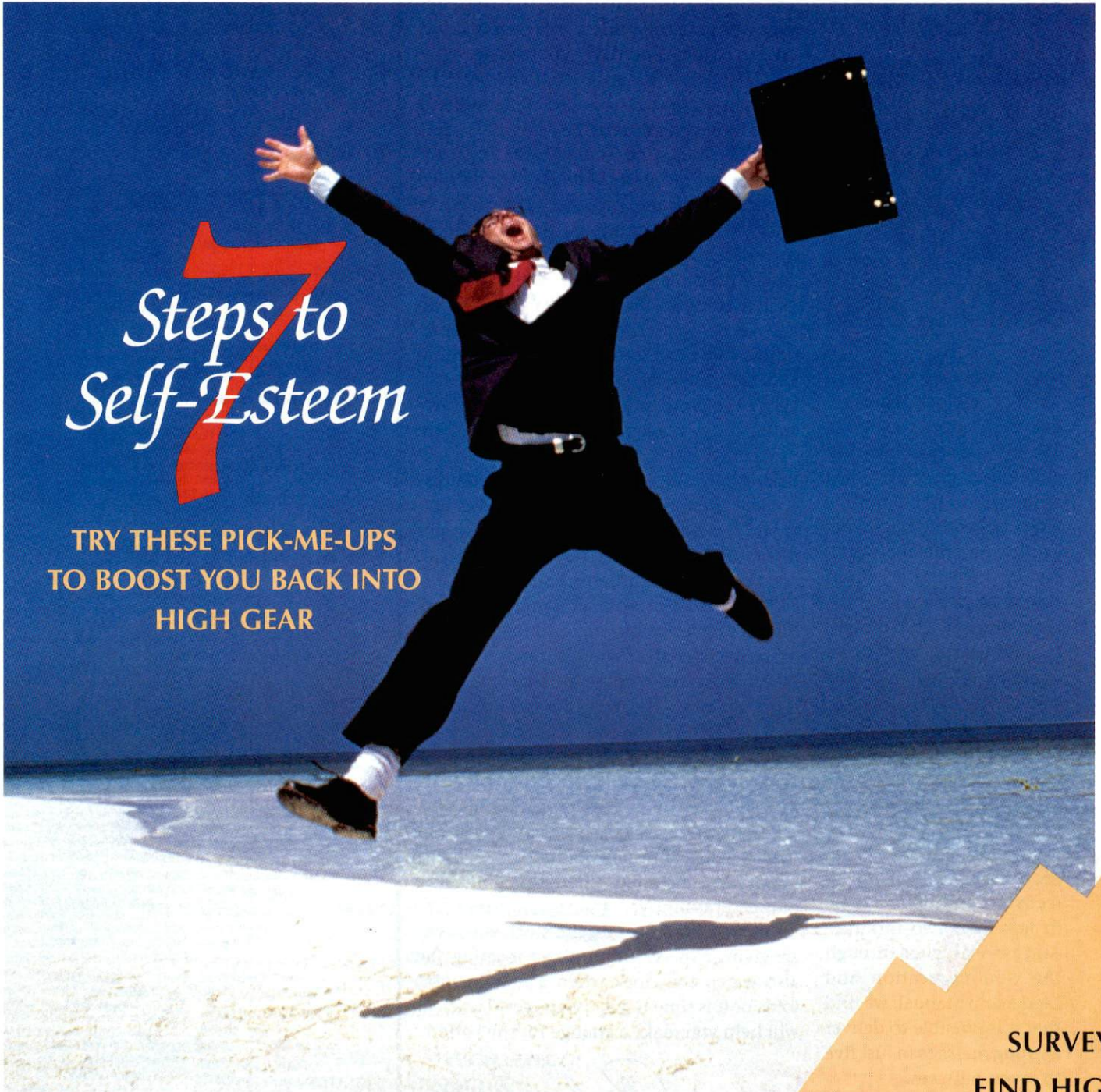


the Toastmaster

january 1995



7 Steps to Self-Esteem

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TO BOOST YOU BACK INTO
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FIND HIGH
LEVEL OF MEMBER
SATISFACTION**

The Clock on the Wall



We keep our eyes on the clock when we deliver speeches, respond to Table Topics and run our club meetings. But it is just as important to be on time when collecting dues, submitting new member applications, registering educational accomplishments, reporting new club officers or performing any other deadline-related administrative function.

Our Toastmasters membership offers us the opportunity to practice time management skills in many different ways. Perhaps the best example is Table Topics, where we learn to effectively respond to a topic in less than two minutes. And as we progress through the Communication and Leadership Manual, we find that it is possible to deliver a strong message in just five to seven minutes.

Thanks to my Toastmasters training, I received my first truly spontaneous standing ovation after de-

livering a speech that lasted less than a minute. It was at a luncheon meeting that was running extremely late and the audience was growing restless. We were still eating our lunch – and the keynote address had yet to be delivered. *My* keynote address!

Finally, I was introduced. The audience was now beyond restless. So I gave my speech in 30 seconds. The analogy was brief and topical. But more importantly, my message was delivered and received. The audience loved it! They appreciated that I had been considerate of their time. That experience taught me to keep my eyes on the clock.

The clock on the wall ticks just as loudly when it comes to taking care of the administrative functions in our clubs. New member applications must be sent in immediately. Why? The processing of that application generates the new member kit, *The Toastmaster* magazine, and it officially starts the clock ticking in the new member's learning process.

Education awards must be registered with World Headquarters as soon as all the requirements have been met. You, the member, do not receive the certificate of completion, nor can the letter of your accomplishment be mailed to your employer, until that happens. An unregistered accomplishment is like a speech delivered without an audience. There is no applause – the recognition is missing.

The clock on the wall also reminds us to renew our membership in a timely manner. Your club officers practice time (and money) management by collecting dues and sending semiannual reports before or by the due date. A sense of responsibility to each member is demonstrated when this process is handled promptly.

So keep your eyes on the clock when you are giving a speech or running a meeting. But also watch the clock when a new member joins or it is time to pay your dues. The clock will help you make a change for the better!

Pauline Shirley, DTM
International President

the Toastmaster

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Letters

FROSTING ON THE CAKE

The August issue contained some caustic comments by Gary Vezzoli about contests and contest judging. Having participated in some 23 contests during my 20 years in Toastmasters – winning some, losing some – I would like to make a few observations.

1) Judges are human and we may disagree with their decisions, but I have never met a Toastmaster judge who could be bought.

2) An International Speech Contest is a competition in which a person is allowed seven minutes to win the hearts and minds of the audience. This is a magnificent challenge. If the topic often centers around love, friendship, loyalty, family and patriotism, is this so wrong? These are eternal verities that have stirred the hearts of men and women since Homer's day. The challenge is to cast this message in a new light that the listener will remember and treasure, perhaps for a lifetime.

3) My advice to potential contestants has always been to pick a message that is meaningful, allows for humor-with-a-point, moves listeners because it is genuine, true and verifies their most heartfelt experience. If the speaker does that, he or she will have the inner satisfaction of having communicated. Receiving a trophy is frosting on the cake.

4) I once won a contest with a speech titled "A Pilgrimage to Dachau." The message was tolerance. More than 10 years after I gave it, a young lady came up to me

and recalled from memory the outline of the speech. That was the finest compliment I was ever paid, and worth all the hours I have ever spent in Dr. Smedley's – God bless him – contests.

Roy Fenstermaker, DTM
Dynamic Forcemasters Club 587-F
Santa Fe Springs, California

Editor's Note: Mr. Fenstermaker won the International Speech Contest in 1983.

WHY NOT TRY AGAIN?

I was both amused and saddened by Gary Vezzoli's comments concerning speech contests (August). The Toastmasters program is effective only when applied by persons desiring to improve themselves. After 70 years, trying to change the Toastmasters program to one well-meaning individual's whims is similar to charging windmills with a lance.

I surely hope Mr. Vezzoli begins to enjoy Toastmasters. I hope he tries and tries again to win speech contests. Every district speech contest winner I know has tried repeatedly before succeeding.

Hank Kunkel, DTM
Parker Club 519-F
Irvine, California

MORE ON SPEECHWRITING

I was surprised at the number and emotional depth of the responses in the August issue to Phil Theibert's May article, "Speechwriters of the World, Get Lost!" In my opinion, Theibert hit quite a few nails on the head.

The three main reasons I have seen speakers fail are: 1) their speaking techniques were bad, 2) they didn't understand what they were talk-

ing about, and 3) their lofty eloquence sailed right over their audience members' heads. While I don't agree with everything in Mr. Theibert's article, his point is excellent: that modern audiences have a short attention span, and we as speakers must speak to them.

Mr. Vezzoli's letter stating that the article "insults our intelligence by classifying us into the MTV genre" misses the point. Theibert is simply stating that most modern audiences are post-MTV and expect a fast pace.

Dr. Perlman's rebuttal article, "Speechwriters of the World, You're Needed!" (August), does his own cause more harm than good. His statement that it takes extensive training and practice to write a speech or even write coherently is an insult to his audience, all of whom are using Toastmasters to write and deliver speeches by doing. Few of us have formal training in speaking or speechwriting, yet quite a lot of us are pretty good at it anyway.

I applaud Toastmasters for having the guts to publish Mr. Theibert's article and the ensuing responses, and shake things up a bit!

Steven Needler, CTM
Rocky Flats Club, 2626-26
Golden, Colorado

GOTTA READ IT TO BELIEVE IT

I just received the latest issue of *The Toastmaster*. This publication is one of the best teaching tools we receive from Toastmasters International! The quality of the artwork, design and article content is unparalleled by any other

magazine. Every month I look in the Hall of Fame section for those receiving designations from our district. This gives me a sense of family – even though I may not know the award recipients personally, they are part of our district family.

This magazine is of such high standards that it would be worth the international dues just to receive it! That said, I'm concerned that too few people actually read the magazine. When I was club president, I always mentioned the magazine and showed articles that could benefit our members. Many people had not even opened theirs!

Stephen A. Coleman, CTM
State Farm Insurance Club 2409-63
Murfreesboro, Tennessee

SPEAKING OF MOSES...

I enjoyed the article "What If" (October) about how some great people in history might have benefitted from Toastmasters membership.

Research of facts is also important for a speaker and the audience. Therefore, I wish to point out that Moses was not kept from entering the Promised Land because he threw down the Ten Commandments, but rather because he struck the rock, instead of speaking to it. (Numbers 20:7-12 are the Bible verses that explain this.) Here is one instance in history that speaking really did make a big difference!

I look forward to more thought-provoking ideas from Janet Whitcomb.

