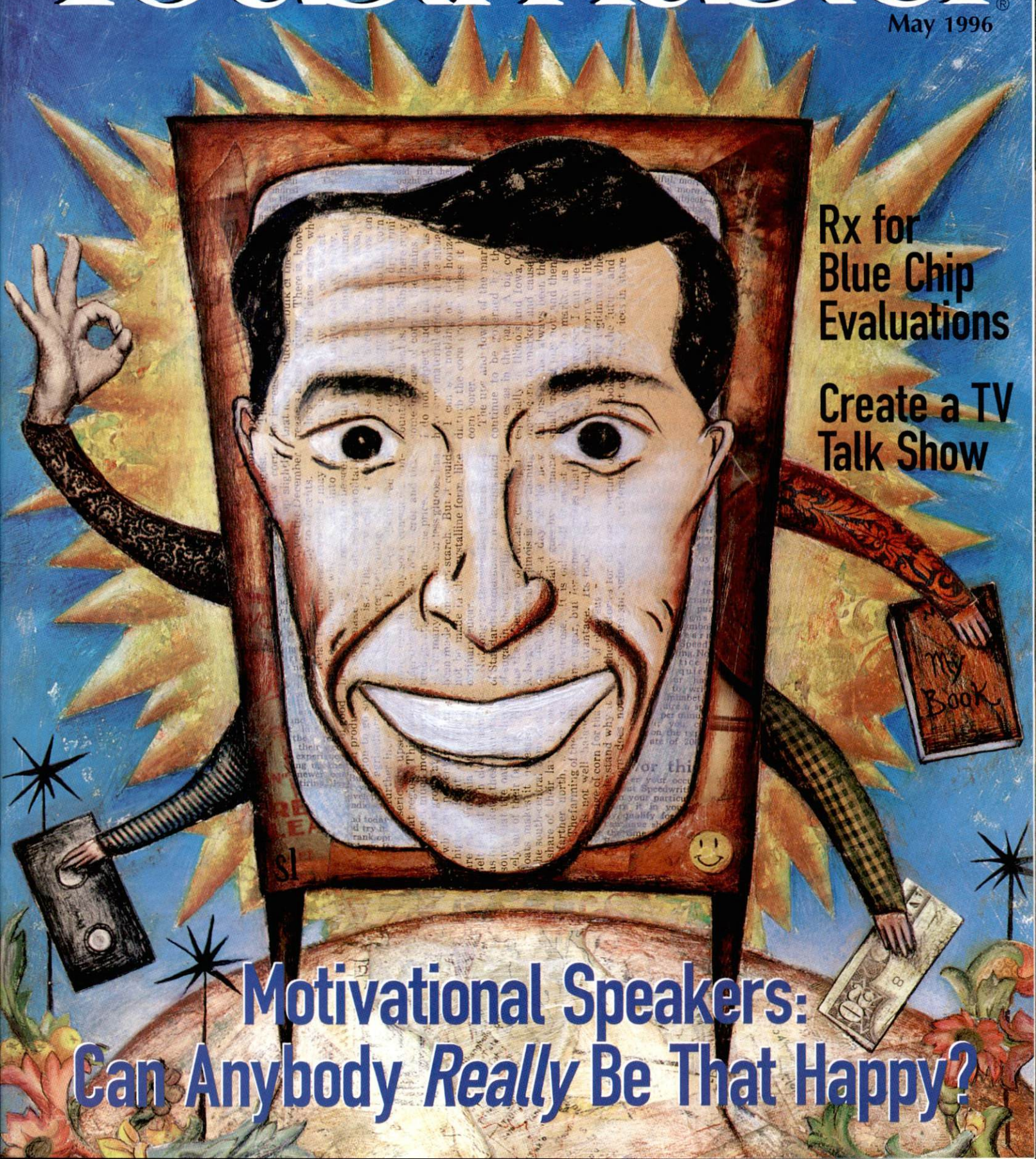


# The Toastmaster<sup>®</sup>

May 1996



Rx for  
Blue Chip  
Evaluations

Create a TV  
Talk Show

Motivational Speakers:  
Can Anybody Really Be That Happy?

# Better Thinking



*"The greatest speakers have usually been remarkable for the abundance of their ideas and their economy with words."*

RALPH C. SMEDLEY

Most Toastmasters are familiar with our organization's motto of "Better Listening, Thinking and Speaking." We devote significant time and effort on improving our speaking and listening skills, but how acutely do we focus on better thinking and creativity?

A great speech is the result of experience, research and reflection. It should be purposeful, original and memorable – all of which requires time and creativity. In these days of hype, sound bites and pre-packaged motivation, there is something refreshing about a speech that clearly reflects the experience, thoughts, feelings and insights of the speaker. We need to take pride in our abilities to construct something in our

minds and effectively convey the resulting messages.

Because we all lead busy lives, it is tempting to fulfill a manual speech assignment by lifting someone else's thoughts and ideas, be it from a newspaper article, radio or television program, or business seminar. But by failing to inject original thought, analysis or experience into our speeches, we cheat ourselves and miss out on the opportunity to develop our innate creativity.

When I asked Edward DeBono, physician and founder of the Center for the Study of Thinking at Cambridge University, whether good thinking is correlated to intelligence, he replied:

"Above a certain level, the operational skills of thinking can be acquired by anyone. The mind is rather like the horsepower of a car, and thinking is like the driving skill. You may have a powerful car but drive it badly. Or you may have a more humble car but drive it well."

Part of our commitment to excellence and personal growth should be the development of better thinking habits. Creative thinking is a learned skill. More thoughtful evaluators look beyond the "sizzle" of a dynamic presentation to the true substance of the speech. How did the speaker demonstrate an ability to produce ideas, combine ideas, change ideas or make unusual connections? Where was the personal analysis or insight? If research was used, how well was it arranged and interpreted?

Our Toastmasters club meeting is usually held in a special room, called the "Room For Improvement." In this room, we have the power and the opportunity to create an environment of excellence. Thoughtful Table Topics and insightful evaluations are exercises in creative and analytical thinking, respectively. Better thinking should be a prime concern to all who aspire to become better communicators and leaders.

**Ian Edwards, DTM**  
International President

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### SALUTE TO YLP ACHIEVEMENT

Toastmasters are achievers. Nothing motivates people more to double their efforts for that next round of achievement than to be recognized by name.

In the March issue of this magazine, International President Ian Edwards mentioned the 88-year-old Toastmaster from Wisconsin who had just finished conducting his 170th Youth Leadership Program. That is some achievement! And 1,890 students can testify to the difference the enthusiasm of that Toastmaster, Past District 35 Governor Edmund J. Schrang, DTM, has made in their lives.

Ed – your fellow Toastmasters salute this tremendous achievement!

John Fauvel, DTM  
International President 1987-88  
Auckland, New Zealand

### STICK TO WHAT WE DO BEST

The January issue had one excellent article, "Give Your Speech a Magical Touch." Does this indicate a new emphasis on unusual methods to add pizzazz to speeches? It was a refreshing and relevant topic.

On the debit side, the publication of the article, "Keeping Time" surprised me. I couldn't see the relevance of the article to the central Toastmaster themes of speaking and self-improvement. Please don't publish things without relevance – let's stick to what we know and do best.

Steven Needler, ATM  
Speaking of Success Club 9395-26  
Lafayette, Colorado

### WHO'S THE OLDEST TOASTMASTER?

I read with interest the letter from the 80-year-old CTM, Judy Holsclaw, of Orlando, Florida, in the January issue.

This caused me to wonder who might be the oldest Toastmaster in terms of age, and also who might hold the record for the number of years of active membership.

I'm reasonably sure that at the *young* age of 73 and with *only* 35 years of continuous membership, I may not even be close.

Orval E. Lavender, OTM (Old Toastmaster)  
Daybreakers 3325-39  
Redding, California

### COLOSSAL MESSAGE

Jill Rowlands' message in My Turn: "Talking Toastmasters" (February) is, to put it mildly, colossal. It should be read and reread, and then practiced by every member of clubs with fewer than 20 members.

Bill Mantinband, ATM  
Chartmasters Club 5001-8  
St. Louis, Missouri

### LET'S PRESERVE OUR LANGUAGE

Mary McNamara makes some valid points in her article, "Importance of Being Ernest(ine)" (February). I wholeheartedly agree that terms such as "firefighter" and "mail carrier" are more descriptive, accurate and inclusive than "fireman" or "mailman."

But as a lover of the English language, I bristle when I hear words such as "chairperson" or "congressperson." After all, look at the words *woman* or *women*. Do we

change these words to *woperson* and *wopersons*, respectively? Of course not! In my opinion a word like chairman can mean either a woman or man, since both *woman* and *woman* have the "*man*" that is in *chairman*.

Yes, let's change words to be more inclusive when the meaning we are trying to convey is enhanced (e.g. firefighter), but let's be careful not to substitute new words unnecessarily and, in the process, destroy our beautiful language.

Dick Merry, CTM  
First St. Paul Club 1102-60  
St. Paul, Minnesota

### KEEPING MENTALLY FIT

My wife, two children and I immigrated from Germany to Canada in 1966. Our English language skills were almost nil.

In Toastmasters we met many people who share our interests and lifestyle. We've made good friends, have had a lot of fun and have learned a lot. But the main reason for staying in Toastmasters is that we are keeping mentally active and fit. This is very important at our age. Our children are proud of us! Toastmasters is the right organization for keeping your brain active.

Heinz Grage, CTM  
Garden City Club 1102-60  
Saint Catharines, Ontario, Canada

### A CONFERENCE MIRACLE

I served on the planning committee for our District 21 1995 Fall Conference. After reading the "Planning Your Conference" article by Kathy Khoury in the March issue, I could only say that I

wish this article had been published sooner. I certainly couldn't agree more with her tips, especially since I had to learn about some of them the hard way.

It was a miracle that we were able to pull it off with only six months to plan and with only one committee member who had ever attended a conference. I had been a Toastmaster for less than a year myself! I'd like to encourage new Toastmasters to participate in the planning committee for a conference. Not only does it help one learn and grow, but it's a great way to make new friends!

