

The Toastmaster

JANUARY 1980

PROPS OR PACIFIERS?



**Joel Gray, a popular entertainer
who uses props with ease and style,
see page 8**



Reaching Out for Growth

When Toastmasters gains a new member or charters a new club, we all benefit. Growth strengthens our organization and thus expands self-development opportunities for all members. That's why it's so important to actively seek new members while taking advantage of every chance to give Toastmasters more exposure in communities throughout the world.

What are you doing to help Toastmasters grow? Personal contact is the best vehicle for any membership campaign. As Toastmasters' president, I meet many potential new members — people who have needs that our organization can satisfy. When people like this reach out to us, we must be ready to respond with complete answers to their many questions. And we must start reaching out to the individuals and groups we so often overlook — senior citizens, housewives, college students, prison inmates, farmers and next-door neighbors among others.

Never assume that Toastmasters wouldn't interest a particular group or individual. Our outstanding educational program is designed to help *anyone* who has a desire to learn, and we offer training in skills that are vital to everyone.

We tend to approach only people we know. But strangers are just people we haven't met yet. Toastmasters offers a remarkable way to turn strangers into friends. Wear your Toastmasters pin and you'll give strangers a natural conversation starter. I particularly enjoyed wearing my pin in downtown Minneapolis during the week of the International Convention last August. It got a lot of attention from people who asked about the convention and its sponsor. I hope I encouraged some new members for the Minneapolis clubs.

Enthusiasm is important. Your enthusiasm for Toastmasters must show when you talk about the organization or your words may not have enough impact to be convincing. I'm sure my enthusiasm is what prompts people to visit the clubs I refer them to. I make those referrals with confidence because I know the club members will greet guests warmly and use every available resource to sell our program.

Do you remember the show-and-tell presentations you made in elementary school? A demonstration or display always

impressed my classmates more than talk. Potential members also will react more to what they see than what they hear, so *show* them what Toastmasters can do for them. Introduce them to members who have made particularly outstanding achievements through Toastmasters. Give them pamphlets explaining our program and encourage them to at least scan our educational manuals.

When a guest visits your club, everyone should get involved. Remember, the personal approach — with enthusiasm — is the key. And don't forget to *seek* new members — don't wait for them to come to you. Send meeting invitations to the people with whom you work, and follow up visits with "glad-you-came" letters and applications for membership. Send teams of members to visit businesses where corporate clubs might be established; volunteer to give speeches for community organizations and send news releases on club events to local newspapers. Don't overlook any vehicle for exposure, and always appeal to the universal need for self-improvement and personal growth.

We buy products because we are convinced we need them, and soon we need them because we are used to having them. However, the long-time members of Toastmasters don't see their continued involvement as a habit they just can't kick. Many have told me they feel renewed after each Toastmasters meeting they attend. They come for the fun, the fellowship, the educational enrichment and the opportunity to continue the never-ending process of self-development. Get that message across to those potential new members, and chances are they'll be joining long before you finish listing the many benefits Toastmasters has to offer!

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Eric K. Stuhlmüller". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "E".

Eric K. Stuhlmüller, DTM, International President

Founder
Dr. Ralph C. Smedley (1878-1965)

Officers, Toastmasters International
President
Eric K. Stuhlmüller, DTM
32 Sweetwater Bay, Winnipeg, Man., Can R2J 3G5

Senior Vice-President
Patrick A. Panfile, DTM
78 Stoneleigh Court, Rochester, NY 14618

Second Vice-President
William D. Hamilton, DTM
2323 N. 7th Street, Phoenix, AZ 85006

Third Vice-President
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12101 Hunters Lane, Rockville, MD 20852

Past President
Hubert E. Dobson, DTM
1205 Henry Road, South, Charleston, WV 25303

Executive Director
Terrence J. McCann
2200 N. Grand Avenue, Santa Ana, CA 92711

Secretary-Treasurer
J. William Venable
2200 N. Grand Avenue, Santa Ana, CA 92711

Directors
Helen M. Blanchard, DTM
430 San Antonio Avenue, #2, San Diego, CA 92106

Hugh T. Burgay, DTM
1583 Waterwitch Drive, Orlando, FL 32806

Vincent V. DeGeorge, DTM
375 Grace Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15236

Dr. Carl A. Johnson, DTM
P.O. Box 415, Granville, OH 43023

Oscar L. Olive, DTM
111 Spring Circle, Smyrna, TN 37167

George J. Ott, DTM
2302 Strader Terrace, St. Joseph, MO 64503

Mario G. Pedercini, DTM
4243 York Avenue North, Robbinsdale, MN 55422

H. Al Richardson, DTM
901 Wigwam Avenue, Arcadia, CA 91006

Tom Seale, DTM
7180 Baker, Millington, TN 38053

Larry C. Selby, DTM
1800 E. Mulberry Circle, Edmond, OK 73034

Sid M. Smith, DTM
3336 Louise Avenue, Salt Lake City, UT 84109

Floyd O. Swathwood, DTM
2521-2 Abbey Drive, Ft. Wayne, IN 46815

Ronald I. Wallace, ATM
281 Paraiso Drive, Danville, CA 94526

Telesphore Ted Wilga, DTM
14 Elmbrook Circle, Bedford, MA 01730

Neil R. Wilkinson, DTM
12608-39 Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta, Can T6J 0N2

Theodore C. Wood, DTM
908 Cox Avenue, Hyattsville, MD 20783

Magazine Staff
Editor
Sherry Angel

Editorial Assistant **Art Director**
Diana Spurgeon Judy Turk

To Place Advertising, Contact:
Toastmasters International
Publications Department
2200 N. Grand Ave., P.O. Box 10400
Santa Ana, CA 92711
(714) 542-6793

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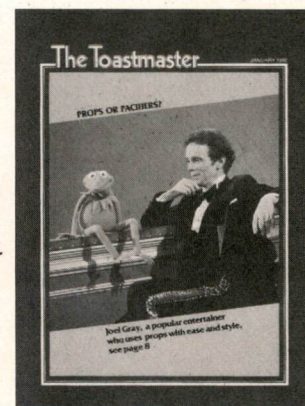
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COVER

When is a prop an asset and when is it a crutch? Watch Joel Gray perform with Kermit, television's celebrated Muppet star, and you'll find out how a prop can make an entertainer sparkle. But props aren't just for stars like Gray. Any speaker can use them to add color and life to a presentation. Props can make the difference between a good speech and a great one. But don't try to hide behind them — once props become pacifiers, they lose their power.



Active Members Gain Unexpected Benefits

It is expected that active membership in Toastmasters will help develop better listening, thinking and speaking skills. And that is an appreciable return on one's investment of time and effort.

However, there are many unexpected benefits to be gained from interacting with club members. A recent incident at Checker Flag Club 2007-11 illustrates the serendipity to which I refer.

A club member gave a manual speech in which she described INDIRS (Indiana Information Retrieval System), a computerized social and economic data base available as a free information service in numerous libraries throughout the state. A new member heard this speech and sought out INDIRS at a library the next day. The following week he told of the valuable data and added, "The information from that speech alone is worth a whole year's dues!"

Toastmasters never know what they may learn from another member as they listen, think and speak together — but that is the beauty of serendipity!

*Sheldon J. Rikke
Indianapolis, Indiana*

A Time for Reflection

Time has a way of slipping by much more quickly than we realize. Before you know it, tomorrow's activities are today's history.

It's not surprising, therefore, that about this time every year we reflect upon our organization's recent accomplishments, using the goals we established last July as a basis for evaluation. It's a time to measure where we have been, where we are and where we are going. I'm sure no one will argue the point that one mark of success in an organization such as ours is growth. To ensure this growth, we all should periodically reflect upon our individual accomplishments as Toastmasters — our so-called history — and plan to build upon and expand our successes.

As one wise philosopher once said, "History is a way of learning . . . Only by grasping what we were is it possible to see how we have changed . . . and to gain some perspective on what we are. The historical experi-

ence is not one of staying in the present and looking back. Rather it is one of going back into the past and returning to the present with a wider and more intense consciousness of the restrictions of our former outlook."

When combined with positive actions directed toward the achievement of our goals, meaningful reflection of this type contributes to our organization's continued growth while helping each of us become a better speaker, a better listener and a better thinker.

*Michael L. Wardinski, DTM
Alexandria, Virginia*

Celebrating the Year of the Child

The members of the Buffalo Valley Club 2643-38, located inside the U.S. Penitentiary, Lewisburg, Pennsylvania, have been sponsoring a child in Mexico through the Christian Children's Fund of Richmond, Virginia, for the past five years.

Silvero Martinez, who is now 14-years-old, is doing quite well, and we plan on continuing his sponsorship. When this child no longer requires or qualifies for sponsorship, we will "adopt" another child.

We would like to commend the United Nations for proclaiming 1979 The International Year of the Child. The future of the world rests in the hands and minds of our children.

*Gabriel H. Beazley
Lewisburg, Pennsylvania*

Toastmasters' Colonial Roots

More than 250 years ago Toastmasters' ideals were put into practice in Colonial America! In the autumn of 1727, Benjamin Franklin founded a "Club of Mutual Improvement" in Philadelphia. It lasted for 40 years. Toastmasters will be interested in the remarkable similarity between their club meetings and the "Junto," as it was called.

Each weekly meeting was conducted by a "president" in a spirit of enquiry after truth, without fondness for dispute or victory. All dogmatic or negative statements were outlawed "to prevent us from disgusting each other." Members had to "read an essay of their own writing" every three months.

Also, at each meeting every mem-

ber posed a question on a point of morals, politics or natural philosophy. The question was discussed at the following meeting to allow time for study. In this way members deepened their knowledge and acquired better conversational skills.

The members' need for books prompted the club to form America's first Public Subscription Library in 1731. Other social advances pioneered by Franklin's club were the first paid police force and the first volunteer fire company. Nearly three centuries after Franklin's club was founded, its benefits are still being felt. And as a Toastmaster, I am proud to be in a similar organization that is developing clear-thinking, articulate men and women to face the challenges of our contemporary society.

*C.S. Ingram, ATM
Tauranga, New Zealand*

Humble Eloquence

I had been in Toastmasters for several years, had used the Communication and Leadership Manual, participated in Speechcraft, entered speech contests, conducted special programs, helped organize new clubs and assisted clubs that were having difficulties. I thought I had done everything a Toastmaster could be expected to do. However, one Sunday morning I was told that a member had passed away and his wife wanted the Rocky Mountain Club to conduct a memorial service on Tuesday, just two days away.

I immediately called current and past district officers to find out if any of Toastmasters' publications had any information on how to conduct a memorial service; they couldn't find anything. I was advised to tell the widow we couldn't do it. But I went to the club president and he said he would handle the preparations.

On Tuesday morning, several members of the Rocky Mountain Club eulogized Will Trolander with both eloquence and humility. I have had the privilege to listen to some of the world's finest speakers, but none compared with those who spoke that Tuesday morning.

The ability to handle any speaking situation was an obvious intangible benefit of being a Toastmaster.

*Gershon Cohn
District 26 Governor
Denver, Colorado*

Toastmasters' New SUCCESS/LEADERSHIP Program

A New Opportunity for Self-Development

You've worked hard to develop and refine your speaking skills. You've learned and grown a lot. But you never really graduate from the kind of educational program Toastmasters offers. One step leads to another. Now it's time to branch out. Become a leader. Let Toastmasters' new SUCCESS/LEADERSHIP Program

show you how.

WHAT IS IT? This program goes beyond the Communication and Leadership series and initiates a new training method — a seminar format involving all club members.

HOW WILL MY CLUB BENEFIT? Members will love learning together. Enthusiasm and motivation will increase. As leadership skills are developed, they'll contribute more to the success of the club.

