, they think it. If they don't think it, they should be examined by their friendly morticians.

A lot of very important people, when invited to give a speech, serve on a board of directors, spearhead a charity drive, lead a committee – or do a multitude of other things – are asked to provide biographies. The result? In most cases, the end products can be described with one four-letter word: dull. Active human beings are reduced to lifeless skeletons.

Chairmen can always find new and different ways to mess up speaker introductions. The wise speaker does nothing to aid and abet that situation.

The average biography submitted by the average VIP is usually written by the VIP, thus making it an autobiography. This would be immaterial if not for the tendency of people writing about themselves in the third person to become stilted. The average biography consists of lists: lists of schools, lists of jobs, lists of organizations, lists of directorships, lists of awards, lists of children and lists of spouses. This is one instance where being listless wouldn't be all that bad.

Behind all those lists must be a few interesting stories. Almost everybody admits to being inspired to greater heights by someone or something special. But warm slices of life never seem to make it into bios – and as a result, into introductions. Yet those are the very elements that help enhance a VIP's image.

A doctor who reveals he's the fourth consecutive generation to enter the medical practice has a story to tell. He was obviously impressed by his father, grandfather and great grandfather. The audience will be impressed with the reason, unless the good doctor's attention was focused on the material wealth garnered by his ancestors. Even that would be an improvement over nothing.

It pays to pay tribute to those who influence one's life. In talking about others, you also tell about yourself. Teachers are often involved in career directions, but they seldom get credit. If Maude Muller yanked you out of your chair and ordered you to straighten up or else flunk her English course, mention it. Especially if it caused you to take an enthusiastic interest in both grammar and literature. In my case, she did and it did. And I'm mentioning it.

Pertinent accidental happenings are often worth a chuckle. You met your eventual boss as a result of participating in a mini-marathon. You both finished last. That makes you a friendly, non-threatening athlete with a sense of humor.

There's an old expression, "You can't judge a book by its cover." Quite often, you can't judge a book by its title, either. But many introductions contain references to the writing of many books, the subjects of which are not readily evident. If books are worth mentioning, they also should be worth describing. Otherwise, an audience has to fake being impressed.

Some biography writers substitute initials for organization names and job titles. If a speaker is a V.P. with AT&T, that might be acceptable. However, initials can stand for a multitude of things, many of which are frivolous. Likewise, the introducer should not assume that the audience is familiar with the names of even the largest organizations in a given community. If it's even remotely possible that a name is not instantly recognizable, add a few words of explanation.

A speaker may be a key figure in one company and a board member of several others, the names of which give no clues about the types of businesses the companies represent. Not all program chairmen are good guessers. Correction: Very few program chairmen are good guessers.

Some biographers resist putting things in chronological order. Nobody seems to know why. Perhaps it's to

keep readers from distinguishing between promotions and demotions.

How much extra work would it be to identify the locations of the colleges and universities the speaker attended . . . unless the school names make the locations obvious? For example, it's obvious that Indiana University is in the state of Indiana. But it is not obvious that Duke and Temple universities are in Indiana. Which is a good thing, because they aren't. However, without further information, who would know?

Once again to the college scene. The kinds of degrees the speaker earned might be of interest to an audience. A bachelor's degree in what? A master's degree in what? A doctorate in what? Some people major in certain subjects while in college, but never end up working in fields where those subjects are relevant. The story behind the change might reveal a lot about the speaker. Being deliberately inconsistent comes across a lot better than being accidentally inconsistent.

Forget industry buzzwords. If a word can't be found in the dictionary, don't use it in the biography. Or even if the word is in the dictionary, but doesn't reflect the intended meaning, don't use it. Confusion leads to misunderstanding. And misunderstanding is better left to the bureaucracy.

A good biography does not necessarily have to contain a date of birth. But when one is omitted, readers occasionally start look-

ing for clues, which are more numerous than one might imagine. The omission of personal data is particularly curious when the speaker is a member of an organization that takes minute details seriously.

The photocopy of the biography shouldn't be 10 generations away from the original. It's quite a challenge for the person introducing you to attempt to read what appear to be hieroglyphics. No matter what anyone thinks, sending such a copy through a fax machine does not improve the quality.

The biography should not be longer than the speech. What is the right length? In most cases, no more than two pages, double-spaced. Anything beyond that usually smacks of puffery. I've seen 30- and 40-page bios – given the fancy name “curriculum vitae” to justify their existence – and they were incredibly boring. The speakers who provided them couldn't possibly have been as dull if they'd tried.

Don't make the biography too short. If you can't come up with at least one page of interesting information, don't expect the program chair to manufacture an award-winning introduction. Enthusiasm is contagious. The same can be said of apathy.

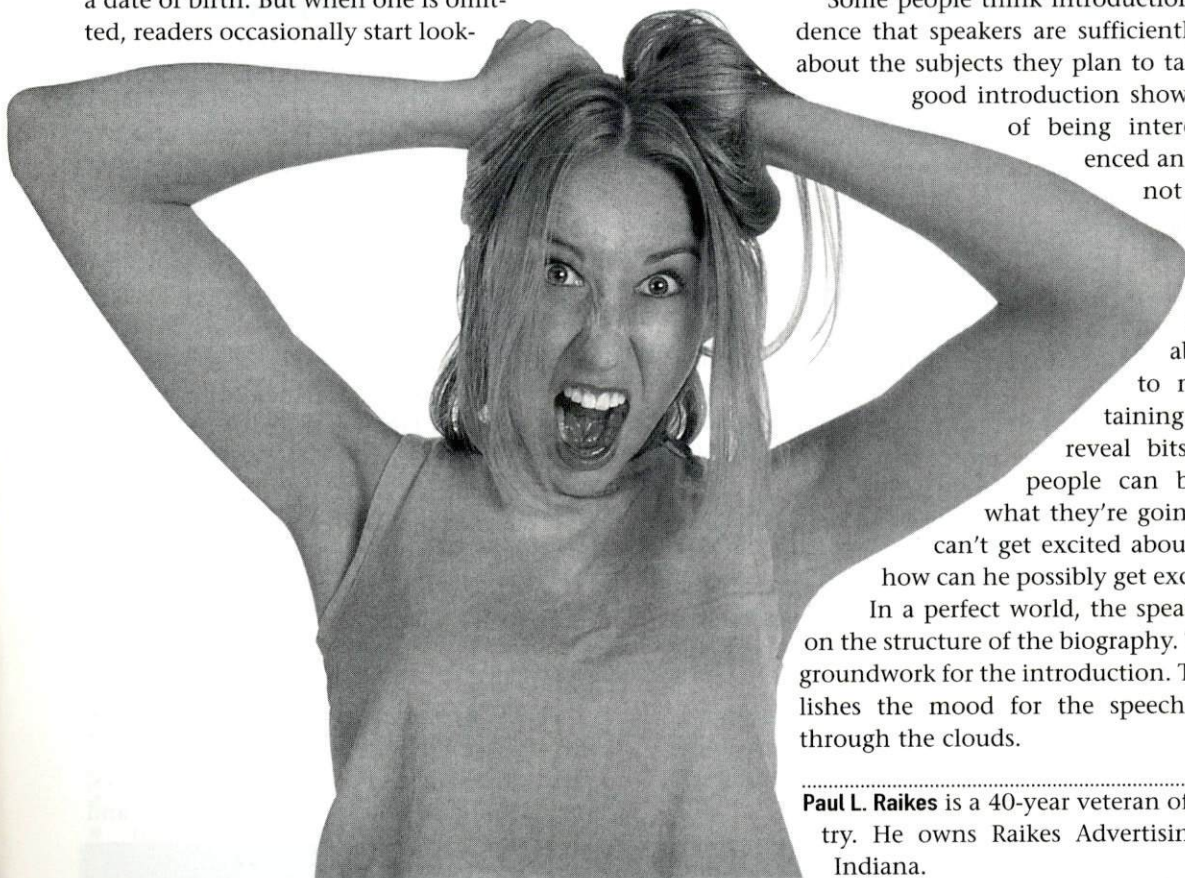
Behind every job should be a reason. Behind every directorship should be a reason. Behind every award should be a reason. That sounds reasonable, doesn't it?

Some people think introductions should serve as evidence that speakers are sufficiently experienced to talk about the subjects they plan to talk about. I disagree. A good introduction shows a speaker is capable of being interesting. Being experienced and being interesting are not necessarily qualities found in the same human being.

An introduction should tell enough about a speaker's topic to make it sound entertaining. Never reveal all, but reveal bits and pieces, so that people can be enthusiastic about what they're going to hear. If a speaker can't get excited about promoting a speech, how can he possibly get excited about giving one?

In a perfect world, the speaker keeps an eagle eye on the structure of the biography. The biography lays the groundwork for the introduction. The introduction establishes the mood for the speech. And the sun peeks through the clouds. **T**

Paul L. Raikes is a 40-year veteran of the advertising industry. He owns Raikes Advertising Agency in Carmel, Indiana.



REPRESENTATIVE

With Words

Lesson No. 6 in the basic Toastmasters manual advises us to “Work With Words.” But if we are to become better speakers, we also need to play with words – to frolic, dance and giggle with them. We need to progress from merely being correct and move into more fanciful linguistic frontiers.

We should become unrepentant verbomaniacs who delight in collecting new words and honing new phrases. Just as a chef uses different spices and a painter uses a variety of colors, so too Toastmasters need a wide array of words to add vitality and imagination to their speeches.

Here are some ways to expand your verbal horizons.

COLORFUL WORDS

Your aim always should be to communicate clearly, and that often means using short, concise words: home instead of domicile, food rather sustenance, and car instead of vehicle. But when you sprinkle a whimsical word here and there, your audience will find your speeches more interesting and entertaining.

In his book *The Grand Panjandrum* (Collier Books, 1991), J. N. Hook has compiled a list of rare and unusual words “whose popularization would make a unique contribution to people’s ability to express themselves succinctly – and to enjoy themselves in the process.” They include:

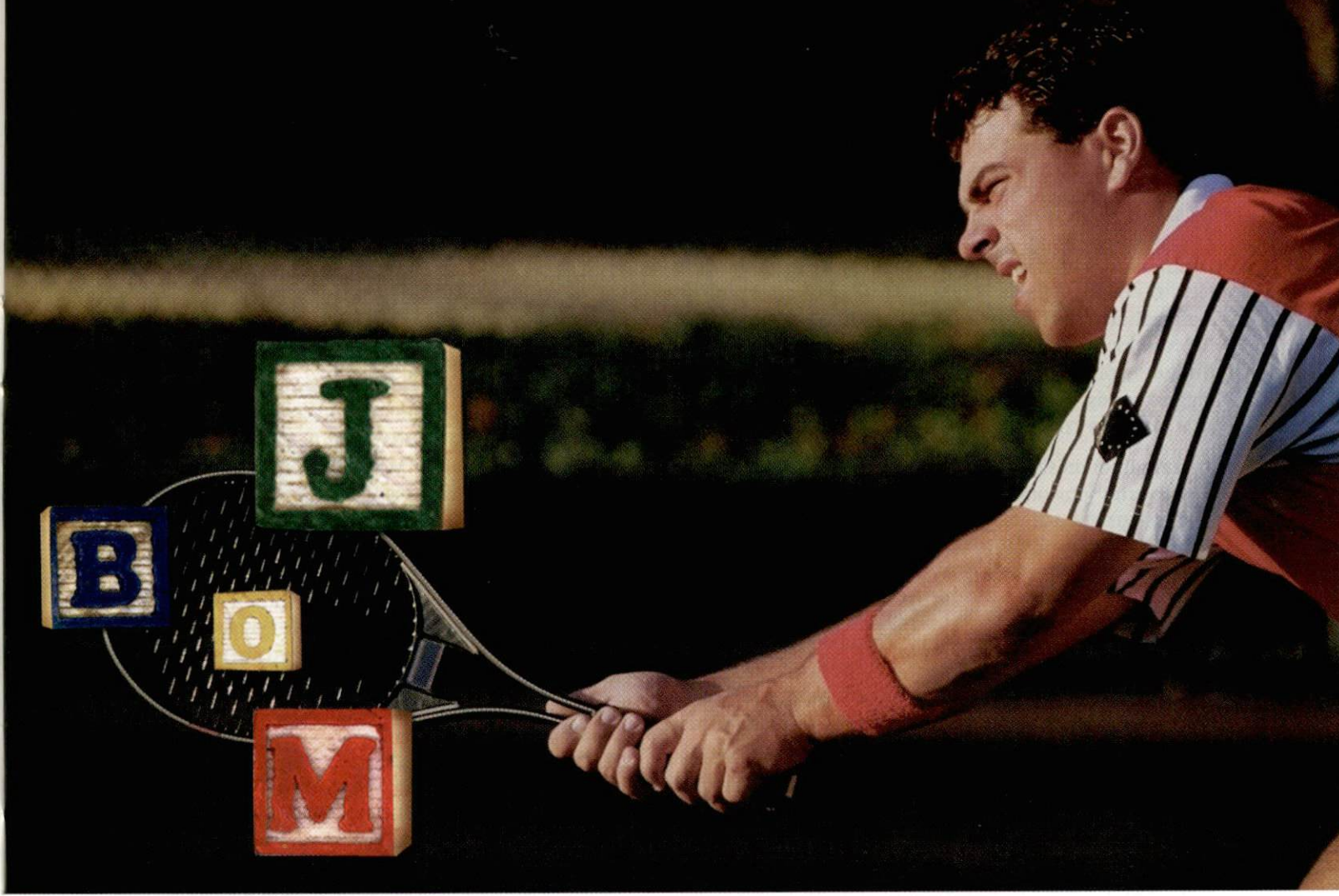
- **Panjandrum:** A pompous official with considerable power that he or she is not likely to use wisely.
- **Conky:** A person with an unusually large nose. Jimmy Durante was a conky.
- **Overdog:** A member of the dominant, privileged group. Everyone cheers for the underdog, but who sympathizes with the overdog?
- **Dabster:** One who dabbles in a task but is not proficient in it. Former British Prime Minister Winston Churchill was a dabster in painting.

It’s also fun to know where words come from. Knowing their derivation helps you appreciate words and remember them more easily. In his book *From Achilles’ Heel to Zeus’ Shield* (Fawcett Columbine, 1993), Dale Corey Dibbley gives the mythological origins of 300 words and phrases. Here are a few:

- In Norwegian language *bjorn* means “bear” and *serkr* means “shirt.” Norse legend tells of ferocious berserker warriors so convinced of their invulnerability that they refused to wear coats of mail and went into battle clad only in bearskins. Today when someone commits such frenzied and reckless acts, we say he has “gone berserk.”
- Moly was a magical plant mentioned in Homer’s *Odyssey*. This root was difficult for mere mortals to dig up, but it could be easily plucked by the gods. Because the herb was associated with holy deities, it inspired an English wag to invent this phrase of surprise and incredulity: “holy-moly.”
- Bacchus was the Greek god of wine and revelry. Those who worshiped him and partook of his favorite beverage participated in wild parties that have come to be known as “bacchanals.”
- It was once thought that staring at the moon brought on spells of madness. Thus, we now have the terms “moonstruck” (to be crazy in love) and “lunatic” (to be simply crazy).

FUN WORDS

In my Toastmasters club, the Grammarian not only points out problems with subject-verb agreement and use of double negatives, she also praises descriptive language and



clever turns of phrase. As speakers, we try not only to avoid glaring grammatical errors, but also to be creative and lively. We know that charts and slides are not our most important visual aids – words are. So we attempt to use language that invokes vivid mental pictures.

If you fear your speeches are as dull as dog biscuits, try using similes and metaphors to make them as lively as Mexican fiestas. A *simile* is a figure of speech in which two dissimilar things are compared, often using *like* or *as*: “He was as strong as bear’s breath.” A *metaphor* is a figure of speech in which a word or phrase that ordinarily represents one thing is used to designate another, as in “a sea of troubles” or “all the world’s a stage.” Using similes and metaphors makes the abstract concrete, thus keeping the audience involved in what you have to say.

The book *Happy as a Clam* (Prentice Hall, 1994) by Larry Wright, lists hundreds of similes. Here are a few:

- “straight as the part in a barber’s hair”
- “abrupt as a guillotine”
- “abundant as dandelions”
- “careful as porcupines making love”
- “deep as a grave”
- “happy as a butcher’s dog”
- “hot as a teenager in love”
- “cold as a Siberian outhouse”

In *The Play of Words* (Simon & Schuster, 1990), renowned lexicologist Richard Lederer lists metaphors that describe a person who’s not very smart.

- “her kernels never popped”
- “he’s a couple cans short of a six-pack”
- “the butter slipped off her noodles”
- “someone blew out his pilot light”

Onomatopoeia adds pizzazz, zest and verve to your speeches. Onomatopoeia is the use of words that imitate the sounds associated with the actions they refer to. Examples:

- The child heard the clock go “cuckoo” and ran to see the bird that came out.
- When the bell tinkled, the clerk knew a customer had come into the store.
- Mary heard a “meow” at the door and opened it so her cat could come inside.

Use **alliteration** to make your sentences as alluring as a lovely lady in a lighthouse. Alliteration is the repetition of the sound at the beginning of each word in a phrase. This device helps create mood and calms the listener like the steady beat of a drum:

- The Wonderful Wizard of Oz
- Women Who Run With the Wolves
- The Great Gatsby
- The Fickle Finger of Fate

Another way to improve your speeches is to become a connoisseur who collects words the way a movie star collects husbands. When you're reading, pay attention to **unfamiliar words**. Keep a dictionary handy and make a habit of looking up one new word every day. Then try to find some place to use it. Your purpose is not to know the biggest words, but to know the best words. Here are a few new ones I've come across recently:

- **frangible**: breakable
- **parvenu**: someone who has risen to a higher economic class but has not yet gained social acceptance
- **mellifluous**: sounding sweet and smooth; honeyed
- **appellation**: name or title

You can also collect words that are **just plain fun to say**: "finagle," "lollygag," "succulent," "bamboozle," "razzmat-tazz," "heebie-jeebies," "roly-poly" and "boogie-woogie."

And don't be afraid to try out **trendy new words** and slang expressions. Some of today's well-accepted words were once frowned on as mere fads: "jitterbug," "beatnik," "teenybopper," "snafu," "egghead," "whodunit" and "jam session." Language is a living entity that is constantly in a state of flux. If it weren't, we'd still be talking like characters in a Shakespearean play. As Ernest Weekley is quoted in *Crazy English* (Simon & Schuster, 1989), "Stability in language is synonymous with rigor mortis."

So far we've been discussing literary devices to add to your speeches. Now let's consider some things to stay away from. Avoid clichés like the plague. Beware the hackneyed expression that is dead as a doornail. After all is said and done, you will only add insult to injury by using them. Fresh expressions are as rare as hens' teeth, but if you want to get out from behind the eight ball, you should open your eyes to their potential.

Malapropism is the misuse of a word, especially by confusing it with one having a similar sound. Richard Lederer gives some humorous examples in his book *Anguished English* (Dell Publishing, 1987):

- "The defendant pleaded exterminating circumstances."
- "Sit-ups strengthen the abominable muscles."
- "Senators are chosen on the basis of their senility."

Malapropisms should be avoided – unless you're witty enough to use them as imaginatively as did Yogi Berra, the famous Yankee catcher. Lederer says, "Berra learned to creatively mutilate the English language by performing bizarre flights of linguistic fancy, mind-boggling malapropisms and intuitive wisdom." Some of Berra's famous sayings:

- "Many people my age are dead."
- "You can observe a lot just by watching."

- "People don't come to this ballpark because it's too crowded."

CONFUSING WORDS

It's not enough to avoid wrong words; you want to employ the right ones. Some people don't know when to use "lay" and when to use "lie." Even the venerable (or in this case vulnerable) Ernest Hemingway had trouble with words. Lay – used in the present tense – means "to place" and requires an object. Today you lay the ring on the table; yesterday you laid it on the dresser.

Lie means "to recline" and does not take an object. But its past tense is lay. Today you lie on the bed; yesterday you lay on the couch. When Hemingway says in *To Have and Have Not*, "Eddy went forward and laid down," he should have said, "Eddy...lay down." Doesn't it make you feel better to know that even literary giants sometimes make mistakes?

Toastmasters should know the difference between a lectern and a podium. A podium is the raised platform on which a speaker stands, and a lectern is the narrow desk upon which the speaker places his or her notes. Just remember, you *put* your foot on a *podium*, and you *lay* your notes on the *lectern*.

Oral refers to the mouth and, therefore, means that which is spoken. Verbal, on the other hand, means communication that uses words, written or spoken. But in common usage the two have become interchangeable. So when Samuel Goldwyn quipped that "A verbal contract isn't worth the paper it's written on," no one needed to ask him if he had that in writing.

Anxious is to be worried, while *eager* means to anticipate with enthusiasm. Therefore, you should convince your audience that you're eager to give your speech, even if you feel anxious.

Fewer refers to units that can be counted (fewer cars, fewer calories). *Less* is used for abstract quantities (less dignity) or for bulk material (less sugar).

Farther is used for measurable distances (The ball traveled 10 yards farther). *Further* refers to quantities, times or degrees (We should discuss the problem further.)

Use *among* when showing the relationship of more than two persons or objects. Use *between* with only two. (We distributed the gifts among Jill, Jane and Jan. We divided the pie between Bill and Bob.)

Continual means repetitive. *Continuous* means unbroken. (You should continually try to improve your speaking abilities, but don't talk continuously.)

Disinterested means impartial or unbiased. *Uninterested* suggests aloofness or lack of interest. (You hope the judge at your speech contest is disinterested, but never uninterested.)

Our linguistic dexterity comes into play every time we open our mouths to ask for a raise, inspire our kids or give a sales presentation. The ability to speak well distinguishes

(continued on page 19)



By Patrick Mott

A plea for plain English.

Speak Simply, But Carry a Good Dictionary

AS A MAGAZINE EDITOR WHO TAKES NO PLEASURE IN GRINDING his teeth, I'd like to make a plea for the simple declarative sentence. Speak to me with simple words, and you'll find a receptive and grateful ear. Write in plain English, and you'll have my respect. I say this because the English language is

suffering at the hands of a blizzard of goofball linguistic affectations, and anyone who is their enemy is my friend.

It has long been said, rightly, that the English language is – indeed, must be – a malleable and ever-changing living thing. Our means of expression must evolve as we evolve in order to adapt to invention and the emergence of new things that deserve clear description. The continually growing computer culture, for instance, has made necessary many dictionary pages full of newly coined words and terms to deal with a wide range of activities that barely existed two decades ago. They are useful, terse, generally clear, even witty.

Likewise, the worlds of psychology, show business, journalism, government and public relations (among others) have produced words and phrases remarkable for their ability to describe something more fully or exactly. As a result, we have such examples as “co-dependent,” “talking heads,” “news cycle,” “spin” and “sound bite.” Relying on this new vocabulary to do the job it was designed to do can be helpful and even desirable.

But relying on it to do everything is a linguistic sin.

It is so easy to glom onto a catchy new word or phrase and to shunt aside more conventional – and exact – English in favor of it. We are fascinated, for instance, by the sound of the word “interface” when it is used to describe a coupling of computer components. So fascinated, possibly, that we decide to embellish and say, “Why don't we get together over lunch and interface about that?” What we really want to do is talk, but the word seems so...puny, somehow. We can become so enraptured with, say, “plausible deniability” that we forget that in the real world that's simply called an excuse or an alibi.

This misuse proliferates for the same reason that bureaucratese continues to hold us in thrall: We often mistakenly believe that it makes us sound smarter, more authoritative or more formidable than we really are.