Vincent Li  
MPR Club 5449-21  
Burnaby, British Columbia, Canada

**Publisher's Note:** Those wanting more information on conference and speech contest planning may be interested in "Put On a Good Show" – The Toastmasters Meeting Planners Handbook available from World Headquarters.

### MASTER OF CEREMONIES WANTS STORIES

I'm a Toastmaster who is writing a book about being a master of ceremonies and am looking for people to submit stories. Specifically, unusual, funny or disastrous personal stories about emceeing, roasting or eulogizing. If you have a story to tell, please contact me at this address or phone number: 3044 Lischer Avenue Cincinnati, Ohio 45211-7029 (513) 481-7029

Wayne E. Baughman, DTM  
West Hills Club 1249-40  
Cincinnati, Ohio



by Darrel Francum, ATM-S

# Does DTM Mean 'Dubious' or 'Distinguished' Toastmaster?

■ HAVE YOU REACHED YOUR PEAK AND found there's nothing more you want to do? Have you met all your goals, fulfilled all your expectations and accomplished the highest ranking in Toastmasters, the title Distinguished Toastmaster or DTM? Do you feel that it's all over and there's no reason for you to continue?

Well, if so, wake up! Attendance is off in nearly every club in the organization, membership is lagging and somewhere a club needs your skills! You've spent years climbing and accomplishing, teaching and training and leading – now is not the time to sit back and rest on your laurels.

Throughout Toastmasters I've heard that DTM all too often means "Deactivated" or "Disinterested" Toastmaster. That's the saddest thing I've ever heard and I hope you share my feelings. As a non-DTM I still hold the title in highest esteem as I, too, aspire to one day reach that lofty position.

To me the DTM represents the epitome, the very finest, the *crème de la crème*, the absolute best in this business of speaking, leading and training. Yes, I too, have seen some Toastmasters wearing the gold badge who, by their actions, made me wonder just how they accomplished the honor. I also have seen those who demonstrate in all they do that their gold badge is a mere representation of what they have accomplished, a symbol that pales in the light of their brilliant performances as they help others along their paths.

Are you one of the few entitled to wear the gold? Then dig out the little plastic tag, brush it off, make it shine with pride and distinction once again. Seek out the members who have lost their way and become cynical. Find the club in dire need of rejuvenation and step in to help out. You worked hard to earn your title. You've been recognized and elevated to a lofty perch so that

all may see and know your worth. Now do it again!

Demonstrate, educate and assist the Toastmasters in your community. And when you hear the words "Dubious" or "Dormant," demonstrate by your actions that you refuse to be described that way. Launch your own crusade to prove that the "D" in DTM stands for a "Dependable, Dedicated, Determined, Distinctive" and most assuredly, Distinguished Toastmaster. **T**

*Darrel Francum, ATM-S*, is a member of the Spellbinders Club 6860-47, in Melbourne, Florida.



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# OOPS!

## What To Say When You've Embarrassed Yourself

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Strategies you can use to recover from the moment and turn things around.

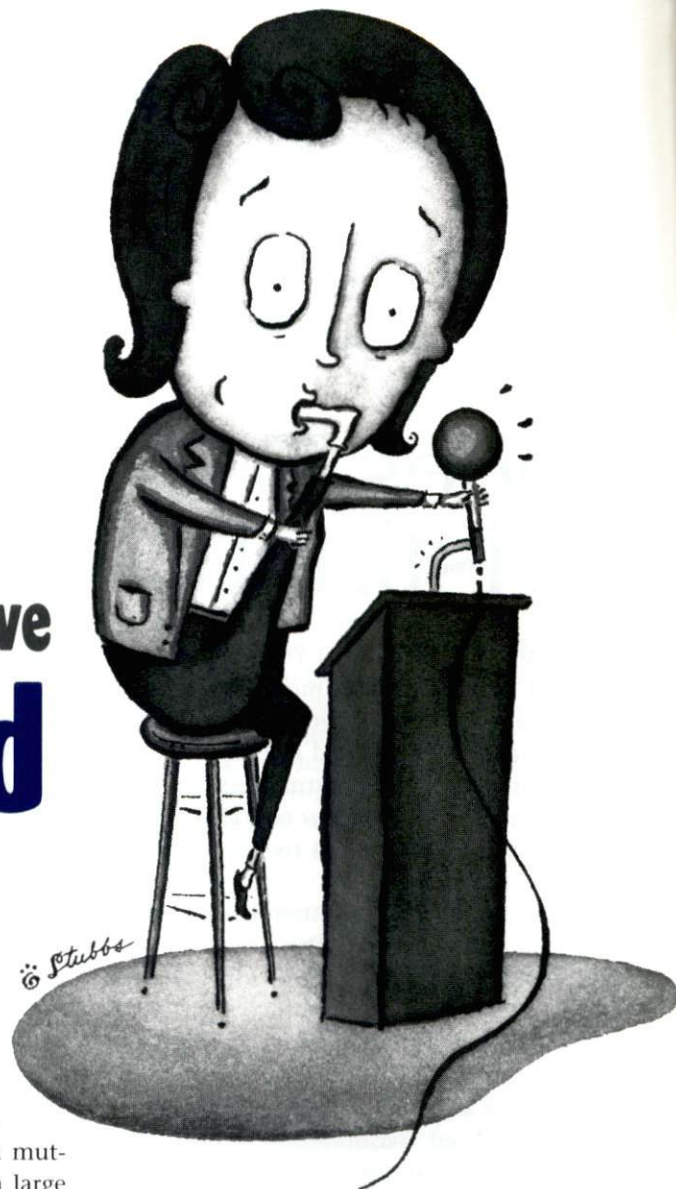
**N**ow you did it. You addressed a customer by the name of her competitor. Or you spilled your coffee all over important documents in the middle of a meeting. Or you muttered some private complaint that a large group of people accidentally overheard. And you're embarrassed. You feel your pulse racing and your face turning red. You'd like to be invisible.

Embarrassment is a universal phenomenon. Often, it occurs as the result of a verbal accident. At times, however, embarrassment is the result of an unwitting lack of skill or diplomacy. Sometimes, it results from the combination of unfamiliar situations, unfamiliar people, and unfamiliar expectations.

However distasteful embarrassment is to most people, it can still be a genuine learning experience. In fact, with a bit of advance preparation, embarrassing moments can even be turned around to your advantage.

So no, don't seek out embarrassment. But if you do find yourself muddled in an embarrassing situation, here are a few strategies you can use to recover from the moment and turn things around:

by Richard G. Ensmann, Jr.



- **Gracefully explain why the incident occurred.** For example: "I can't believe I called you by John's last name. Actually, he's been on my mind constantly for the last few days, and I even woke up in the middle of the night thinking about him." The benefit: Others understand why you embarrassed yourself. You appear thoughtful and concerned.
- **Respond to the incident with self-deprecating humor.** For example: "Oh, oh. I wonder what else I can do wrong today." The benefit: You're demonstrating genuine humility. And while humility may be good for the soul, it also builds respect from the people around you.
- **Use the occasion to offer a compliment.** For example: "You're always so careful about things like this. You'd never make such an embarrassing mistake and I hope I won't ever make it again, either." The benefit: You're offer-

ing two universally appreciated qualities – praise and warmth.

- **Excuse yourself.** For example: “I’m really sorry...I’ve been racing around for the past few hours, and I just don’t feel like myself today.” The benefit: You’re reminding others that you – and they – are human.
- **Ask for help.** For example: “I can’t believe I spilled this. Would you help me move these papers?” The benefit: You’re replacing personal embarrassment with a group solution.
- **Redirect the attention of others.** For example: “I’m really embarrassed by this, but what I hope you’ll remember about this morning is the tremendous accomplishment I told you about earlier.” The benefit: You’re reinforcing the significance of the information, news or goals you’ve already presented.
- **Acknowledge the mutual embarrassment of the people around you.** For example: “I doubt that any of you are quite as embarrassed as I am!” The benefit: You’re turning the incident into a group experience. Remember: encouragement doesn’t exist in a vacuum. Other people may be just as embarrassed or uncomfortable as you are after you make a faux pas.
- **Offer a lighthearted confession.** For example: Pull a pen out of your pocket

and hold it up. “Now I’m going to write 1,000 times, ‘I will always remember John’s name in the future’...” The benefit: You’re clearing the air by admitting your momentary failure, and you’re making other people appreciate your grace under pressure.

- **Turn the people around you into an audience.** For example, pause and face the people around you: “Well, now let me tell you about my next act...” The benefit: You’re lightening the mood and setting the stage for a return to the business at hand.

Embarrassment plagues every one of us from time to time. However, while you might try to prepare for embarrassing moments, you can never fully prevent them. But you can always respond to them after they occur. React quickly to these seemingly unpleasant moments and you’ll turn your embarrassments into opportunities for learning, humor, even team building. Others will overlook and even forget your embarrassment, but may long remember the strengths and positive qualities you brought to the moment. **T**

---

*Richard G. Ensmen, Jr.*, is a business writer living in Rochester, New York.

*“Other people may be just as embarrassed or uncomfortable as you are after you make a faux pas.”*

## **OOPS!** 10 Common Slip-Ups In Today’s Business World

1. Forgetting an associate’s name, or addressing someone by the wrong name.
2. Uttering an embarrassing slip of the tongue, or realizing that your private comments have been overheard by others.
3. Criticizing another person, or analyzing an issue, only to realize you’ve got the person or the facts wrong.
4. Misplacing important items or papers, or realizing you’ve lost important documents in the middle of a meeting.
5. Being “caught” in an awkward position, like searching through the wastepaper basket, ripping clothing on an obstruction, or kicking a malfunctioning copy machine.
6. Realizing that you’ve forgotten your manners.
7. Being under- or over-dressed, wearing mismatched clothing, or leaving a tag or debris attached to clothing.
8. Using profanity or off-color humor with an unintended audience nearby.
9. Being observed talking to yourself.
10. Dropping things, tripping or experiencing a lack of physical coordination in the presence of other people.