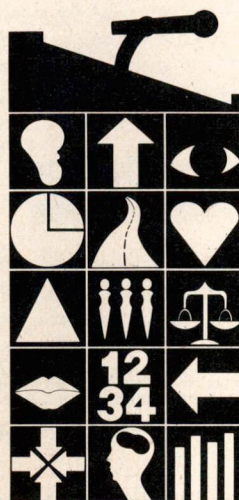
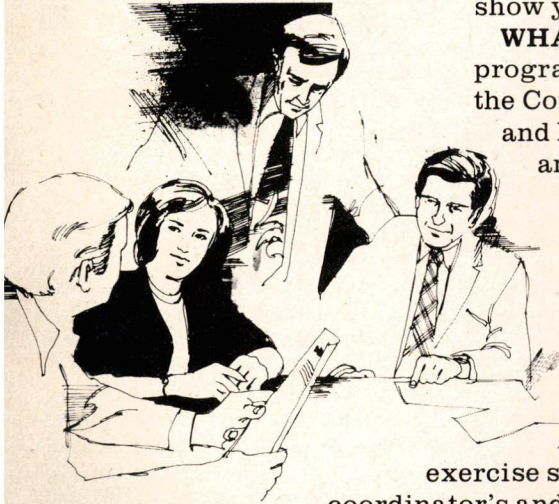
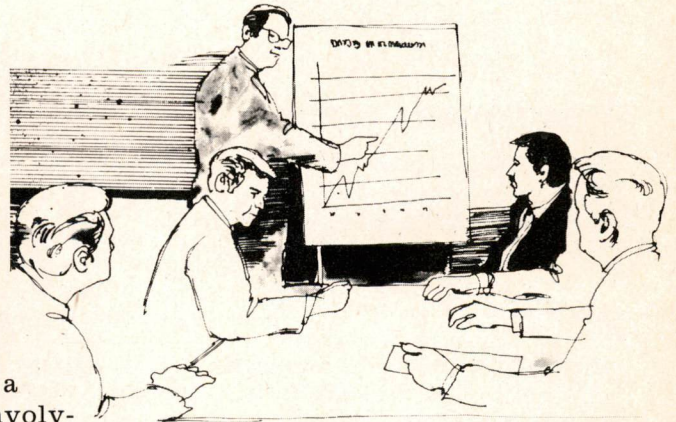
HOW DOES IT WORK? It's simple. All that is needed is a seminar leader to conduct a series of learning and

exercise sessions. Everything you need to know is in the coordinator's and participant's manuals.

HOW DO WE START? The first two modules in this exciting series are available now. **ORDER TODAY** — *How to Conduct Productive Meetings* and *Parliamentary Procedure in Action*.

WHAT DO THESE MODULES OFFER? *How to Conduct Productive Meetings* will teach you the most effective methods of meeting management. Each module contains one coordinator's guide, eight participant's manuals and certificates for the coordinator and participants. *Parliamentary Procedure in Action* will give members skills to lead and participate in parliamentary discussion. This kit includes one coordinator's guide, nine overhead transparencies and certificates for the coordinator and participants.

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*Contains enough material for eight people. Individual items in both modules may be purchased separately.

Conference Credits

Q I've heard a lot about the conferences Toastmasters sponsors, but no one has ever told me how I can benefit from participating in one. How can a Toastmasters conference help me reach my self-development goals?

A There are many benefits to be gained from a Toastmasters conference. They include the following:

- You can revitalize your motivation to succeed by associating with like-minded, enthusiastic people.
- You'll have an opportunity to evaluate yourself against the standards of other individuals and clubs.
- By getting closer to more people, you can broaden your awareness and understanding of others and thereby learn to understand your audiences better.
- You can gain greater visibility in Toastmasters through participation on a wider scale. This exposure will increase your speaking opportunities and your potential for election to district and international offices, which leads to greater personal prestige, satisfaction and recognition.

• You'll discover new ideas to help make your club meetings more interesting, informative and helpful.

Toastmasters is a kinetic organization. At each conference new people are hearing ideas for the first time, which stimulates renewed enthusiasm and excitement among long-time Toastmasters. A fresh outlook from newer members helps others develop fresh approaches toward Toastmastering.

Participation in educational training sessions provides other rewards. For example:

- You can save time and effort because the material presented at one conference might take weeks or months to acquire on your own.
- Seasoned Toastmasters will provide suggestions to improve your speaking techniques and share their own self-development methods.
- You'll have an opportunity to

examine new educational and promotional materials and obtain samples for your own use.

Members of clubs that are fortunate enough to be asked to coordinate a conference educational program can sharpen their presentation skills through the many rehearsals necessary to present a quality program. Personal growth through preparation for such a presentation also helps prepare the participant for increased leadership opportunities in career and community life.

Toastmasters, perhaps more than any other organization, is a living testimony that every opportunity for participation is an opportunity for personal growth.

Of course, one of the greatest benefits of conference participation is one that can't be quantified — the personal satisfaction you gain from helping Toastmasters become a better organization for everyone else.

This response was provided by Carole B. Breckbill, Area 6 governor and a member of Towne Club 443-10 and Perkins Dieselears Club 1936-10 in Canton, Ohio.

Simple Remedies for Meeting Headaches

Q As a manager in a large international corporation, I continually attend and hold meetings at a great cost of time and waste of energy. My observation is that my firm engages in a morass of often unnecessary and inefficient meetings. What recommendation do you have that I could suggest to our executive management to remedy the situation?

A You have just described a communications problem that plagues nearly every major business and corporation. Most executives and managers would agree that the problem with meetings is not the time involved, but the time wasted. The waste occurs because of the general inability to perform effectively and efficiently before an audience.

What participants in a meeting need is the ability to think on their feet, to present their cases clearly and briefly and to be persuasive. They should also be capable of disagreeing tactfully and knowing when to stop talking.

To lead meetings effectively, you must be able to guide everyone briskly through the business at hand. A majority of executives believe that meeting skills can be learned. Many major corporations spend great sums of money hiring outside experts to teach these skills. On the other hand, just as many firms are starting in-house programs for the same purpose. The consensus is that properly run meetings are not a waste of time in business because meetings *are* business.

Toastmasters International offers an excellent low-cost method of training employees to manage meetings effectively. It is the new Success/Leadership Series seminar module, HOW TO CONDUCT PRODUCTIVE MEETINGS. Several major corporations that sponsor Toastmasters clubs are now using this module in their management communications training programs. For more information on how this Success/Leadership module can benefit your company or organization, contact Robert Tucker, manager of Education, World Headquarters, 2200 N. Grand Ave., Santa Ana, CA 92711.

Managing Stage Fright

Q As a student, I have had to cope with a severe phobia of public speaking. I have attended a Toastmasters club meeting, but I felt I needed some other type of help to alleviate my problem. I would appreciate it very much if you could offer any suggestions or advice to help me overcome my stage fright.

A Stage fright is more common than you may think. Even accomplished speakers experience it. Concerns about the topic to be chosen, the extensive research required, the time limit for the speech and the type of audience to be encountered are among the many causes of this phobia.

Books in Brief

You can build a fortune of knowledge and a foundation for success by reading one or more of these fine books. Learn the art of speaking from the experts at the top. Each book is available from World Headquarters, and each can help you reach your highest speaking goals. May we suggest...

- **A MASTER GUIDE TO PUBLIC SPEAKING** — By Robert L. Montgomery. An expert with vast experience as a speaker reveals the inside secrets of the most successful speechmakers. A must for beginning and advanced speakers.
(B-5) \$9.95
 - **HOLD YOUR AUDIENCE** — By William J. McCullough. A dynamic guide with a wealth of material on how to prepare and deliver a speech.
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 - **HOW TO WIN AUDIENCES WITH HUMOR** — By Winston K. Pendleton. Tips from one of your favorite funny men on how, when and why to put humor into your speeches.
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 - **KINESICS: THE POWER OF SILENT COMMAND** — By Merlyn Cundiff. One of the world's foremost authorities on body language reveals all the techniques you need to know to unleash this incredible power over others. Paperback.
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 - **THE CAVETT ROBERT PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT COURSE** — By Cavett Robert. Toastmasters' 1972 Golden Gavel recipient shows you, in 16 easy lessons, how to win the respect, admiration and esteem of every person you meet.
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You can alleviate your fears by learning how to identify individual stressors that affect your performance. For instance, if you procrastinate and don't leave yourself enough time to master your material, you're sure to be uneasy. Once you recognize that problem, you can overcome it by starting your preparations earlier.

The key to your success in managing stage fright lies in the recognition and control of these individual stressors.

Here are some more specific ways you can deal with stage fright:

- Research your topic early and organize your thoughts.
- Organize your speech outline well in advance of your speaking date.
- Do some breathing exercises just before giving your speech.
- Get adequate sleep and rest.
- Maintain a positive mental attitude.
- Reflect on your feelings and thoughts; talk fears out with someone you trust.
- Learn enough about your topic to feel that you have mastered it.
- Maintain a willingness to change.
- Keep your sense of humor.
- Maintain a balanced diet and eat natural foods.

It's particularly important to let Toastmasters offer their support. If you feel that club activities are moving a little too quickly, it's perfectly all right to communicate this to the Topic Master or Toastmaster of the meeting.

Find a club with which you are comfortable and then give the club programs a chance to help you overcome your fears by guiding you in preparation, rehearsal and the subsequent development of technique and style.

These suggestions have been provided by Jaime Mendez-Perez, a member of Lonestar Club 1286-25 in Fort Hood, Texas.

Send your questions to Toastmasters International, Publications Department, 2200 N. Grand Ave., P.O. Box 10400, Santa Ana, CA 92711, Attention: Speakers Forum. Please send your name, address and club and district number with your question. —Ed.



UNPREDICTABLE PROPS — You never know what to expect when you use a pet as a prop, but that's part of the fun for Johnny Carson and his "Tonight Show" guest, Joan Embery. This Koala Bear from Southern California's San Diego Zoo may appear to be stealing the show but Carson, as usual, gets all the laughs.

The right prop can make
a good speech great.

The wrong one
can destroy your image.

PROPS OR PACIFIERS?

by Dorrine Anderson Turecamo

We all need somebody to lean on," sang Joel Gray during a recent appearance at the Waldorf Astoria. The catchy number was choreographed around the actor's clothes trunk. As the sturdy prop stood on end, six feet high, the 5'4" performer leaned against it and sang of the comfort that can be found in relying on someone or something for support.

Between numbers, the diminutive dynamo changed costumes behind his handy prop. Then he'd climb the ladder at its side and sing while sitting at the top. At one point, he delighted his audience by donning hat and cane and dancing on the up-ended trunk. Facing the orchestra was the prop's cleverly shelved interior, which held precisely lined up changes of shoes and hats, a cane and a full dress outfit.

With a nostalgic story about the trunk that every vaudeville performer traveled with and lived out of, Joel Gray created one of the most clever props of all time. It was almost as essential to that show as the performer himself.

During a recent Lincoln Center benefit performance for Fordham Preparatory School, Bob Hope asked for a chaise lounge to be brought onstage. He was halfway through a 70-minute monologue. Incongruously, four Fordham priests wearing clerical collars carried it out and Hope delivered the rest of his routine half sitting-half lying on

the couch. The prop created an unexpected diversion, and the audience loved it.

Cornelia Otis Skinner and Ruth Draper, in their play reviews for royalty and general audiences around the world, always held an opened book of the play in one hand (although they almost certainly knew every word of their full evening's performance). The book and a long, chiffon handkerchief were stylized props for this type of performance. Although they served no

If you try to hide behind a prop, you'll only reveal your fears.

purpose whatsoever and actually restricted movement, many imitators used these props to enhance their performances.

Props to Hide Behind

Props can also be useful in non-theatrical settings. But they may be detrimental if used as pacifiers by those who are insecure. For example, during the Kefauver crime hearings in the '50s, Frank Costello — the great "Prime Minister of the Underworld" — crumpled and twisted a handkerchief in his hands as he was questioned. He also held a half-filled glass of water inter-

mittently, tightening his grip as the questions got tougher. The table top became a prop as Costello, from time to time, tapped a steady beat on its smooth surface. He also occasionally rolled a little ball of paper between his thumb and index finger and stroked the side of a pair of glasses on the table. The constant use of these many pacifier-props became a subject of national interest as they betrayed Costello's anxiety even when his face remained passive.

A prop can become habit forming, something to lean on — or to hide behind — as many young men use moustaches to appear older. But if a man habitually runs his fingers over his moustache to smooth it out, he reveals his distress with a gesture as distracting as ring twisting, watch winding, hair twirling or ear pulling.

Even professional entertainers have pacifier-props. For example, Johnny Carson is forever tapping a pencil. He also has a habit of running his right hand down along his tie to make sure the bottom is tucked in his suit coat. He then leaves his hand there in a Napoleon-like gesture.

Other pacifier-props include Dean Martin's bow tie and cuff links, which he adjusts and readjusts as he performs. Some singers snap their fingers in time with the beat or passionately cling to the mike. Speakers often use the lectern as a pacifier-prop by leaning over it

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Magnify Your Message Through an Overhead Projector



David L. Schmidt, Convention Speaker
Photo by Martin Jeremy Lancaster

The first electric chalkboard — as an anonymous wag labeled the overhead projector when it was introduced in the early '40s — was an expensive, cumbersome machine. It threw off too much heat and, in general, intimidated its operator. But the machine filled a crucial need at that time — the rapid military training of huge numbers of men during World War II.