It can feel pretty good to pepper our speech with lots of newly minted

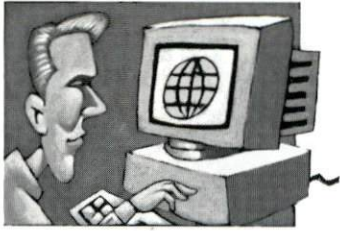
English words. It's the same satisfaction we get from knowing the latest gossip, having seen the latest movie, being conversant with the latest news. There is an undeniable feeling of exclusivity, too, in watching someone's eyes glaze over as we sprinkle our conversation with terms the listener cannot comprehend. Language is power. New language, some might believe, means more power.

But it is not power. It is only pomposity. And worse, impenetrable. It ultimately thwarts effective communication.

There is such a thing as conventional English, as unpopular as that idea can be in some quarters. Every language on Earth rests on a bedrock of common usage and eloquently simple vocabulary. Speakers and writers of English are more blessed than many peoples because that bedrock is broader and thicker than most. Crack open a good dictionary and simply browse a bit. It will take only a few minutes for you to convince yourself that you will never plumb the depths of conventional English.

Still, we should try. Give the new, the snappy, the quirky its due. But remember the words of Henry Higgins, as he explains to that linguistic novice, Eliza Doolittle, why he is driving her so relentlessly in her quest for beautiful speech: “Think what you're dealing with. The majesty and grandeur of the English language. It's the greatest possession we have. The noblest sentiments that ever flowed through the hearts of men are contained in its extraordinary, imaginative and musical mixtures of sounds. ... And conquer it you will.” **T**

Patrick Mott is editor of *Orange Coast* magazine in Newport Beach, California.



A guide to efficient speech
research on the World Wide Web.

Click and You Shall Find



When doing research for a speech, you need to approach the Web as a library rather than a shopping mall, video arcade or discussion circle. You'll also need some way of quelling the riot of information you'll find there.

Portals such as Yahoo are one attempt to make the Web more manageable, aggregating content and services in hope that you'll stick around. But you're often better off surfing beyond their narrow confines.

For some years now, search sites have tried to bring order to the Web's anarchic abundance. But serving up just the information you're looking for, and avoiding the litter of irrelevancy, is a tall order. And even the best search sites penetrate only so far into the Web's awesome depths.

Some of information technology's best minds are working on this problem. Among the more interesting developments, ironically, are sites that downplay technology in favor of the human touch.

At Allexperts.com (<http://www.allexperts.com>), you first drill down to the category of information you're interested in, such as insurance or photography. Then you select a volunteer, based on his or her profile, to send your query to. More than 1,500 volunteers work with the site, providing answers free of charge. If you need more comprehensive service, volunteers can offer themselves as consultants for a fee.

Similar new search sites that go against the grain of increasing mechanization include XpertSite.com

(<http://www.xpertsite.com>) and ExpertCentral.com (<http://www.expertcentral.com>).

Human help, however, does have its drawbacks. At Allexperts.com it may take a day or two to receive your answer. Also, despite the site's name, the volunteers aren't necessarily experts. Allexperts.com claims that many are professionals, but it doesn't verify their credentials.

If the people approach isn't for you, you might want to try the opposite. YourCompass.com (<http://www.yourcompass.com>), strives for total automation. This new site tracks your searches, and when you visit again alerts you to sites it thinks you're interested in before you ask. This may sound Orwellian, but the site promises not to share your personal information with third parties.

Privacy isn't the only concern people have these days about the Web. Commercialization has become the norm, and you have to be wary here with some search sites.

For instance, TitanSearch.com, a new search site (<http://www.titansearch.com>), openly promises that other sites who advertise with it will receive prominent placement in search results, "with the advertiser's page on the top three pages 100 percent of the time, and on the top page one-third of the time."

People also worry about exposing themselves or their children to inappropriate material on the Web. If you search at a typical search site for the White House, some of the sites it returns may display what you might see in a cathouse.

SurfMonkey.com (<http://www.surfmonkey.com>) is a new search site and portal for kids that's designed to filter out porn and other no-nos. To use it, you download either a small add-on program for Microsoft Internet Explorer or a proprietary browser. Ah-ha.com (<http://www.ah-ha.com>) is another new kid-safe search site.

The popular general-interest search sites are also hard at work to improve relevancy in search results. HotBot, (<http://www.hotbot.com>), which deservedly was designated as the best all-around search site by *PC Magazine*, now includes a popularity engine. Click on "Top 10 sites..." after it displays its first screen of findings.

One site that's garnered much praise lately is Northern Light (<http://www.northernlight.com>). It distinguishes itself by its accurate Web search results, which are free, and its full-text database of articles from newspapers and magazines, which generally cost \$1 to \$4 per article. A new feature periodically alerts you via e-mail when it finds information you've requested.

Recently much has been made about how no search site indexes the entire Web. If you're looking for very spe-

cific information, one way around this is to use a "metasearch" site, which piggybacks on other search sites and combines their results. The best overall is ProFusion (<http://www.profusion.com>).

If you're looking for information on broad topics, Yahoo (<http://www.yahoo.com>) remains the best and most popular choice.

As testimony to how hungry people are for relevant, reliable information, when *Encyclopedia Britannica* recently made the content of its 32-volume printed set freely available online (<http://www.britannica.com>), it received so many visitors that the site became inaccessible.

Finally, to delve more deeply into Web searching itself, two good sites are Search Engine Watch (<http://www.searchenginewatch.com>) and Search IQ, (<http://www.searchiq.com>).

"Among the more interesting developments, ironically, are sites that downplay technology in favor of the human touch."

searchenginewatch.com) and Search IQ, (<http://www.searchiq.com>). T

Reid Goldsborough is a syndicated columnist and author of the book *Straight Talk About the Information Superhighway*. He can be reached at reidgold@netaxs.com or <http://members.home.net/reidgold>.

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By Mary Kay Matson, ATM



Obscure facts
about famous
people add
spice to
any speech.

“Once upon a time, there was a king – oops! I mean there was a dead king – who sat on his throne for 400 years.” What kind of speech opener is this? The beginning of a fairy tale? A horror story, perhaps? Not at all. It’s history.

History can be hilarious – and a real lifesaver if you happen to be in the following situation. You’re scheduled to give a speech in two days, but your mind is blank. What to do? You may just want to sit back for a while and fantasize. Maybe this is the week you will finally give the Super Speech of all time. It will be amusing, appealing, unique...a real hit! But – you still don’t know what you’re going to talk about.

YOUR SOLUTION IS HISTORY

What? You don’t recall that history is hilarious? Look into a history book or two – not the detested, dogeared books you unwillingly dragged home from high school (and maybe ceremoniously burned on the day after graduation). Drive over to your branch library and begin browsing, for starters, through one of the books in Will and Ariel Durant’s historical series, *The Story of Civilization*.

“Ugh!” This is not to suggest that you spend several hours battling sleep while you struggle to develop an interest in some obscure historical character. Instead, just

History Can Be Hilarious

rummage through any of the Durants’ books. Dozens of familiar names will tumble off the pages. Perhaps you glimpse the name of “Isaac Newton.” Is that “apple” story really true? Probably not. But, if you read the first two paragraphs about Newton in the Durants’ *The Age of Louis XIV*, you’ll discover that the brilliant physicist was deeply interested in alchemy, the “art” of trying to make gold out of cheap metal. He also was a lifelong devotee of astrology (not to be confused with astronomy, or anything else

scientific). You might start a speech with these hitherto little-known facts. Then, with your audience interested, and possibly incredulous, you simply "fill in" with information about Newton's significant accomplishments.

Continuing to page through *The Story of Civilization*, you glimpse the name of John Milton, the blind English poet who wrote *Paradise Lost*. Milton doesn't seem a likely subject for a humorous speech. Most people have a mental picture of him strolling about London with a prayer book, a beatific smile on his lips. Less widely known are the following juicy tidbits: Milton beat his young nephews during the years they lived with him as adolescents; he married three times and detested his daughters, who reciprocated his feelings. Once, in an attempt to get rid of his first wife legally, Milton tried to change English law so he could divorce her.

Maybe your tastes favor European history. Pick a king or a queen. Where can you unearth some intimate and little-known facts? Just look under "kings" in your library's subject index and then repair to the proper shelf. You'll be amazed.

The antics of Henry VIII may be all too familiar to your listeners, but there are many other monarchs whose lives were much more risqué. King Louis XV of France, for example, ordered the first "lift" installed at the palace of Versailles, built by his great-granddaddy. Louis used the lift for quick visits to his paramours, who were installed on the floor above. The lift was called the "Flying Chair." The famous Madame Pompadour found his frequent visits on the Flying Chair so stressful that she soon relinquished her career as Louie's favorite and retired to the country.

Or perhaps you would fancy telling your audience about King Faud I of Egypt (1868-1936), who detested odors and ran from room to room armed with eau-de-cologne spray. His passion for clean living, unfortunately, did not extend to his business dealings. And therein you have an interesting tale.

Maybe you would like to start a historical sketch about Charles I of England by mentioning that one of his vertebrae ended up as a pepper shaker at an English doctor's table – at least until Queen Victoria found out and ordered the bone buried with the rest of Charles' remains.

If you like rummaging around sales tables in bookstores, you usually can find small, generally unpopular little paperbacks to which you can refer for unusual facts about famous people. A recent find consisted of dumb quotations from well-known American politicians – humorous beginnings for a speech on almost any 20th century American president.

So sidle up to that library index or computer, or to your bookstore's sale table and, in no time at all, you will have in your pocket the Super Speech you always dreamed of presenting.

Incidentally, the dead monarch who sat on his throne for 400 years was the popular and powerful Charle-

magne, king of the Franks and emperor of the West, whose funeral directors couldn't bear to bury him. The body was embalmed and dressed in the royal robes; his crown was placed on his head and a suitable smile on his lips. Charlemagne's body was propped up like this from 814 to 1215, when he was finally buried. **T**

Mary Kay Matson, ATM is a member of Daybreakers Club 1155-11 in Indianapolis, Indiana.

Several of the following books were used as references for this article. This list includes a few others that were on the same shelf and looked as though they'd be fun to use for a speech. All were found in a small branch of the Indianapolis Public Library. You probably can find these books – and dozens more – in your own local library.

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When people say "That's funny!" they don't necessarily mean that it's humorous or witty. They may simply mean the remark or event is odd or unusual. In effect, they are changing the literal meaning of the word by a figure of speech called antiphrasis.

While this is sometimes confusing, especially to someone learning a new language, there is a place for both literal and figurative language in our discourse. Expressions in their literal sense provide accuracy and clarity, while figures of speech add imagination and beauty to the text. If we were restricted to literal language alone, our communication would have all the vitality, interest and attractiveness of an Internal Revenue Service summons.

If you are a serious-minded person who has been told to lighten up on your speeches or try a little humor, this reading is for you. Remember the axiom of the platform speaker: "You don't have to use humor in your speeches - unless, of course, you want to get paid."

I can't promise you a job confecting one-liners for a TV comedy show, but I can tell you how to sprinkle some appropriate humor into that contest speech. A figure of speech conveys an idea by means of a mental picture. It is a verbal exclamation point. Quite often, by a twist of thought, it sheds light on an otherwise abstract idea and makes a point with a jab of humor.

Take for example, the famous American vaudevillian and radio star Fred Allen. His disdain for Hollywood and all its glitz was monumental. In one of his broadcasts, he

flattened the Hollywood scene with a brilliant and classical putdown: "You can take all the sincerity there is in Hollywood, stuff it into a flea's navel, and have room left over for six caraway seeds and an agent's heart."

In this one cutting sentence, Allen combined metonymy, meiosis, irony, sarcasm and derision. The rhetorical device of figurative language owes its origin - as do many other things - to the ancient Greeks. Many of these devices still retain their original, and today, unpronounceable names: polysyndeton, eustathia, bdelygmia and so on.

On the other hand, almost everyone is familiar with the more common devices of simile and metaphor. The difference between the two is slight; a metaphor is simply an implied simile. The tipoff is the use of the word "as" or "like" for the simile.