R. Alan Bush, CTM
Haywood Club 7592-37
Canton, North Carolina



Speaking without preparation just might be the best learning experience of all.

by *Carla Goodman, CTM*

AT THE DROP OF A HAT, I'M READY!

■ AS A FIVE-YEAR VETERAN OF TOASTMASTERS, I enjoy the challenge of Table Topics: thinking quickly on my feet, sounding logical and remembering the all-important "word of the day." It's a part of the Toastmasters program that is fun, entertaining and filled with the unexpected. For me, it's the other type of impromptu speaking that spells P-A-N-I-C!

At a recent club meeting, I took a seat beside our President and casually scanned the speaking calendar for the coming month. Yes, I told myself, your next speech is in two weeks. Fine. Still plenty of time to prepare.

Then my eyes widened. I stared at my name on the day's meeting schedule. I was slated to give a 4-6 minute "speech craft": a talk on some aspect of researching, writing or delivering a speech. My breath quickened; I'd forgotten to check my Toastmasters mail earlier in the week.

This wasn't the time to plead a sudden emergency — one speaker had already canceled due to illness. My mind went completely blank. Nervously, I whispered my dilemma to our President. She smiled and asked with encouragement, "Can't you just wing it?"

My public speaking confidence vanished at the thought of standing before my club with an empty mind. I could see the disappointment in her face as I shook my head "no". My right hand reached for a pen and I began to think hard. As Nike says, "Just do it."

Saying "yes" to the request was an important learning experience and a turning point in my Toastmasters career. As Susan Jeffers says in her book, *Feel the Fear and Do It Any-*

way: "Every time you find yourself resisting what's happening at the present moment, recall the phrase, 'say yes to your universe.'"

I said "yes" and spoke for six minutes and 28 seconds. More than one club member affirmed, "That was your best speech ever." What happened? How did it all come together? I learned the following five things about speaking impromptu:

- ❖ **Choose the familiar.** Talk about a subject you know well or feel strongly about. When you have a personal rather than clinical interest in a subject, you'll be more at ease and your ideas will flow more naturally.
- ❖ **Keep it short and simple.** With a presentation of less than six minutes, there's only time to make a few key points — three or four at the most. With a short introduction and close, you have a complete speech.
- ❖ **Be positive.** Don't detract from the power of your remarks by apologizing or explaining your situation.
- ❖ **Ask for additional time.** If you are first on the program and need time to gather your thoughts, ask the Toastmaster if the schedule can be rearranged without interrupting the flow of the meeting.
- ❖ **Say "Yes!"** Welcome the opportunity. There's no better way to build your self-confidence than to "feel the fear and do it anyway." You'll soon discover that fear dissipates with action. As a result, you'll enjoy a great morale booster and will be encouraged to try other challenging speaking situations.

For example, I have often marveled at how chefs on television prepare wonderful dishes with great ease and steady conversation. I had visualized myself doing the same before a captive audience. Therefore, two weeks after my successful "speech craft" presentation, for my next manual speech I tied an apron around my waist, placed my kitchen utensils on the table, and gave my club members a step-by-step demonstration on how to prepare my favorite entree: a classic Caesar salad.

Impromptu speaking is one of the greatest challenges of public speaking. It's also one of the most rewarding. (Shortly after this experience, I was asked to serve as our club's President for a six-month term!)

Now I'm always ready to speak "at the drop of a hat." ①

Carla Goodman, CTM, is president of the Flying I Club 2134-39 and a professional business writer in Sacramento, California.



for the novice

Determining what's holding you back might help you to move forward.

■ What are the chances you will become the speaker of your dreams? What realistic steps have you taken to give yourself the best possible chance of achieving them? If goal setting is one of your steps, you are probably moving closer to realizing your dreams. However, even with set goals and the best of intentions, your dreams may remain just that: distant dreams.

Goal setting is an important exercise in attaining our long-term ambitions in Toast-

The following are four guidelines I've used to manage my fear of speaking. They are general, but can be tailored to fit your particular situation:

PERSONAL GUIDELINE #1: Strictly maintain all Toastmasters speaking engagements. Forego all excuses as to why a speech cannot be completed and maintain a consistent balance between quality and quantity.

This guideline is basic and provides the foundation for all my other goals. Simply put, I must speak in order to manage my fear of speaking; there are no quick fixes.

PERSONAL GUIDELINE #2: Accept your fear of public speaking. That's right – don't deny it or fight it! The more familiar you are with your fear, the more quickly you will be able to manage it.

If I am really going to give public speaking my fullest effort, then I must do so on all fronts – both physically (guideline #1) and emotionally (guideline #2). On the emotional level, this means I should not try to avoid the pain of public speaking. It requires me to fully accept the process of stretching my limits. I must create a new mindset of actively looking forward to the fear of speaking – no matter how intense the moment might be.

PERSONAL GUIDELINE #3: Maintain the correct focus. This involves learning what you can control and influence – and what you cannot.

When I began speaking in Toastmasters, I found myself worrying too much about what the audience thought of my performance. But the audience thought what they wanted to think. I should not have focused on factors I could not control – namely, the audience's opinion of me. Rather, my focus should have been on what I could directly control: my own ability to improve my speak-

Guidelines and Goals

by Scott Chapin, CTM

masters. The most effective leaders recognize it as an ongoing process and are constantly rewriting and updating their goals.

It has been my experience that goal setting is the easy part: It is one thing to set goals, but another to attain them. We all know what we want to accomplish when a goal is set. But how we go about accomplishing that goal is a different process altogether. How many of us have set personal goals, only to abandon them shortly thereafter?

Knowing the difference between *what* and *how* is important, especially when it deals with self-growth, a basic tenet of the Toastmasters program. For example, the ultimate goal of many Toastmasters is not necessarily to overcome the fear of speaking but rather to manage it effectively. This goal answers the question of *what* is going to be accomplished, but gives no clue as to *how* it can be accomplished.

ing skills. This distinction is important because it represents the difference between empowerment and lack of control.

PERSONAL GUIDELINE #4: Determine whether your fear of speaking is being influenced by factors other than standing up and speaking in front of the audience.

Are you toting around any "old baggage" that may be affecting your ability to speak? A personal issue – such as fear of rejection – may intensify the fear of speaking. Once this personal issue has been dealt with, conquering the fear of speaking may become a less onerous battle.

Here are some points you may wish to consider as you write your own personal guidelines:

Guidelines are actions you can do now in an effort to reach goals later. They are manageable and immediate steps. Most importantly, they should be realistic.

Just as leaders must reconsider and refocus, you may find a continual need to rewrite your goals. Be prepared to alter your guidelines to reflect these changes. Guidelines are not static; they are designed to have some flexibility. Also, notice that personal guidelines should provide direction. You don't want to be held back – you want to be pushed forward. Only write restrictive guidelines if they are absolutely necessary for attaining your goals.

Personal guidelines are analogous to personal mission statements: They force you to think seriously about your current position relative to your personal issues. Notice if you are shying away from some guidelines or if you think some just aren't important enough to write down. This may be an indication that these particular guidelines are absolutely necessary for your success.

So if you feel unmotivated, try setting some personal guidelines. Ask yourself these

questions: What are the chances I will become the speaker of my dreams? What realistic steps have I taken to give myself the best possible chances to achieve them? Remember, your guidelines will tell you what you have to do *now* to attain your goals later. Through them you will find direction and empowerment. ①

Scott Chapin, CTM, is a member of University Club 1499-35 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

"I must speak in order to manage my fear of speaking; there are no quick fixes."

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by Victor M. Parachin

Seven Steps to Self-



8

Julio Iglesias was a professional soccer player in Spain when an automobile accident ended his sports career. The car crash left Iglesias paralyzed from the waist down. He spent nearly two years in a hospital, unable to move his legs.

While Iglesias was recuperating, a compassionate nurse gave him a guitar to keep him occupied and lift his spirits. Prior to that time he had never had any musical aspirations. Well, Iglesias not only managed to regain the ability to walk, but he has gone on to become one of the most popular entertainers in the world. His albums have sold hundreds of millions of copies.

Have you ever wondered how an individual can experience a devastating loss, conquer it and then emerge even more triumphant?

PHOTOGRAPHY: PAUL STEEL

Esteem

Feeling down? Try these pick-me-ups to boost you back into high gear.

According to psychologists, a major factor has to do with an individual's self-esteem – that combination of self-confidence and self-respect that empowers a person to keep moving forward and upward. Judith Briles, Ph.D., author of *How Self-Esteem Can Change Your Life*, says self-esteem “permeates everything. It affects your relationships with friends, with those at work, with a spouse; it affects your ability as a parent.”

Psychologists also offer reassurance that low self-esteem does not need to be a permanent condition. Anyone can increase and improve their self-esteem. Here are seven ways to strengthen your self-esteem:

1. Make the most of yourself. Too many people put themselves down and dwell primarily on the negative aspects of their lives. The first step in building stronger self-esteem is to stop kicking yourself and start to harness the true potential within.

An example of this is Ruth, a 29-year-old director of public relations for the largest company in her field. She has been promoted more rapidly than most of the other men and women in her company who have more experience. Her secret: “Rather than berate myself for my inadequacies, I have always tried to maximize my strengths and minimize my weaknesses.”

2. Take risks. There is nothing quite like accepting a new challenge and conquering it. A good approach is to tackle a project you have been hesitant about doing: go back to school and earn the college degree you've always wanted, take singing lessons, go on that overseas trip.

Susan Schenkel, author of *Giving Away Success*, explains: “Taking action helps to restore a perception of control and to lessen the sense of helplessness. The feelings of success generated by even a seemingly trivial accomplishment can inspire optimism and a desire to carry on.”

3. Be optimistic. Actress Lucille Ball once shared her philosophy for success: “One of the things I learned the hard way was that it doesn't pay to get discouraged. Keeping busy and making optimism a way of life can restore your faith in yourself.”

Psychologist Cherie Carter Scott says many people are actually “negaholics,” individuals who limit their own abilities by consistently thinking negatively about themselves. In her book, *Negaholics*, she offers this advice: “Think positive. When you find yourself on the brink of a negattack – e.g., ready to berate yourself for an error you've made – murmur a ‘pet phrase’ that has a positive message for you. Some examples are: ‘You only learn from making mistakes’ or ‘You have the power to choose.’”

4. Turn negatives into positives. There is wisdom in this Eastern saying: “When life throws a dagger at you there are only two ways to catch it: either by the blade or by the handle.” The lesson is this: If the dagger is caught by the blade it can cut, wound and even destroy the person. However, if the dagger is caught by the handle it can be used to fight and win a victory.