The overhead projector's essential difference from its predecessors, the slide and motion picture units, was that it placed the operator-lecturer in front of the audience in a normally lit room. The result was extraordinary: Firmly established among the trainees was a strong identification with their officer-instructor, who was imparting important, if not life-saving, information.

This close knitting of the instructor or speaker with the audience was continued in the postwar period in a new setting, the nation's classrooms. The overhead projector became recognized as an important teaching tool.

It was not until the early '60s, however, that technological advances in performance and design made the overhead projector applicable to business meetings. Today's improved models can be extremely useful to meeting planners. The advantages — some of which were as valid during the '40s as they are at present — are listed below and can be found in most of the models manufactured by the big suppliers.

• **Immediate Rapport** — As mentioned previously, there's a give-and-take mood fostered between the speaker and the audience because both are clearly visible to each other.

• **Adaptable to the Speaker's Needs** — Images on the transparencies to be projected on the screen can be changed by the lecturer-operator. Secured to the unit's light table, the transparencies can be enhanced by circling key words, drawing arrows to specific points, filling in blank lines, placing sequential overlays for step-by-step explanations of complex problems and even jazzing up the images by adding brilliant colors, available in pressure sensitive tapes or translucent ink.

• **Audience Participation** — During the entire showing the audience is free to take notes since the room need not be darkened. Question-answer sessions and face-to-face discussions can be conducted at the will of the instructor, not the machine, since he or she controls the showing of the transparencies. And you need not face the rigamarole of turning lights on and off!

• **Competitive Costs** — In relation to other audio-visual equipment, overhead projectors offer a good buy. For example, transparencies can now be produced inexpensively through office copy machines. A modestly priced kit is available. In fact, one portable transparency maker can produce overhead transparencies in four seconds.

• **Portability** — Gone is the ugly duckling of the '40s whose excessive weight, expensive construction and electrical consumption kept it in limited circulation. The present overhead projector has a streamlined design, is lightweight in construction and easy to carry. Many of the newer models, in fact, offer the conveniences of retractable projection arms and self-contained chassis for convenient storage.

There are technical improvements coming all the time and each advancement makes the overhead projector a greater asset in all kinds of speaking situations.

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with one hand on each side for support.

Removing one of these props is like taking cigarettes away from a chain smoker. Yet a prop can be more distracting than helpful if it's used clumsily or inappropriately.

Engraving Your Message

When is a prop an asset and when is it a crutch? A good speaker doesn't need to be a gimmick-laden comedian like the talk show guest who appears with a gadget-covered display table. Like Joel Gray, you can use props to strengthen, clarify and engrave your points in each listener's mind. But they must be appropriate to the message, the occasion and the audience, and they must be used deftly, without self-consciousness. No prop should overwhelm or overshadow the speaker or the message.

A clergyman recently included a fully costumed mime in the Sunday service to emphasize a point. The mime released helium-filled balloons, which floated up and clung to the mosaic dome of the cathedral's sanctuary and remained there for more than a week. In another setting, this may have been a great idea, but the visiting priest's horrified audience felt the dignity of both the service and the church had been desecrated.

Steve Allen, who often plays bits of tunes at the piano (one of his many standard props) as he rambles, cautions speakers to adjust to the mood of the audience. Consider their ages, their economic and intelligence levels and whether the group is mixed or made up of only one sex, he says. A prop that gets a standing ovation in one setting may bomb in another.

Reverend Dallas Blenkush, of Lakeville, Minnesota, illustrated a crucial point in a sermon by dropping the Cannon Law Book from the pulpit to the floor.

"One family transferred their membership because of this," he says. "They felt it was disrespectful."

On another occasion, this same clergyman attempted to add drama to a Christmas sermon by shattering a tree ornament at what seemed to be an appropriate moment. But the solemn mood was broken by a little boy who called out in dismay, "Pastor Blenkush dropped the Christmas ball!" The pastor had expected his audience to silently contemplate his gesture. Instead, the congregation laughed. Needless to say, Blenkush uses props more cautiously now. And he offers this observation: "If the content isn't good enough, no amount of enthusiasm, theatrics or props will help."

According to John Burger, a Dale Carnegie trainer of instructors, "Key questions can be more stimulating than visual aids." But it takes experience and self-confidence to field questions effectively, and it's difficult for anyone to

use this technique successfully in a large group.

Disguising Speech Notes

Paul Micall describes a keynote speaker's all-too-common mistake in his book, *Shortcuts to Impressive Speaking*: "Reaching for his bifocals, (the speaker) opened the cover of the three-ring binder containing the speech prepared for him by his public relations department. (It had been placed on the lectern for him even before the meal was served.) And from this point on, he buried his nose in the script as he read it, word for word, in a boring monotone."

It's not easy to disguise or hide your

Audiences remember strong visual images longer than words.

notes, a speaker's most essential prop. No "idiot cards" have been created for the average "live" speaker and not many are as facile as John Connally, who glibly rattles off facts and figures with no prepared text.

Communispond, a company that presents speaking seminars to executives, may have an answer for speakers who want to hide their notes. Communispond advocates the use of symbols or pictures as reminders rather than words. But this technique is not widely practiced or accepted at this time.

Unlike hidden or disguised notes,

many props are deliberately obvious. Some even become trademarks of their users: Liberace's candelabra and diamonds; W.C. Fields' cigar; Charlie Chaplin's derby and walking stick; Groucho Marx's cigar, glasses, bushy moustache and bow tie (sold in sets at any dime store); Alistair Cooke's high-backed wing chair and pipe; Sammy Davis Jr.'s rings and Jack Benny's violin.

Superstitions about props abound. For example, it's considered bad luck to wear genuine jewelry or anything green on the stage. But there are also "lucky" props, like the tie a British actor always wears on stage — and even lends to friends for auditions. Stories of talismans are unending. If they make you feel confident, they probably will bring you good luck.

Although chewing gum on stage is anathema, there is a seminar leader at a prestigious training center who deliberately stuffs a wad of snuff in his cheek midway in his lecture. The participants are still feeling uptight and scrutinized at this point, and Al's obnoxious-but-folksy action relieves the tension.

As a speaker, you're probably often urged to use the latest in overhead projector equipment, screens, films and sound props. But you may be hesitating because, like everyone else, you've seen the most sophisticated presentations ruined by a projector that refuses to work, upside down slides, screaming feedback from an electronic speaker, dead batteries or a shortage of outlets. Explore every new idea and experiment with an open mind until you find what works best for you.



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Because television depends on the visual, talk show guests are usually asked to bring a prop that will add color to the interview — perhaps an author's latest book or animals from a trainer's zoo. Props also are used to clarify messages, and they're particularly helpful in speeches involving demonstrations. For instance, "How to Care For Your Own Hair" lectures come alive when the speaker demonstrates his or her own styling techniques with a model and uses posters, wigs, a blackboard or a flannel board to show the effects of teasing, spraying and coloring.

A highly successful presentation on "Color: How it Affects and Reflects You" was done for the grand opening of Deptford Mall, near Philadelphia. The innovative props included a six-foot, revolving color wheel with pie-shaped masonite triangles that could be lifted out. This stood upstage left. Midstage right were several colorful three-foot cubes with tops that opened to store scarves on hooks. Simple and collapsible for moving, these props helped capture and hold the attention of thousands of bustling, chattering shoppers.

This same production company presented "Nostalgia" stories in shopping malls with the help of a step-through, seven-foot "Old Photograph Album" and a 1930s vintage radio the speaker used to "tune in" to various subjects.

Sometimes it's effective to give your audience the props — Alpine hats for a German feeling, bow ties for Dixieland, moustache cups for Father's Day or leis for a Hawaiian theme. Any of these props can be obtained for a few cents each from a party supplier or display company. Audiences love these giveaways and they insure that you and your message will be remembered. But if you want attentive listeners, don't distribute your props until you've finished talking.

Pets and children usually make poor props. If they don't create chaos, they can be counted on to steal the show. Many fashion shows have been destroyed by an adorable child. In one elaborate ballroom runway show, a demure three-year-old decided she would rather sit in the pool under the show's fountain (in designer's clothes) than return up the runway.

Animals are just as unpredictable as children. Even The Muppets can be difficult to work with. Jim Henson, creator of The Muppets, tells how apprehensive the show's producers were when they first attempted to star a live personality with his outlandish creatures:

"A personality has to be very sure of himself in order to hold his own with The Muppets," said Henson. "We were delighted when it worked so well with so many top stars. More absolutely refused to chance being upstaged,

though, and there were some who tried and failed."

At the Hope benefit show, the producers felt the audience would love to see the star of the hit play "Annie" meet Dorothy of "The Wiz" on the yellow brick road on stage with their dogs. The rehearsal went smoothly, but when Annie gave Dorothy her cue at the actual performance, their dogs refused to budge. Toto and Sandy stayed on opposite sides backstage, barking across at each other.

Your Visual Image

Props can help create a mood, but they can also kill a mood. Have you ever thought of the clothes you're wearing as props? They're part of the visual message you deliver on stage. One seminar speaker had his audience captivated at the start of a weekend session. His knowledge of the subject and manner of presenting it held everyone's interest the first day and anticipation was high for the next day. But as he began the second lecture, with compelling eyes and a strong, quiet delivery, wayward eyes drifted to his feet — and stopped.

His suit was navy blue, his shoes were black and his socks were bright yellow. Since the eye is always drawn to the lightest or brightest color, the spell was broken. The fascination couldn't be recaptured because the visual image was incongruous. Although the presentation continued to be interesting, the yellow socks had crushed the all-enveloping mood.

Successful advertisers know that an effective visual message is remembered longer than a verbal message. Advertising agencies obtain clients through the use of "story boards" — carefully prepared cards with a simple, slowly developing, repetitive message. Words are part of the sales pitch, but it's the visual message that keeps surfacing in the minds of the listeners long after the presentation.

If you have a message that a prop can definitely enhance, work with it — whether it's a projector, a funny hat, or a puppet — until you can use it with ease and style. Don't take chances. If your prop requires batteries, bring along spares. If it's electric, bring an extra long, heavy-duty extension cord. Take a tip from Joel Gray, who checks and rechecks every prop and its placement at least two hours before every show. And remember, the right prop can make a good speech great. 🎤



Dorrine Anderson Turecmano is an actress, keynote speaker and talk show hostess who writes articles and books in her spare time. She lives in New York City.



Warren Blumberg, Smedley Chapter One, 1-F, Santa Ana, California

Photo by Martin Jeremy Lancaster

Fundamentals for
effective speechmaking.

THE SCIENCE OF SPEAKING

by Peter J. Hampton

It is estimated that we use about 300 million words in speaking communication over the period of a lifetime. It is with words that we do business, express our innermost feelings and ward off the usurpation of others. Words can be great and glorious, but they can also be devastatingly cruel and destructive. Words are the

It's natural to be nervous, but fear must be controlled.

bridge for the reciprocal experiences of human beings. The person who wishes to succeed in life, vocationally and avocationally, must become fluent in the use of words in reading, writing, listening, and, above all, in speaking.

Many persons who are called on to speak go through agony before they

settle down to what they have to say. Stage fright is common. Even seasoned and highly qualified speakers suffer from it.

There's nothing wrong with being nervous. Actually, the person who is somewhat nervous before beginning a talk conveys much more in the way of personal dynamics than the person who takes responsibilities for speaking as a matter of course. Fear is frequently the father of courage. Without a modicum of fear we can't do our best. In speaking we must retain enough rational control so that fear does not take over. When we become too apprehensive and too nervous, we submit to emotional blocking. Controlled fear is helpful; uncontrolled fear can be disastrous.

There are a number of simple rules that can be followed to assure that we use just enough fear to make our talks spicy and dynamic. When we speak, we must make sure that we are at home with what we say, where we say it and how we say it. We should avoid speaking on a subject we know little about. The French philosopher Descartes used to say, "When in fear, try to raise what you are afraid of to the clearest level of conscious awareness. This accomplished, the fear will subside to where you can handle it." The more we know about what we speak of, and the more we know about the persons we speak to, the less apprehensive we are.