# MOTIVATIONAL SPEAKERS





RECENTLY I READ THAT ONLY 29 PERCENT OF AMERICA IS HAPPY. That leaves 71 percent of people in our great nation in varying degrees of misery. I have always included myself in the latter statistic, and now, unfortunately, more than ever. Because now, in addition to my misery, I must live with the miserable realization that I have no reason to *be* miserable.

I hear this almost daily from the happiness gurus who do the America landscape like so many Happy Face stickers. More commonly known as motivational speakers, these purveyors of personal power are compounding my misery by proclaiming that happiness is right within my grasp.

I resent this. I have worked hard for my misery. More than that, I consider it eminently realistic and practical. Finding myself pasted by gravity to a spinning rock hurtling through space at 18.5 miles per second has never struck me as a cause for riotous celebration.

Furthermore, I have taken comfort in knowing that this opinion placed me in excellent company. Mark Twain, George Bernard Shaw, Leo Tolstoy, Voltaire – miserable malcontents – all who achieved worldly success without the benefit of an *Anthony Robbins Power Talk* seminar. They viewed the human condition as I do – a well-intentioned experiment gone horribly awry. In fact, I believe it was Shaw who described our little planet Earth as “the insane asylum of the universe.”

Now, however, the sellers of success are telling me that these thoughts are “self-defeating,” that my realism is a “core belief” that is stopping me from becoming dynamically empowered and achieving a place in *People* magazine’s list of the 50 Most Beautiful People in the World. If I will only follow their simple, common sense prescriptions, they promise, I will have fabulous wealth, worldwide fame and a reserved parking space with my name on it.

Being a New Yorker, the reserved parking space certainly has its appeal – enough so that these glib gladiators have me wondering if they might be right. For one thing, they’re all so *convincing*. Each is a walking advertisement for the sure-fire effectiveness of his or her respective philosophy. We see them being interviewed on creamy white Hawaiian beaches, exuding poise on *Regis and Kathy Lee*, conducting seminars at plush resorts, auto-

graphing copies of their best-selling books, hosting their own TV shows – and it isn’t hard to believe that these people have indeed reached the highest level of self-actualization: *they don’t work for a living!*

Could Twain and Tolstoy have been wrong? Is happiness actually possible in a world where Martha Stewart can’t find a decent pair of pinking shears?

I decided to find out. The first thing any motivational speaker will tell you is that true personal fulfillment lies in knowing what you want out of life. A simple enough proposition, but one that has always left me drawing a complete blank. Not to worry, the motivational tape explained. Many people struggle with this question. When the answer is not immediately

# CAN ANYBODY REALLY BE THAT HAPPY?

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forthcoming, a simple method can reveal it. Get a note pad. For the next eight weeks, quickly write down, without thinking, the three things you want most out of life at the moment. Do this once a week, keeping your lists together. Don’t think. Just write. At the end of the eighth week, read the lists over and see if some recurring theme emerges that points toward a particular life work.

At the end of eight weeks I read my lists. Here is a sample:

October 7 – I would very much like to:

- Sell men’s clothing
- Raise Russian wolf hounds
- Work on the Alaska pipeline

October 14 – I feel absolutely compelled to:

- Work as a tour guide at Disney World
- Own a health food store
- Become a Green Beret

October 21 – I simply *must*:

- Open an off-track betting parlor
- Teach Early Indo-European History at Harvard University
- Run for public office

My lists went on like this for five more weeks, but try as I might I could find no common thread. The only possibility was that I might be harboring a secret desire to open a school of mortuary science – which was out of the question because I'm allergic to formaldehyde.

I took heart in learning that only 3 percent of our population actually has a plan for getting what they want out of life. (Where do they get these statistics, anyway?) Another 10 percent knows but never does anything about it. And 60 percent have only the vaguest notions of their hopes and dreams. That adds up to 73 percent. They don't mention the other 27 percent. I can only ascertain that these are the people like myself, who never give their heart's desire a moment's thought for fear they might actually have to go out and get it. "In this world," said Oscar Wilde, "there are only two tragedies. One is not getting what you want. The other is getting it."

I agree. Getting what you want requires courage, fortitude and perseverance, which I have always understood to be fancy words for work. Not only that, but you must then experience the sinking sensation of realizing that what you so desperately wanted isn't so wonderful after all, or why would you already be wanting something else? And now that you've got it, what are you going to *do* with it? And where are you going to put it when you don't want it anymore?

Besides, even with only 3 percent of the population leaving their mark on the world, the world is pretty marked up as it is. Imagine 100 percent of us doing it! We'd all be bashing into each other at 200 miles per hour.

I don't think the oracles of omnipotence realize this. I firmly believe that what little harmony exists in the world is there precisely because so many of us are drifting aimlessly, without the vaguest notion of why we're here. It stands to reason: If you aren't going anywhere, no one can get in your way. More to the point, you're not going to feel the need to roll over other people like a 20-ton highway paver. Think of the figures in this century with a singular objective and an iron-willed determination to achieve it. Let's not mention any names, but did one of them live in Germany and wear a little mustache? Did another live in Russia and wear a big mustache? This is why people who set goals make me uncomfortable. I always feel like they're going to invite me to an Amway meeting.

The gurus of growth would respond that I am subconsciously sabotaging myself because I don't feel worthy of success. Success, they say, breeds guilt in many of us. We feel we don't deserve it, or we're afraid of it. We think it will make us vulnerable, demand more than we

can deliver, alienate us from our friends, and take away the greatest pleasure we have in life, which is despising everyone who's more successful than we are.

Actually, none of this is true for me. I feel extremely worthy of success. The few times I've stumbled blindly into it, it has seemed to be a perfectly natural fit. I reveled in it, I gloated, I beat my friends over the head with it like a sock filled with sand. I even found myself wondering how I might organize a club with the sole membership requirement that everyone be exactly like me.

And that's the point: I simply could not be *trusted* with success. I was like a child with dynamite. That's why the Greeks wrote plays about mortals who tried to be like the gods – they ended up getting chained to a rock with eagles pecking at their livers. No, thank you.

The other problem is something George Gershwin said – i.e., the trouble with being a success is *staying*

a success. Once you're on the mountaintop, every force of nature conspires to knock you off, and if you wish to remain on top you must fight, struggle, compete and otherwise expend all manner of energy to maintain your position of dominance. All of which gets us back to that pesky notion of *hard work*. If all these manifestly marvelous motivators don't have to work, why should we?

Of course, there is not just worldly success; there is also success in *personal relationships*, which presents us with a whole different breed of happiness hawkers. These tend to be hard-bodied women with Ph.D's or bearded men with doe eyes who look like everybody's favorite uncle. Their tactics involve energetic televised seminars where they roam the stage with boundless enthusiasm, throwing prepackaged catch phrases to the audience like fish to seals. Everybody ends up crying and hugging and the whole thing looks like a huge Italian wedding.

Now I must admit – you're listening to a man who thinks the phrase "bad marriage" is redundant. Nevertheless, I have to guess that even the most hopelessly romantic would find these public feel-good fests just a tad incredible. We are promised easy answers to the issues that have plagued marriages from time immemorial: sex, finances, child-rearing, communication, intimacy and whose house you're going to for the holidays. We are told these are "secrets" that can be learned, "mistakes" that can be avoided, "programs" that can be followed. Never mind that the people telling us all this are *divorced*. That's why they're on TV: They need the money to pay alimony. I'd find them much more believable if they'd simply walk on stage looking like *real* married people – tired, depressed, overweight – and say to the audience:

**"Even with only 3 percent of the population leaving their mark on the world, the world is pretty marked up as it is. Imagine 100 percent of us doing it!"**

"I've been married for 20 years and I don't have a clue how we've made it. By all rights one of us should be dead, and the other should be in jail for murder. The only thing I can tell you is - if you want to stay married, have a short memory." Now *that* I could believe.

Of course, this is all academic. My personal theory holds that for all their cheering us on to be just like them - "I did it and you can too!" - the high priests of happiness don't really want us to be as successful as they. If we were, we wouldn't need them any more, and then who would buy all their stuff? They parade before us with their perfect physiques, perfect teeth, perfect hair and perfect poise, not to inspire us to be like them, but to remind us that we're *not* like them and we never will be, so forget it, fatso! Because being *not* like them is what makes us want to *be* like them, which is the *motivation and inspiration* to buy their tapes, books and seminars. See how it works? The whole thing is a giant conspiracy.

But I'm not fooled, and now, after reading this, neither are you. Instead, I invite you to buy *my* book, enti-

led: *Don't Ever Attempt Anything in Life and You'll Never Be Disappointed Again* (also available in a series of six blank audio tapes.) You'll learn:

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**John Cadley** is an advertising copy writer living in Fayetteville, New York.

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# Make Your Speeches 'Cogent' and 'Memorable'

*This is the first in a series of articles by Alan Perlman, Ph.D., a professional speechwriter and linguist. A former professor of linguistics and composition, he spent seven years writing for the CEO and other top executives at General Motors. Since 1991, he has been Director of Executive Communications for Kraft Foods in Northfield, Illinois. A frequent contributor to Speechwriter's Newsletter, he is one of this nation's top speechwriters, with many of his speeches appearing in trade publications such as Vital Speeches of the Day and Executive Speeches.*

Tricks of the trade from a professional speechwriter.

Whether we write speeches for a living or as an adjunct to our personal and career development, we all want to be cogent and memorable. But how do we do it?

That was the question I confronted recently, when an executive client, in our preliminary interview, gave me those two key words as goals for the two speeches we were going to write for his opening and closing remarks at a day-long meeting of his top 120 people.

He's a relaxed, affable, very intelligent guy with a good sense of humor. However, most of his public speaking consists of budget reviews. How would we get to "cogent and memorable"?

Well, as the Italian politician and statesman Vittorio Emanuele Orlando once observed, "Oratory is like prostitution. You have to have little tricks." I decided that I needed a full arsenal, especially since the occasion was hardly dripping with drama.