Life brings setbacks to every person. The key is to transform pain into gain and hurt into healing. A good example is actor Dana Elcar, who co-starred in the television series “MacGyver.” Glaucoma, a serious eye disease, is robbing him of his sight. He has taken this tragedy and turned it into a personal triumph by having the producers of “MacGyver” write his plight into a stirring TV plot. Elcar did this in order to increase public awareness of glaucoma, thereby helping the 2.5 million Americans affected by it.

5. Avoid judging others. Barb, a 31-year-old woman, sought help from a counselor because, she said, “I have no friends.” In the privacy of her therapist's office, she further confided: “Every time I get close to someone they begin to back off and drop out of my life.” When the counselor asked Barb to repeat some of the conversations she had with potential friends, it became clear that almost 90 percent of her comments about other people were negative – either putdowns, complaints, accusations or harsh judgments.

The therapist helped her to see that such a judgmental attitude came from low self-esteem: She tried to cover up her own flaws and weaknesses by criticizing other people. Through counseling Barb learned how to see the good in

“Have you ever wondered how an individual can experience a devastating loss, conquer it and then emerge even more triumphant?”

others and to publicly affirm their virtues. And by viewing others more positively, Barb found herself better able to make and keep lasting friendships.

6. Seek enriching relationships. The people with whom we associate affect how we think and feel about ourselves. Developing strong self-esteem means connecting with women and men who are affirming of our gifts and talents. Alexandra Stoddard, a well-known interior designer and the author of nine books, says a large part of her success was derived from her ability to surround herself with people who were good role models.

"Ever since I can remember, I've looked up to and learned from older people," she says. "A sensitive art teacher opened doors that allowed me to pursue a career in design. Think about people you admire, study how they do things and see whether you can adopt some of their habits."

7. Forgive yourself. Everyone experiences failure. Even though this is true, many who experience failure berate themselves harshly. That emotional response only leads to

a downward spiral and accomplishes nothing good. People need to practice self-forgiveness.

Take singer Billy Joel, for example. While in his early twenties his musical career was at a stand-still. He says, "I wasn't doing well as a musician, my girl had run out, I'd had this succession of lousy jobs... so I popped a bunch of pills. It didn't work, so I tried again by swallowing furniture polish."

Fortunately, Joel recovered and sought professional help to deal with his depression. An important aspect of Joel's success has been his ability to practice forgiving himself. "I've learned that you have got to forgive yourself at times and grow from failure instead of letting it destroy you."

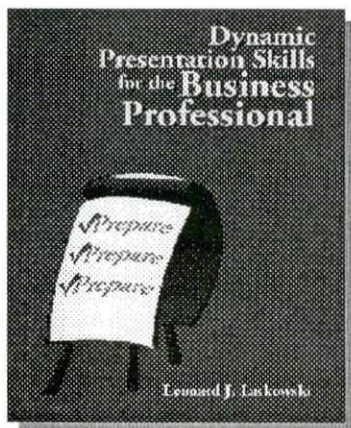
"I've learned that you have got to forgive yourself at times and grow from failure instead of letting it destroy you."

Remember, low self-esteem isn't a permanent condition. Try these steps to improve your self-esteem. Most likely, they will empower you to be a happier, more loving person, increase your chances for success and lead to greater fulfillment in life. **T**

Victor M. Parachin is a freelance writer and frequent contributor to *The Toastmaster*.

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by Patrick Mott

■ WE SEEM TO BE IN THE TROUGH OF one of those eras when pessimism presents itself as a very easy, and even attractive, option. Heck, we think, why be a Pollyanna when the interest rate on our credit cards borders on usury and the letters O.J. no longer are used to refer to orange juice?

OK, agreed, life as we know it these days could use some improving. And it'll happen. It always does. In the meantime, we could use a road map. Here's one some friends and I thought up over old wine and new spring weather:

1. **Read.** Turn off the TV – the comedy is mostly awful, the drama is mostly depressing. Curl up with a good book and allow your brain to do a few push-ups. Get out that old required reading list and dive in.

2. **Listen to good music.** And really listen. This means that you'll want to shoot a little higher than rap. One university study found that listening to Mozart temporarily raised the IQ.

3. **Eat well.** Not sprouts and tofu. Real food. Learn a few cooking basics and you'll wonder why you didn't like broccoli before. Do it sensibly, but don't be a fanatic. Hand-cranked peach ice cream is a birthright.

4. **Get out of town** – even for just a few days. New perspectives, new views, new people. Leave the alarm clock at home. Remember that there's no problem so big or so horrible that it can't be run away from – at least temporarily.

5. **Be a nice guy.** This is just another way of telling you to consider the other person, always. Nice guys finish last, you say? See you in the cardiac ward.

6. **Forgive.** First cousin to No. 5, but worthy of separate mention. The alternative is holding a grudge, which, as far as you're concerned, might well be a live hand grenade. Give people a break. They just might reciprocate when *you* screw up.

7. **Develop a long view.** A really long one. The acid test: Will you care about, or even remember, the rotten thing that happened to you today when a year has passed? Yes? How about 10 years? You're probably going to live for quite a while, so remember Golden Rule No. 2, the one about not sweating the small stuff. And remember its corollary: it's all small stuff.

8. **Render to Caesar.** Live within your means. Pay your bills. Save a little, if you can. Solvency is freedom, and a good night's sleep.

9. **Render to God.** Forget the inner person at your peril. We're not just skin and bones and bank book. We are more than what our resumes say we are. Remembering that gives us perspective, even peace. Not religious? Look to philosophy, or friendship, or family. Inspiration is everywhere.

10. **Study.** Anything. And everything. We're incredibly complex beings, with an astonishingly huge brain capacity. We'll never come close to cramming it full. So why be content to be good at one thing? Be an intellectual sponge. You were made for it. The warranty is still good.

11. **Don't be afraid.** The easiest thing to say, the hardest thing to do, in a world where nothing is certain. Yes, there is a lot out there to be worried about: our jobs, our safety, our families, our futures, the unknown. But all these things will exist whether we worry about them or not. Trust. Unless you're a truly hideous crook, the universe is working for you, not against you.

Easy, right? But what the heck, give it a shot. Like they say, the situation is hopeless. But it's not serious. **1**

Patrick Mott is a freelance writer living in Santa Ana, California.

Rules to Live By

11)

We are more than what our resumés say we are.



■ A SKILLFUL TOASTMASTER LEADING A dynamic meeting may have tons of confidence and years of experience behind him. But in front of him: an agenda.

At the time I joined my club, preparing a customized agenda or program for meetings simply wasn't done. The only person who even vaguely knew what was going on was the Toastmaster of the meeting, since a blank formatted agenda was photocopied and placed at the lectern.

ing. After all, it is the Toastmaster who knows about last-minute scheduling changes, and because the duty changes weekly, the club will be treated to a variety of layouts and designs.

Though any agenda is helpful, some work better than others. First and foremost, agendas should lessen confusion, not add to it. As President, I open every meeting, and trust that the agenda will guide

What's on the AGENDA?

12

by Linda Pescatore, CTM

Not surprisingly, my first time as Toastmaster went pretty badly. I had no idea what I was doing since I wasn't familiar enough with the flow of the meetings. So I vowed that the second time would be better. And it was. Why? Because I decided to produce an agenda for both myself and my audience. Taking the time to plan and type the entire program from scratch, minute by minute, helped me really understand the procedure. And despite my club's tendency to go overtime, that meeting stayed right on schedule.

Luckily, my idea caught on. The agendas helped both members and guests follow the action. General evaluations began to include suggestions about distributing agendas. Now, two years later, it is absolutely expected that our Toastmaster will provide members with a printed agenda at each meeting. If your club doesn't already use agendas, I highly recommend introducing them at your next meeting.

KEEP IT CLEAR AND CONCISE

Although some clubs charge the Vice President Education with producing the agendas, the most logical choice is to give the responsibility to the Toastmaster of the meet-

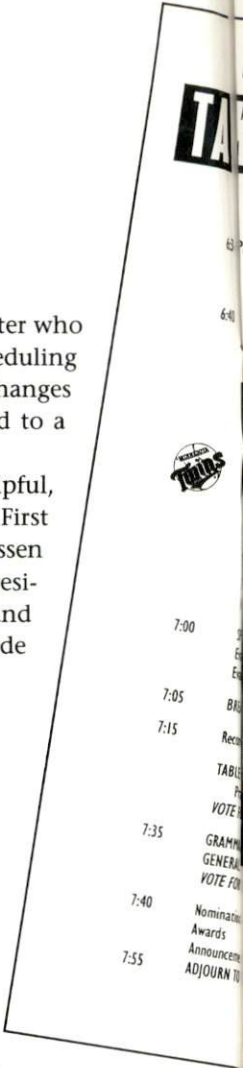
ing, especially if I should "go blank." If necessary information isn't there, problems arise. One agenda, for example, didn't mention introductions. The Toastmaster assumed that I'd remember them, but I didn't. Another time, the Toastmaster thought that putting her own name on the agenda would seem egotistical. Unsure, I proceeded to introduce the wrong person as Toastmaster. And then one Toastmaster, after taking the time to collect three rounds of ballots, never gave out the awards. He forgot because it wasn't on the agenda. So don't clutter your agenda with too much information, but do concisely mention everything that needs to be done.

A helpful tip for the Toastmaster: While at the lectern, check off or highlight each activity as you progress through the meeting. That will make it easy for you to keep your place and prevent you from skipping over anything.

START FROM SCRATCH

To create an agenda, many members prefer filling in a standard blank form and photocopying it. However, I don't recommend

If your destination is a successful meeting, insist on a scripted program as your road map.



Pacific Beach Toastmasters... The Club That Makes Waves TAKE ME OUT TO THE BALL GAME!

May 10, 1994

6:30 CALL TO ORDER
Pledge of Allegiance, Thought for the Day
Introductions: President: Linda Pescatore, CTM
Richard Alan
Your name & the baseball team you root for
Linda Pescatore

6:40 TOASTMASTER
Overview of Program; Introduce Functionaries.
General Evaluator: Imelda Pearce
Timer: Bill Pearce
Grammarian & Word of the Day: Shana Glasheen

PREPARED SPEECHES
Speech #1: "WHAT IS ISO?" Steve Walczak
3rd Manual Speech: Organize Your Thoughts. 5-7 minutes
Minute of Silence—Write Brief Comments to Steve.

Speech #2: "IN THE HOT SEAT: How to be interviewed without getting burned" Trish Brown
9th Manual Speech: Speak With Knowledge. 6-1/2 to 7-1/2 minutes.
Minute of Silence—Write Brief Comments to Trish.