Planning What to Say

The approach we take in speaking is also very important. What we say must be meaningful to the persons we speak to. Only in this way can we marshal the audience interest we need to do a good job of presenting what we have to say. We must be well prepared. Our planning must permit a careful outlining of ideas. Immanuel Kant, the German philosopher, suggests that the mind demands order. If such order is not forthcoming from the universe, then the mind must develop it. Only as we order things can we make best use of our intellectual capabilities. As we prepare an outline and write the speech we find the confidence necessary to do a good job of communicating what we have to say.

There are other conditions that must be observed if we are to control fear and anxiety in our talking. It is important that we feel happy in the clothes we wear while speaking. We should make sure that our attention does not become riveted upon ourselves. We must think of those we speak to and of what we are talking about.

It's also important to have enough freedom of movement. To speak from notes, to speak into a mike, especially a stationary mike, is often so restricting that we lose our naturalness while we talk. It's reasonable to use notes for reference purposes. But notes must

never become so important that a talk becomes tied to them.

Competent speakers know beforehand what they are going to say about the basic ideas they develop in their talks. However, they do not memorize the facts to support their ideas. If they were to do this, they would become slaves of their memories. This must not happen.

Still another point to remember when speaking, especially in public, is not to speak to all the people at once. It's best to select several individuals at some distance from us and speak to them one at a time. We should make eye contact with those people on a rotational basis. When this is accomplished, we find that fear of the crowd disappears. We are now ordering our audience to a level of personal, everyday conversation, and that is as it should be.

Above all else, in speaking to one person or to a group of persons, we must make sure that the speaking is a reciprocal experience. We should not speak *to* people. We should make it appear that we are speaking *with* them. We must give them a share in what we

A loud, strident voice reveals the speaker's insecurity.

are saying. We belong to them. We must make it possible for them to relate what we are saying to what is already important to them in terms of their experimental past. When we succeed in doing this, the people we talk to will be on our side. We will not have to fear them because they will support what we are saying.

Openings and Endings

What comes first and what comes last in a talk is proportionally more important than what is said in between. In the beginning of a talk, we make a promise to our listeners. This promise must be fulfilled by the end of the speech.

The first job a speaker has is to attract the attention of his or her listeners. This can be done by invoking voluntary, involuntary or habitual attention. The arousal of involuntary attention is generally only of momentary importance. This attention vanishes as quickly as it comes. Habitual attention is too automatic to provide the full conscious awareness that a speaker wants from an audience. Voluntary attention, on the part of the listener, produces the best results for the speaker.

To accomplish this the speaker must avoid certain unforgivable errors. A speaker should never begin a talk with

an apology. An apologetic introduction irritates and antagonizes. Nor should a speaker open a talk with remarks that distract from the message and divert the attention of the listeners. The opening of a talk should never hold up the traffic of the main speech. It must attract not distract. The ideal opening then, is one that quickly arrests the voluntary attention of the listeners and then goes on to hold their attention to the end of the speech.

The beginning of your talk must win the listener over to your side. This can be done through a deftly told joke, an appropriate story or an important statement with which the listeners are in agreement. I prefer the important statement to a joke or a story because a statement can be handled much more easily. Recently, I opened a speech on "The Skills of Listening" with this statement, "The self-evident is given little attention. So it is with listening. Too many of us believe that listening comes naturally, that most of us can do it without effort and without training. Not so." This opening produced an almost immediate audience acceptance of my discourse on listening.

In some respects the end of a speech is even more important than the beginning. You can fumble into a speech and then correct yourself as you go on. But you can never fumble yourself out of a speech and retain the respect and the allegiance of your audience.

A happy and effective ending to a talk can come in several ways. Frequently it is achieved by summarizing and recapitulating what has been said. It can also be achieved by challenging the listeners to take action. In my speech on listening skills, I challenged my audience to enroll in a course on listening. The challenge brought results. Several members of our audience later enrolled in our course on listening at the University of Akron in Akron, Ohio. An ending also can be made appropriate with a closing story or quotation. The point to remember is that the story must be relevant and appropriate.

The beginning and ending of a speech are important because they embody the elements that will be remembered longest by the listeners. The laws of forward and backward association guarantee this. What we learn first and what we learn last in a listening experience are retained longest in our memory.

Say It The Right Way

There is a right word for every thought and feeling a speaker may wish to convey. The English language is rich in synonyms. As we prepare to speak to others, we must search for the words that best express our thoughts and feelings.

To use words in an ostentatious and erudite manner, words that we are not master of, trips us up in our speech.

Such words undermine our self-confidence and tend to ruin our speeches. As a rule, we should choose the simplest words we can find to convey what we have to say. To do so, we must expand our vocabularies so we become rich in word knowledge and word usage. In addition to the simple monosyllabic and polysyllabic words commonly used in everyday communication, we must learn complex words that say a great deal in a compressed way.

We must also have breadth of vocabulary. We must, in effect, possess several vocabularies. First of all, we must have an everyday human relations vocabulary consisting of words we use when we communicate with one another as we comment about the weather, sports and current events.

In addition to this everyday garden variety of vocabulary, we must possess specialized vocabularies needed in our particular job or occupation. In some occupations, several specialized vocabularies are in use. Thus, for instance, an engineer must be familiar with math vocabulary, science vocabulary and technical vocabulary, while a nurse must be familiar with physical science vocabulary, math vocabulary, biological science vocabulary and to some extent social science vocabulary. As we become proficient in the use of words applied in various subject matter, we become better able to choose the words that will be most appropriate for our speeches.

Pitching and Pacing

Much of our speaking effectiveness also depends on how we pitch and pace a speech. If we speak in a loud and strident voice, we will seem unsure of ourselves. If we talk in a colorless way and deliver what we have to say in an unfeeling voice, we are bound to reveal tension and emotional instability. To pitch the voice appropriately in speaking, we must talk low and slow in a relaxed manner.

It's well for you to practice pacing before you do your talk. If you talk too fast, your words will run into each other and you will be racing with yourself to the disadvantage of your listeners. You will end up being indistinct and inaudible. But if you speak too slowly, your listeners will become impatient. You will bore them and lose their attention.

Whatever you say, be precise — even if you are not altogether sure of your facts. Definitive and deliberate speech is in your favor. Be sure to use your lips while speaking. Do not be a lazy tongue speaker. Sound out your words, especially the endings. By using your lips and your tongue energetically while speaking, you can add resonance and a pleasing tone.

Occasionally, pauses in your speech can do more for you than words. However, pauses must be spaced carefully.

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You must be in control of them. They should not be the result of fright and emotional blocking. Pauses are used primarily to give the listener opportunities to digest what has been said. Momentary pauses also give the speaker time to collect his or her thoughts. But never should a speaker attempt to bridge such pauses with awkward "ers" and "ahs." These irritate listeners and may cause them to turn against the speaker.

Put Yourself in Your Talk

Nowhere is the advantage that comes from losing one's self in words more noticeable than in speaking. Since we can speak, on the average, only about 145 words per minute, and since the mind of the listener, working with some 18 billion brain cells, is capable of comprehending very rapidly, speakers who want to keep their listeners riveted to what they have to say must really put themselves into their talks. To do this effectively, the speaker must be genuine.

To project yourself as a person and as a personality, you must remain true to yourself. No matter what your background is, no matter what your beliefs and values are, unless you reveal yourself as yourself you will fail in your

speechmaking. Whether you speak in private or public, you must be sincere. Subterfuge, calumny, euphony, a play on words that doesn't say anything will not sell the audience. Only you alone, in your very essence, can do this.

Speaking is an art and a science. The art of it is in large measure inherited. Verbal aptitude comes with the genes; the science of speaking is acquired through learning. Fortunately for all of us, heredity sets only the ceiling of our capability in speaking. Through education and training we can acquire enough mastery of speech to reach that calling. 🎤

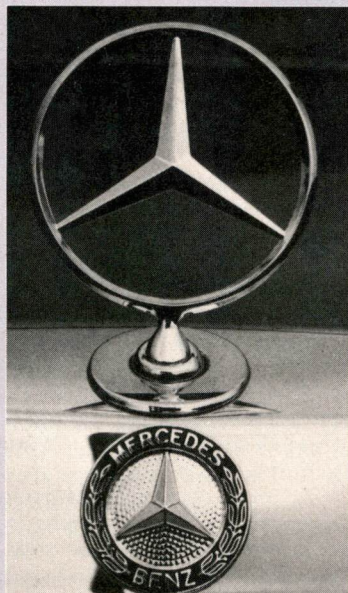
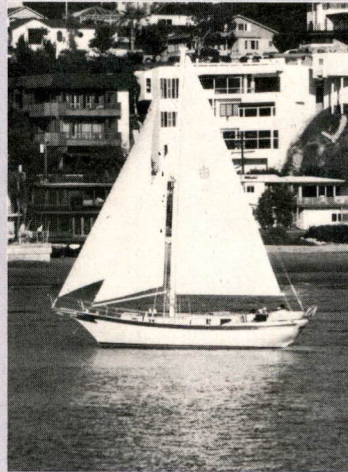
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Dr. Peter J. Hampton is Director of Developmental Programs and Associate Professor of Psychology at the University of Akron, Ohio.

Daydreamers at Work

by Vivian Buchan



Daydreaming isn't
a waste of time —
many great ideas
have been conceived
in fantasies.

Photos by Robert D. Clemens, Jr.



A sign saying, "This couch reserved for a dreamer at work," should be hanging over the sofa in every executive's office. And every executive should take time to lie down on that couch and daydream — during regular working hours. If that shocks workaholics devoted to the Puritan Work Ethic, it's meant to.

Studies have shown that daydreaming helps people become more creative, innovative and competent. Most of us think of daydreamers as people with idle minds who drift through workdays without getting much accomplished. But we've been wrong. According to experts, the people who spend time every day meandering through the avenues of their minds are healthier — mentally, physically and emotionally — and more successful than those who don't allow their thoughts to drift.

Increasing Self-Knowledge

Dr. Joan T. Freyberg, a New York City psychotherapist, believes that daydreaming helps people learn, concentrate, renew their energies and achieve better interaction with their colleagues. She's also found that patients who are good at fantasizing are quicker to respond to treatment and better able to withstand stress. Another psychologist, Dr. Sara Similansky, learned that people who are taught to daydream become better communicators and find more success in all their relationships.

Something important happens when you daydream: You become better acquainted with yourself. It's difficult to be a friend to yourself. But people who have self-knowledge are genuine, natural and original. They've learned how to relate to themselves, and that makes them better able to relate to others.

Taking time to daydream is something like making a date with your mind and soul. Author Dorothea Brande says she is revitalized after daydreaming: "It seems as though my mind gives a great sigh of relief at the liberation and stretches itself to its fullest limits." Those who use daydreaming as a vehicle for problem-solving rarely experience the frustration others face when they tackle a problem head-on and refuse to relax until a solution has been found. The harder you consciously try to solve a problem, the less apt you are to find the solution.

Many famous inventors and scientists say some of their best ideas "come out of the blue." Newton, for instance, admitted that his best ideas came when he was thinking about something totally unrelated. Thomas Edison went into a "half-waking" state of mind when he was grappling with a knotty problem. He'd stretch out on his couch and let fantasies and daydreams occupy his mind.

January 1980

Long-Range Vision

What happens in that half-waking state? The conscious mind is turned off; the subconscious mind is turned on and the data it recalls is flashed back as an intuitive thought.

The most valuable daydreams are those in which you picture yourself succeeding — finding alternatives to problems, discovering new ways to reach your goals and re-evaluating your plans. It's easy to lose sight of your goals under the pressures and demands of your daily life. But short-sighted vision — a narrow focus on everyday duties — obscures the future.

Dr. Harry Emerson Fodsick, the humanist, says, "Great living starts with a picture held in some person's imagination of what he would like someday to do or be."

Florence Nightingale dreamed of being a nurse. Edison pictured himself as an inventor. Conrad Hilton dreamed of managing a hotel when he was just a young boy.

Your fantasies can make you more competent and creative.

"All such characters escaped the mere shove of circumstance by imagining a future so vividly that they headed for it," Fodsick continues. "Picture yourself vividly as defeated, and that alone will make victory impossible. Picture yourself vividly as winning, and that alone will contribute immeasurably to success. Do not picture yourself as anything, and you will drift like a derelict."

Winning athletes spend time picturing themselves as winners. A runner sees himself breaking the tape; a pole-vaulter sees himself clearing the bar at the winning height, a basketball player sees himself putting the ball into the basket every time he throws it. Jack Nicklaus daydreams before every tournament to get a "winning feeling." He says, "This feeling gives me a line to the cup just as clearly as if it's been tattooed on my brain."