That's a key point: a lot of cogent and memorable speeches aren't especially challenging to write. They're what I call slam-dunks: the context – a civil war battlefield, a crying social need, a space shuttle explosion, a nation under attack from the skies, an economic crisis, whatever – is itself so cogent and memorable that the speechwriter has no trouble driving right to the heart of the matter.

Of course, that's not to say that all Gettysburg Addresses are created equal. Lincoln executed his much better than Whatzisname, who spoke for two hours. But in both cases, context and situation were powerful components of "cogent and memorable."

That was not the case here, so I cast my intellectual net as wide as possible. I thought about all the speeches I'd written, read and heard. I wanted to include not only "internalities" – matters of structure and content – but also "externalities" like the speaker's behavior, the audience's involvement and the speaker-audience dynamics.

Here's the list I came up with:

■ **Strong theme/story line**  
*(preferably with suspense).*

Ken Askew, an outstanding speechwriter, made me aware of the importance of this one. His background is literature, whereas my field is linguistics. Ken once gave a speech that very eloquently spelled out the significance of story, of tension and resolution, of problem and solution, of an ending that somehow completes the beginning.

■ **Clear moral/bottom line.**

It's the last thing they hear, so if you make it the best thing they hear, you're well on the way toward "cogent and memorable." What does your conclusion mean for your listeners and their lives? What general principle is confirmed (or refuted)?

■ **Powerful, intense rhetoric that speaks of a serious problem or dire consequences, or that conveys vehement advocacy or a lofty vision.**

by Alan M. Perlman, Ph.D.

Powerful rhetoric gets people's attention, so use it sparingly. Most corporate rhetoric is so low in intensity that a little goes a long way. On the other hand, most political campaign rhetoric is so overheated that it loses credibility.

# orable,

## ■ Simple "why-didn't-I-think-of-that?" solution/agreement.

Here you want to unify items that have until now seemed disparate – or bring together ideas that seem irreconcilable. You might show how one solution, already doable, is applicable to the current problem, or that the unfamiliar is really familiar, thus less threatening – or even to be welcomed. Or maybe you can justify something via a principle the audience already believes in.

In any case, you create a quick, easy – but heretofore unseen – path to a desirable goal.

## ■ Personal testimony/experience/anecdotes.

We all know how audiences love stories. But there's another reason for personal testimony: authenticity. When a speaker speaks from experience, no one can question the truth of what he or she is saying.

This came home to me vividly in working with my executive client. He wanted to congratulate his people on being first-rate professionals in their field. I asked him to authenticate the qualities he was praising them for, through his own experience – and he did. The very qualities that had gotten his people through an extraordinarily difficult year had gotten him through some difficult periods in his career. Somehow, I don't think it was a coincidence.

## ■ Effective use of ornamental material – quotes, humor, statistics, historical references.

This one pretty much speaks for itself. The conventional advice is "less is more" and "know your audience," and I agree. Again,



authenticity is important; it's so easy to sound fake with this stuff. Don't use material just because it seems clever or impressive. Make sure it reinforces – and doesn't distract from – your main theme.

## ■ Summarizing via slogans, acronyms, aphorisms (or "sound bites," as they're called today) – especially at the end.

We can't all rhyme like Jesse Jackson or Johnny Cochran – nor should we try. But a well-constructed acronym or aphorism can be a powerful mnemonic device. You just have to be careful not to clutter up the overall message with a lot of other clever devices.

I confess, I've never been able to write sound bites by setting out to do so. I try to summarize major points with approximate generalities and to say everything in a

*"Don't use material just because it seems clever or impressive. Make sure it reinforces – and doesn't distract from – your main theme."*

**“Powerful rhetoric gets people’s attention, so use it sparingly.”**

rhythmic, balanced way, and the better examples may acquire sound-bite status.

Maybe you’re able to crank ‘em out at will. Maybe you’re the kind of person Thomas Fuller had in mind when he observed, back in 1731, that “constant popping off of proverbs will make thee a byword thyself.” If so, you have my admiration.

■ **Key “grabber” metaphor or analogy.**

These tend to come in flashes of insight, after you have your whole speech in mind and can imagine what your main theme is similar to.

I’m not that creative in this department either, but I am pretty good at puns, so I tend to start with metaphors that already exist, then build on them with related ideas. In a recent speech, I started by talking about the “political landscape,” then went into the “fault lines” of the landscape, then into the “bed of sand” underneath.

You can also use idea-generating software like Ideafisher to find associations that you can convert into analogies and metaphors.

■ **Audience involvement.**

Audiences are normally so passive during speeches that a little involvement can help make the speech memorable, simply because afterwards, people can “anchor” the speech-event, in their memories, to something that they actually did during the speech.

You can single out individuals or groups for recognition (as the executive did during his speech). Or you can use props or physical devices such as a voice vote, a show of hands, or applause (which the executive also did, applauding his people and urging them to applaud themselves).

There are two other forms of audience involvement that are internal to the speech: a compelling “what’s-in-it-for-me?” bottom line and a clear “I-know-where-you’re-coming-from” message. These tap into two of the most powerful sources of interpersonal bonding – empathy and benefit.

■ **Polished delivery with appropriate gestures and emotions.**

That’s really a no-brainer. I included it just for completeness. Toastmasters take it for granted, as they should. But for us ghost-writers, it’s often a real challenge to convince our clients that it really matters.

So there you have the key ingredients. Not all of them will work for every speech. But the more of them you use (and I emphasize: use *appropriately*) the more cogent and memorable your speeches will be. **T**

*Alan Perlman, Ph.D.*, has written two books, *WRITE CHOICES: New Options for Effective Communication* (1989, Charles C. Thomas); and *It Gives Me Great Pleasure...A Guide to Writing Ceremonial Speeches* (1993, Ragan Communications).



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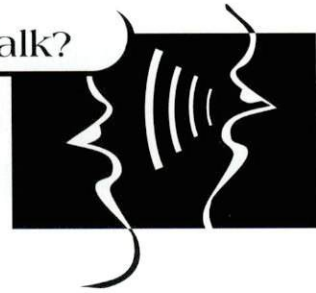
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can we talk?



Sooner or later, the oratory gremlins are going to get you. How will you respond?

by Patrick Mott

# Nobody Is Perfect

■ IN ACADEMIA, TODAY'S NUMERICAL definition of an A-plus grade is 97 percent or above. This means that you can get an A-plus – the highest letter grade possible – and technically not be perfect.

Let's say you just got your grade back with a score of 97. How would you react? Chances are you'd find it cause for celebration. This is a healthy response.

Still, we all know people for whom 97 percent is a failure. They will flay themselves mercilessly for the tiniest gaffe in a speech – in a competition or otherwise. They will chew on that mistake, brood about it, fixate on it, replay it and heap regret all over it until the balance of their fine performance vanishes entirely and all that is left is a massive self-inflicted wound to their pride.

It can be worse, because if jealousy or insecurity are also in the mix with perfectionism, then the sight of a competitor – or even a colleague – performing well can be enough to send the perfectionist into a tailspin of self-recrimination and agonized hyper-analysis.

It doesn't have to be this way. Public speaking is not an exact science. It is a lot more like golf than calculus. In calculus, you can get an absolutely right answer. It is possible to be completely correct, thoroughly right, to get 100 percent. If you're really good at it, you can get it right quite a bit of the time, too.

Golf you will never get right. But never. The pros often stink up the course on a regular basis, yet they're the best players in the

world. And yes, you do see good golfers berating themselves for their mistakes – for about five seconds. Then they're on to the next situation, the next hole, the next terrific shot.

Because they fully expect to hit a terrific shot after a mistake. Maybe even hit a bunch of them. They know if they brood over one shot gone awry, if they let it fester for any time at all, they will not be capable of doing better later – and that later comes, sometimes, within seconds.

Golfers also expect to screw up. This is not a paradox. They know it's not a question of if, but only of when. In an imperfect game, in an imperfect world, played by imperfect people, there are going to be lots and lots of, well, imperfections. Knowing that going in makes the let-downs easier to take.

As for competition, golfers know that they're going to get beaten, sometimes by inferior competitors. This, they know, does not mean they are failures. It means the other guy may have had a brilliant day. Or they themselves may have had an off day. Or both. Regardless, they know that either condition can, and often will, change in 24 hours.

I'm not advocating that you bring a golf club to the podium as a reminder of fallibility, but that you, as a speaker who is dedicated to getting better, recognize that sooner or later the oratory gremlins are going to get you. You'll have a memory lapse – maybe several of them. You'll unaccountably fail to pronounce a simple word – maybe over and over again. You'll fling

out an unintentional malaprop, stub you toe on a double entendre, maybe just come down with a quick and disastrous case of speaker's heebie-jeebies (imprecise, but you know what they are when you feel them).

In the last British Open, Jack Nicklaus, only the greatest golfer of the 20th century, took three strokes to get out of a fairway bunker. As a result, he dropped out of the pack like a stone. An hour later, he was in the broadcast booth joking about it. A few days later, he was back on some other golf course, eating it alive, climbing the leader board, getting richer.

Millions of viewers watching the Open did not laugh at Nicklaus' terrible trouble. They were filled with sympathy and, more significantly, empathy. Your audience will be also, should the gremlins get you. They'll know that you'll come back from it, and soon. You should know that, too. ①

Patrick Mott is a writer living in Camarillo, California.

By Dr. Ann D. Villiers, ATM

I have been on the receiving end of many an evaluation. Often these evaluations go something like this:

"Ann, that was an absolutely fantastic speech. You gave us about 10 tips on how to improve our skills in using a microphone and concluded with a great anecdote about your own experience with a "dead" microphone. A terrific speech. Well done."

At face value, this evaluation sounds enthusiastic, positive, encouraging – just what a good Toastmasters evaluation is meant to be. Or is it? On closer inspection, this type of evaluation says very little of real help to me, the speaker.

I would not benefit greatly from this evaluation for two reasons: First, it relies heavily on superlatives and generalities. Expressions such as "great," "fantastic,"

"excellent" and "terrific" are trite and too broad to be of value in evaluating my progress as a speaker.