This is perhaps the easiest way to subtly add humor to a talk: Identify the serious point you want to make in the text; then before or after that passage, insert a simile or metaphor that aptly illustrates the point. Thus: He was quick on his feet like a hot knife through butter.

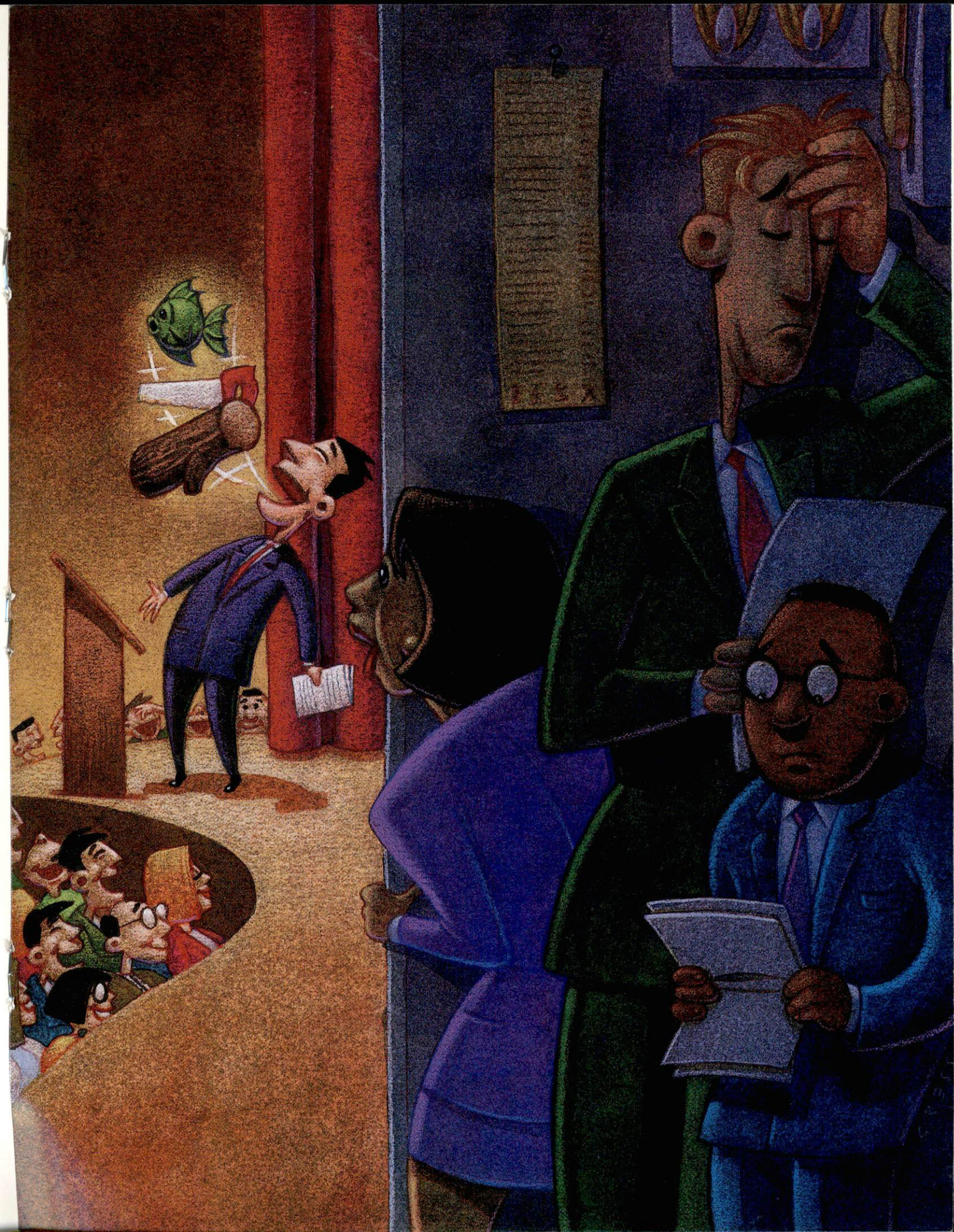
Metonymy is a close relative to a metaphor. It consists of using one term to represent another. Thus: "I know an automotive engineer who repairs my Toyota - and drives a Mercedes." (Translation: I'm poor and he's rich.)

The paradox can be used to add humor because it introduces an element of surprise, the main feature of humor. Paradox is forever associated with two great English men of letters, G.K. Chesterton and George Bernard Shaw, both renowned for their wit, which cast new light on the issues of their time. A paradox is a statement that on its face may seem contradictory or absurd, but may in fact conceal a larger truth. Thus in *Man and Superman*, Shaw remarks, "A lifetime of happiness! No man alive could bear it; it would be hell on earth."

**How to
add humor to
your speeches
the easy way.**

That's No Joke - It's a Figure of Speech

BY ROY FENSTERMAKER, DTM ■ ILLUSTRATION BY MIKE CRESSY



No discussion of figurative language is complete without mentioning puns. The *Random House Dictionary* traces the origin of the word to the 17th century and the use of the word "pound" meaning to mistreat words. It consists of a play on words, in which the same word or sound-alike words (homonyms) are used in differing senses. An example: What did Mozart say to Schubert, when they first met in heaven? Answer: "Take me to your lieder."

The typical reaction to a pun is often a suppressed groan. Speakers should be warned that a pun in the middle of a speech may alienate an entire audience. This figure of speech is best avoided.

Figurative language also finds frequent expression in the verbal arsenal of politicians who find it useful for attacking opponents. Few people can forget the term "nattering nabobs of negativism," although they might have a hard time remembering the name of the U.S. vice president (Spiro Agnew) who coined the term.

Certainly a favorite of politicians in public debate is to ignore the reality of the issues and skewer the opponent with an apt figure of speech. Among all political figures, the unquestioned master in this was Winston Churchill. His skill was honed by years of parliamentary debate. His reported characterization of the British Labor Party's Aneurin "Ernie" Bevan as "a man of great humility...for which he has much reason," is a deft combination of categorization and sarcasm.

Sir Winston's mastery of figurative language was displayed in April 1941 in the House of Commons in a derisive speech on Mussolini's "stab in the back" attack on France:

"This whipped jackal who, to save his own skin, has made of Italy a vassal state of Hitler's empire, is frisking up by the side of the German tiger with yelps not only of appetite — that could be understood — but even of triumph."

Churchill combined personification, invective and sarcasm with poetic cadence and rhythm. Numerous similar passages could be cited justifying Churchill's mastery of the language and its use to buoy the spirits of the British people.

Politicians are also known to favor the figure called *bdelygmia*. A prime example may be found in Gene Fowler's hilarious work *Timberline* (Garden City Books, 1933). Fowler recounts the rather gruesome story of Alfred Packer, a Colorado man convicted of the crime of cannibalism, allegedly committed while in the company of a group of prospectors whom he had been ostensibly guiding through the back country.

In Fowler's account, one of the witnesses at Packer's trial quoted presiding Judge Gerry as having pronounced sentence on Packer in the following words:

"Stand up, you man-eating #@%& and receive your sintince! There was sivin Dimmycrats in Hinsdale County, but you, yah voracious man-eating #@%&*, yah eat five of them! I sintince y' t' be hanged by the neck until y're dead, dead, dead; as a warnin' ag'in' reducin' the Dimmycratic popalashun of the state."*

"Speakers or writers who are serious about their craft would do well to be funny (in a literal sense) with figurative language."

Did the good judge realize that he was using a figure of speech originated by the Greeks? Probably not. The figure itself may be defined as "an elegant expression of a vulgar argument." In this instance it might even be defined as a "vulgar expression of an elegant argument."

Americans are generally credited with humor based on hyperbole, i.e. exaggeration without the intent to deceive. The British, on the other hand, tend more toward meiosis, that is gross understatement.

Stephen Leacock, the Canadian economist and humorist (is this an oxymoron?), James Thurber of *New Yorker* fame, and P.G. Wodehouse were masters of meiosis. (Leacock's "You could have knocked me over with a crowbar" is a typical example.) Art Buchwald and Garrison Keillor are current practitioners of the same. Litotes is a close

relative to meiosis. (Example: the supercilious tourist at the Grand Canyon, "Not half bad, really!")

The oxymoron, referred to in the preceding paragraph, lends itself to humor because of its incongruous aspect. The expression combines two Greek words meaning "sharp" and "dull." The terms of an oxymoron are inherently contradictory. Recently it was reported in *The Los Angeles Times* that "...In Hollywood, philanthropy is an oxymoron."

Figures of speech illumine the dark corners of a text, charm reader or listener, and add reality to an otherwise abstract thought. Speakers or writers who are serious about their craft would do well to be funny (in a literal sense) with figurative language.

A few suggestions might be in order:

- Develop figures that are original. Avoid clichés as you would the latest strain of the flu.
- Be consistent. Don't put your nose to the grindstone with your head in the clouds.
- Practice inventing fresh expressions for different figures. Begin with similes, metaphors and hyperbole and work into paradox, oxymoron, gnome and more complex figures.
- Check your script and ask yourself where an apt figure might be inserted to brighten or illumine the text.

And, by the way, have you underlined the figures of speech in this article, just for practice? **T**

Roy Fenstermaker, DTM, won the International Speech Contest in 1983. He is a member of Dynamic Force-masters Club 587-F in Santa Fe Springs, California.

Common Figures of Speech

By Roy Fenstermaker, DTM

Anaphora: Repetition of a word or phrase at the beginning of two or more verses, clauses or sentences. "...We shall fight on the beaches,...we shall fight in the fields and in the streets,...we shall never surrender." — Winston S. Churchill.

Antithesis: Placing a sentence or phrase against another to which it is opposed in order to show a contrast of ideas. "Ask not what your country can do for you..." — J.F.Kennedy.

Aphorism/Gnome: A pithy expression embodying a general truth. "A penny saved is a penny earned." — Benjamin Franklin

Apophasis: Denial of one's intention to speak on a certain topic but, in fact, doing so: "I shall not refer to my opponent's character, but..."

Bdelygmia: A litany of abuse.

Categoria: Direct exposure of an opponent's faults. (Edward R. Murrow's broadcast on Joe McCarthy).

Epigram: A witty, ingenious, or pointed statement, expressed tersely. "I couldn't help it. I can resist everything except temptation." — Oscar Wilde.

Eustathia: Literally, "to stand firm." An adamant refusal to give up. (See Churchill's "... On the beaches," etc.)

Hyperbole: An obvious and intentional overstatement: "I'm so worn out, I could sleep a year."

Irony: Use of words to convey a meaning contrary to the literal statement: "The human race, to which many of my readers belong." — G.K. Chesterton.

Litotes: An obvious understatement: "I kid you not." — Jack Paar.

Meiosis: Use of a lesser word or phrase for a greater to diminish the impact. "He didn't lay a hand on me." — A prostrate pugilist.

Metonymy: Naming one object for that of another to which it is related. The "White House" for the executive branch.

Onomatopoeia: Formation of a word by the sound of the object. "Boom!" "Pow!" "Kerplunk!"

Oxymoron: Mutually contradictory elements producing an incongruous effect. "The innocent recipient of a bribe."

Paradox: A self-contradictory proposition that may express a possible truth. "We have to believe in free will. We have no choice." — Isaac Bashevis.

Polysyndeton: A sentence knit together with a series of conjunctions. "To live, and to breathe, and to smell the roses — Ah, that's retirement."

Sarcasm: A remark not to be taken literally and usually delivered derisively. "The senator is so intent on becoming another Lincoln, that he won't be content until he's assassinated." — Said of Sen. Frank Lausche (Ohio) by a political opponent.

Playing With Words

(Continued from page 10)

an entertaining orator from a boring one. As J. N. Hook says, "Words represent concepts. Therefore, the word-rich person is also concept-rich." Here are some ways to expand your verbal intelligence:

- Invest in a good dictionary and thesaurus. Instead of putting them away on a shelf, keep them on your coffee table where you can reach them easily.
- While you're reading the newspaper, jot down one new word and look it up. Then try to use it during that day. You become the master of words when you put them to work for you.
- Keep a vocabulary book on your bedside table and study it.