While on a ship heading for the Olympics, Jim Thorpe sat with his eyes shut as other athletes worked out on the decks. "What are you doing?" a concerned coach asked Thorpe. "Just practicing, just practicing," Thorpe answered, explaining how visualizing the decathlon would increase his chances of winning.

Why does a picture in your mind result in success? Dr. Maxwell Malz, plastic surgeon and author of *Psychocybernetics*, explains: "Your nervous system cannot tell the difference be-

tween an *imagined* experience and a *real* experience. In either case, it reacts automatically to information you give it from your forebrain. Your nervous system reacts appropriately to what you think or imagine to be true."

Mental Vacations

Daydreams provide the data that's stored in the midbrain and the nervous system. Anything put into that storage area that improves our self-image is going to have an impact on our performance. If you want to achieve your goals, draw a road map, picturing yourself enroute and arriving at your destination. Daydream about success and you will become successful.

Take a mental vacation for 15 to 20 minutes every day. Go to a place where you won't be disturbed, close your eyes and pretend you're sitting in front of a big, blank movie screen. Then, see yourself as an actor performing as you'd like to perform, looking the way you'd like to look, speaking the way you'd like to speak.

Don't set your goals too far into the future, for achieving short-term goals will inspire and encourage you to daydream often and vividly. Your eventual success will be in direct proportion to your ability to picture yourself as a successful person.

You'll return from your mental vacation as enriched and refreshed in mind and body as though you'd taken a physical vacation. If you have room for a couch in your office, put one there and spend your lunch hour daydreaming. If you don't have room for a couch, then go to a park and sit in a quiet, remote spot. Consider the time you spend daydreaming as a working period, a time for accomplishing something important to your success. Don't feel guilty about taking time to daydream; it could be the most important part of your workday.

Daydreamers aren't frittering their time away if they're doing the right kind of dreaming. They're developing creativity. They're becoming successful. And they're getting more satisfaction out of life.

So hang the sign that says, "Quiet! A dreamer at work," over your dreaming place and begin to shape up your future exactly the way you want it to be. 📺



Vivian Buchan received her bachelor's degree in English from Coe College in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and her master's degree from the University of Illinois. A frequent contributor to *The Toast-*

master, Ms. Buchan is a former member of the faculty of the University of Iowa, where she taught expository writing, public speaking and literature.

Many speakers corrupt the English language with sports terminology. Have you been off base?

SPORTS TALK STRIKES OUT

by John B. Gravatt

This afternoon the stock market staged a ninth inning rally with a total climb of nearly 11 points. Blue chips led the advance. Market analysts were unwilling to tackle an explanation. One of them said he was floored by the performance, especially after so many utilities dropped the ball the day before. 'It's impossible to call the shots in today's uncertain economy,' he declared.

"The flurry of activity, which began at about 3:15 p.m., saw buyers jockeying for position to make their bids. American Tobacco hooked a big one, rising better than two points, while Kennecott Copper, a loser in early

activity and a more serious situation in some other human endeavor. Often the parallel becomes a divergent line leading to confusion rather than clarity. When using sports terms for clever connotation instead of specific denotation, there's also a danger of sounding trite. Why take such chances when there are so many other words that can make your message clear and your style unique?

"Three strikes and you're out" is a rule in baseball, yet we often say people have "strikes" against them even when they're not involved in a ballgame. What we really mean is that their chances of success are reduced by certain factors. So why not say it that way — in plain, direct language?

Since baseball is the only major sport played in a park, it had to have been this athletic game that gave "a ball park figure" to the language. Does anyone know what number constitutes "a ball park figure"? Could it be the distance from home plate to the centerfield fence? The number of runs scored in a game? The number of spectators? We interpret the expression as an *approximation*, but of what? Wouldn't it take more sense to say "approximate" instead of "ball park figure" even when discussing baseball?

Other sports also have given their corrupted words to popular expression. The millionaire who has never played poker may be "flushed." Poker also gave its "wild card" to professional football when that sport needed more jokers than its own deck provided. A person who has never played golf says he's "teed off" although he has no idea how a golf ball feels when knocked off its tee.

The use of sports terms in communication isn't an American or 20th Century phenomenon. Two thousand years ago, the famous Roman general, Julius Caesar, is said to have uttered, "The die is cast," when he decided to cross the Rubicon River and lead his army to Rome. He was not referring to a matrix but to the dotted cube better known by its plural, *dice*, a favorite

pastime for Romans. Ever since, the expression has been used to mean *decision on a calculated risk*.

The man who "hits below the belt" or plays "grandstand quarterback" is as inconsiderate of his language as he is of the people he berates or belittles. He doesn't ponder "the breaks of the game."

Four decades ago, a former football star reflected on the highlights of his sports career as he sat in a doctor's office waiting for a medical report. He recalled the time he punted from a position close to his own goal, then watched the ball land at midfield and bounce toward the kicker. At this point

Sports terminology interferes with plain, direct communication.

trading, closed at 56, deadlocking its closing figure of the day before."

The paragraphs quoted above contain nine expressions taken from sports jargon. If you can identify all nine, you're either an avid sports fan, a good English student — or both. In sports-loving societies, it's quite natural for athletes to exert a strong influence on the language. Unfortunately, this influence has not been enriching. We haven't gained new words from sports; we've borrowed existing words, twisted their meanings to fit an activity in a game and then returned them to the language with their meanings damaged.

Confusing Parallels

Those who use sports terms in general communication attempt to draw parallels between the athletic

Politicians often use sports terms to confuse the issues.

in his reverie, the doctor emerged from the laboratory and announced, "You have six months to live." The once great athlete murmured, "That's the way the ball bounces," coining an expression for people who must resign themselves to disappointment. Incidentally, the former football player's story has a happy ending. He underwent successful surgery, and then his life was "a whole new ballgame."

Mixing Politics and Sports

Politicians have used sports terminology for specious as well as crowd-pleasing reasons. They may answer questions they wish to avoid with such comments as, "That's a home run with the bases loaded." They may deliver "a knockout blow" to the illusory opposition without offending voters among their constituents. Sports terms don't clarify; they obfuscate, which is what politicians intend to do when they try to accommodate voters on both sides of an issue.



A governor attending a conference of the Southern Regional Educational Board told his audience the South should change its "game plan" in the field of higher education and play "catch up ball." "Game plan" is a legitimate term in football and basketball, but it gives the serious business of college education a levity that makes the workshop, the laboratory or the classroom seem subordinate to the court or the gridiron.

The use of sports terms by the Southern governor reflects his interest in sports and the importance of athletics in the collegiate world. But the governor's "game plan" should have emphasized the importance of vocabulary building in higher education; with a speciousness he probably didn't intend, he pointed out the need.

Tennis is a sport that hasn't returned a "volley" of corrupted words to the language, but it has done its share of twisting. There's nothing romantic about a "love match." The term "ace" has nothing to do with flying and is only remotely kin to the ace in the deck of cards.

Sports terms should be avoided in general written and oral communication — no matter how clever they may sound. Those who don't participate in the sport from which the term was borrowed may not know what it means, and even those who know its meaning in a particular game can't always see the parallel. Sports terms may save you the effort it takes to find precise words, but, like the arrow that misses the bull's-eye, they "fall wide of the mark" when used under the wrong circumstances.

It's good to be a sport in a game, but not when making a speech on some other subject. 🎤



John B. Gravatt is a past president and current member of Virginia Beach Club 3267-66 in Virginia Beach, Virginia.

The crowd waits in tense silence as the judges mark their ballots. Then the name of the Area Speech Contest winner is announced and his supporters cheer wildly as he marches forward to claim his trophy. On the opposite side of the banquet hall, Toastmasters who had been rooting for the other contestants politely join in the standing ovation, trying to hide their disappointment behind quiet smiles.

Later, as the meeting breaks up, the audience begins to evaluate the competency of the judges. "Boy, the judges sure got it right this time! I knew our man had it in the bag!" Elsewhere, there is disagreement: "I can't understand how the judges could be so wrong. I thought the winner should have been in fourth place, not first. I was sure our representative had won."

Sour grapes? Maybe. Poor etiquette? Perhaps. But it happens. Although usually done discreetly, most members of the audience will sooner or later get around to expressing agreement or

Toastmasters can become more competent, more objective speech contest judges by understanding and earnestly trying to overcome these *barriers to objectivity*:

- The *halo effect* has long been recognized as a barrier to objectivity not only in speech judging, but also in decisions made in work and home environments. The halo effect occurs when we assign a favorable attribute or trait to a person simply because that person possesses another favorable (but unrelated) attribute. The halo effect is so prevalent in our culture that some forms of it have even become stereotyped. To demonstrate, I'll wager that you can match the following:

Stereotypical Halo Effects

1. If Jim is a good golfer, then he must _____.
2. If Joe is a successful businessman, then he must _____.
3. If Sally is pretty and smart, then she must _____.
4. If Jack is a good craftsman, then he will certainly _____.

5. If Jane is a faithful churchgoer, then she must _____.

 - a. be a good typist
 - b. have a charming wife
 - c. have executive potential
 - d. be a good foreman
 - e. be a very honest person

How did you do? Did you find it easy to make associations based on common stereotypes? That's just what you should avoid doing when you judge a speech contest. Resist the temptation to give a speaker high marks on content simply because his or her delivery was superb. And don't boost the score for organization because you are pleased with the speakers charming accent and sharp clothes. Evaluate each criterion separately; don't allow one to influence the other.

- The *reverse halo effect* is the association of one unfavorable trait or attribute with another unfavorable (but unrelated) attribute. Examples:

- "Henry's grammar is terrible; therefore, he must be unintelligent."
- "Jim is a poor golfer; therefore, he must not be very good at tennis either."

Don't allow the reverse halo effect to color your judgments. Just because a speaker was sloppily dressed, it doesn't necessarily follow that his delivery was

Judging is a subjective process, but your decisions will be more accurate and fair if you strive for objectivity.

Obstacles to Objective Speech Judging

by Richard A. Taylor, ATM

dissent, approval or disapproval, with the decision of the speech contest judges.

How can such a wide gap in perceptions be explained? Speech evaluation and judging is mainly a *subjective* process to which we attempt to apply *objective* measures. It simply can't be done with precision, and that's why you should always use a panel of judges rather than a single "expert."

A panel of judges is more likely than an individual to select the best speaker. But that doesn't always happen. In theory, if each judge could be *entirely* objective, there would be unanimous agreement in rating the speakers, and the best speaker would always win. But, again, that's *in theory*, not real life. Nevertheless, I firmly believe that



Richard A. Taylor, ATM, is educational lt. governor of District 58 and a past editor of The Palmetto Toastmaster district bulletin. A member of Rock Hill Club 2040-58, Mr. Taylor

writes and conducts training programs for Celanese Fibers Company in Rock Hill, South Carolina.



poor, although there may be an unconscious tendency on your part to downgrade him in that area because his bright plaid sportcoat "turned you off." Again, evaluate each criterion separately. Don't permit poor performance in one category to influence your scoring in another.

First and Last is Best?

- The *primary/recency effect* was discovered by behavioral scientists who observed that people who studied lists tended to remember the *first* and *last* items best. It has been suggested that the *first* and *last* speakers in a speech contest have a slight advantage over other contestants, and I believe experience bears this out.

The first speaker tends to be remembered because he or she becomes a reference point against which all following speakers are compared. The last speaker, because he or she is last, often leaves the most vivid impression, while the third and fourth speakers in a seven-speaker contest tend to be forgotten, even if they perform as well as the first and the seventh. No wonder the speakers draw for position. It's important.

The conscientious speech contest judge will try to compensate for the

primacy/recency effect by paying close attention to *all* contestants, making brief notes on each speech and re-examining any inclination to vote the first or last speaker into the winner's circle. Sometimes the first or last speaker really is the best, but you'd better check your notes.

- *Club norms* probably account for a great deal of honest disagreement on which speech was "best." Each club is

Don't allow your preconceptions to color your judgments.

unique. Each club has experienced Toastmasters who tend to set the pattern for the newer members. As a result, each club has a propensity for a particular "type" of speech.

At one speech contest I judged, a contestant told a humorous story about a beer-drinking experience. As the story unfolded, the speaker slowly piled empty beer cans on the lectern (one can for each beer he drank during the episode he was describing). About 30%

of the audience thought it was hilarious, 30% thought it was disgusting, and the rest thought it was hilariously disgusting.