When these expressions are applied indiscriminately to evaluations, we are doing our members a disservice. On one hand, we can over-value the performance of novice speakers by suggesting they've attained a standard higher than is the case. On the other hand, we may under-value the competent speaker by using vague expressions that give no clear indication of the speaker's true competence.

The second reason I wouldn't benefit greatly from this type of evaluation is that it relies on describing content and does not analyze the speech to identify what I do well and where improvements could be made.

## Skill 1:

### Build An Evaluation Vocabulary

So how can we provide positive, realistic evaluations of a speech? One way is to develop a more extensive evaluation vocabulary, one that covers much finer gradations of quality. A dip into a thesaurus reveals many alternative, common superlatives. For example: "awesome," "grand," "majestic," "consummate," "supreme," "top," "surpassing," "fine," "exceptional," "splendid," "polished," "elegant," "quality," "treasure," "gem," "masterpiece," "superior," "splendid," "first-class," "first-rate," "deluxe,"

## "Evaluation requires analysis of the speech, not description of the content."

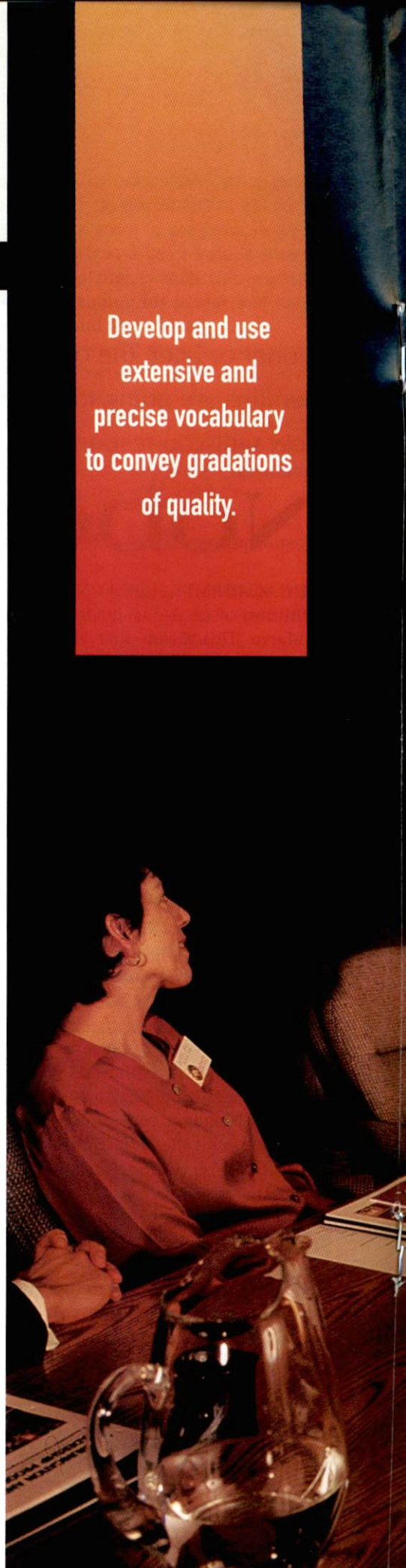
"outstanding," "sound," "sterling," "Olympian," – you get the idea.

For a truly exceptional speech, praise the speaker by saying: "Margaret, tonight you gave us a consummate performance, one that for me surpasses all your previous speeches." The feedback clearly indicates that the speech was much better than just "great" or "terrific."

If a speech is good, but not necessarily "fantastic," the evaluation could take the following path: "Jim, you gave us a fine speech tonight, one characterized by sound structure and enthusiastic delivery."

In addition to the above list of words, various colloquial expressions can be used to signal an evaluator's enthusiasm for a speech. These colloquialisms include: "bobby-dazzler," "humdinger," "knock-out," "pearl,"

Develop and use extensive and precise vocabulary to convey gradations of quality.





# RX For Blue-Chip Evaluations



“Rolls Royce,” “tiptop,” “the icing on the cake,” “capital,” “smashing,” “ace,” “five-star,” “blue-chip,” “gilt-edged,” “prime,” “one out of the box,” “blue-ribbon.” These can be woven into an evaluation to give a novice speaker positive and encouraging feedback that offers a realistic appraisal of the speaker’s skills.

For example: “Robert has given us a splendid third manual speech, providing us with a sound illustration of how to organize material. The introduction was a gem – a vivid story that captured our imagination. I felt the story could add even greater value to the speech by being used as a linking pin at other points in the speech. For example, the speech structure could be strengthened to assist the audience’s understanding by using the story theme to signpost the four key points. For me, the icing on the cake was Robert’s first-class use of facial expressions to illustrate various emotional reactions. That’s a prime quality to build on in future speeches.”

To appreciate the value of building a wider vocabulary, replace the emphasized words with “great” or “fantastic.” As you do this, observe that these descriptions are linked to specific qualities and features of the speech – which brings me back to my second point:

## Skill 2:

### Analyze The Speech

A second trap evaluators often fall into is to describe and summarize the speech. Since the audience already has listened to the speech, it is neither appropriate nor useful to spend time retelling it. Evaluation requires analysis of the speech, not description of the content. While the content may have been riveting, the speaker needs to understand *how* this was achieved and *why* the audience found it so interesting. Many speakers have fascinating speech topics, but ruin them in the delivery.

To properly evaluate a speech, you need to react to the speaker’s presentation with constructive suggestions for improvement, using the Evaluation Guide provided with each project. Let the speaker know how you perceived the speech and what impact it had on you. Identify the speaker’s strengths as you see them and provide suggestions for improvement.

To illustrate the difference between describing content and analyzing a speech, compare these two evaluations:

*“I was fascinated by Fiona’s speech which gave us a detailed account of the impact feral cats have on our native fauna. She told us there are possibly 12 million cats living in the bush, each killing at least 1,000 native animals a year. And she informed us that it’s not just feral cats that are a problem. Domestic cats are responsible for reducing some of our favorite native birds...”*

An evaluation based on analysis, rather than description, might go something like this:

*“I hadn’t given much thought to the impact of my pet cat could be having on our wildlife until I heard Fiona’s No. 2 speech tonight. I like a speech that triggers my interest in a new*

*subject. The statistics she quoted are staggering and brought home to me what a huge problem we have with feral cats. By quoting well-researched, authoritative details and displaying vivid photos, she built a convincing case. In fact, she changed my perception of cats. This combination of authoritative detail and powerful visuals shows me that Fiona takes this problem seriously and thoroughly understands its dimension...”*

The evaluation notes that Fiona’s speech raised awareness about an important issue.

## Analysis Checklist

The evaluator might then go on to let Fiona know of her strengths and suggest ways to improve. This requires further analysis of the speech. You can use the following checklist to guide your analysis:

### SPEECH OBJECTIVES

#### Content

- Structure – opening, body, conclusion
- Support material
- Interest
- Achievement of purpose
- Original thought or ideas
- Preparation
- Knowledge of topic
- Relevance

#### Delivery

- Voice
  - Flexibility
  - Volume
  - Articulation
  - Audibleness
  - Speaking rate
  - Vocal pitch
- Manner – (enthusiasm, confidence, sincerity, conviction)
- Language (appropriateness, correctness)
- Appearance
- Posture
- Gestures
- Body Movements
- Facial expressions
- Use of notes
- Control of nerves
- Eye contact
- Use of visual aids

This list prompts the evaluator to think about the ways the speaker has achieved his or her impact. If a speech hasn’t “worked” for you in some way, this checklist may help to identify where modifications could be made to achieve a different effect. For example, if you weren’t able to grasp the full details of Fiona’s speech on the feral cat problem because she presented the key statistics too quickly, you could suggest she alters her speaking rate and uses pauses after the critical figures.

So, if you would like to give speakers blue-chip evaluations, ones that give first-class encouragement and a treasure-trove of assistance, then practice two key skills:

1. Develop and use an extensive evaluation vocabulary.
2. Analyze speeches, rather than describe content, to provide useful feedback. T

**Dr. Ann D. Villiers, ATM**, is a member of Ginninderra Toastmasters 4298-70 in Canberra, Australia.

# THE DO-IT-YOURSELF

by Shelley A. English

*"People ask you for criticism,  
but they only want praise."*

— WILLIAM SOMERSET MAUGHAM

Unfortunately, many Toastmasters with the best of intentions seem to heed Maugham's advice when providing evaluations. One member of my club, while offering eloquent and balanced oral evaluations, in his written assessments gives the highest marks and writes glowing comments like "Beautiful!", "Excellent!" and "How can you improve on perfection?" Great stuff for a novice Toastmaster's ego, but it does not offer much of a foundation for future presentations.

Ideally, you receive more constructive criticism than that from your peers. But, realistically, because we're all here to encourage each other, the feedback you get may not be completely honest or remotely critical. But there is one way to almost guarantee a solid, honest, well-rounded evaluation: do it yourself!

Look at it this way. Most of us joined Toastmasters for one all-encompassing reason: self-improvement. We want to better ourselves in some way, or improve our skills in some area. It is a very individual purpose, which calls for a very individual learning process. Sure, input from our peers is an important part of our growth. But relying only on others' critiques of our work not only puts us in danger of co-dependency, but contradicts the ideal behind the term "self-improvement."

Only you know exactly what it is you want to accomplish, and you know better than anyone else where your strengths lie. Your strengths are valuable resources

already available to you; they can help you reach your goals. Hopefully, when you joined Toastmasters, you set goals based on those strengths and weakness – and put them in writing. As Spencer W. Kimball said, "A goal not written is only a wish."

I submit to you a sad specimen of this wishful neglect: Myself.

One of the reasons I joined Toastmasters was to overcome my tendency to rely only on the written word to communicate, and build on my writing skills in order to hone my verbal skills. I brought with me the talents of organization and preparation. I did not, however, specifically define and put into writing my original purpose.

Soon after I joined, my secondary goal became to earn a CTM certificate within my first year as a Toastmaster. Then six months passed, and I had only completed three speeches. Suddenly, the CTM became the primary goal, and I started cramming. I volunteered to fill in for speakers the day before a meeting, not even knowing what topic I would present, and doing so just to "catch up to where I needed to be" in order to reach CTM status within a year.