- Work crossword puzzles and play word games. Take the vocabulary quiz that appears each month in *Reader's Digest*.
- Write down clever phrases when you hear them and start a file of them.
- Go to your local library and check out the books mentioned in this article. You'll find other good ones in the process.

Don't be a dabster. Become an expert who's eager to use new words that further your education and make your presentations as colorful as Italian sunsets. If you're determined to become a better speaker, you also must become a philologist. (You can look up that word if you don't already know what it means.) **T**

Susan Atkins is a member of Dawn Yawn Club 3218-26 of Lakewood, California



Two's Company But Three's a Meeting

By Gary Schmidt, DTM

Imagine that you have recruited and encouraged three guests to attend your club meeting. You arrive at the location and discover that only two members (including yourself) are present. Realizing the poor impression this makes on your potential members, you become discouraged and sadly cancel the meeting. Right?

Wrong! As long as at least two members are present, you can conduct productive meetings that improve the morale of your members and the growth of your club. As a past club specialist and member of clubs with as few as eight members, here are some ideas I have discovered to keep smaller clubs persisting until that day when membership – and attendance – tops 20.

There are two types of meetings – those with guests and those without. Meetings with guests must carry a different tone from those with only members present.

MEETINGS WITH GUESTS

The primary goal of a club meeting with fewer than five members is to demonstrate to guests why they should join this club. Key points to remember are:

1 Always conduct a meeting. Despite the inclination to cancel a meeting because of small turnout, demon-

Tips for conducting productive meetings with five or fewer members.

strate to guests why this club is special. They will most likely return if you show them you care enough to hold a meeting regardless of how many people attend.

2 Be positive. Show your guests that even though member attendance is low, you still enjoy the Toastmasters program and what it offers. Your enthusiasm and positive attitude will rub off on them.

3 Be flexible. If members are unable to attend the meeting at the last minute, be willing to shuffle the schedule and duties to meet the needs of those who are present.

4 Involve the guests. Let guests know that your club is temporarily facing low membership, but that club members are dedicated to rebuilding the club's strength. Ask for their suggestions on how to improve club participation. If guests are invited to participate in club activities and to help out, they feel a sense of ownership and might decide to become members.

With those principles in mind, here are some ideas for actual meetings when member turnout is low:

■ **Hold a mini demonstration meeting.** If your guests outnumber your members, conduct a "hot-seat" demonstration of what transpires at a typical Toastmasters meeting. Gear your entire meeting to your visitors. Explain each duty in detail and describe how those tasks relate to real-world experiences. (For example, evaluations teach members to give honest and timely feedback to peers and family members.)

■ **Fill only key duties.** When member attendance is low, fill only the essential roles: Toastmaster, Table Topics-master, Speaker, Speech Evaluator and Timer. Explain the duties for the benefit of the guests, and offer them an opportunity to get involved. Timer is an example of a task that a savvy guest would be able to undertake.

■ **Have a sales meeting.** Sell the benefits of Toastmasters and the benefits of your current club situation. Small clubs offer the perfect opportunity to speak often. Also, smaller numbers provide a less intimidating environment for practicing and improving communication skills. Find the silver lining to your cloudy condition.

MEETINGS WITHOUT GUESTS

A meeting without guests takes the pressure off of motivating prospective members to join the club. However, in order to inspire and retain current members, a sparsely attended meeting has a new set of challenges. The key points to remember in this situation are:

1 **Always conduct a meeting.** While the inclination might be strong to cancel a meeting with five or fewer members, do not succumb to temptation.

2 **Have fun.** The greatest Toastmasters meetings are those that are fun to plan, fun to attend and fun to remember. Be outrageous! Try ideas that you have never tried before.

3 **Be creative.** What can you accomplish at a club meeting with few members? Develop exciting and entertaining meetings that take advantage of low attendance:

■ **Hot-seat speeches.** Have an entire meeting filled with hot-seat speeches. This not only gives members an opportunity to practice impromptu communication skills, but it also facilitates completion of manual speeches, which in turn encourages greater educational accomplishment.

■ **Backwards meeting.** This theme meeting fits well with low member turnout. Conduct the entire meeting backwards – evaluations before speeches, speeches before introductions, etc. This is a fun way to improve listening skills.

■ **Hot-seat meeting.** We have hot-seat speeches, why not hot-seat meetings? Write meeting duties on paper, put

them in a hat, and have members draw for tasks. This meeting will improve flexibility and creativity.

■ **Table Topics Extravaganza.** Eliminate all other meeting duties and have an elongated Table Topics meeting:

- **Hold a debate** – either one member against another, or a team competition.
- **Have a discussion.** Appoint a discussion leader, a recorder, and break into small groups. Assign a specific topic, such as "how club attendance and membership can be improved." This is an excellent opportunity to improve meeting and listening skills.
- **Consider comedy and skits.** Imitate celebrities such as comedians, actors from favorite TV shows, newscasters or politicians. Have members perform skits based on audience suggestions and comments.

By continuing to conduct meetings, regardless of attendance level, your club will actively work to improve member retention and attract new members. Most clubs have experienced a drought in membership at one time or another. With a positive attitude, flexibility, creativity and a sense of fun, club meetings can be productive and enjoyable and right on track toward achieving charter strength. **1**

Gary Schmidt, DTM, is a member of three clubs in Portland, Oregon: Clackamas Stepping Stones 3697-7, Electric Toasters 3964-7 and Marylhurst 5588-7.

Tools to Help Low-Member Clubs

Don't worry if your club is experiencing low membership. You can rebuild it with the help of the following materials from TI's World Headquarters:

How to Rebuild a Toastmasters Club manual (Catalog No. 1159, \$1.00); Promotional brochures *Talk. Still the Most Effective Means of Communication* (Catalog No. 99, first 10 free then \$.20 each); *Yes, You Need Toastmasters* (Catalog No. 101, first 10 free then \$.20 each); and member recruitment guide *From Prospect to Guest to Member* (Catalog No. 108, first three free then \$.25 each). Contact the Orders Department or World Headquarters to obtain these items. Prices do not include shipping.

If your club has fewer than nine members, it qualifies to receive the help of a district-assigned Club Specialist. Club Specialists are experienced Toastmasters from other clubs who work on a consulting basis to rebuild low membership. Contact your district governor for more details.



HOW TO

By Marijoyce Porcelli

Open your speech
with a bang.

Invite Your Audience To a Grand Opening

His voice was gentle, he was soft in manner and skin. He reminded me of a sweet child in an adult's massive, pale body. The description didn't exactly fit my mental image of a state executioner.

The opening of any speech should snare audience interest as soon as possible. There are several methods to obtain such results. One way is to use a sentence or a few statements that are a little startling. Try shocking your audience to grab their attention.

Mental imagery is also essential. For instance, the following opening, while informative, is a bit dry. Consider the visual picture being created:

A poll last year by the commission for the Future of Tobacco Rights in North Carolina says that fewer than 15 percent of the state's voters can name even one state representative they voted for in recent years. Yet, these state officials, depending on how they vote, can help make or break the local economy.

Think about this beginning. Can you or anyone else really visualize 15 percent of the myriad of voters in North Carolina? Probably not. This opening hasn't hooked immediate audience interest. Look at the next example to see how this opening could be reworded to net more interest and create a better visual picture while still getting the important points across.

They are the movers and the shakers who can decide whether citizens in North Carolina will have a rich or

poor economy. Yet, most people don't even remember putting them in office. They are the state's politicians, the senators and representatives, who were elected to speak for the people of this area.

A favorite method used to snare immediate audience interest is to use anecdotes. Anecdotes are very short stories that, to be successful, usually provide a surprise ending that ties the whole story together. Such a beginning also helps personalize the speech, so that participants can easily form a visual image of whatever topic you happen to present. Anecdotes can be one paragraph or a few paragraphs long. Just say enough to get your point across before going on.

Study the following example, which might serve as a suitable beginning but suffers from being rather impersonal:

Hypothermia is a potentially deadly condition triggered by low internal body temperature. A plunge in skin temperature is rarely dangerous. However, when outside factors cause the body to be defective in properly regulating internal temperature, a person can literally freeze to death.

So? What am I saying here? That people can literally freeze to death if they don't keep up their internal temperature. That opening is okay, but what if we personalize it, still getting the same message across, before leading into the facts? How about if I try something that aids in putting hard information on a more personal level?

At 65 Lizzie didn't seem to be affected by the chilly temperature. When her friends shivered, Lizzie claimed to

be comfortable and refused to wear a sweater. The entire community was shocked when she died of hypothermia, overexposure to the cold. Even more startling was that on the day of her death, the temperature was just under 60 degrees.

What Lizzie and others didn't understand is that hypothermia is a potentially deadly condition triggered by low internal body temperature. A plunge in....

Do you get the general idea? Don't be afraid to do several rough drafts of any particular opening. Let words and thoughts flow in your rough draft to get suitable material for a good beginning.

Surprise mixed with humor is always a good way to get immediate interest. For example, while addressing beauty school consultants I opened with a brief tale of a bad perm, ending with, "I walked out of that salon with hair big enough to hide a chihuahua in." The people laughed, then actually leaned slightly forward as a small group, waiting for more, because the opening image used was surprising but still humorous.

In continuing the use of humor, an opening anecdote can be created from a short joke in your own words or a funny story (if it is your amusing tale and does not belong to another), as long as you make sure the joke is appropriate to the speech. For instance, what about the following opening for a talk about some of the dangers of not taking prescription drugs correctly?

There's an old joke about a patient who, by following medical directions, was taking one pill a night and skipping the next. After she was treated for exhaustion, she asked the doctor if she couldn't try walking every other night, since skipping was so tiring. Absurd as this story may be, making mistakes on dosage, or not understanding all you can about different prescription drugs, is no laughing matter. The consequences can be serious.

Remember what I said about jokes having to be appropriate as openings? While the matter about making mis-

takes with prescription drugs is a serious topic, it isn't personal enough for the majority of people to take offense. However, while deciding the tone of any intended speech you must also consider the sensitivity of your audience. Consider this joke:

My neighbor was asked to give a talk on adultery at a local church meeting. He agreed, but since his wife was rather prim he decided not to share this news with her. He told her he was giving a community speech, but said that it was on boating. A week after the meeting another church member saw my neighbor's wife at the local grocery store and, without making a comment on the topic, complimented her husband's words of wisdom.

"I'm surprised he knew so much about it," the wife replied with surprise. "He's only done it twice. The first time he threw up and the second time his hat blew off."