Some clubs like patriotic speeches best. Some favor inspirational speeches. Others develop an affinity for the philosophical or esoteric. Clubs seem to develop favorite styles of humor, too. Slapstick works well in some clubs; humorous personal experiences are favored in others. Your club may laugh at puns, and *I* will, too. But my club doesn't.

Is it any wonder then, that whole clubs go away from speech contests with the feeling that *their* contestant got cheated out of a clear-cut victory? Could it be that clubs too often evolve a narrow view of what constitutes a good speech? Isn't this why we need more speaker-evaluator exchanges and joint meetings?

As a contest judge, you'll want to stop for a moment and consider what your "club norm" for a good speech really is. Do you expect the rest of the world to conform to that norm? If you do, you may have difficulty judging objectively.


Personal Preference

- *Individual likes and dislikes* are probably the greatest barriers to objective

speech contest judging. Tastes, preferences, prejudices, preconceived notions, attitudes, opinions, experiences — all the things that make you and I unique individuals — can prevent us from giving speech contestants a fair shake.

Because it will be difficult, indeed impossible, to set aside all our biases and prejudices, it makes a great deal of

sense to ask: "What do I really like or dislike about this speaker and his or her speech?" and "Is the particular thing I like or dislike about this speech truly relevant to my decision?" If you can ask those questions of yourself — and answer them honestly — then you have taken a giant step toward being a more objective judge.

Objectivity in speech contest judging is an ideal. We can never achieve it perfectly. But we can do better. Maybe someday there will be a computer that can do a more objective, more competent job of speech contest judging than people can. But I hope that day never comes. It would take away the fun and excitement of the contest. 

The Critic's Role: What to Look For

by William E. Johannsen

Although constructive speech evaluation is one of the fundamental concepts of Toastmasters' educational program, it is a process that is too often misunderstood. Many Toastmasters find evaluations difficult to give and painful to receive. You can solve both problems by recognizing the significance of the evaluator's role and learning how to give the kind of speech critique that leads to growth rather than despair.

When you evaluate a speech, you are a *critic*. The Greeks define a critic as "one who is able to form wise judgments." If you can identify the strengths as well as the weaknesses of a speech and offer constructive suggestions for improvement, then you qualify for the role of a critic.

Judging Criteria

As an evaluator, your goal is to provide an honest reaction to the speaker's presentation. What should you listen for? Content and organization are among the most important judging criteria. But it's not enough to listen; you also have to watch carefully so you can determine the effectiveness of the speaker's delivery.

Let's look closely at the presentation. Imagine that you are attending a big league baseball game. The pitcher has the ball in hand. He winds up, summons all his force and skill and delivers the ball. If he puts power and direction into his delivery, he is successful. The same holds true for a speaker. But personality, appearance, voice and gestures are all equally important elements of a speaker's delivery. We can sum it up by saying that a speaker talks with his or her whole being — and an evaluator should always keep that in mind when giving a critique.

Evaluators should also examine structure closely in order to gain a

full appreciation of speech content. To evaluate structure, first listen for the *purpose* of the speech. This should be revealed in a concise statement that identifies the scope and direction of the presentation.

Next, examine the *body* of the speech — the part that makes it all worthwhile. This section should be logically arranged, clearly presented, well phrased, illustrated with appropriate examples and designed to hold the audience's interest from start to finish.

When your examination of structure leads you to the *closing* of a speech, you face a twofold responsibility: First, you must appraise the speaker's final appeal in view of the material already presented and, secondly, you must reflect on the impact of the speaker's closing statement. This period of reflection is a fundamental part of effective listening.

What else should an evaluator look for? Imagine that you are learning to play golf or baseball. One of the first instructions you would be given is: "Keep your eye on the ball!" In speaking, it's just as important to keep your eye on the audience. Good eye contact is essential to a successful presentation. As an evaluator, you must assess the speaker's ability to use this very expressive form of nonverbal communication.

Now, you've observed the speaker's style of delivery, you've analyzed the structure of the speech and you've studied the speaker's use of eye contact. All this has happened as you listened to the presentation. But what happens when it's your turn to speak, and you have only two minutes to give your evaluation? How can you best be of help to the speaker?

Constructive Feedback

The simplest formula for a speech

evaluation is based on four fundamental questions:

- What did I like best about the speech?
- What did I dislike?
- What should the speaker do to improve?
- Did the speaker "make the sale" to me?

By emphasizing strong points, identifying weaknesses and making suggestions for improvement, you offer the kind of constructive feedback that motivates speakers to improve and gives them the direction they need to make positive changes.

The evaluator has one of the most important responsibilities that can be assigned to a Toastmaster. If not handled thoughtfully — and tactfully — an evaluation can be a destructive force rather than an inducement for growth. Remember, all criticism should be *friendly, constructive and helpful*. It should reflect the honest reactions of the critic and be given without unpleasantness or faultfinding. *Always* end every critique with a note of encouragement. *Don't let the speaker down.*

As you develop your evaluating skills through study and experience, you will become "one who is able to form wise judgments." No matter how much experience you've had as an evaluator, you can't go wrong if you remember that constructive criticism is mutually helpful. Evaluate others in your club as you would want to be evaluated and you'll all gain from the experience.



Bill Johannsen, DTM, is an active member and past president of Tampa Noonshiners Club 3909-47 in Tampa, Florida and former governor of Area 6. He is employed by Florida Steel Corporation in Tampa, Florida.

Speaker on Stilts Raises Funds for Medical Research

Joe Bowen believes you can do anything if you have a dream, a plan and a strong commitment to your goals. And this month, he's going to try to prove that for the sake of all those who suffer from muscular dystrophy, a crippling disease for which no cure is known.

Joe, a member of Derbytown Club 3688-11 in Louisville, Kentucky, plans to walk across the United States on stilts to raise money for muscular dystrophy research. Last August, he raised \$7000 for his cause in just nine days during a stilt walk across Kentucky. His Toastmasters training gave him the skills and confidence he needed to speak at more than a dozen community meetings, give interviews on local television talk shows and sell his idea of a stilt walk across the United States to the U.S. Jaycees, which is sponsoring his trek from Los Angeles to Kentucky.

Joe says he joined Toastmasters because he knew he had to become a

good public speaker in order to successfully raise funds for his cause. Now he's sharing his dream with groups and individuals wherever he goes in the hope that they will join his campaign. If you want to help, write to Joe at 6813 Yvonne Ct., Louisville, Kentucky 40218.



SHARING A DREAM — Toastmaster Joe Bowen addresses a crowd of 2000 at the Muscular Dystrophy Battle of the Stars. At his side is television personality and former Miss America Phyllis George.

Speech Contest Creates Excitement for Japan Clubs

Toastmasters around the world are sponsoring activities beyond their regular club programs to broaden opportunities for education, achievement and recognition.

With this goal in mind, the Tokyo and Kanto Clubs recently hosted the All Japan Toastmasters International Speech Contest. More than 60 Toastmasters and their guests participated in the exciting event. The highest award went to **J. DeRico** of Yakota Speakers Club 583-U for his speech, "You Can Be Anyone You Want To Be!" **Virginia Hogan** of Atsugi Club 3162-U took second with a speech on "World Pollution," and the third place award went to **Maureen D'Honau** of Tokyo Club 1674-U for her speech "Are Americans Unique?"

Youth Leadership Preps Students for Success

New Zealand students are discovering that participation in Toastmasters' Youth Leadership Program can make them strong competitors in writing as well as speaking contests.

In mid-1978 Napier Toastmasters Club 1542-72 in New Zealand presented the first Youth Leadership Program (YLP) at Saint Joseph's Maori Girls' College. Since the completion of that program, three students have achieved notable success in competitions:

Louana Forster won the Hawke's Bay regional finals of the "Korimako" Speech Contest for secondary school students. The speakers were judged on fluency, speech content, audience appeal and clarity. Louana gave a prepared speech and an impromptu talk.

Lucy Rakete won first place for her Maori essay in the Ngarimu VC Essay competition. The competition encourages students to write about the Maori people. Lucy won top honors in a field of 753 entries.

Tracey McIndoe won a \$100 prize

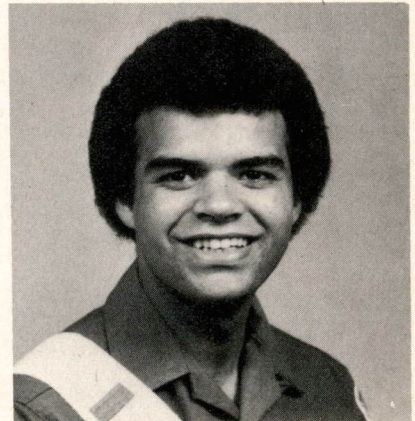
and \$150 for her school in the 1979 Napier Rotary Club's High School Prepared Speech Contest.

In a letter to Les Hewett, DTM, Saint Joseph's principal, Sister Patricia, asked the Napier Toastmasters to continue the YLP program at the college. She wrote: "English teachers and others speak highly of the improvement in oral communication that they have noticed since last year in the youngsters who were lucky enough to participate in your program."

The Napier club accepted Sister Patricia's invitation and continued the program under the direction of Toastmasters Les Hewett, DTM, Richard Gregory and Richard Knight.



Louana Forster



Lawrence F. Brown, Jr.

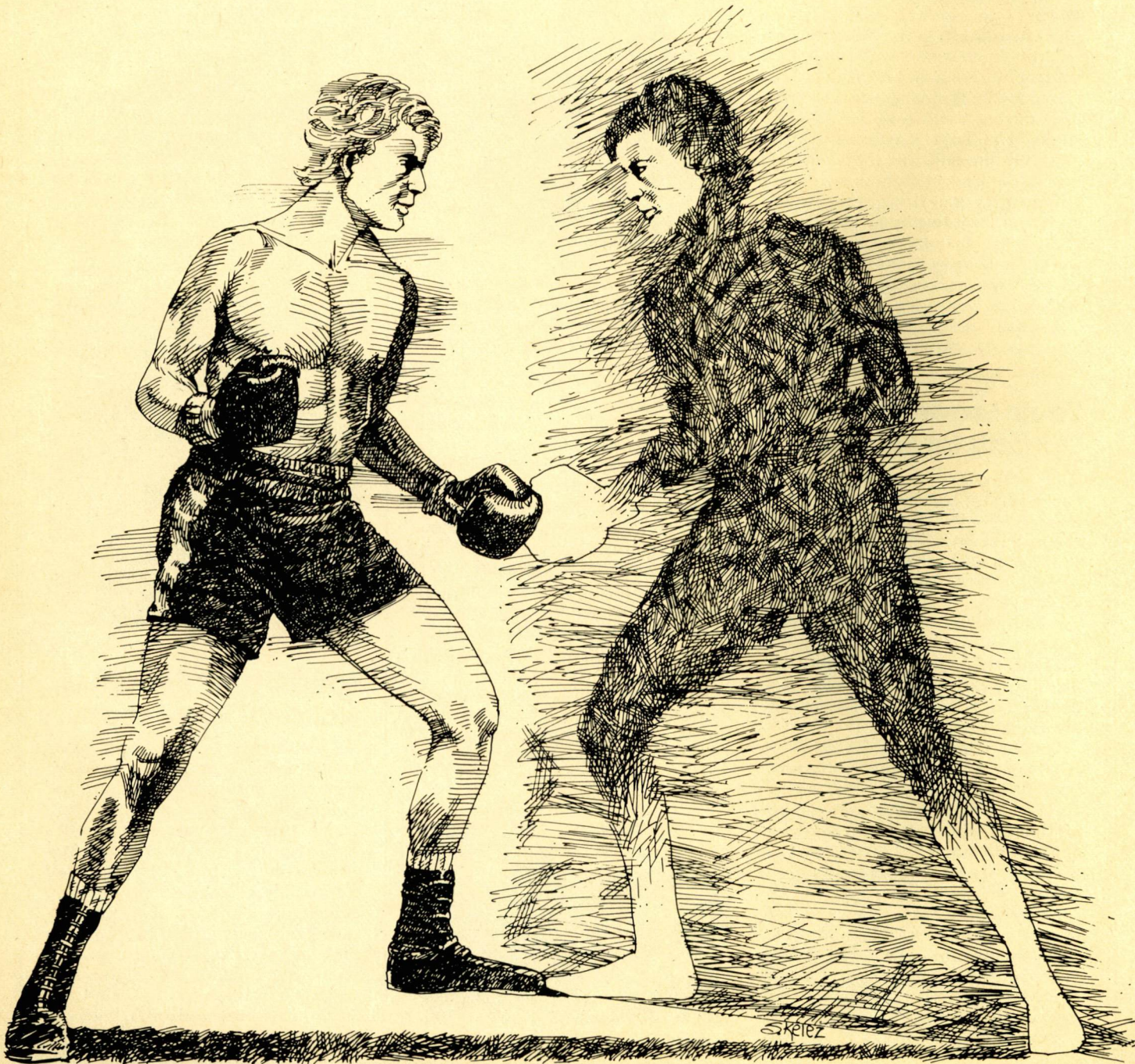
Toastmaster Becomes National Scout Leader

Toastmasters have long been known as the "action people," and our members continue to live up to that reputation in many ways. For example, there's 20-year-old **Lawrence F. Brown Jr.**, a Toastmaster recently named one of four 1980 National Youth Representatives for the Boy Scouts of America. Lawrence, a member of Saddleback Morning Club 86-F in Lake Forest, California, is a student at Seattle-Pacific University. An Eagle Scout from El Toro, California, Lawrence is planning a career in law.