Naturally, my strength of preparation was put on the back burner so I could concentrate on milling out the speeches. I would hurriedly put an idea together, and then glance at my most recent evaluation so I could include whatever the evaluator had suggested. As you can guess, I was completely uncomfortable giving those speeches. I knew – no matter what the feedback from my evaluators – that I could have done much better, had I taken the time to organize my thoughts and practice my presentation.

After completing my seventh speech, I discovered the self-evaluation guide in the

# EVALUATION

***“Use the knowledge of those more experienced than you, but be true to the valuable insight only you have about yourself.”***

basic manual, “Evaluate Your Progress.” The results of my evaluation should not have been all that surprising. In my opinion, I had improved slightly or remained stagnate in some areas, but I had actually regressed in others – you guessed it, in areas having to do with preparation. And because I did not remain strong in these areas, the other areas of confidence and presentation needlessly suffered.

With this not-so-new information, I went back to the basics, and I finally wrote down what I considered to be my strengths and what goals I wanted to reach from there. With this in mind, I took time and care in preparing and practicing my next manual speech. Then, just before the meeting, I made a photocopy of the accompanying evaluation for myself.

After I had given my speech, I immediately sat down and evaluated myself. Later, I compared my own evaluation with my assigned evaluator’s input. I found that although my fellow club member gave valid suggestions, I felt much stronger about my own evaluation. True, I was probably harder on myself, but I gave input and suggestions only I knew enough about myself to give. I gave myself a stronger base not only for my next speech,

but for my day-to-day communication – which is one of the reasons I joined in the first place!

Had I gone through this “self-improvement” process in the beginning, I would have saved myself much frustration. Furthermore, had I continued the process with every speech at every meeting, I would have made far greater strides in reaching my goals. While I was relying on my club to mold me into the type of speaker I wanted to be, I should have heeded the knowledge and advice of my own worst critic – the one who knows me best: myself.

This is not to say you should disregard input from your peers; in fact, the more feedback you can get, the more you will learn. But the most valuable feedback you can receive is from yourself. Take time to write down your goals. Evaluate yourself after each meeting, and incorporate the input from your peers. Use the knowledge of those more experienced than you, but be true to the valuable insight only you have about yourself.

Be your own best critic. **T**

**Shelley A. English** is a member of Lipps, Inc. Club 5783-39 in Reno, Nevada.

EVALUATION TOOLS  
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# T O A S T M A S T E R S I N T E R N A T I O N A L

## 65TH ANNUAL CONVENTION

AUGUST 21-24, 1996 ♦ ADAM'S MARK HOTEL, ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI, U.S.A.

MAIL THIS PART TO: Toastmasters International, P.O. Box 9052, Mission Viejo, California 92690 U.S.A. (This form is not to be used by International Officers/Directors, Past International Presidents, Past International Directors or District Governors elected for 1996-97.)

To attend general sessions on Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday, a registration badge will be required. Preregister and order event tickets now! **You must be registered to purchase tickets to any events, including the International Speech Contest.** ATTENDANCE AT ALL MEAL EVENTS AND THE INTERNATIONAL SPEECH CONTEST WILL BE BY TICKET ONLY. Advance registrants will receive a receipt by mail. Tickets can be claimed at the registration desk beginning at 10:00 a.m. Wednesday, August 21.

**ALL ADVANCE REGISTRATIONS MUST REACH WORLD HEADQUARTERS BY JULY 7.**

**FULL CONVENTION REGISTRATION** allows you to attend ALL general and educational sessions during the Convention.

*Full Convention Registration* also allows you to purchase tickets to any events of your choice. Event tickets are *not* included with registration and must be purchased separately. (See below)

- \_\_\_\_\_ Full Convention Registration for Members (Wed., Thurs., Fri., & Sat.) @ \$90.00 \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ Full Joint Registration: Husband/Wife (both Toastmasters) (Wed., Thurs., Fri., & Sat.) @ \$165.00 \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ Full Spouse/Guest Registration (Wed., Thurs., Fri., & Sat.) (each) @ \$75.00 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**ONE-DAY CONVENTION REGISTRATION** allows you to attend general and educational sessions and purchase event ticket(s) for one day of your choice (Wednesday/Thursday, Friday, or Saturday). Tickets are not included with registration. If you wish to attend general and educational sessions or purchase event ticket(s) that take place on more than one day, then you must purchase a Full Convention Registration. No exceptions can be made.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Wednesday/Thursday (August 21 & 22) Convention Registration for Member/Spouse/Guest @ \$47.00  
(With this registration, you may purchase ticket(s) only for the Golden Gavel Luncheon.) \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ Friday (August 23) Convention Registration for Member/Spouse/Guest @ \$47.00  
(With this registration, you may purchase ticket(s) only for the Toastmasters & Guests Luncheon, DTM Luncheon and Fun Night.) \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ Saturday (August 24) Convention Registration for Member/Spouse/Guest @ \$47.00  
(With this registration, you may purchase ticket(s) only for the International Speech Contest and President's Dinner Dance.) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**EVENT TICKETS.** To attend any of the events below, you must purchase a Full Convention Registration or purchase a One-Day Convention Registration for the day of the ticketed event(s).

- \_\_\_\_\_ Tickets: **Interdistrict Speech Contest** (Monday, August 19) @ \$10.00 \$ \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Tickets: **Golden Gavel Luncheon** (Thursday, August 22) @ \$28.00 \$ \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Tickets: **Toastmasters & Guests Luncheon** (Friday, August 23) @ \$25.00 \$ \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Tickets: **DTM Luncheon** (Friday, August 23) (Note DTM # \_\_\_\_\_) @ \$25.00 \$ \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Tickets: **"Waterworld" Fun Night** (Friday, August 23) @ \$43.00 \$ \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Tickets: **International Speech Contest** (Saturday, August 24) @ \$15.00 \$ \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Tickets: **President's Dinner Dance** (Saturday, August 24) @ \$43.00 \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- TOTAL \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Check enclosed for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (U.S. Dollars) payable to Toastmasters International. **Credit cards not accepted. Cancellation reimbursement requests not accepted after July 15. Cancellations not accepted on site. NO EXCEPTIONS!**

(PLEASE PRINT) Club No. \_\_\_\_\_ District \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse/Guest Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

State/Province \_\_\_\_\_ Country \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Telephone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ If you are an incoming Club or District officer, indicate office: \_\_\_\_\_

I need special services due to a disability. Please contact me before the Convention.  This is my first TI Convention.

Clubs become strong when members respect each other, evaluate with balance, and enhance “a mutually supportive and positive environment.”

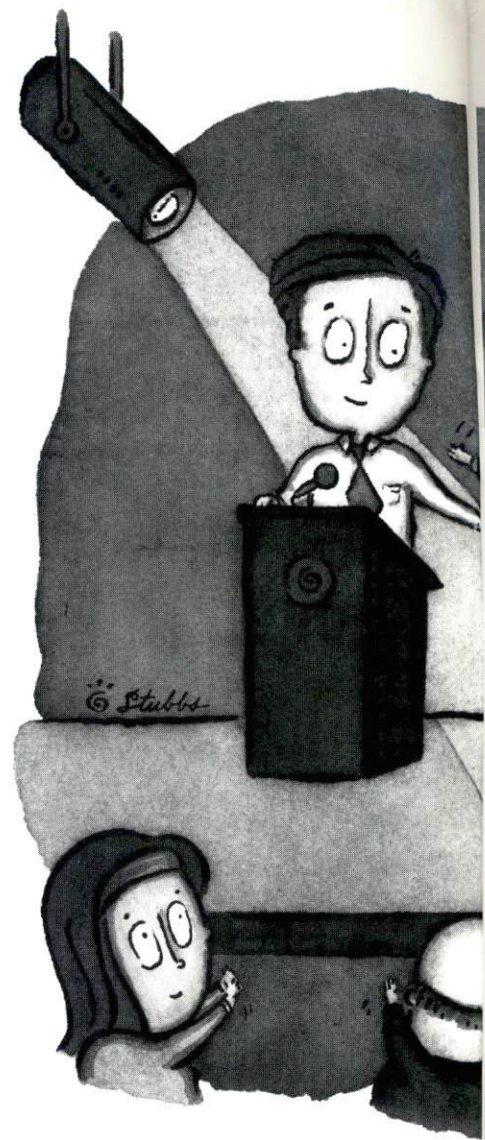
Which of these two comments motivates you to improve: “Your speeches will never be good until you prepare your material better” or “Would you consider practicing your speech out loud 10 times before presenting it to the club? This would help improve your pauses, pronunciation of words, and flow of material?”

According to our organization’s mission, the latter statement is appropriate for a Toastmasters evaluation. The first statement is a mere insult with no substantiating evidence or specific call to action. Evaluations are the backbone of Toastmasters International’s educational programs. As such, they are fuel for the survival of clubs. Toastmasters International has clear guidelines for evaluations as the foundation for the club mission statement:

*“The mission of a Toastmasters club is to provide a mutually supportive and positive learning environment in which every member has the opportunity to develop communication and leadership skills, which in turn foster self-confidence and personal growth.”*

When forming or joining a club we accept these primary standards – especially as they pertain to evaluations.

Otherwise, we could just start meeting with some people and call ourselves the Aggressive Arguers without any restrictions or meeting criteria. Plus, we could trash the positions of Ah Counter and Timer – we would be free to rant and rave without the red light ever going off. But we don’t want this. We have chosen a “mutually supportive and positive environment” for our own speeches and we are therefore



the well-intended ‘white-wash’ – an evaluation that fails to provide comments aimed at helping the speaker improve. Every evaluation should contain specific suggestions for improvement using a friendly and helpful manner (Page 7).”

Think of evaluations as you would a rose. If it is handled gently, you can smell a beautiful aroma despite the thorny stalk.

# Quality Evaluations

obligated to reciprocate and provide the same positive environment for others.