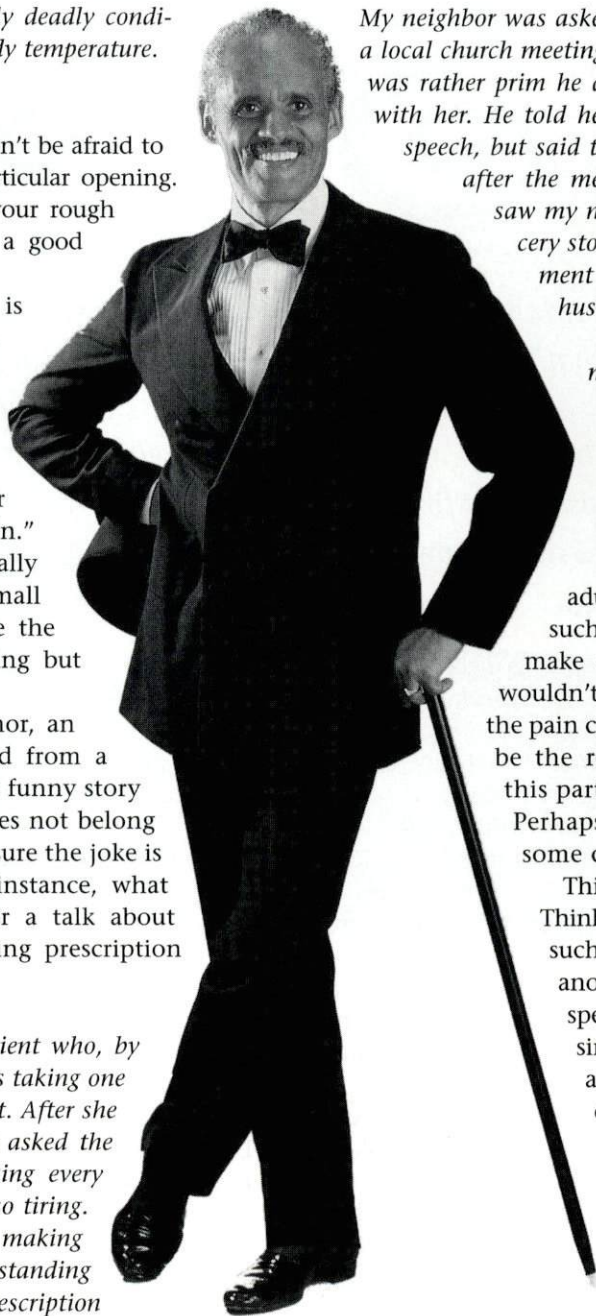
If you were giving a speech on adultery, would you consider using such an anecdote? It would probably make some individuals laugh. But it wouldn't be funny to the person suffering the pain caused by adultery, which might be the reason he or she had attended this particular speech in the first place. Perhaps that individual was hoping for some comfort or advice.

Think about the subject: adultery. Think about the pain that comes with such trauma. This joke might work in another, entirely different, type of speech, but in this case the topic is simply too grave. It does not lend an angle of humor, so such an opening would be inappropriate in most cases.

The general rule here is the same that applies to all speeches: Keep your audience in mind always, especially with the beginning

of any speech. Remember, most people love a grand opening. **T**

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Let's Produce Verbal Sunshine

In the spring of 1871, a young man picked up a book and read 21 words that had an immediate, profound and dramatic impact on his life. At the time, he was a medical student at the Montreal General Hospital and was consumed with anxiety. He was worried about passing his final medical exams, worried about where to go next, worried about how to build a practice, worried about how to make a living.

Incredibly, the 21 words this young medical student read in 1871 helped him to become the most famous physician of his generation. He would soon organize the world-famous Johns Hopkins School of Medicine. Oxford University would bestow the highest honor that can be given to any medical doctor in the British Empire – the Regius Professor Of Medicine at Oxford University. The King of England knighted this man for his accomplishments. And, when the doctor died, two huge volumes totaling 1,466 pages were required to write the story of his life.

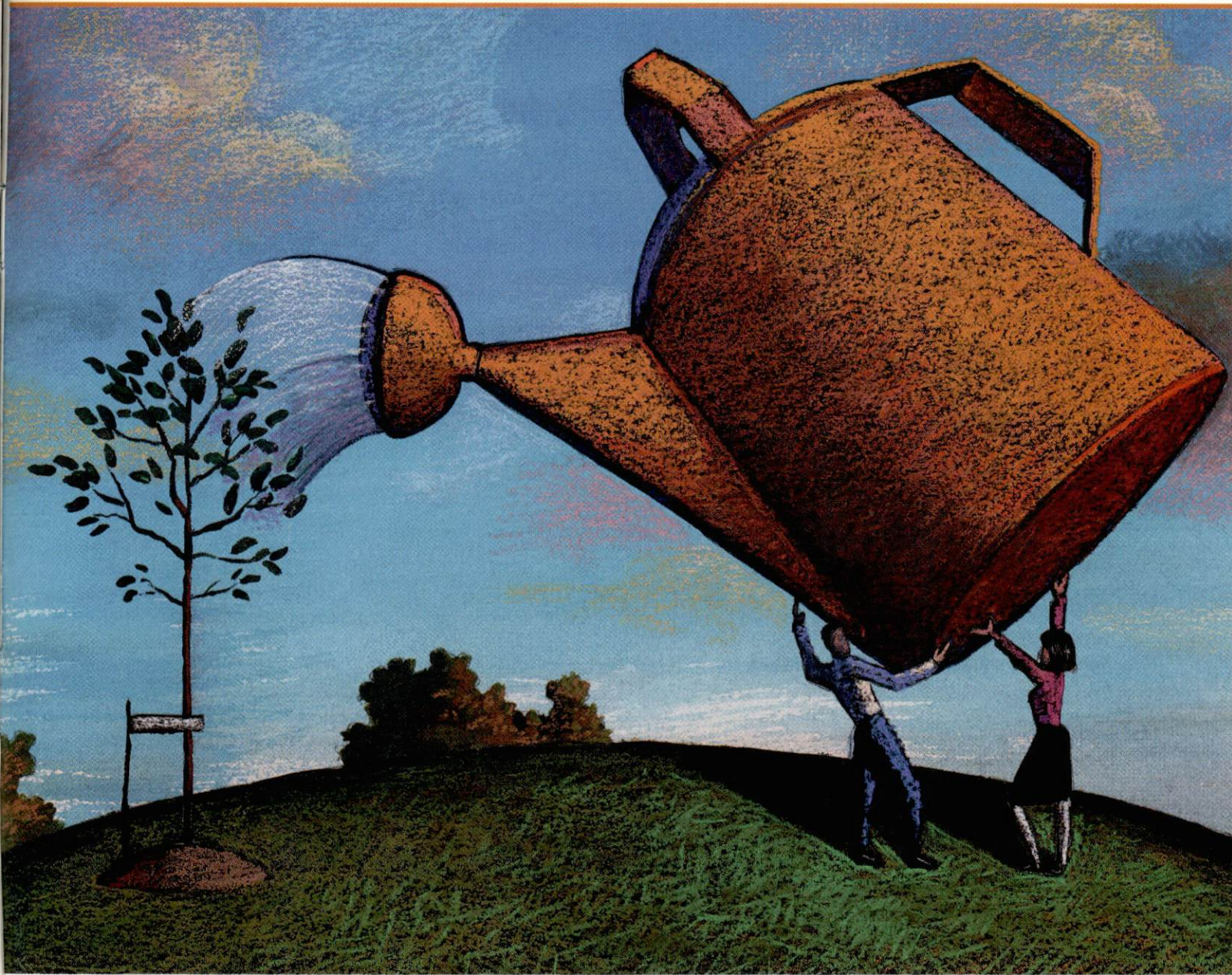
The man was Sir William Osler. The 21 words that transformed his life came from Thomas Carlyle who wrote: *“Our main business is not so see what lies dimly at a distance, but to do what lies clearly at hand.”*

Words are very powerful. What we speak and write can inspire or injure, heal or hurt, motivate or manipulate, delight or demean. Most individuals, if they take the time, can recall words of wisdom from a parent, teacher, friend or even a stranger that made a difference in their lives. Likewise, many can also remember a moment when harsh words, carelessly inflicted upon them years earlier, generated pain or shame or humiliation. The simple act

of recalling that moment is enough to revive the original wound. Therefore, it is vital that we pay attention to our words, ensuring that what is spoken or written builds people up rather than tears them down. Consider these powerful and inspiring ways to use words:

■ **Words of encouragement.** Long before Michael Caine became a world-famous actor, he was on the verge of abandoning acting. In his book, *What's It All About?*, Caine describes how he spent several years living “hand to mouth, being helped out by friends, with the occasional film bit or television part.” During those discouraging years he landed infrequent, minor roles in a popular British TV series called *Dixon of Dock Green*. After appearing in one of the episodes, Caine received this short note of encouragement from Dennis Price, a famous movie star at the time: “I saw you on *Dixon of Dock Green* and I always pride myself that I can spot star quality when I see it. And you, Mr. Caine, have it. I know that *Dixon* is not the greatest show, but don't give up. You have what it takes. Good luck.” Caine recalls that those brief words created a “massive boost to my flagging resolve.” The lesson in that story is simple: a few well-chosen words

BY VICTOR PARACHIN ■ ILLUSTRATION BY JONATHAN EVANS



of encouragement can go a long way to reassure, cheer and motivate a person who is struggling with discouragement.

■ **Words of instruction.** Sometimes people can lose their sense of direction in life, especially in times of a personal crisis. During such a time, a few simple sentences of instruction can provide invaluable guidance. Here is an example from Bobbie, a 49-year-old woman who has multiple sclerosis. A decade ago, she struggled with a flare-up of the illness and found it impossible to get her clothing in place after using the office restroom. "I hated the problems I was experiencing – not being able to walk or stand long enough to get dressed or rise without help," she says. As she struggled, Bobbie weighed the value of her current working life against that of disability retirement.

She had a wonderful family and a successful career. But now her MS problems were overwhelming and haunting; could her family cope with her disability? How much longer would her employer be understanding before forcing her into a disability retirement? Should she give up now? Overcome with frustration and the current humiliating circumstances, Bobbie started to cry with great anguish. Just then a younger co-worker came into the restroom asking Bobbie if she could help. "Go away!" Bobbie sobbed. "I'm too much of a burden. People get tired of helping someone like me."

But the woman walked over and began to assist, gently saying: "Never turn down assistance or hesitate to ask for help. Remember, your need is someone else's opportunity to give. And we all need to give. Right now, it's just

as important for me to give as for you to receive." That woman's wisdom has echoed in Bobbie's mind many times over the ensuing 12 years. "In that time, help both sought and offered has allowed me to lead a full life," Bobbie says. "Even today that young woman's profound understanding reminds me that kindness willingly received is a kindness given in its own right."

■ **Words of praise.** "I can live for two months on a good compliment," declared Mark Twain. His comment is a reminder of how important praise is for nourishing the human spirit. A word of praise honestly uttered and a compliment sincerely given is verbal sunshine. When Emily Rooney, daughter of American television commentator Andy Rooney, became the first woman to hold the position of executive producer of ABC's top-rated *World News Tonight with Peter Jennings*, her father was asked to comment on his daughter's accomplishment. He paid her this compliment: "If Emily is as good a producer for *World News Tonight* as she has been a daughter for us, then ABC is lucky to have her."

■ **Words of correction.** At times, an objective critique of our actions and attitudes is invaluable. Done gently and sensitively, these words of correction can both transform and enhance lives. A good example is this woman's experience, which took place decades ago when Patti was in the eighth grade and a member of a very popular group in her junior high school. She and her friends came from affluent families. Every Friday night they gathered at the country club where special events were planned for junior high students. Patti was often the first of her friends calling others before school to find out which designer clothes she and the other members of her group should wear.

One day a teacher asked her to stay after school. When they were alone, the teacher asked Patti if she had ever heard of India's caste system. Patti said no, so the teacher drew some line figures on the blackboard. She explained that a Brahmin, in the top caste, could not even allow an Untouchable's shadow to fall on him. "You and your friends," the teacher said sadly, "remind me of those Brahmins." Patti showed no emotion at the time, but the teacher's words impacted her deeply. She was shocked to be perceived as a person who excluded others. Prior to that conversation, Patti never thought about the way she and her friends affected those who didn't belong to the popular crowd. That brief conversation changed Patti's


life. Today – 20 years later – her circle of friends includes people from all walks of life.