Turning self-defeating behavior into a positive way of life.

Are You Your Own Worst Enemy?

by C.A. Bertolino



It's a sad fact that many individuals are their own worst enemies. A number of these people are capable of being extremely good friends to others and some wouldn't even consider rejecting a plea for help, but they just don't know how to be good to themselves.

The most unfortunate result of their self-defeating behavior is that they fail to enjoy the wonderful life that could be theirs if they only knew how to be as kind to themselves as they are to friends, acquaintances and even strangers.

While there are a lot of selfish, conceited individuals in the world, there are many more people who aren't selfish enough. When you fail to think highly enough and often enough of yourself, you're going to suffer. And that's not going to help anyone. In fact, you can do much more for others when you like and take care of yourself.

I don't recommend complete self-centeredness but, rather, a healthy self-respect and self-consideration. An individual who is unhappy with himself is not a whole, complete person. Society as a whole suffers the consequences of self-neglect — the world needs the best in every man and woman.

So how do people become their own worst enemies?

You can't become successful unless you have self-confidence, yet many people fail to develop this essential quality. People who lack self-assurance try only what they think they can do — nothing more. Yet they could probably go far beyond their present level of achievement if they had higher expectations and more faith in themselves.

Most of us have moments, perhaps even days, when we feel we can do almost anything. But when the mood passes, we think we're kidding ourselves. Just the opposite is true.

The picture you have of yourself in your most self-confident mood is the one that is real. It is your true self, and it is the image you should hold in your mind steadily. The more you think of yourself and picture yourself as a capable, intelligent, successful and self-confident individual, the faster others will see you that way.

But this is something that has to be worked on. A high self-image is developed through positive thinking. If you allow yourself to be gloomy, pessimistic, timid or self-pitying, you bring out the worst in yourself. All these negative attitudes are damaging to physical as well as mental health. On the other hand, when you practice cheerfulness, hopefulness and expect the best in life, you'll get the best.

Uplifting Experiences

A good attitude alone will improve

your health, bring you promotions on your job, win friends for you and make your life much more enjoyable. But, again, joyfulness is something you have to work at. It doesn't just come automatically, at least to most people. In fact, just the opposite is true. If we don't make a definite effort to be positive, it seems our minds and our feelings almost automatically slip into negativity.

Do whatever you can to stay happy and cheerful — it's worth any effort you may have to make. Look for activities that put you in a good frame of mind and then do those things often. Take the time to discover at what times and on what occasions you seem to feel at your peak, and then repeat those experiences as often as possible. It's the best investment of time and effort that you can make.

It's true that there's much in the world that is sad and wrong, but the best way for each of us to help correct these conditions is to see to it that we always have a hopeful and confident attitude. With that we can accomplish things that would otherwise be im-

When you expect the best in life, you'll get the best.

possible. We can do far more good for others when we try to keep ourselves happy and healthy, mentally and physically.

Don't be your own worst enemy by allowing pessimism, discouragement or doubt into your mind. View these attitudes as dangerous and damaging to yourself and anyone else you contact. Recognize that they are your real enemies and that they can rob you of more happiness, health, accomplishment and good works than anything else possibly can.

It's a proven fact that you do your best work when you're in a cheerful frame of mind, and who wants to ever settle for anything less? In spite of all that's been said and written about positive thinking, too many people still fail to recognize its power and importance. Don't be your own worst enemy by neglecting to make positive thinking a way of life.

Don't Miss Opportunities

Another way of becoming your own worst enemy is by failing to take advantage of opportunities that are presented to you. Many people pass up opportunities to better themselves, and yet they would urge their friends to take advantage of those same opportunities. Every opportunity should be grasped without hesitation. Exercise initiative

and courage. Remember, too many advantages are lost by timidity.

Don't be your own worst enemy by asking advice of everyone else on every subject, listening to every other person's opinion and neglecting to listen to your own. You know what's good for you so listen to your own voice and your own feelings. Your intuition is full of wisdom if you'll only give it the attention it deserves.

Don't be your own worst enemy by neglecting to spend a reasonable amount of time and money on your own recreation. Instead of considering it a waste, consider this time and money an investment in yourself. No matter how busy you are or how many obligations you have, you owe it to yourself to reserve time for self-renewal and refreshment.

Another way in which you can quickly become your own worst enemy is by never spending time alone. We all need time to think things through, to make careful decisions, to decide just where we want to go in life and how we're going to get there. It may appear to others that you're "doing nothing," but this time spent alone can be your most profitable time if you use it wisely.

It will be easier to find time to be alone if you don't allow yourself to get bogged down in too many obligations and commitments. Only take on those things you can do without feeling too divided and harassed. Remember, you don't have to do everything. If you take on too much, you won't do anything well. If you enjoy working under pressure, fine. But if a tight schedule puts you under more stress than you can comfortably handle, then cut back until your workload reaches the level that is comfortable for you.

Don't be your own worst enemy by failing to try something you've always wanted to do. If you want to write a book, paint a picture or compose music, don't keep saying to yourself, "This is silly." It isn't silly. Try it. You owe it to yourself to at least make an attempt.

Don't ever put yourself down. Think highly of yourself. Get the feeling that you can do anything, and hold onto that feeling every day of your life! Believe in your special talents and abilities. Expect good things to happen to you and they will. Don't forget to laugh. Count your blessings regularly. And remember, you're supposed to love *yourself* — not just your neighbor. Do all these things and you won't be your own worst enemy anymore. Instead, you'll become your own best friend. 🐣

C.A. Bertolino is a freelance writer based in Clinton, Iowa. His work has been published in a number of magazines, including Positive Living, Lady's Circle, American Newspaper Boy and AIM.

Discover the difference between speaking and writing
and you'll use both communication channels more effectively.

SPEAKING vs. WRITING

A series of explosions blasted the airport and two railway stations in Madrid yesterday.

Powerful, synchronized explosions yesterday ripped through the domestic arrivals terminal of Madrid's airport and two crowded railway stations in the capital, killing four persons and wounding at least 113.

by Leon Fletcher

Though all things differ, all agree," wrote English poet Alexander Pope in 1704.

When you've compared speeches with written presentations, you'll appreciate the wisdom of that epigram. All of us can identify features in oral and written communications that "agree." Both forms of expression use words, sentences and paragraphs; they have structure; they communicate ideas; they present points; and they support arguments with data. Yet they also differ in many ways, although it's not easy to pinpoint the differences. Of course we spot the obvious — we *listen* to speeches and we *read* writing. But there are also several significant subtle differences between spoken and written material, and each is important to your development as a speaker.

Every Toastmaster should know how to put words together for the eye as well as the ear. Many Toastmasters have jobs that involve writing. They prepare reports, requests, studies, findings, analyses, evaluations and critiques. And some Toastmasters may write magazine articles. You'll become a

better speaker and writer as you gain more knowledge of the characteristics of each form of communication.

You'll find that most of the differences between spoken and written material are subtle. Many speeches, when in print, read like articles or essays; many articles and essays, when read aloud, sound like speeches. So you'll need to look deeply and carefully to identify the significant differences between speeches and written presentations.

A good way to start is to study issues of *Vital Speeches*. Each month it publishes the complete scripts of about 10 speeches. There's one real problem in studying them. Many speeches that get into print are poorly structured, badly worded and have little direction or drama. But that's where your training in Toastmasters will help — you should be able to recognize the better speeches.

Compare those better speeches with some of the better written material you find in magazines, journals or reports from your own employment field. Or you could compare written material in

popular magazines such as *Reader's Digest*, *Time*, *Newsweek* and *National Geographic*. Another productive source is the magazine that specializes in your hobby, favorite sport or avocation. *The Toastmaster* magazine can also serve as a good basis for comparison.

Analyzing Structure

What should you look for in making these comparisons? One essential difference is structure. You already know the format for a speech, well-summarized in this simple formula:

First: Tell 'em what you're going to tell 'em.

Then: Tell 'em.

Finally: Tell 'em what you told 'em.

As you well know, in a speech you repeat your main points. Not only do you preview, present and summarize; many speakers also find it very effective — especially when dealing with complex or unknown subjects — to present *internal summaries*. These summaries are, in effect, transitions; as you move from one point to the next in a speech, you can re-emphasize your points by restating them.

But don't try that in written work! Your readers will quickly become bored,

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dismissing your writing as material more appropriate for third grade readers. The structure of most written material is different from most speeches.

A written report, for example, is more effective when the structure moves it forward with in a "hooking sequence." That is the technique of ending a paragraph with a sentence, idea or example that leads the reader into the following paragraph. Want an example?

There! You just got hooked!!

Outstanding examples of this technique appear throughout William Manchester's popular book, *American Caesar*, the definitive biography of General Douglas MacArthur published by Little, Brown and Co., Inc., 1978. You'll spot dramatic, productive hooking within the first few pages. Of course, hooking isn't the only technique that makes the book powerful. But hooking is one technique that often moves readers to say, "I just couldn't stop reading that book!"

Yet hooking is not appropriate for all written material, just as no one technique is effective for all speeches. In the traditionally structured newspaper story, the five "Ws" — Who? What? Where? When? and Why? — are supposed to be covered in the first sentence, or at least the first paragraph. In subsequent paragraphs, the questions are answered in greater detail, usually with one paragraph for each "W." Finally, if the story is worth a longer presentation, additional paragraphs present still more specifics, elaborating on previous paragraphs with more detail.

That structure was once valuable to newspapers as a way to solve the problems of determining the length of each story — balancing its importance against the need to completely fill a given number of pages. Today, computers do much of this decision making. The result: Many newspapers now publish news reports that no longer follow the five "Ws." Instead, many news stories are written like magazine features; rigid formulas are abandoned and the structure is determined primarily by the writer's style.

Stressing Key Points

Detailed analysis can help you improve your speaking and your writing by enabling you to move from one to the other with ease and to use the techniques of both channels of communication. The study of structure points to another difference between written and spoken material: The organization of the specific points in a speech always needs to stand out much more closely than in written material. That's why speakers are urged to number their points or incorporate them in an acronym. For example, you might

use the acronym CAR to help listeners remember the points of a speech on safe driving — Care, Adjust, React.

Of course, it's also effective to number the points presented in written material. In fact, three of the eight articles in the January 1979 edition of *The Toastmaster* use that technique. Acronyms are also useful in written material. See, for example, Vivian Buchan's article "The Seven Ingredients of Success" in the April 1979 edition of this magazine; it uses the key word of the article's subject — SUCCESS — as an acronym.

While it's helpful to emphasize the structure of written material by using such techniques, it is *essential* to emphasize the structure of spoken material. Yes — there are exceptions. Speaking and writing are creative endeavors, and while creative efforts have general guides, rules or designs, often the individual who bends or breaks those standards is most successful. In a word, use *moderation* when following and breaking away from the established structure.

Why is it so important for a speech to emphasize structure? If readers lose track of where you're taking them they can lay the publication down, pause and think through what you've written. Or

Methods that make speeches exciting don't always work on paper.

they can thumb back a few paragraphs or pages. Because listeners don't have that luxury, the speaker must make it as easy as possible for the audience to follow the presentation. If people have to stop listening to figure out what you just said, they may miss your next point, and that can be frustrating enough to cause some listeners to lose interest.

How Many Words?

Another major difference between spoken and written material is the length of sentences. Recently I helped a doctor write a speech based on an article he'd written. The first sentence of his article contained 75 words, the first sentence of the speech 13.

The point is *not* that there is a specific sentence length that is best for spoken or written material. What's critical in both cases is the fluency of delivery. The doctor's 75-word opening lead was easily read but much too long for the start of a speech.