SPRUCH EVALUATIONS
Evaluator #1 (for Steve's speech): Bill George
Evaluator #2 (for Trish's speech): Vic Patterson

BREAK 10 minutes
Snacks Courtesy of Richard
Linda Pescatore

BLEND PICS
Prize Impromptu Speaking: Faith Campbell
THE FINEST TABLE TOPICS: Guests invited but not required to participate.

MEMBER'S REPORT
GENERAL EVALUATION: Shana Glasheen
FOR BEST EVALUATOR: Imelda Pearce

Introduction Spark Plug, Whitewash; Solicit Guests' Comments.

TOAST-TOASTIES!



using a standard agenda because it leaves no room for adjustment; the timetable is already set. Advanced manual speeches, special programming, and other out of the ordinary events don't lend themselves to a preplanned format. And because they are so quick and easy to fill in, standard forms don't help you get to know the program as well as if you were to begin at square one.

Square one is making your phone calls as Toastmaster and confirming all functionaries. Get speech titles, manual assignments, and lengths of presentations. All of this should be listed on the agenda to help generate interest and prevent any timing blunders. The timing of the speeches will determine much of the rest of the schedule. With a pencil or your word processor, first list every activity that will take place, including the minute of silence for voting after each speech and the actual vote taking. Assume all presenters will use at least their maxi-

mum allotted time. It should also be clear who has control of the lectern at any given time.

Once you're done scheduling, design a clear, simple layout, keeping plenty of white space on the page. Be sure to highlight the main portions of the program with larger type or bold print. Avoid handwritten agendas, unless you have no other choice and your handwriting is very neat. Make more copies than you'll need, and place one at each seat *before* the meeting begins.

STRIKE A CREATIVE CHORD

In my club, all our meetings have themes. A nice touch is to customize the agendas with graphics specifically chosen for each theme. It needn't be a lot of trouble. For example, when the theme is Earth Day, add circles, make squiggles inside with blue pen, and you've got colorful globes. For a recent baseball theme, I decorated the white space with small team logos clipped from advertisements. Other agendas have been embellished with rubber art stamps or computerized clip art. You can also use colored paper for your copies.

Creative agendas do take a bit more time, but they also attract attention and are more likely to be read. Plain, boring agendas are often overlooked, wasting time, energy and money.

Top-notch agendas attract new members, too. A guest recently commented that the first thing that impressed her about our club meeting was the agenda. She liked the design and was glad to see that we took our meetings seriously enough to put such a nice agenda together. She said that like the agenda, the meeting had been well-organized, as well as fun and creative – and added that she'd like to join the club.

Following a well-planned agenda always makes for a much better meeting. How can you go wrong with a helper to prompt the Toastmaster with what to say and when to say it? **1**

Linda Pescatore, CTM, is a member of Pacific Beach Club 54-5 in San Diego, California.

“Creative agendas do take a bit more time, but they also attract attention and are more likely to be read.”

PASSING

the

BATON

Who's next? Graceful endings set the stage for smooth beginnings.

In considering teamwork and coordination, no analogy is as appropriate as that of a relay race during a track meet. Each team has four members, and each member runs one lap. The next member starts running only after the preceding member passes a baton. Without that baton, the new runner cannot start. On the rare occasion the baton is dropped, the runner has to stop, turn back, pick up the baton and begin running again. Poor teamwork. But with the best relay teams, one runner hands off to the other while both are running, and not a single stride is lost.

Toastmasters requires teamwork as well. A club doesn't succeed solely on the basis of having a great President or Vice President Education. It succeeds because each member of the club is like a member of the team. We all contribute.

During any given club meeting, there are times when one speaker has contact with another speaker. That is when the first speaker ends his or her speech and allows the next person to speak. Transitions such as these can be handled smoothly, like a baton being passed in full stride, or they can be flubbed. Most of us joined our clubs in part to improve our ability to make presentations in public. And an integral part of that is being able to make the handoff from one club member to another. How can that handoff be made smoother?

We begin our speech (be it a Table Topic, prepared speech or an evaluation) with some sort of salutation: "Mr. Toastmaster, Fellow Toastmasters and Guests" is typical. That's fine. But as we conclude our presentation, we need to send a signal to the next person, whomever that might be. This is where most novice speakers – and some veterans, too – encounter difficulties.

The question is: How should you end your presentation? Or, better yet, how should you *not* end your presentation?

Most public speakers advise against concluding

your remarks with "Thank you." It's just not a strong ending – it sounds as if you want to slink back into your chair. And, as some Toastmasters have pointed out, the audience should be thanking the speaker – not vice versa.

Another way *not* to end your remarks is to just stop. The abruptness doesn't clue the audience in to the fact that your speech is over. It's awkward.

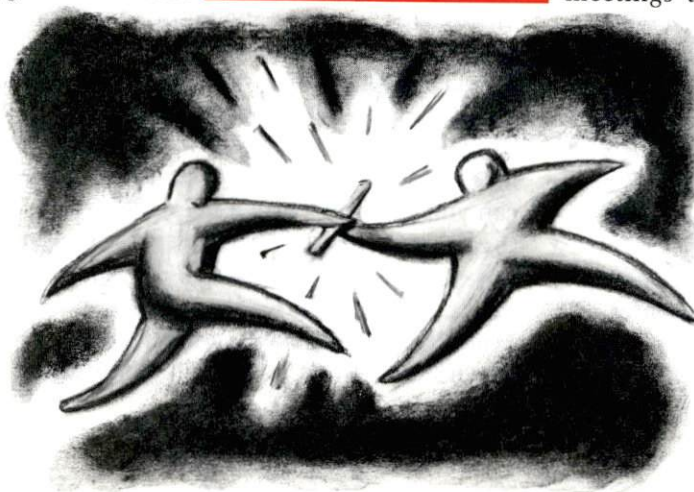
There are better ways of passing the baton. At the end of a presentation, for example, pause for a second, then say, "Madame Table Topicmaster." By doing so, you are clearly telling the next speaker that she is back in charge. Body language helps, too: As you stand at the lectern, in addition to your words you should turn, shake the hand of the person back in charge, then quickly move away and be seated.

Another method is one suggested by Patrick Panfile, former International President: When you're in charge of a major meeting role – Table Topicmaster, Chief Evaluator or presiding Toastmaster – and your portion of the meeting has ended, you need to say something more than just "Mr. Toastmaster." But choose your words carefully. If you say, "I will now turn over the lectern to the Toastmaster," some people may take it literally: Are you really going to overturn the lectern? Instead, say something along these lines: "I now return control of the lectern to the Toastmaster."

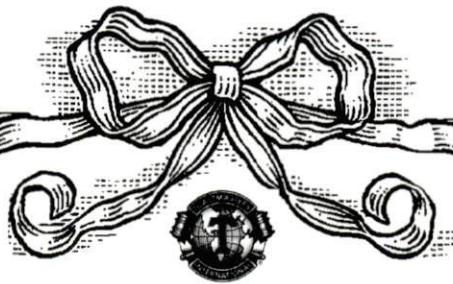
Why should we be so concerned with transitions?

Because of teamwork. We all want our meetings to run smoothly, so we want the various parts of the program to be in sync. Just as the baton in a relay race shouldn't be dropped, we need to take every precaution to ensure smooth transitions between speakers during club meetings. ①

Gary Muldoon, CTM, is a member of Postprandial Club 3259-65 in Rochester, New York.



by Gary Muldoon, CTM



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From Concept

by Patrick Shanahan, ATM

(16)



to

CONCRETE:

A Practical Guide to Speech Development

It must be a dream. More like a true Toastmasters nightmare. While reading your club newsletter, you discover that you're scheduled to speak at next week's meeting. You break into a cold sweat as the awful realization sets in: You don't have a speech! What's worse, you don't even have any *ideas* for a speech. The week speeds by as you search your manual to find an assignment, struggle to come up with ideas, and slap together the bare bones of a speech.

Soon meeting night arrives and you are standing behind the lectern with only a fuzzy idea of what you want to say and a few vague notes scrawled on a piece of paper. Your knees begin to shake as the audience looks to you with anticipation, waiting for a dynamite speech. But you know better. You are unprepared. Voice quavering, you begin, "Thank you Mister Toastmaster..."

Suddenly the buzz of your alarm clock slices through the fog with merciful harshness and rescues you. It *was* a dream!

But for many Toastmasters each week, this is a reality. At one time or another, we have all felt the panic of having no ideas for a speech. And we have all struggled to put together a speech which, while meeting manual requirements, seems to meander from point to point with no coherence and then ends abruptly. I have seen Toastmasters so paralyzed at the prospect of developing a speech that they repeatedly postpone scheduled appearances and eventually become inactive members. It doesn't have to be that way.

There is a simple, five-step process for developing speeches that all Toastmasters can use to eliminate many of these frustrations and open the door to consistently well-organized and well-prepared presentations.

STEP #1: *The Idea*

Let's face it, if you don't have an idea, you don't have a speech. Nothing can destroy your morale more quickly than having "speech writer's block" – the awful circumstance of being completely unable to come up with a speech topic. What causes this to happen and how can you change it?

The root of most people's difficulty in coming up with speech ideas is that they think too big. After all, it is only natural to think that speech ideas ought to be big, important concepts, and if you can think of lots of big ideas, that's great. The trouble is that most of us cannot consistently come up with earthshaking themes. So we strain and strain, then come up empty and become discouraged. In the meantime we ignore all the perfectly good little ideas all around us.

Remember that newscast that made you angry? That could be a potential speech idea. That article you found so interesting? Also a potential speech idea. What about the comment at work that made you shake your head in amazement? You get my drift. Some of the best speeches are based on ideas that initially may have seemed trivial. Your every-

day life, your job, your hobbies, your family life, books and television programs are all simply bursting with ideas.

And no idea is too trivial. If it is interesting enough to discuss with your spouse at the breakfast table or with co-workers on a coffee break, it could potentially be a speech topic.

The trouble with these everyday ideas is that they don't stick around for long. So you have to capture them. The best way to do this is to maintain a running "idea list." When a thought or event strikes you as interesting and worthy of discussion, write it down on your list. Review the list periodically. If you find that some of the ideas aren't as neat as you first thought, simply cross them out – others will come. At least once a month you should choose the best idea on the list and harvest it for further development.

STEP #2: *The Central Theme*

It is tempting to jump from your raw idea to a full-blown speech. But if you do, you risk producing a speech that is disorganized, rambling and may not communicate your message effectively. In order to stay on track as you develop the speech, you need to take your ideas and build a "central theme" to guide you.

A central theme is a broad, one or two-sentence description of what you want the audience to learn from your speech. None of us can instantly form a speech completely in our heads. We usually develop it over a period of time. Without a guideline to keep us focused on the speech's main theme, it is easy to get sidetracked with unnecessary details. This can create inconsistencies in what we tell our audience, and the speech comes across as contradictory or just plain unorganized.