■ **Words expressing appreciation:** "The deepest principle of human nature is the craving to be appreciated," noted 19th century psychologist William James. Perhaps the reason people welcome words of appreciation is that so much of what we do goes unnoticed. Many people think their hard work and sincere efforts are taken for granted. Thus, when someone expresses appreciation, those words are received with grateful hearts. One woman, who has taught elementary school for 25 years, recalls the delightful compliment given by a student. At the time she had

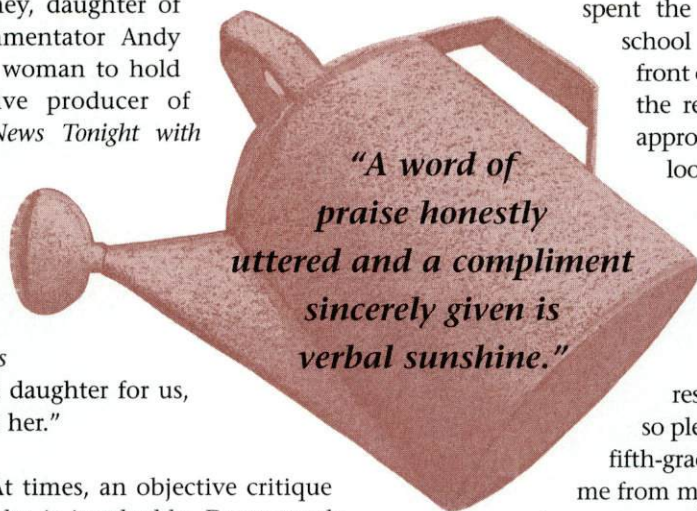
spent the day as a substitute. With the school day over, she was sitting at the front of the classroom making notes for the regular teacher. A fifth-grade boy approached her and quietly waited. "I looked up, smiled and said, 'Yes, Jeff?'" To her amazement the boy said: "I'd like to thank you for being such a nice substitute teacher. I really appreciated your kindness."

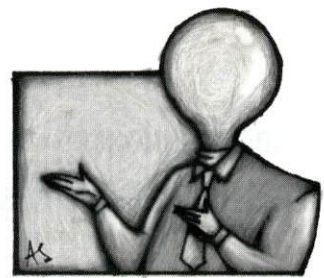
The teacher describes her response: "I was so surprised – and so pleased – to hear such words from a fifth-grade boy! I felt a warmth wash over me from my head to my toes as I scrambled for a response and simply thanked him for his words of appreciation. His words left a glow in my heart that is with me even today, many months later."

■ **Words to generate confidence.** Michelle Pfeiffer credits a high-school teacher with giving her the confidence she needed to pursue acting. She explains: "It's amazing when you're a kid how something can alter the direction of your life. I had a high-school teacher who said one simple thing to me: 'I think you have talent.' And I never forgot it – partly because while growing up, I got very few compliments. Now, I didn't at that moment think, 'Oh I'll be an actress.' Still, I came to feel very confident in that world because of that single comment."

Pfeiffer's encounter is a reminder that words are not mere letters strung together. Positive words expressed become a creative force generating positive energy. Knowing the power of words should lead all of us to pay closer attention to what we say – not only to what we intend to say, but also to those words that slip out in the heat of the moment. Day by day we should understand the mighty force present in the statements we utter and write. 

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By Jana Bickell, ATM-G

Frolic in language with fun assignments.

The Wild and Wonderful Grammarian

A FEW HOURS BEFORE THE TOASTMASTERS MEETING, YOU SUDDENLY remember that you're the Grammarian. Panic sets in. Dictionary, dictionary, my kingdom for a dictionary! At last you find it – buried beneath that mystery novel you've been reading. Eyes closed, you open the book and point. Sound familiar?

For some Toastmasters, serving as Grammarian is a simple task, so simple they forget to prepare. But like all meeting functions, the Grammarian's role is essential. A well-prepared, thoughtful presentation on language, style and tone adds insight and helps speakers become more articulate. Don't be afraid to be creative. Here are some suggestions for adding fun to your duty:

1 Research the meaning of the Word of the Day. English words have fascinating histories. Some are Anglo-Saxon and have Germanic roots; others are left over from the Norman conquest of England and have Latin backgrounds.

For example, the word nepotism comes from the Latin "nepotis," meaning nephews. It derives from a practice of early Popes, who having no children, conferred special favors on their nephews. Today, the English "nepotism" refers to business leaders who provide jobs for their relatives.

2 Select an unusual word. Here's one – *gormless*. I'll bet not many of you have heard of that word. One of my club members found it on the Internet. I had to look in three dictionaries before locating it. The word means stupid, without purpose. At my workplace we have devised many ways to use it. Or, how about the word *Francophile*? It means the love of French things. This is not an easy word to use in a Table Topic or speech, but one member of my club managed to sneak it in. Suddenly, in the middle of a story about the Old West this speaker said in a hushed voice, "No one knew his secret... that he was a Francophile."

3 Pick a group of words with a thematic link. I came across five very old words in the debut issue of *Civilization* magazine and presented them as a group for club members to use. The idea caught on so quickly in Table Topics that some members used all the words. The Toastmaster

managed to use them all in the same sentence.

What would you do with these three words?

- (a) *Snoutband* – a person who rudely interrupts conversation. "No one likes to socialize with a snoutband." The word conjures up a picture that is hard to forget.
- (b) *Ninnywatch* – a vain hope or foolish expectation. One member described a ninnywatch as finding a female to talk to him. Another described it as expecting him to get up early on a Saturday morning.
- (c) *Clyte* – a verb meaning to lose one's train of thought in the middle of an oration and suddenly sit down. It wasn't hard to use this one. Many people are afraid they will clyte during a Table Topic.

4 Assign each person a different Word of the Day. As Grammarian, I gave each member one word to use from a book listing unusual words. I handed out definitions and asked members to match them with the words used by each speaker. These are some of the obscure words I selected: *macrophobia* (fear of long waits), *lassipedes* (tired feet) and *flanerie* (idle walking).

As you see, Grammarians can have a lot of fun. I don't recommend that you exercise this kind of creativity at every meeting, but trying something new can certainly liven up the routine agenda. So next time it's your turn to serve as Grammarian, think of something wild and wonderful to do. Your members will love you for it. **T**

Jana Bickell, ATM-G, is a member of Nova Club 5507-52 in Los Angeles, California.

Attention please!
Implement these tips and you'll . . .

By Walter Oleksy

Improve Your Concentration

One day while surgery was being performed in a Chicago hospital, part of the ceiling collapsed. The surgeon was concentrating so intently that only after the operation did he ask a nurse, "What's all the plaster doing on the floor around the operating table?"

Most of us, unfortunately, do not have such powers of concentration. Noise distracts us, having too many items on our agenda frustrates us, phone calls pester us, people claiming our attention draw us away from our tasks. We also devise dozens of reasons to delay starting or completing a project.

Countless professionals, however, achieve high levels of concentration. They get so involved in work that is enjoyable or meaningful to them that concentration comes rather easily. Most successful people subordinate everything to the main purposes of their lives. When at work, they display extraordinary powers of concentration. These people often bewilder colleagues because they never seem to work hard for any long period of time. Their secret lies in their power of concentration, thus obtaining maximum results with minimum effort.

"Concentration," said Ralph Waldo Emerson, "is the secret of success in politics, in war, in trade; in short, in all the management of human affairs."

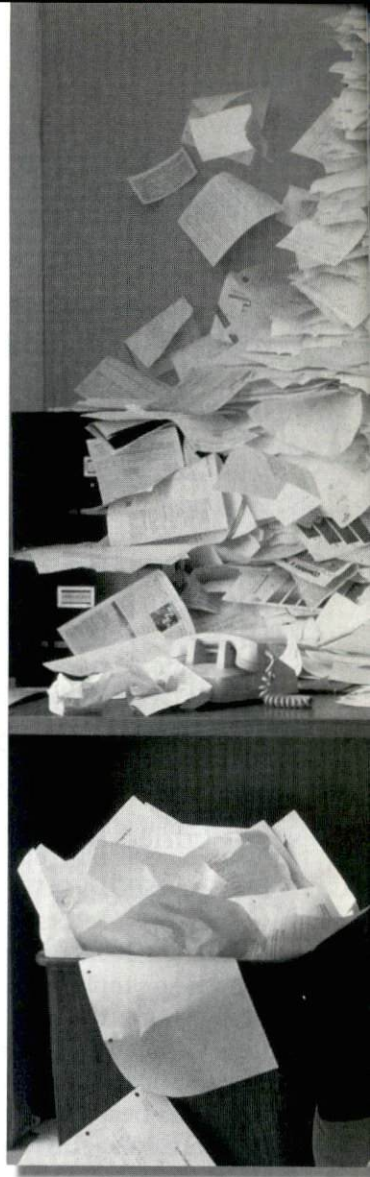
We are not, however, born equal in our power to concentrate any more than we are born equal in our ability to play tennis. Concentration, for most of us, is an acquired skill.

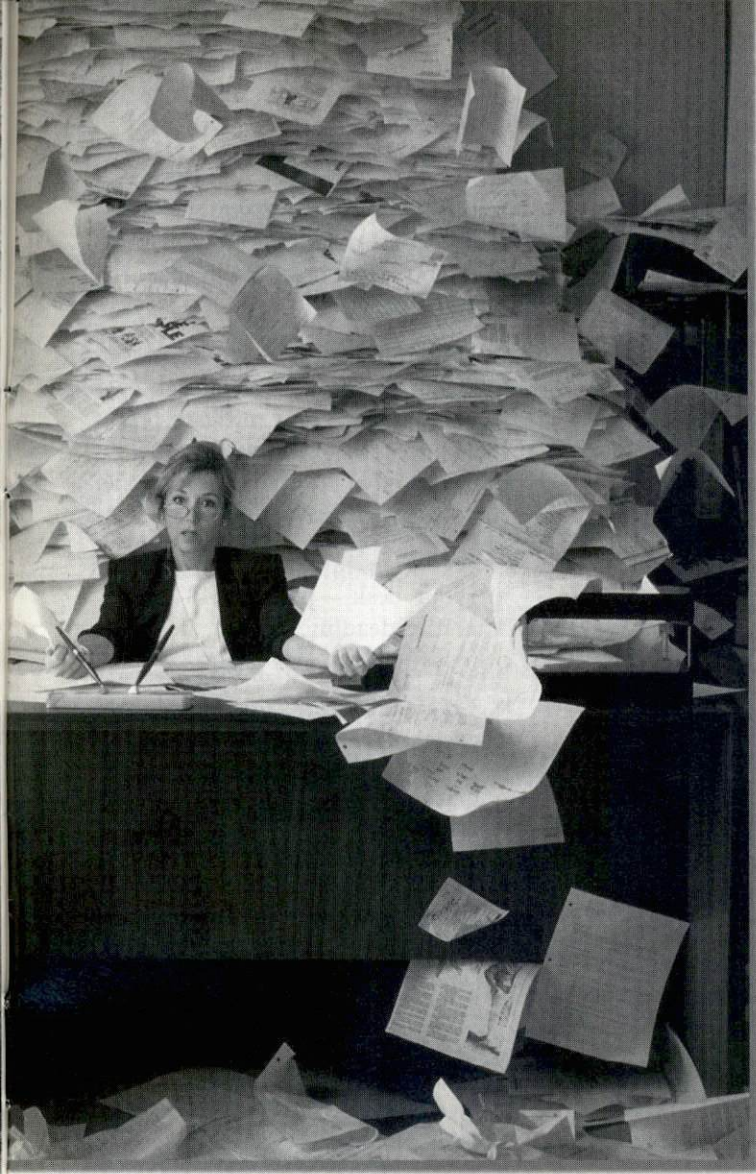
The late Frederick B. Robinson, psychologist and one-time college president, said he had found four simple

principles useful in improving concentration:

1. Cultivate a keen and active interest in the task to be performed or subject to be mastered.
2. Learn to amass, in an orderly way, the raw materials necessary for your thinking. Get the facts and stress only those that bear directly on the problem.
3. If you want to think hard, you must learn to relax. The most efficient use of mental and physical energy is the most economical.
4. Briefly remove yourself from the problem at hand. When you return, you'll find yourself better able to focus on the problem and, surprisingly, might find the solution that had seemed so elusive. How? After a sustained effort, the mind becomes temporarily exhausted, but recovers and arrives at a solution. That is to say, our mental processes continue to work subconsciously. To a certain extent, we make the subconscious work for us.

One of the most important factors in achieving greater concentration is to become better organized. Organize your schedule and your work. Each day, like Benjamin Franklin, decide upon a set of priorities. Decide the order of importance in which things must be done, and take one at a time until you have completed your task list. If you are the type who can do more than one thing at a time and get each done on time and satisfactorily, fine, but most of us are not that accomplished. We can achieve more by tackling tasks singly and in their order of importance.