According to the basic manual, the role of an evaluator is “not to pass judgment, but to describe your reactions. This should be reflected in your language. Describe the strong points of the speech and make the overall tone of your evaluation positive and rewarding – strive to make the speaker feel good about himself or herself. Yet, avoid

The fragrance and beauty of a rose as a gift can be remembered much longer than the attached prickly thorns. Likewise, the positive comments of an evaluation can be crafted to overcome the sting of the points that need improvement.

Clubs who attract guests and convert them to members usually maintain a high standard of evaluation. Members who smile at each other and display a sense of team-

by Jill Rowlands, DTM



ILLUSTRATION BY CHARLES STUBBS

work make an attractive view for a spectator. Members do not have to be best friends, but they do have to respect each other. Without respect, the tone of voice and wording of comments will appear to be patronizing. Visitors can spot this a mile away.

The general evaluator of each meeting should comment on the effectiveness of the evaluators (do not re-evaluate the

club has some membership turnover every year, this workshop could easily be presented every 12-18 months and not ever get stale. Members who have heard it before may serve as presenters.

Once a year, the evaluation contest is offered. Participation in this contest is another way for members to re-focus on the standards the Toastmasters club mission. The evaluation is a two-to-three minute speech, offering positive points and specific suggestions for improvement.

However, the Toastmasters philosophy of effective evaluations transcends the exchange of words between the speaker and the assigned listener. It is a standard that, when followed, causes clubs and all members to flourish.

The process of improving our speaking skills is risky business. We are vulnerable when we try out a speaking technique and when we reveal ourselves through our speech topic. Very few Toastmasters are tough enough not to worry about being "royally raked over the coals," particularly when we didn't practice enough before the presentation.

Time and experience will help reduce most of the anxiety of being evaluated. When several members point out the same area needing improvement, the speaker should take notice. As speakers, we are obligated to consider changing or modifying our behavior. Part of being a speaker is to appeal to the majority of the audience – and the evaluators are part of your audience!

Clubs become strong when members respect each other, evaluate with balance,

*"Evaluations are the backbone of Toastmasters International's educational programs. As such, they are fuel for the survival of clubs."*

# Are Our Mission

speakers, just comment on the evaluators' performances). This helps maintain high evaluation standards. In addition, clubs have a wonderful tool to renew evaluation criteria by presenting the *Success Leadership* module, *The Art of Effective Evaluations*.

This module quickly teaches new members how to give quality evaluations and it alerts seasoned evaluators to missing ingredients in their own critiques. Since each

and enhance "a mutually supportive and positive environment." When the evaluation standards are high, membership growth and retention increases, and members discover that the evaluation standard is the key to the Toastmaster mission. **1**

---

*Jill Rowlands, DTM*, is a member of Metro Club 6045-56 in Houston, Texas.

# CREATE A TV

*Get advanced manual credit and have lots of fun with this unique club meeting.*

BY JANA BICKEL, ATM-S • ILLUSTRATION BY CHARLES STUBBS

24





**M**E, ON TELEVISION? FORGET IT, I'M NOT AN ACTOR! Sound familiar? Whenever I saw a camera, I moved out of the way and no amount of persuasion would make me change my mind – that is, until last October. That's when I first picked up the "Communicating on Television" advanced manual, and started thumbing through it. Suddenly, I stopped thinking. My attention was arrested by the intriguing assignments and

**1 Find a director.** Putting on a talk show is like producing a Broadway play. Even with a script you need a director, someone to take charge and direct the flow of activities. In the case of HUD Toastmasters, we were lucky to have a club member with film production experience. Although you may not have such a person in your club, you might have someone interested or experienced in working with video cameras.

# TALK SHOW

possibilities spread out before me, specifically, "Being a Talk Show Host" and/or "Being a Guest on a Talk Show." My head was in the clouds. I could see it now: I could be the next Oprah Winfrey! I read on.

In the following two months, I became involved in the staging of two talk shows, one at each of the clubs I belong to. Each club produced a different kind of talk show. Both were a tremendous hit.

Being involved in these talk shows has been one of the highlights of my Toastmasters career. Like to try it?

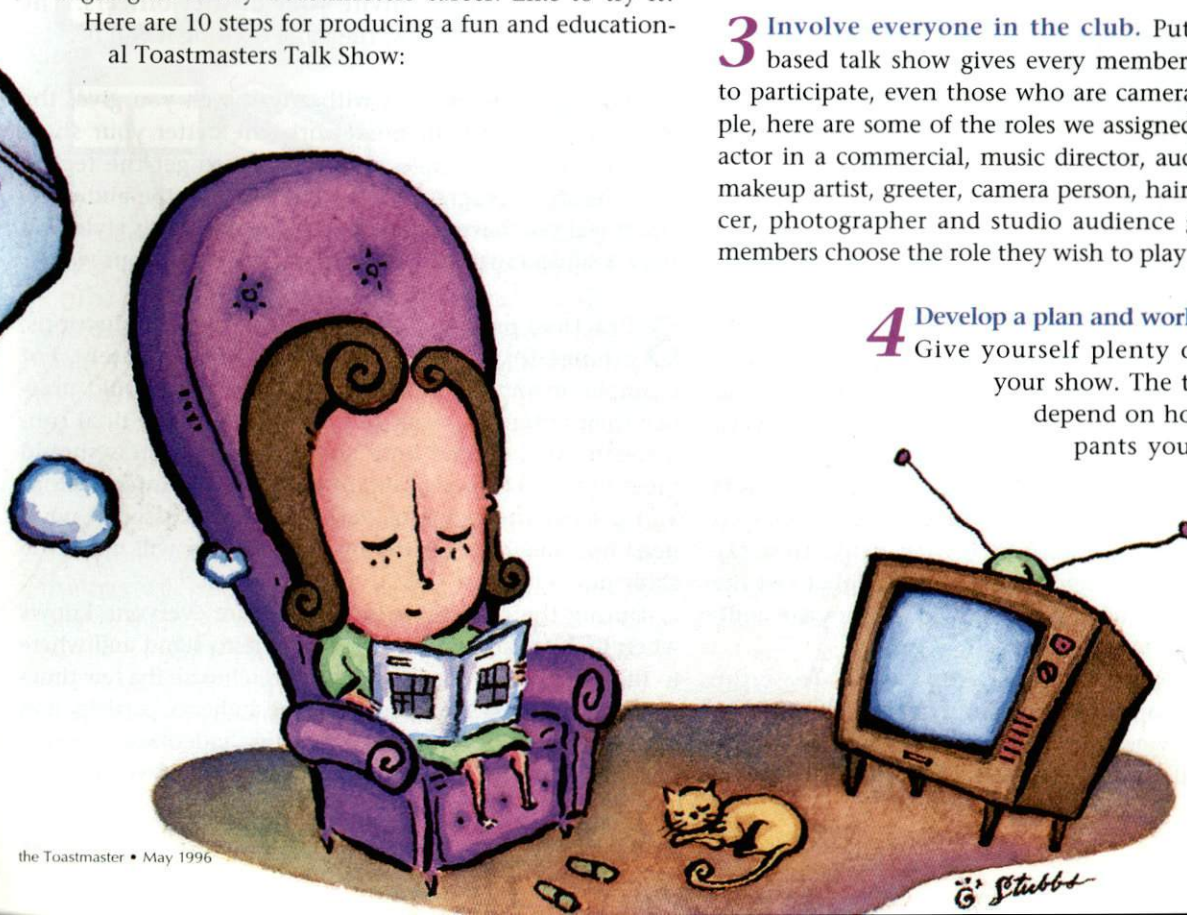
Here are 10 steps for producing a fun and educational Toastmasters Talk Show:

**2 Cast the players.** Now that you have a director, select a talk show host and find at least three other members to be guests – the more the better. First, look for members who want to give a speech in the "Communicating on Television" manual or some other manual speech that requires character development. Next, cast about for someone who's an extrovert, someone who has always wanted to be on television, or someone who owes you a favor.

**3 Involve everyone in the club.** Putting on a club-based talk show gives every member an opportunity to participate, even those who are camera shy. For example, here are some of the roles we assigned: floor manager, actor in a commercial, music director, audience prompter, makeup artist, greeter, camera person, hairdresser, announcer, photographer and studio audience guests. Let your members choose the role they wish to play.

**4 Develop a plan and work out the details.** Give yourself plenty of time to plan your show. The time needed will depend on how many participants you have and how

25



big of a production you want to make. One to three months of preparation is probably sufficient. For an even greater challenge, try it as a Table Topics exercise and assign the roles on the spot.

Once you have a general plan, here are a few of the details to work out:

- **Props** – What props will you need? (Microphone, applause cards, a backdrop for the set, etc.)
- **Room arrangement** – Will you have a table for guests or just chairs? Where will the camera be positioned? Where will the commercials be performed? How will the guests enter and exit the room?
- **Scheduling** – Determine the sequence of events, the guest order, and when to break for commercials. Distribute a schedule that breaks down how many minutes participants will have to perform their roles.

- **Record the event for posterity** – Be sure that when it's all over, you have a record of the event, both on video and in still photographs.

**5** **Select a theme.** Selecting a theme is important for several reasons. It gives the guests ideas for choosing a character to play and helps the host focus on what questions to ask them. The theme also sets the tone for the show and lets the audience know what to expect. More importantly, it gives your publicity chairman ideas for advertising the event.

Pick a theme that will appeal to a wide range of people. It should be entertaining but not too controversial. At HUD Toastmasters, we selected "media violence" as our theme. Our characters were a Hollywood producer, the President of Parents Against Hollywood and a television psychologist. At Nova Toastmasters, we had a western theme with histor-

## "Having a special event like a talk show is a great opportunity to publicize your club."

Decide who will open the show and who will warm up the audience.