STEP #3: *The Broad Outline*

After establishing the central theme of your speech, the next step is to create an outline showing the introduction, the two or three basic points of the body, and the conclusion. This is an important step. If you bypass the outline and simply write the speech, it will be a lot harder to figure out if you are sticking with your theme, and a lot trickier to back up and revise parts of the speech later on. If you have a simple central theme, you will be able to quickly determine if your outline supports the theme.

Don't worry about detail at this point. All you want is one or two phrases describing the content and/or approach for each part of the speech. If you concentrate on creating a simple, broad outline that is balanced and supports your central theme, then you will have completed the most difficult part of your speech development.

If you spot some aspect of the outline that doesn't support your theme, restructure the speech before investing any more time on it.

STEP #4: *Filling In the Details*

You may notice that, up to this point, you have not written down any specific details of the speech. This is because concentrating on details right away causes us to lose direction and end up with a mass of detail rather than a focused speech.

Once the outline is completed, you will want to take each section of the outline and fill in the details for that section. At this point, you know the outline supports your central theme, so if you ensure that the details support the outline, you will begin to see a coherent speech emerge.

A good way to stay on track as you go through this process is to ask yourself questions along the way. Look at each section of the outline and ask yourself: What is it about this part of the speech that is important to supporting my central theme? The answers to that question will help you fill in the details.

It is important to note that many people don't necessarily commit this stage of the development process to paper. Some people are more comfortable with simply looking at each piece of the outline and kicking ideas around in their heads; others are more comfortable writing it all down. But either way, after several rounds of discarding some details and adding or embellishing others, the speech will start to feel "right" or "firm." When you get this feeling stop! Trust your instincts.

STEP #5: *Rehearse and Revise*

If you have followed the steps listed above, you now should have a reasonably well-developed and coherent speech. As you begin to rehearse, focus in on several specific areas:

■ **Manual Objectives.** While developing your central theme, you should have broad manual categories and ob-

jectives in mind: Would this be a good "speech to inform"? How about a story or a humorous speech? But don't "build" the speech around the specific manual assignment. You should concentrate first on creating a good speech. Then, when you are at the point of rehearsal and revision, compare your speech to the manual objectives. What can you add or change to better meet the manual objectives? Will the delivery help or hinder your manual assignment?

"Some of the best speeches are based on ideas that initially may have seemed trivial."

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■ **Length.** How does the speech at this point stack up against the manual speech requirements of length? Remember, most people will rehearse a speech more quickly than they will give it in front of an audience. If you find your

speech too long, this is the time to review and cut anything that doesn't directly support the central theme. One of the benefits of using this method of speech development is that you can edit out details without injuring the basic speech structure.

■ **Balance and Proportion.** As you rehearse, think about the balance of the different areas of your speech. Do you have enough background in relation to detail? Too much? Are you spending so much time in one area that you have to rush through another? This is your chance to add a little here and trim a little there, until you feel comfortable.

■ **Sequence.** As you rehearse your speech, consider sequence. If you find yourself building to a point and then seemingly switching gears to a different subject, you may have a sequence problem. Remember, you want to order your points in such a way that the information flows naturally, leading the audience comfortably toward your conclusion.

18



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■ **Continuity.** One of the dangers of creating a speech based on an outline is that there may be a lack of smoothness between major points. As you go over the speech, evaluate the transitions between its parts. Are they too abrupt? Do you seem to be “jumping” into new subjects? Is it difficult to see the connection between parts?

This is your opportunity to make sure you have built “bridges” from one part of the speech to another. Continuity is tied to sequence. If your speech has a good sequence, the different parts will almost seem to flow from one another. If they don’t, go back and review them. Ask yourself: What do these two parts of the speech have in common? How do they both support my theme? Then try to add a little “bridgework” to connect the pieces.

■ **Opening and Conclusion.** Until this point, we have concentrated on the body of the speech. But the opening and closing are two of the most important pieces of the puzzle. This is the time to hone them. You should have a well-formed speech with a clear central theme. Now you can refine your opening and conclusion to fit that theme.

- ❖ All openings should be attention-getters, but they can have many purposes. Decide which purpose best suits your theme. Do you want to set a mood? (This is effective in storytelling.) Do you wish to establish rapport with the audience? Do you wish to establish authority? Do you wish to “sell” your speech subject?

- ❖ A good conclusion will recap the high points of the speech and present a wrap-up statement (preferably memorable) or a call to action. In most cases, your conclusion should closely resemble the central theme.
- ❖ The end of the speech should be an obvious end. *Never say:* “In conclusion” unless you are really right at the end. Make your ending statement strong, direct, tidy.

IN CONCLUSION...

If you use this development approach you can easily review the content and structure of your speech. As long as you always make sure that the speech fits the central theme and outline, you can make many changes and enhancements without danger of frittering away the good parts.

As good Toastmasters, we owe it to ourselves and our clubs to be prepared to speak not just when we are on the schedule, but any time a speaker is needed. Those members who always seem to have a speech “in their pocket” are the envy of every club. You can be one of those people! If you follow this process and have a speech outlined, you can give that speech on an “impromptu” basis and have it come across as coherent and organized.

Wouldn’t that be nicer than the shaky knees and sweaty palms of being caught unprepared? **1**

Patrick Shanahan, ATM, is a member of Central Club 2277-31 in Worcester, Massachusetts.



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NEW PSAs LEAVE ACTORS



(20

Speechless

Most Toastmasters can vividly recall their first time at a lectern: heart racing, throat dry and composure overtaken by terror. The memory of the ordeal is so indelible, in fact, that it is almost as if it had been caught on video tape. And now it has! Not your particular experience, of course, but the typical anxiety associated with lacking the confidence and know-how to effectively communicate a message to an audience.

Two new public service announcements focusing on the fear of public speaking will be available this month to members looking for innovative ways to promote the benefits of Toastmasters training in their community. The 30-second spots are the brainchild of advertising executive and Toastmaster Kevin Carroll. Using his creative talent and professional expertise, Carroll brought together enthusiastic friends and colleagues last July to collaborate on the project, resulting in the production of these entertaining and informative PSAs.

A year earlier, Carroll had been prompted by fellow members of the Greater Stamford Toastmasters Club 865-53 in Stamford, Connecticut, to use his marketing background and write a PSA for a local cablevision station. While this initial effort met the club's immediate public relations needs, Carroll was not satisfied with the low-budget production and decided to redo it – in his words – “the right way.”

So he approached creative co-workers at his advertising agency, writer Frank Izzo and art director Greg Daly, who came up with the idea of doing two humorous commercials depicting the overwhelming nervousness that all beginning speakers experience. Rough ideas in hand, the team then sought the help of director and cinematographer Dennis Peters who was looking for interesting new projects to showcase his talents. Peters agreed that the project was worthwhile and volunteered his professional services.

The team fine-tuned their ideas and came up with scripts for both commercials. One would show a speaker trying to tell a joke at a convention and bombing miserably. The other would feature an apprehensive presenter who, when called to the lectern, is so terrified that he imagines himself being led off to be executed.

Once the scripts were finalized, the crew turned their attention to arranging for a set, talent and props. At this stage, producer Trish McKeon volunteered her talents and began the task of coordinating the production of the commercials.

From there, the pieces quickly began to fall into place. Two actors were cast to play the main characters. The first, Dave Coughlin, was selected for his ability to improvise bad joke telling. The second, Mark Elliot, was chosen for

which responds with uncomfortable silence. The actor's performance was so funny that the entire crew spontaneously broke out in laughter several times, forcing some of the scenes to be refilmed!

The second commercial, "Execution," opens with an emcee announcing the speaker. The camera quickly zooms in on the terrorized "victim," then cuts to the microphone, looming ominously in front of him like an electric chair. The speaker lapses into a brief dream sequence in which he imagines being led to the microphone by a prison guard and a priest. At the end of the commercial he arrives at the lectern, grabs it with white knuckles and begins to shake so violently that the lectern rattles and the microphone falls over.

Once filming was complete, the editing process began. With the help of film editor Randy Snitz of The Big Picture Inc. in New York City, the team went to work. This was perhaps the most difficult phase of the project: capturing all the humor and entertainment of a day's shooting in two 30-second commercials. Another important consideration was to drive home the idea that Toastmasters can help people improve their speaking skills so that they will never have to experience the embarrassment portrayed in the commercials. Toward that end, both commercials end with the message: "Trouble speaking in public? For help, call Toastmasters. The public speaking support group."

As a result of the hard work and innovation of Toastmaster Carroll and his crew, apprehensive public speakers around the world may soon discover how Toastmasters International can help them overcome their fears and reach for success. 21



his comical facial expressions of fear. Soon after, a location for the filming was found: an auditorium on the campus of Quinnipiac College in Hamden, Connecticut. As a result of brilliant liaison work by Bill Burns (who also plays the prison guard in one commercial), the college agreed to free use of its facility since the project was for a non-profit organization.

After painstaking preparation on the part of the director and crew, the day of filming arrived. A group of volunteers showed up early that morning. Extras, including many friends and family members (even the director's mother), gathered for their moment of stardom.

Then the lights went down and the director began to shoot. In the first commercial, "Bad Speech," a poorly prepared speaker approaches the lectern and taps the mike nervously, causing feedback. He attempts to open his presentation with a joke about a farmer, a doctor and a chicken, but can't get it right. Becoming more and more visibly shaken, he begins stammering, sweating, and finally knocking over the mike and staring dumbly at the audience,

Publisher's note: Public service announcements are an effective way to promote your club in the community and reach prospective members. To order your copy of all four PSAs (Catalog No. 1144), call World Headquarters' Order Department at (714) 858-8255. Before doing so, you may wish to check with broadcasting stations in your area for public service guidelines and policies, as well as specific video requirements such as preferred tape size. The PSAs are available on 3/4" video cassette, Beta-SP, VHS (U.S. and Canada) and PAL (countries outside North America).

2 Additional PSAs Showcase Top Speakers

■ While the humorous PSAs take a lighter look at the effects of poor speechmaking, two additional television commercials demonstrate the impact of effective communication.

Using two different appeals, these PSAs emphasize the importance of a strong presentation. The first features 1994 Golden Gavel recipient Les Brown, a professional speaker

and seminar leader, and the second shows 1993-94 International President Neil Wilkinson, a successful Canadian businessman.

Displaying the poise and confidence characteristic of seasoned speakers, Brown and Wilkinson talk about the benefits of the Toastmasters program and invite viewers to visit a club.