Many editors would say a 75-word opening is too long for an article or a speech. The short sentence, especially a short first sentence, is one of the techniques that has made *Reader's Digest* successful. However, *New Yorker* magazine is famous for long sentences. One

article in the July 2, 1979 edition of that magazine opens with an 86-word sentence.

While long sentences may be used effectively in writing, they should be avoided in every part of a speech. Many speakers use long, complex sentences that confuse and bore their audiences. It happens most often in impromptu talks. (President Eisenhower's spontaneous responses in press conferences were notoriously long and complicated.)

But more critical than the length of sentences in speeches is the way they sound. When I was writing radio scripts, I always read them aloud to make sure they *sounded* good. Later, when I shifted to writing articles, I continued to read my material aloud. But written material doesn't necessarily have to sound good. Radio and newspaper writers recognize this difference. On July 30, 1979, the top front page story in the *New York Times* opened with this sentence:

Powerful, synchronized explosions yesterday ripped through the domestic arrivals terminal of Madrid's airport and two crowded railway stations in the capital, killing four persons and wounding at least 113.

On radio, that story opened this way:

A series of explosions blasted the airport and two railway stations in Madrid yesterday.

To check the difference, try reading the newspaper's lead aloud. It flows smoothly when read but not when spoken.

To make another comparison, try to read aloud any article in *Time* magazine. Even polished speakers find it difficult to read those articles in a way that can be understood by listeners. The reason is clear: That magazine is written — skillfully — to be read, not heard.

The main differences between written and spoken material have to be felt. They are sensed. They become apparent as the observant communicator speaks and writes, listens and reads.

Eventually, you'll be able to identify the differences instinctively, and your intuition will tell you how to use that knowledge to become a more effective speaker and writer. Meanwhile, you can sharpen your perceptions of those differences by comparing, studying, analyzing and criticizing everything you read and hear and by practicing what you learn in your own speeches and written communications. 🎤



Leon Fletcher is an emeritus Professor of Speech at Monterey Peninsula College and author of more than 215 publications, including the new *Toastmasters* module, *How to Conduct Productive Meetings*, and the college self-instructional text, *How to Design & Deliver a Speech*, published by Harper & Row.

Be a Sympathetic Listener

by Daniel C. Morgan

Communication involves more than just getting a message across. A radio transmitter is of little use without a working, effective receiver and all the words in the world mean nothing if no one is listening.

How do you listen to others? How do others listen to you? After studying my own listening habits as well as those of others, I've learned what to avoid doing when I'm on the receiving end of a conversation. Following are the guidelines that have helped me become a more effective listener:

- **Don't give unwanted advice.**

When someone approaches you with a problem, he or she is probably looking for a sympathetic ear, not a guidance counselor. This person doesn't need solutions from you; given enough time, people usually work out the best solutions themselves. The answers you offer may be fine from your perspective, but you can't make decisions for someone else and expect them to be right; life doesn't work that way.

The next time your best friend calls to complain that his new car won't start, his wife has no sense, his boss doesn't like him or his favorite team lost the playoffs, don't give advice — just listen.

- **Don't put a damper on anyone's happiness.**

There will be times when your best friend will call you to report good news. He wants to share his good fortune with someone and he has picked you. If you really care about your friend, you will usually want to offer congratulations and encouragement. But even the best of us, at times, have feelings of envy or resentment. It's hard to listen to someone who is on top of the world when you are down in the dumps. You may not be able to genuinely share your friend's happiness, but you have no right to dampen someone else's joy.

- **Don't rush the speaker.**

There's nothing more discouraging than to have someone start to listen to you and then try and rush you to the

end of your story. People need time to express themselves in their own way. If denied that opportunity, they may feel frustrated and resentful. Even if you have something important to do, try to spare at least a few minutes to listen patiently and attentively.

- **Don't interrupt.**

Either listen or talk; don't try to do both at once. We've all been guilty of interrupting. We know it's rude, insensitive and boorish but some of us seem driven to continually do it. We correct facts, help others tell their jokes or try to keep their stories in chronological order; in short, we get into their

Good listening takes concentration — don't divide your attention.

act and neglect our listening role.

- **Don't divide your attention.**

If you are listening to someone, don't do something else at the same time. The human mind is a marvelous machine, but it's not capable of concentrating on two distinct things at once. It's not uncommon to find a wife relating the problems of the day to her just-arrived-home husband as he reads the sports page. His grunts of acknowledgement may appease his wife, but they certainly won't lead to understanding. If you agree to listen to someone, set aside everything else for a few minutes and do it.

- **Don't overlook nonverbal messages.**

Nonverbal messages can be more revealing than what people say. A friend may tell you everything is fine when he really has more problems than he can handle. If you had been listening more carefully, you might have discovered this through his tone of voice, expressions, body language or the way he put his words together. Alert listeners will be able to pick out a variety of signs that will enable them to receive the whole message. Many

people with problems are reluctant to expose themselves to their friends, but they will reveal a lot if you are prepared to hear what they *don't* say.

- **Don't make assumptions. Listen carefully to the speaker's words.**

If you're not really listening you may think you hear something you didn't hear at all. You might end up waiting for hours in front of the wrong store. You might get tickets to the wrong play. You might miss an important message or even a cry for help. The failure to listen to words has created much strife between couples, employers and employees and even between countries. Words are designed to convey a specific message, so listen to those intended for you.

- **Don't expect problems to disappear because you've tuned them out.**

You've probably noticed how children will pretend not to hear when called to some unpleasant task such as washing dishes. Many adults react the same way. The dishes won't go away because they're ignored and neither will adult problems. You can pretend you didn't hear the message but, eventually, you'll have to acknowledge and deal with it. People most often use this tactic in a crisis situation because they're afraid to face the problem. But ignoring the problem only makes it worse. Listen to what is said, and act on it before it's too late.

These are just a few of the things you should *not* do if you want to be a good listener. As you develop your listening skills, try to expand this list of "don'ts." Everyone, at some time, needs a listener. If no one listened, there would be little, if any, communication. And without communication, where would we be? 🎧



Daniel C. Morgan is a member of Lexical Club 1367-16 at the Lexington Correctional Center in Lexington, Oklahoma.

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4072-2 Southcenter
Tukwila, WA — Mon., 7 a.m., Turkey House Restaurant, 17794 Southcenter Pkwy. (433-6822). Sponsored by Burien Breakfast 2543-2.

3238-4 San Jose IRS
San Jose, CA — Wed., 11:30 a.m., San Jose IRS Office, 123 E. Gish Rd. (275-7217). Sponsored by FMC 2873-4.

4077-4 Muni
San Francisco, CA — Thurs., 11:45 a.m., Metro Center, Lounge Classroom, 2200 San Jose Ave. (992-4343 or 558-2491). Sponsored by Crownmasters 1133-4.

4074-10 Realtors
Youngstown, OH — Fri., 8 or 11:30 a.m., Antone's Restaurant, 1621 Market St. (788-7026).

4081-11 Greater Greenwood
Greenwood, IN — Fri., 7 a.m., Jerry's Restaurant, U.S. 31 & Smith Valley Rd. (784-8512). Sponsored by Woodman 681-11.

1859-16 Muskogee
Muskogee, OK — Thurs., 7 p.m., Muskogee Public Library, 801 W. Okmulgee (687-6437). Sponsored by Gilcrease 1384-16.

3223-19 University of Okoboji
Spirit Lake, IA — Sat., 8 a.m., Galley Restaurant, Hwy. 71, Great Lakes Mall (336-4255 or 336-2820).

1421-25 The Fox Tales
Fort Worth, TX — Thurs., 8 a.m., Fort Worth Bank & Trust, 2001 Beach St., Ste. 828 (267-5514). Sponsored by F&J Speakeasy 3318-25.

3723-26 Centennial
Denver, CO — Wed., 11:30 a.m., Assembly Plant-Samsonite, 11200 E. 45th Ave. (344-6366).

4071-26 STC
Louisville, CO — Wed., Storage Technology Corp., 2270 S. 88th St., Bldg. 111 (466-6928 or 497-6813).

4073-32 GSA
Auburn, WA — Wed., 11:45 a.m., General Services Administration, GSC Center (833-6500 x 214).

4076-32 Eyeopeners
Tacoma, WA — Thurs., 7 a.m., Turkey Inn, 8217 S. Hosmer (759-0753 or 531-3064).

4082-32 Naval Supply Center Puget Sound
Bremerton, WA — Thurs., 11:35 a.m., Naval Supply Center Puget Sound Conference Rm., 3rd Fl., Bldg. 467 (478-7094).

1788-33 Executive
Fresno, CA — Fri., noon, Casa Canales, 3110 N. Moroa (441-7171).

1704-37 Swannanoa Valley
Black Mountain, NC — Mon., 6 p.m., Alcoholic Rehabilitation Center (669-8213). Sponsored by Asheville 436-37.

4083-43 Kilowatt Klub
Memphis, TN — 12:05 p.m., Memphis Light, Gas & Water Bldg., 220 Main St. (528-4163).

4079-49 Honolulu City and County
Honolulu, HI — Wed., noon, City Planning Conference Rm., City Hall Annex (523-4623). Sponsored by Palolo 1780-49.

3656-56 Spellbinders
Conroe, TX — Tues., 6:15 p.m., Bonanza Restaurant, IH-45 and Semands (756-0571 x 252).

2867-57 CAL
Berkeley, CA — Wed., noon, University of Calif., Berkeley, 750 Davis Hall (642-4021).

4075-57 Travis
Travis AFB, CA — Fri., noon, NCO Club, P.O. Box 1582 (437-2910). Sponsored by Napa 2024-57.

4078-57 Cutter
Berkeley, CA — Thurs., 11:45 a.m., Cutter Laboratories, 4th & Parker (420-5053).

4085-58 Foothills
Seneca, SC — Thurs., 7:30 p.m., Po Folks Restaurant, Hwy. 123 (882-1861). Sponsored by Anderson 1946-58.

4080-60 Trafalgar
Oakville, Ont., Can — Mon., 7:30 p.m., Oakville Centennial Library, 120 Navy St. (844-0906).

752-U Penang
Penang, Malaysia — Fri., 7:30 p.m., Conference Rm. B, Wisma Perse-Kutuan Northam Rd. (04 364097 or 04 22477).

1800-U Corregidor
Cavite City, Philippines — Tues., 7:30 p.m., New Chefoo Restaurant, P. Burgos Ave.

4084-U AGC
Davao City, Philippines — Sat., 5 p.m., Mezzanine Floor, Maguindanao Hotel, C.M. Recto St. (7-91-91; 7-91-81). Sponsored by Davao 3854-U.

4086-U Executive
Makati, Metro Manila, Philippines — Thurs., 7 p.m., The Manila Peninsula, Ayala Ave. (85-97-06/09).

4087-U Top of the World
Elmendorf AFB, AK — Tues., 7 p.m., Bldg. 2-900 (753-4381 or 752-4295). Sponsored by Great Land 3069-U.

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70. Peter Leney, ATM, 40 Womerah Ave., Darlinghurst, NSW, 2011, Australia
71. Andrew J. Ducker, 10 Fernhill Ct., Richmond Rd., Kingston-Thames, Surrey, England
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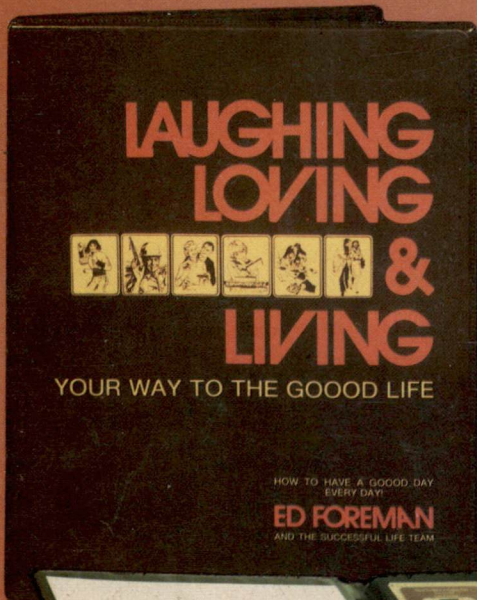
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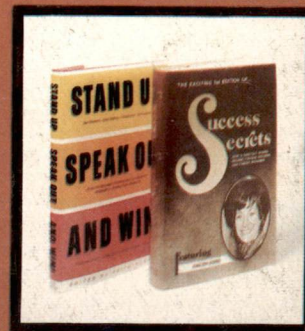
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