Organizing our desks, offices or other workplaces can enhance concentration by making materials readily available. Some people claim they can work efficiently in clutter, with books and papers stacked on the desk or floor, but such lack of organization is usually counterproductive. An orderly workplace aids concentration.

One of the greatest enemies of concentration is noise, which seems to be in greater abundance every year. Our offices, factories, and homes are becoming so noisy and full of distractions that it is often next to impossible to focus on any task. "Noise in the workplace, whether for white-collar or blue-collar workers, has become the most prevalent hazard faced by employees," says Dr. Maurice H. Miller, professor of audiology at New York University.

"Noise doesn't kill, but it is the greater destroyer of the quality of life," Miller cautions. "It can prevent a worker from concentrating on his task; a parent from hearing a child at play; or keep us from enjoying the song of a bird, an outdoor concert, or being able to communicate."

One basic way to tune out distractions and keep them from interfering with our concentration is to attain a higher level of interest in what we are doing. If a quiet work environment cannot be achieved by closing a door or disconnecting a telephone, a radio playing soft music

may help. If all else fails, earplugs can shut out most disturbing noises at work or home.

Not only interest and enjoyment, but skill and performance are called into play if you are to achieve high levels of concentration at work. If you can shut out competing thoughts and distractions while you focus on a particular task, you will do the job better and enjoy your work more.

Satisfaction with job performance reinforces concentration because we all like to contemplate a past personal success. Persons easily distracted from their main tasks should consider the possibility that they are running away from dissatisfaction with their own efforts at work.

Some essentials for achieving better concentration include:

- Interest in the work at hand.
- Organization of time.
- Organization of materials.
- Quiet atmosphere.
- Focusing on the task at hand.
- Environment conducive to work.
- Mood conducive to work.
- Good health to handle the stress of the task.
- Positive attitude.
- Determination to succeed.
- Perseverance to complete the task.
- Knowing the purpose of the task and believing in it.

The more successful a person is, the busier he or she is apt to be, with more demands on time and attention. To accomplish more and retain high levels of concentration, it is important to be alone for at least part of the workday. Consider putting up some "Do Not Disturb" signs.

Making war on clutter is another aid to concentration. Put out of view all papers or other materials that are not directly related to the task at hand. Give your eyes and mental processes the benefit of focusing on the job at hand without the distractions of physical references to other tasks. You can focus on the others in turn.

Another important aid to good concentration is adequate preparation. How you approach your work can determine how well it will progress and end up.

Relaxation is another concentration enhancer. The one key common to all forms of successful thinking and achieving is a peaceful mind. Stress and other factors that cause fatigue weaken our mental powers.

Finally, you must achieve attention to the task at hand. Scholars have put it their way, but novelist Christopher Morley perhaps said it best when he wrote, "No man is lonely while eating spaghetti – it requires so much attention." **T**

Walter Oleksy is a Chicago-based writer of business and management articles and books, including *Employee Benefit Programs*, (Prentice-Hall.)

Making the Most of Your Minutes

By Tom Jenkins

No matter who you are, where you are or what you do, you have 1,440 minutes available each day. How you use them makes the difference. Time has special qualities. You can't accelerate or retard it. You can't store or recover it. You can't buy, sell or change it. But you can control it. At least, in a sense. With the right decisions, you can manage time – and therefore your life.

Here are some timely tips to help you manage your time:

- Be confident enough to believe you can plan your day and that the plan will work.
- Make every day an investment by making time management a habit.
- Clarify your objectives by putting them into writing. We cannot do anything about the past, but we can do something about the future by setting objectives.
- Make sure the first hour of the day is productive.
- Focus on your objectives, not your activities.
- Link activities that can be performed simultaneously or in rapid succession. This will help you work smarter rather than harder.

- Use the telephone to your advantage. Substitute phone calls for meetings whenever possible – especially business meetings that always involve the same people or are held far away.

- Don't waste time feeling guilty or frustrated if you blow your time management plan today; just try to do better tomorrow.

- Be positive about what you are doing; even try to enjoy it.

- Listen actively. It really saves time.

- Use your prime time each day. Some of us are most effective at certain hours of the day. Structure your day to take advantage of this.

- Set aside a quiet hour at the same time each day. Use this time to concentrate on your most important activities, allowing no telephone calls or other distractions, except emergencies.

- Do the most profitable parts of a large project first. Often the sense of fulfillment from seeing immediate

results will motivate you to complete the remainder – or you may find you don't need to finish the planned project.

- For your business activities, set aside an "open-door" time each day to answer questions, mitigate problems and assist in any way. If you prefer to have an open door all the time, use it effectively.

- Set a time limit for leaving papers on your desk – perhaps 48 hours. After the deadline act on, delegate or toss them.

- Create an idea factory. Designate a special place – a notepad, calendar or drawer – to write down ideas as they occur to you.

- Sometimes getting started is tough. Break big projects into logically divisible parts, and tackle one part at a time. Move mountains by carrying small stones. **T**

Tom Jenkins is a freelance writer and a former Toastmaster living in Englewood, Colorado.

Change the Future by Knowing the Past

By Tom Jenkins

An important first step in making better use of your time is to find out precisely how you are using time now. You may think you know how you spend your day, but you probably don't. Studies show that most of us can't even remember what we did last week with any substantial degree of accuracy. To improve your use of time, you need reliable information as to how you spend it now. You can change habits if you first identify what they are.

Make a daily log. Select a fairly typical week, one without a holiday, vacation time or sick leave. Record all activities every half hour. Be as specific as possible. For example, identify your activities, meetings, telephone conversations and visitors, keeping records of the duration and topics of discussions. Judge each activity. Was it productive, timely or time-consuming, interrupted, wasteful, inspirational or provocative? Most important, did your activities help you reach your goals and objectives?

After keeping a log a few days, review all your charts and you will begin to see a pattern showing where you have been effective and where you have wasted time. You will become conscious of your use of time in a new way. You probably will eliminate activities that simply fill space between productive tasks. Then you can build a new schedule of activities that should take you closer to maximizing your time use.



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.

Janaki Prasad Pattanaik, 6897-U
 Frances E. Hawthorne, 9047-19
 Barbara J. Garcia, 4509-23
 Roger D. Mitchell, 4642-24
 Deborah L. Kulkkula, 7434-31
 Herbert B. Cousins, 9297-40
 Jon Merchant, 8932-41
 Malcolm Connell, 1437-42
 Andrew D. Pais, 2903-47
 Richard Czarnecki, 506-65
 Peter Nichols, 5491-73

Anniversaries

60 years

Twin Falls, 419-15
 Tulsa, 148-16

50 years

Harvey Spaulding YMCA, 781-62
 Portsmouth, 771-66

45 years

Cedar Hills, 751-7
 Atomic City, 1760-9
 Daniel Wright, 1605-30
 Park Forest, 1717-30
 Essayons, 988-52

40 years

State Farm, 2926-38
 Foothills, 3073-42
 Clearwater, 3087-47
 Reddy Talkers, 1987-48
 Groton, 3007-53

35 years

Anaheim Breakfast, 3836-F
 Kritikos, 1686-18
 Flying I, 2134-39
 Aerospace, 3516-39
 Patroon, 3863-53
 Kelly Management, 1973-55
 Voyageur, 2638-64

30 years

Palatine, 3307-30
 Greenway, 2280-56
 Takapuna, 2506-72

25 years

Navfac, 3396-27
 Panoka Proclaimers, 3430-42

20 years

Turbine Talkers, 1283-3
 Sri Organon, 1435-4
 Mount Vernon, 1259-10
 Hub City, 1591-21
 Rambling Resistors, 3112-24
 Vineyard, 1571-39
 Pine Bluff, 3284-43
 Bl Cross & Bl Shield, 3874-48
 Downtowners, 3570-54
 Thousand Islands, 3886-61
 Speakeasies, 1926-62



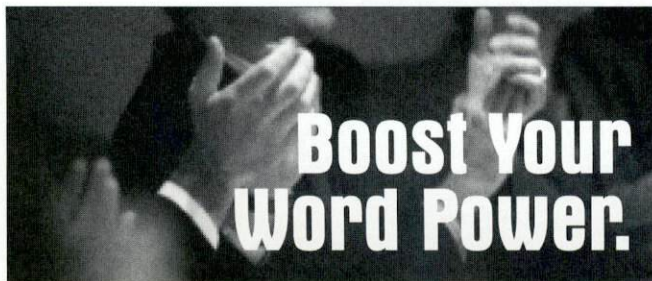
Snappy humor for speakers

Karl Righter, DTM

Humorous closing thoughts of the day inspired by Forrest Gump:

- A closed mouth gathers no foot
- The icebreaker is the first speech of the rest of your life
- Life is what happens to you while you're working on a speech
- A mind is a terrible thing to lose during Table Topics
- He who laughs last probably just got the punch line
- When push comes to shove, most speakers can be stopped
- Table Topics is like a box of chocolates...
- A tomato a day keeps the borator away
- Of all the things I've ever lost, I miss my notes the most

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.



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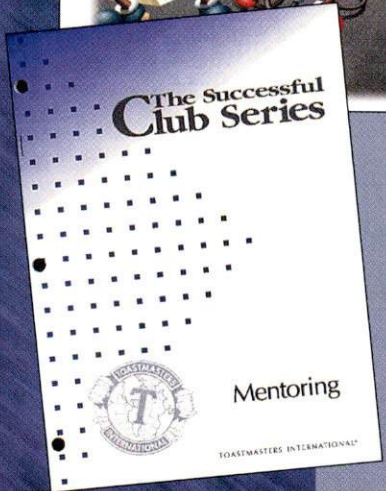
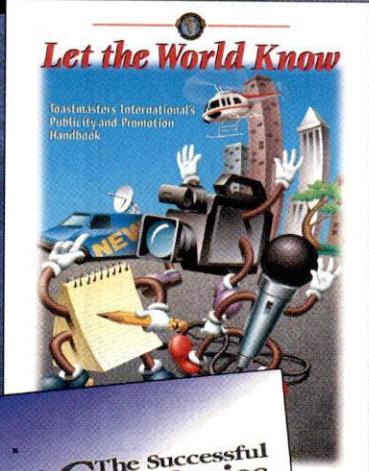
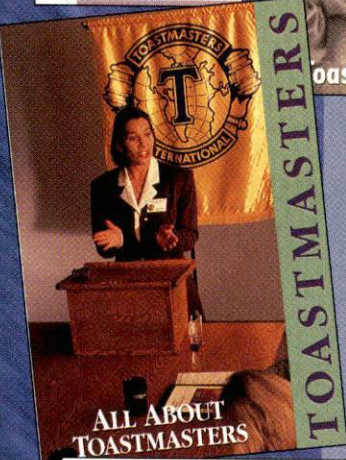
First Aid

for your

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Membership
Growth
Materials

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



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- ___ 101 Talk. Still the Most Effective Means of Communication10 free*
 - ___ 99 Yes, You Need Toastmasters . . .10 free*
 - ___ 103 Bringing Successful Communication into Your Organization50 cents
 - ___ 124 All About Toastmasters25 cents
 - ___ 114 Toastmasters Can Help! (Pkg of 20 fliers) \$2.50
 - ___ 115 Toastmasters. It's More Than Just Talk (Pkg of 20 fliers) \$2.50
 - ___ 367 Toastmasters. It's More Than Just Talk (Three full color posters) \$4.00
 - ___ 108 From Prospect to Guest to Member3 free*
- QTY** **SUPPORT MATERIAL**
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 - ___ 231 Guest Invitation Cards (set of 25) \$3.50
 - ___ 348 Invitation to Membership (set of 25) \$5.25
 - ___ 400 Membership Applications (pad of 20) 1 free*
 - ___ 405 New Member Profile Sheet (set of 10) \$1.00
 - ___ 401-A Membership Cards (set of 50) . \$1.00

*Your club can order the specified number of copies free of charge every six months when placing an order. Additional copies are available for an additional charge.

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