Reach Out to your Audience



Effectively coordinating gestures with your words goes hand in hand with an excellent speech.

Some gestures are universal. The clenched fist, the outstretched hand and the friendly wave are among those recognized and understood by almost everyone. But in order to become master speakers, we need to expand our repertoire to include more than just the well-known gestures. To really reach an audience, careful thought must be given to the hand motions we make, as well as to the words we speak.

In his article "Give Your Speech a Helping Hand" from the February 1981 issue of *The Toastmaster*, David Lewis says, "A given hand position conveys a specific idea and should be used for that purpose and that purpose alone. Using it to emphasize a point that calls for a different gesture is just as bad as using the wrong word."

WATCH OUT FOR HAND AND "I" COORDINATION

Humorist Gene Perret tells a tale about a little girl who practiced and practiced the poem she was going to recite for her kindergarten class. As she practiced her poem –

*"I'm a little teapot, short and stout.
Here's my handle, here is my spout."*

– the little girl placed her left hand on her hip to resemble the handle of a teapot, then bent her right arm up at the elbow and turned her right hand out to resemble a spout. How-

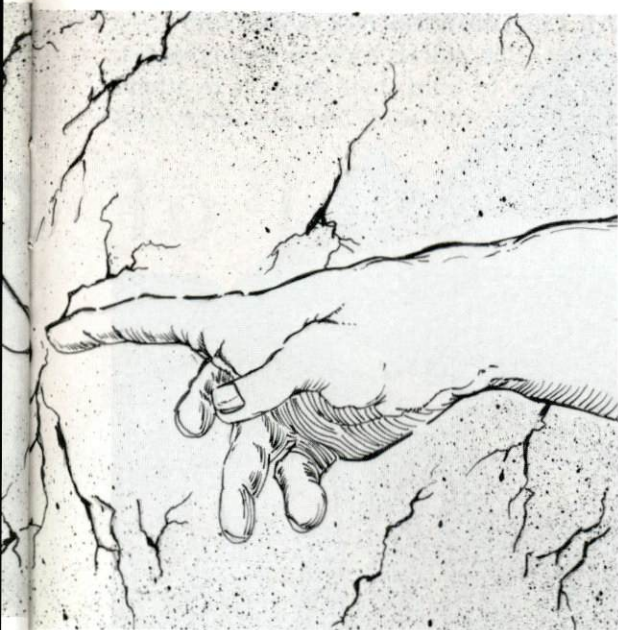
ever, when she stood before her peer group, the tension of the moment caused the child to inadvertently place both hands on her hips. Looking down at the arrangement of her arms, she realized her error and saved the performance by uttering, "Well, I'll be darned – I'm a sugar bowl!" Sometimes it's possible to salvage the moment... but not always.

Pronoun confusion can be especially disastrous. For instance, if you were to say, "I wish you would listen to me" and point toward yourself on the word "you," then extend your hand toward the audience on the word "me," it would be almost impossible to recover. The right gestures – those that describe your words – help your audience understand what you are saying; inappropriate gestures distract and confuse.

THE DO-RE-MI OF GESTURES

Just as a musician composing a song has only seven notes to work with, there are only a few basic hand motions available to a speaker during a presentation. And just as a wide variety of songs are written from those seven musical notes, a great variety of gestures come from these basic motions. By practicing the motions until they become spontaneous and natural, we build a foundation of effective gestures to aid in our presentations. David Lewis discusses these basic gestures in his article. I'd like to take you through them step by step.

by Mary E. S. Fleming, DTM



To start with, reach out with your right hand in a friendly gesture, as though you were going to shake hands. This gesture seems to say, "Let's talk about it. Let's be reasonable." Now turn your palm up. This movement seems to say, "This is really very simple. The facts are..." Next, turn your hand over, palm down, and you appear to be saying, "Don't believe it. It's not necessarily so." Now raise your hand to an "I swear" position and you're saying, "I'm telling the truth. You can believe me." Move your hand forward slightly in a cautioning motion, and you're saying, "Now, give me your attention. This is a very important point." Finally, summarize or drive home your point by raising your hand high in the air. This is the grand finale and in essence says, "I'm calling for action. Let's do something about this." In a way, you are actually choreographing your speech, first using one hand and then the other, and sometimes both.

Let's go through a complete model speech using the previous gestures to see how they punctuate the words:

Extend one hand outward as you say, "I'm offering you an entirely new idea. When you hear all the details, you'll be grateful that I've presented it to you."

Now turn your palm downward and give a small movement away from your body for emphasis and say, "Now, at first you may be

skeptical and resistant (repeat the gesture.) You may think 'that's not for me.'"

Use both palms up, offering again, but hand closer to body this time as you say, "When you hear the entire story, you'll be glad you did. In fact, you'll be eager to participate in the program."

Raise the right hand in the "I swear" position as though you're cautioning the audience. "Before I continue, let me remind you that you'll need to listen patiently, and hear the plan all the way through. You'll need to hear all the story before you count your blessings (raise your hand high in the air for the final words) for being one of the lucky few to hear this revolutionary idea."

ON THE OTHER HAND...

In addition to incorporating these few basic movements in your speech, remember to add variations. Too much repetition is monotonous. Only a professional speaker like Cavett Robert can get by with using the same gesture several times during a speech. His trademark gesture: arms held high and wide apart in a curve, appearing as though he is hugging the audience.

Here is how Accredited Speaker Tom Bintliff, DTM, describes speakers who don't quite know what to do with their hands: "There are speakers who pray (he holds his hands in front of him in the prayer position), and there are those who use the windmill (he rolls his hands over one another in a windmill fashion). Then there's the fig leaf (his folded hands drop down in front of his body), and finally, there is the flasher. (He raises his folded fig leaf hands chest high and lowered them, again and again)."

What kind of speaker are you? Do you use appropriate gestures to describe your words? Or do you use empty gestures that say nothing and actually detract from your speech? Any speech can be improved with the right gestures. Good descriptive gestures help a speaker reach out to the audience and make each person feel touched by the message. ①

Mary E. S. Fleming, DTM, is a member of Antelope Valley Club 9007-3 in Prescott Valley, Arizona.

"If we are to be master speakers, our repertoire should include more than well-known gestures."

Perhaps more than any other organization, Toastmasters International understands the importance of maintaining open lines of communication with its membership. Since this is a market-driven organization with a product – membership in a Toastmasters club – that product must continue to satisfy customers.

Here's an explanation of the individual surveys, their results, and the feedback they elicited:

I. OFFICER TRAINING: LAYING THE GROUNDWORK FOR LEADERSHIP

If clubs are to thrive, club officers must be well-prepared. The best way for them to learn their duties is to attend officer training sessions. And so a Training Survey was

Surveys find high level of

MEMBER SATISFACTION

24

With that in mind, last year Toastmasters International decided to employ the services of Dr. Kenneth L. Tangen, a management consultant specializing in surveys and focus groups for Custom Research of Costa Mesa, California. Four separate surveys were conducted, focusing on the following critical areas: training, new members, awards and recognition, and the reasons members leave.

WHO ARE TOASTMASTERS?

Because the cost of contacting 170,000 members would have been prohibitive, Dr. Tangen selected a sampling of members based on gender, geographic locations, urban vs. rural areas, and community vs. corporate club membership. Each survey was sent to different sets of members representing of our 8,000 clubs worldwide.

While care was taken to reflect the opinions of members from all age groups and walks of life, a profile of the "typical" Toastmaster emerged as the surveys were returned. Most are 30 to 49 years old; 78% are college educated, with some reporting masters and doctorate degrees; and nearly 34% reported annual earnings of more than \$50,000. Although a wide diversity of occupations was represented, the survey found that Toastmasters tend to work in the fields of sales, engineering, management and consulting.

prepared that asked questions such as: Were training sessions helpful? Could they be improved? What information do officers want and need?

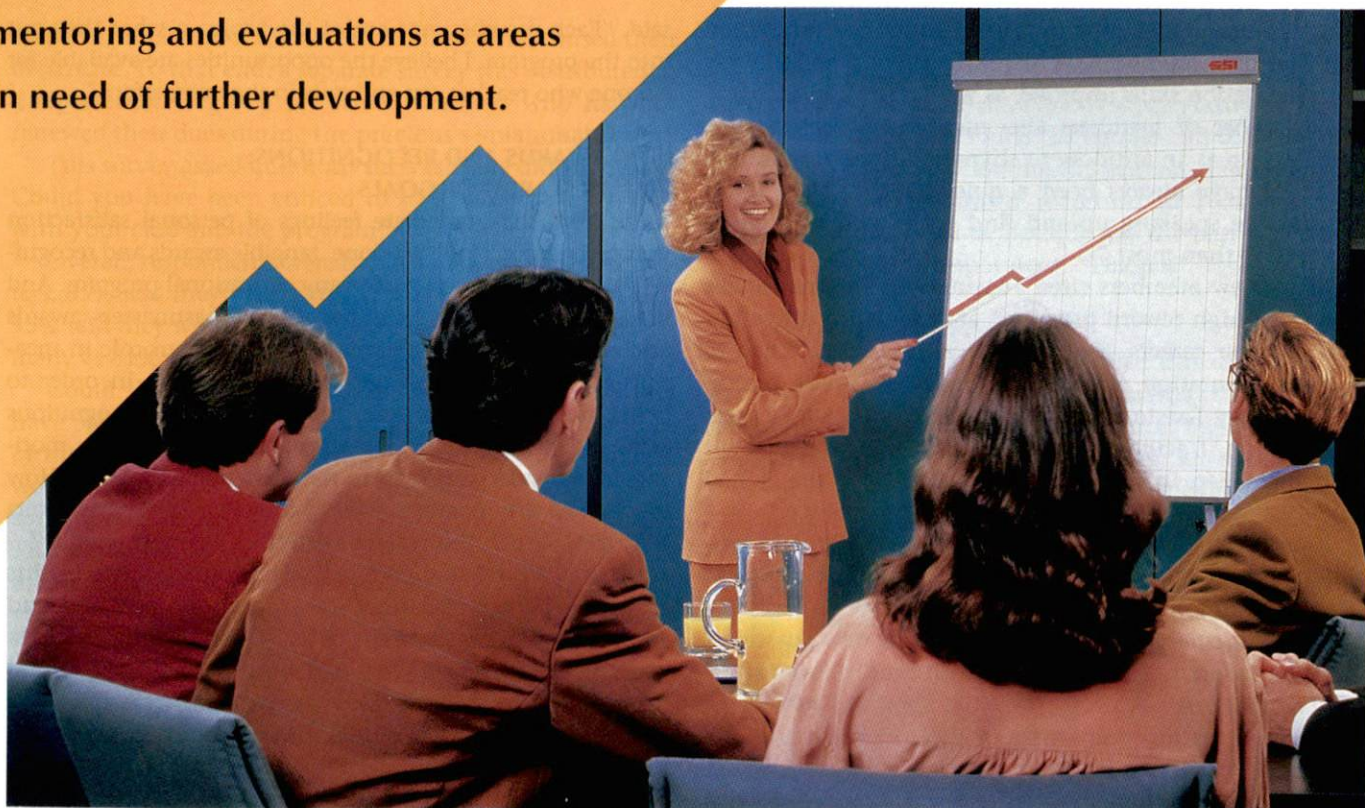
In order to gauge the effectiveness and quality of these training sessions, the Training Survey targeted members that had been eligible to receive officer training within that previous year. Most attendees found the overall presentation good (61%) or fair (22%). Typically, training sessions were held on weekends (74%) and lasted two to three hours, which was considered appropriate by most respondents.

The answers Toastmasters gave to the section featuring open-ended questions also proved enlightening. When asked to name the best part of training, many responded that the networking aspect among officers was especially helpful. Another question asked what topics should be added to the sessions. The responses indicated that mentoring, working with new members and "more emphasis on the team approach to strengthening and building clubs" would be appreciated.

As for the amount of time of officer responsibilities demanded, one club president admitted that "The more you put into the job, the more time it takes," but another officer summed it up this way: "I've learned to better manage my time. I've also found myself with little personal free time. However, watching the club grow from



Toastmasters cite new member orientation, mentoring and evaluations as areas in need of further development.



PHOTOGRAPHY VIESTI ASSOCIATES

14 to 22 members has been an exhilarating experience. I've enjoyed every minute of it!"

2. NEW MEMBERS: HELPING THEM FEEL AT HOME

New members are vital to a club's existence; without them, clubs stagnate and die. And since new members are integral to the continued success of every club, organization leaders wanted to know the answers to questions such as: What happens when a new member joins? How are new members treated? What are their expectations? Are they satisfied with their decision to join? What do they think about the Toastmasters program?

Participants in the New Member Survey all had joined within six months of the study. Their responses? Enthusiastic! A great deal of this positive energy could be attributed to the fact that most respondents said they had become active in club meetings soon after joining. More than 22%, for example, had presented their Ice Breaker by their second meeting, and most of the remaining new members had done so by the third or fourth meeting. Moreover, in response to the question, "Are you satisfied with your Toastmasters experience?", almost 95% said they were. And when asked if they would recommend Toastmasters to a friend, an even higher number (96.5%) said yes –

implying that those dissatisfied would still recommend Toastmasters to a friend, perhaps because dissatisfaction was restricted to their specific club, rather than their view of the Toastmasters program.

Early in the survey, a check-off list of reasons for joining Toastmasters was provided; "improvement of communication skills" was by far the most popular answer. A subsequent section featured open-ended questions and inspired a wealth of detailed responses. When asked, "What is your greatest benefit received from Toastmasters?", new members overwhelmingly cited the camaraderie and warmth of their clubs and the organization in general. Among the comments:

"Our 'we care' attitude is obvious at every level of the organization and encourages us all to strive toward making a change for the better."

PAULINE SHIRLEY
International President

"Toastmasters is a people organization"; "The group has been honest, helpful and so encouraging"; "Toastmasters seem to be very sincere, friendlier than most people, and very interested in each member"; and "The group is a wonderful cross-section of interesting people and encourages a positive, enthusiastic learning atmosphere."

But Toastmasters also appreciated the technical benefits. "As much as I hate Table Topics," one respondent admitted, "they help me learn to speak 'on my feet.'" And at least one new member had already gained some experience serving in a leadership capacity: "I asked for leadership and responsibility and – wham! – was given it. I've learned a great deal about self-motivation, getting

things done and making things happen. In the short period that I've been involved with Toastmasters, I've seen my communication skills improve, as well as my confidence."

A number of members also mentioned Toastmasters membership as an antidote to shyness. As one respondent wrote, "I have always been a quiet person...Now I feel comfortable speaking up and find that I will do a more concise job than most."

Many new members cited Toastmasters International's "low cost, high reward program" as having a positive impact on their careers. Here's a typical response: "I had to give a presentation at work with only 48 hours notice. Thanks to my Toastmasters training, I not only gave a great presentation, I actually had them clapping in agreement with me! Keep in mind that only one year ago, I had anxiety attacks if I had to speak before an audience."

Especially relevant to the burgeoning age of computers, which – sociologists claim – is already having an isolating effect, Toastmasters said club membership helps them enhance their social skills. In the words of one new Toastmaster: "As a programmer, I spend so much time in front of my PC. Toastmasters has afforded me the opportunity to make friends and get together with a group of people and talk about different issues intelligently. As a result, I feel more confident and can better express my thoughts."

So much for the accolades. How did the newest members think their Toastmasters clubs could improve?

"While the group is very supportive and friendly," one said, "no one has worked with me to achieve my goals or explained the responsibilities involved in being a member."

Although many new members spoke of mentors and coaches, a surprising number indicated they had not received enough direction after joining. And while most thought Toastmasters were congenial people, in a few instances clubs had apparently not gone far enough in welcoming others: "The members need to be more friendly, especially the 'old timers.' When you're new, it's easy to make excuses not to attend. But a friendly call or even that friendly greeting at the last meeting will influence a newcomer's decision on whether or not to attend a second or third or fourth meeting, or not to attend ever again."

Despite the fact that the Toastmasters Supply Catalog is sent to every club, new members occasionally reported they did not have access to enough information. At least one expressed the need for "more educational material at the clubs. I know such material must exist but I've never seen any."

Another area of concern was that of evaluations, especially those that are overly positive. Respondents agreed on the difficulty and importance of walking a fine line between positive feedback and negative criticism. "Evaluations that aren't somewhat critical provide no opportunity to advance" and "Evaluations that are 100% positive down the line provide little guidance to speakers who want to get better" were typical comments.

Overall, however, new members seemed satisfied with their initial experience as Toastmasters. Or, as one respondent

said, "Each member gets out of the program what they put into the program. I believe the opportunities are available for anyone who reaches out and puts in the extra effort."

3. AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS: IN SEARCH OF GOALS

Aside from the immediate feelings of personal satisfaction that come from a job well done, tangible awards and recognitions are an important part of any educational program. And in a program as vast and multi-leveled as Toastmasters, awards and recognitions play a particularly significant role in measuring member progress and accomplishment. In order to better understand this role, the Awards and Recognitions Survey wanted to know: Does the recognition system motivate members to participate in the educational program? How much time are members willing to spend on Toastmasters activities? Which Toastmasters activities are most popular?

Every Toastmaster who was asked to participate in this survey had been a member for at least one year and had earned a Competent Toastmaster (CTM) award. The idea was to poll members who had been through the initial program, had met with some success, and were now at a crossroads in determining what they would do next with their Toastmasters training.

To the first question, "Are you satisfied with your Toastmasters experience?", 93% of the respondents answered with a resounding "yes!" Though most said they had joined for the purpose of improving their speaking skills, when asked why they remained, friendships and club camaraderie were mentioned just as often as self-improvement. One member, for example, cited interaction as the most important factor in continued membership, adding that "to be a mentor and share your experience is very rewarding." Another Toastmaster admitted that while joining had been "at the suggestion of my boss, I stayed because of the club members and the leadership skills I learned and developed."

Lack of time was the No. 1 reason for not becoming more involved in Toastmasters activities outside of club meetings. A member of the military, for example, who has participated in area, division and district speech contests and currently serves as club president commented: "At this stage in my career, I really can't include more Toastmasters activities than at present." In fact, a few reported that family and/or career commitments had forced them to temporarily suspend their participation in Toastmasters, but that they missed the learning and interaction. Said one college student: "With my school schedule, I haven't been able to participate actively for the past six months, and I've noticed my skills decreasing. You really appreciate how much you learn just by being around people who also want to learn. I can't wait to get back to a club after I graduate in June!"

4. EXIT POLL: WHY DO MEMBERS LEAVE?

Since Toastmasters International is a volunteer organization relying heavily on its members, when members do

leave, organization leaders need to know what caused their departure. To that end, a separate survey was distributed to a representative group of former members who had not renewed their dues during the previous semiannual period.

This survey asked questions such as: Why did you leave? Could you have been enticed to stay? Were you satisfied with your club and the program?

Overall, respondents were happy to have been Toastmasters: 85% said they were satisfied with their experience, and 95% said they would recommend Toastmasters to others. As many as 81% said they would consider joining again.

Could their club have taken some action that would have prevented them from leaving? In most cases, no: 75% of the respondents cited outside concerns such as family, work or illness as reasons for their departure. The remaining 25% indicated situations involving a lack of attention and supervision. Comments such as "Give a little more direction to newcomers" were common. One respondent gave credit to the overall friendliness of the club, but sensed the need for more direct guidance: "Although I felt welcomed, no one specifically reached out to help."

While mentoring was not always mentioned by name, it was frequently mentioned in concept. When asked how the Toastmasters experience could be improved, for example, one respondent neatly defined the concept with the comment, "Assign senior members to work with junior members." Someone else explored the possibilities even further: "There could be a mentor appointed to each new person to find out the person's needs and, if necessary, be an adviser and cheerleader."

A third area of improvement was that of evaluations. Some felt their club members tended to respond with excessive praise ("more constructive criticism could have been beneficial"), but sometimes evaluations went to the other extreme. "On two occasions I observed two different evaluators totally destroy the persons who had delivered their speeches," one person wrote. "Your evaluators did not possess the skills to positively critique the individuals. I was assigned to be an evaluator but I had no training. So I left."

Fortunately, such experiences appear to have been in

the minority. One former Toastmaster said, "I miss the disciplined work habits I developed when preparing for a speech every two or three weeks. It was a gratifying experience. And, I must say, I miss the people and their commitment to growth." And among the general comments were hints that many intended to return to Toastmasters at some future date. "I'll be back, it was the best time of my life," enthused one respondent. "Thanks!"

THE FUTURE OF TOASTMASTERS

What conclusions can be drawn from this extensive data gathering? To begin with, the Toastmasters surveyed were generally satisfied with their experience. But despite their enjoyment of the program, Toastmasters are not shy when

it comes to pointing out areas for improvement!

All four surveys demonstrated the importance of time in people's lives. While members realize the need for training sessions, the sessions should be conveniently scheduled and located, with content emphasizing efficient networking among club officers. Furthermore, new members do best with immediate rather than delayed participation, and experienced members generally want to direct their energies toward club level activities. Those who had recently left Toastmasters were influenced to do so by a sudden or unforeseen commit-

ment; most indicated an interest in rejoining once the situation had been resolved.

Although members are first attracted to Toastmasters due to the educational program and opportunities for personal growth, they remain because they enjoy interacting with other members. This interaction is enhanced when special attention is given to new Toastmasters, a mentoring program is firmly in place, and evaluations are presented in a constructive and positive manner.

Toastmasters International appreciates the feedback from all who participated in these surveys. With the valued input and the continued assistance of members such as yourself, Toastmasters International will continue to work toward providing a product that meets the needs of a steady and growing membership!

WHAT CAN YOUR CLUB DO?

■ **How can you and your fellow members ensure that your club will maintain a high level of satisfaction? Here are some standards that need to be in place:**

- ❖ **Assign a mentor to each new member and make sure that new member's needs and wants are determined and met.**
- ❖ **New members should give their Ice Breakers as soon as possible, by their first or second meeting after becoming a member.**
- ❖ **Each new member needs to fill out a Personal Goals Checklist (Catalog No. 406). The new member's mentor and club officers should be aware of each member's goal.**
- ❖ **All members should be guaranteed of speaking before a full house! To keep club numbers healthy, all clubs should continually conduct membership drives and participate in Toastmasters International's membership programs.**



Betty Smedley Stephenson: 1915-1994

IN MEMORY OF



A young Ralph Smedley with his wife, Frances, and daughter, Betty.

■ THIS PAST OCTOBER, A PERSONAL CHAPTER in the history of Toastmasters International came to a close when Betty Smedley Stephenson, only child of our organization's founder, Dr. Ralph Smedley, died at the age of 79.

Elizabeth Smedley was born at St. Anthony's Hospital, Rock Island, Illinois, on July 31, 1915, during the time her father served as educational director of the community's YMCA. In a photo album chronicling the earliest years of "Betty" (as she would eventually be called), her parents lovingly recorded the following description of their newborn daughter: "Complexion, very pink. Hair, rather dark and plentiful. Voice, strong and penetrating. An active, vigorous baby." Nine weeks later, the importance of self-expression in the lives of the Smedley family was already becoming apparent when it was noted that "Elizabeth has frequently laughed aloud. She shows a disposition to talk, and has much to say."

As her father continued to work at various YMCA locations - eventually founding a center in Santa Ana, California, where the first Toastmasters club originated 70 years ago - Betty's parents took pride in her progress. A dedicated educator, Ralph Smedley was especially fond of reading to his young daughter and encouraged her to recite favorite poems from books such as Robert Louis Stevenson's *A Child's Garden of Verses*.

By the 1930s, Toastmasters clubs were being chartered throughout California and as far away as Florida and British Columbia, Canada. Betty spent much of her time helping her father with his increased workload. Among her many duties, she typed all of the correspondence mailing labels - including those for *The Toastmaster* magazine. Years

later, during the 1990 grand opening ceremonies of World Headquarters in Rancho Santa Margarita, California, the founder's daughter recalled those early days with characteristic humor, remarking that "After touring the building and learning about the 165,000 labels for the magazine alone, I'm sure glad I don't have to type those anymore!"

Upon Dr. Smedley's death in 1965, Stephenson and her mother were commended during his eulogy for helping support the Toastmaster dream: "Ralph Smedley felt that he was most privileged in enjoying a lovely family life with his devoted wife, Frances, their daughter, Betty Stephenson, and her husband, James. Mrs. Smedley has been ever a loyal helper and encourager, sharing with deep interest in all his undertakings, experiences, and successful achievements - the true woman behind the man. The daughter, too, has entered lovingly, joyously, and proudly into all her father's good endeavors. He was grateful to and for them."

In recent years and until her final illness, Stephenson and her husband had resided quietly in the desert community of Victorville, California. **T**

Founder's
daughter
helped support
the TI dream.

Editor's Note: Although there are no other immediate survivors of the Smedley family, the association between the Smedley name and the Toastmasters organization will continue. In his later years, Dr. Smedley transferred to Toastmasters International all property relating to the works of the corporation. In addition to written materials, these included the name and emblem of Toastmasters International, as well as associated marks and symbols, such as the Smedley name.



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

DTM

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

- Marie J. Abram, 6200-U
- Larry A. Westbrook, 5134-2
- Robert A. (Bob) Meadows, 1881-4
- Rae Dean Taylor, 7736-7
- Cindy Kindret, 872-21
- Marilynn Knoch, 973-21
- Monika E. G. Gobeil, 1938-21
- Laurana K. Johnson, 7870-24
- Brenda Daniels, 6191-25
- Jeffery W. Johnson, 6191-25
- Sandra Denise Lewis, 7882-25
- Chris Lowe, 7677-31
- Clara E. Hutton, 1900-33
- Dolores W. Jones, 7039-38
- Steve Mauser, 6778-39
- Dale L. Disney, 6870-39
- Steven J. Hamilton, 1294-41
- Namon Harris, Jr., 1684-43
- Linda D. Boynton, 8700-45
- Fran Okeson, 9679-46
- Christina D. Harris, 1695-47
- Phyllis J. Pawson, 4541-47
- Colin E. Smith, 1693-60
- Robert D. Weibel, 5460-65
- Judith A. Paschall, 3267-66
- Kathleen A. Nash, 3431-66
- Melton E. Beane, 5099-66
- John Pitt, 7920-69
- Ruth Rinot, 9173-70
- Julian Hammond, 6844-71
- Raewyn K. Dawson, 7144-72
- Yvonne M. Cowling, 1179-73
- Irene Downer, 4795-74

ATM Silver

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

- Francine Sample, 801-3
- Liard Guttersen, 9055-3
- Patricia A. Coleman, 9055-3
- Dolores (Dee) Talley, 9261-4
- Nancy Anderson, 591-6
- Michael Erdman, 3646-6

- Eleanor E. Paul, 105-12
- Thomas E. Munson, 2906-14
- Gary L. Bergstrand, 6066-18
- C. M. (Karl) Hollander, 9453-21
- Daniel E. Reding, 1725-24
- Sarfaz Akber Nazir, 1728-25
- Kyle M. Morton, 2971-25
- Norma H. Pankratz, 5587-26
- Marc Sullivan, 6694-28
- Chuck Taylor, 5464-31
- Michael T. Brown, 89-33
- Shirley Lorraine, 8400-33
- Dottie Reeder, 5960-35
- William A. Foye, 4806-37
- Laura J. Dubois, 142-39
- Adrianna Lavell, 985-39
- Irene A. May, 577-42
- Tommy Gilbreath, 4154-50
- Linda M. Cota-Kumagai, 29-52
- Joseph A. Purcell, 1931-53
- Arnold F. Krueger, 687-65
- Larry L. Tuttle, 3431-66
- Denis Timothy Burke, 2274-70
- George Douglas Murry Morton, 3554-70
- James Frederick Holland, 6944-72

ATM Bronze

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

- Alfred Roy Herzog, 9591-F
- Dolores (Dee) Talley, 9261-4
- Leyla B. Caldwell, 8214-5
- Leslie C. Anderson, 591-6
- Wade McLaren, 9025-7
- Thomas P. Marcy, 4492-8
- Judith L. Conrad, 3628-10
- Judith L. Bailey, 6642-12
- Linda Baker Poindexter, 8352-14
- Treva Hill, 2216-16
- Jim Barton, 3081-21
- Glenda Durano, 6360-23
- Ron Smith, 5286-25
- Janice Butzky, 5496-25
- Robert Trent Main, 741-26
- Eldon J. Halingsstad, 7162-26
- James Kent Queen, 3308-27
- Ruth Berger, 7175-30
- Lisa Killen, 2628-33
- Patricia A. Brown, 5353-33
- Doug Mering, 2026-35
- Homer M. Chen, 1511-36
- John J. Choplosky, 1723-38
- Richard A. Hash, 985-39
- Roger Allen Groves, 2307-39
- Derek Sanders, 4383-42
- Elbrist Mason, 1684-43
- Nancy M. Lane, 6016-43

- Charles Fulks, 3631-47
- Violeta P. Mata, 3701-49
- Don G. Thompson, 1190-50
- Arnold S. Grot, 919-53
- George I. Kauzlarich, 1196-54
- Robert H. Ballard, 1196-54
- Paula Tunison, 7774-56
- Lola Paine, 8544-56
- Norman A. Hayner, 279-65
- Marian Lamanna, 5659-65
- Mary-Edwina Bangs, 3431-66
- Errol Burnage, 3796-69
- John Albert O'Keefe, 1050-73

ATM

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

- Jeff Hartman, 724-U
- Kiran (Kris) Pandit, 1059-U
- Sen-Fuh Chang, 1890-U
- John H. Favro, 4194-U
- Rex A. Santoro, 6390-U
- Walther N. Bolzmann V, 7986-U
- Lorie Mendoza, 2-F
- Julie Stevens, 231-F
- Robert Strach, 770-F
- Jack Schlatter, 1058-F
- Michael J. Brumm, 4244-F
- Dunya James Bolderoff, 5050-F
- James J. Samarin, 5050-F
- Robert L. Gibbons, 7766-F
- Peter Meade, 2924-1
- Steven E. Rogers, 3931-1
- Ivan Gerson, 7330-1
- Randall C. Wright, 2713-2
- Alvin R. Habbestad, 3666-2
- Judith A. Gay, 5030-2
- Kathleen Taylor Sharp, 5030-2
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- Scott Richardson, 8568-2
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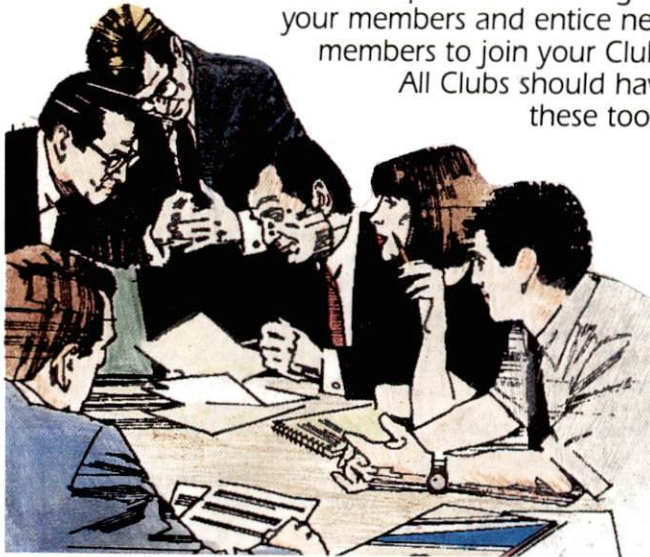
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