- **Format** – Will all the guests be on stage at once or will they come out one at a time? How will the host or hostess do the interview – seated with the guests or standing from the audience? Decide how to choose participants from the audience – before the show, during the break, or on the spot. Will the audience participants come down to the stage or speak from their seats?
- **Characterization** – Encourage the host and guests to assume a character. This may involve wearing a costume, changing a hair style, assuming an exaggerated attitude or adopting an accent. Dare to be outrageous!
- **Commercials** – Commercials liven up the show. This was particularly the case at my club, HUD Toastmasters, where a committee of four worked out three skits. One commercial was for a thigh cream, another was an appointment with a psychic, and the third was a dating service. Another alternative, the one we used at Nova Toastmasters, was to have one-person commercials. All the commercials were related to the Western theme – a travelling troop of players, horse liniment, etc.
- **Audience participation** – Make sure the audience gets into the spirit of the event. During the show, have a member prompt the audience with cards that say "applaud," "boo," "laugh," etc. If you're going to let the audience ask the guests questions, make sure the audience is prepared with questions in advance.
- **The closing** – End the show with a bang. Tease the audience with topics for upcoming shows. Provide an address for the viewers "at home" if they want tickets to the show. Invite them to share their lifestyles with you.

ical characters like Mark Twain, Wyatt Earp, Josey Earp, John Wesley Hardin and Pauline Cushman.

**6** **Take it up.** Having a special event like a talk show is a great opportunity to publicize your club. Be sure to give your Vice President Marketing enough time to advertise the show, prepare flyers, newspaper articles, etc. Encourage members to invite friends, relatives and other prospective members. Invite your district officers. The more people at your show, the more exciting it will be.

**7** **Do your research.** As with any speech you give, the more you do your homework, the better your show will be. Watch a couple of talk shows to get the feel of how the show progresses from one guest to the audience. Don't feel you have to imitate a particular host's style or a show's subject matter. This is your show. Do it your way.

**8** **Practice, practice, practice.** For larger productions, arrange for some groups to rehearse separately. For example, members working on commercials should practice their entrances, exits and timing before the final run-through. At the same time, the talk show hostess should meet with each guest, obtain biographical information, and discuss the range of topics to be discussed. Guests need not memorize their parts; spontaneity will make the show more lively.

During the final rehearsal, make sure everyone knows when to enter and when to exit, where to stand and where to sit. If a segment doesn't work right, rehearse it a few times until it is right. Be sure to rehearse the audience participation segment a few times. If time permits, videotape your rehearsal and play it back. Make whatever changes you can.

Participants should review the manual on "Communicating on Television" prior to doing the show. It has some very useful tips for camera-eye contact and body movement, use of microphones and visual aids.

**9 Put on the show.** Ask all participants to arrive at least 20 minutes before the event. Arrange for stand-ins. Designate members to greet guests and direct them where to sit.

Start on time. Like any meeting, timeliness is important. You don't want to lose your audience. Once the show has started, keep it moving by having a floor manager watch the pacing.

If something goes wrong during the show, fix it. For example, during our show, the banner fell down. The floor manager cut the action, fixed the banner and resumed the show a few seconds later. Nobody blinked an eyelash.

Adjust the audience participation segment according to the level of interest. If several members of the audience are vigorously waving their hands, make sure one person doesn't monopolize the time. If, on the other hand, the audience suffers from stage fright, the host should move to a contingency plan. During my stint as hostess for the HUD Toastmasters Talk Show, a long, deadly silence followed my request for questions from the audience. I almost panicked. So plan ahead. Have one or more members ready with questions.

Don't be surprised if the show doesn't take as long as you planned. Each segment goes faster in real life than

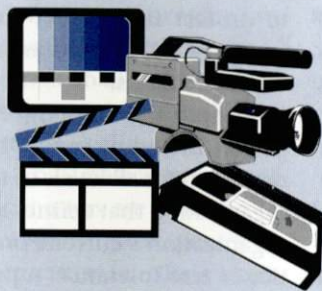
it does during the practice. Our show clocked in 45 minutes, 15 minutes earlier than planned. No problem. We used that time to promote our club and mingle with the guests.

After the show, don't forget to thank everyone – the audience, the guests, the helpers. This is a Toastmasters tradition.

**10 Evaluate your experience.** As with any speech, evaluation is the key to learning from the experience and improving your skills. Set aside a time for viewing the tape. Take notes. Speaking in front of a television is quite different from other public speaking. One thing we noticed during our evaluation of the HUD Toastmasters Talk Show was that the guests and hostess did not look at the camera enough. Our first instinct was to look at each other. This works well in real life, but not on camera.

Do it! Put on a talk show. Start planning it today. Be the host or hostess and experience the challenge of being the focal point of the show. Be a guest and assume a character totally unlike yourself. Develop or brush up on your camera skills by operating the camera and experimenting with different angles. Work on a commercial by yourself or with a group. Be the director or floor manager and direct the activity. No matter what role you choose to play, it will be a fantastic learning experience. **T**

*Jana Bickel, ATM-S*, is a member of Nova Club 5507-52 and HUD Club 8231-52 in Los Angeles, California.



## YOU AND THE TELEVISION CAMERA

■ "Where do I look?" is a common question from those about to appear on television for the first time. "Do I look at the camera, the studio audience or the host?"

The answer is, "It depends on the situation." Newscasters and those presenting announcements or demonstrations generally should look directly at the camera that is "on the air." This camera is designated by a bright red "tally" light on top. Be careful not to let your eyes wander - you will appear nervous or to have lost your place.

Occasionally, a different camera will go on the air. When this happens, the red tally light on the camera will go off and the red light on the other camera will go on, or the floor manager will point to another camera. Simply transfer your gaze to the other camera as smoothly as possible. Remember, the camera is your audience. Talk to it as you would talk to a friend. Don't stare at it wide-eyed.

If you are a guest on an interview program without a studio audience, you should look directly at the television inter-

viewer, not at the camera. If there is a studio audience, you should look at it occasionally. Don't dart your eyes back and forth between the interviewer and the audience, however. Direct your eyes to the audience slowly, and look at it for several seconds before turning your head back.

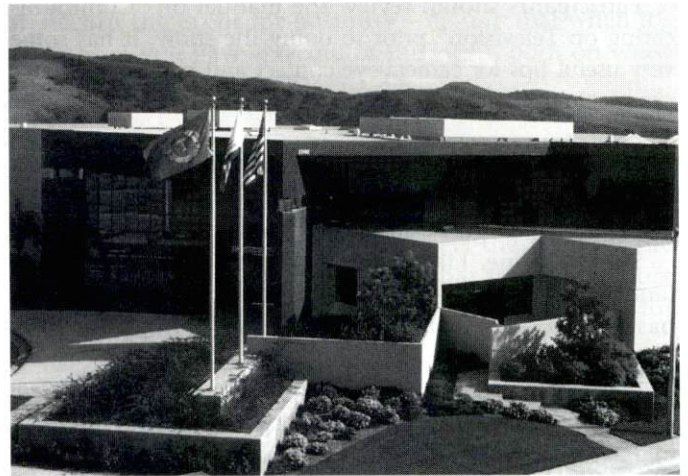
Keep your attention focused on the interviewer. Ignore the television monitors, lights and cameras being moved and the stage crew darting back and forth, and don't stare off into space. Don't do anything you wouldn't want to be seen doing in front of thousands of people!

When you are the interviewer or talk show host, your eye contact with the camera, guest and/or audience varies. When greeting your viewers and introducing guests, you should look at the camera or, if there is a live studio audience, at the audience. When interviewing your guest, however, you should maintain eye contact with the guest, with only occasional looks at the camera or audience. If someone else is the focus of attention and you are in the background, be careful not to detract attention from the other person and ruin the show.

# Sharing the Vision of Excellence

*"Our past prepares us to meet the challenges of the future."*

RALPH C. SMEDLEY



In describing his impressions of the first half of his term as International President, Ian Edwards, DTM, told the Board of Directors in February that he enjoyed his fall visits to seven districts in North America. "I was impressed with the pride, dedication, and commitment to excellence of our district leaders and Toastmasters members," he said.

This was particularly evident during his special visit to the Republic of China Council of Toastmasters in Taipei, Taiwan, where he said "many of our members are corporate leaders who have joined to improve their communication skills in English, the language of international trade." He said he was very impressed with the level of talent of those members and with their pride in and enthusiasm for the Toastmasters program. "They even had 24 contestants in the Council Speech Contest!"

President Edwards travelled from Montana to Mississippi, from Georgia to California, and from Texas to Washington State, with a stop in Illinois, visiting districts 17, 54, 29, 14, 25, 33, and 9. He met with leaders of corporations, government agencies, medical centers and educational institutions, all of whom acknowledged the significant role Toastmasters can play in improving employee skills. In fact, Edwards said, "The value that our Toastmasters program offers during a time of great change in the corporate work environment is one of our greatest selling points."

He said the "town hall" type of demonstration meeting with question-and-answer sessions proved particularly effective in informing business leaders and the public about the wide array of Toastmasters programs. President Edwards also had the opportunity to promote the organization through interviews on television and radio talk shows, through extensive articles in newspapers and magazines, and through personal meetings with corporate leaders.

He concluded his report by saying, "When I asked 'What makes your club an excellent club?' the most frequent response was, 'The support and caring of the members in helping me accomplish my goals.' Yes, the Club Mission is alive and well!"

The Board will meet again on August 21, during the International Convention in St. Louis, Missouri.

## BOARD ACTION:

After splitting up into its component committees for discussion, the Board reconvened and took the following action:

- Approved expansion of the warehouse at World Headquarters by adding addi-

tional storage shelves and a mezzanine and approved the purchase of a forklift for use in the warehouse.

- Adopted a policy that prohibits the establishment of special foundations, affiliate organizations, and other legal entities in order to accept

contributions in the name of Toastmasters. The Ralph C. Smedley Memorial Fund remains the sole repository for major charitable contributions to the organization.

- Approved a boundary change between District 9 and District 7.

- Adopted a policy on Board of Directors confidentiality that would allow certain items to be kept confidential for legal reasons and to protect the best interests of the organization.

- Considered and rejected a proposal to provide members with a Toastmasters credit card through an affinity card program. The program was rejected in order to protect the privacy and integrity of our organization's members.

- Adopted a harassment policy (including sexual harassment) for all levels of the organization that defines the organization's current practice of zero tolerance. A procedure for handling personal conduct matters was also adopted.

- Approved the inclusion of an indemnification and release statement and A Toastmasters Promise on the Application for Membership Form 400.

- Clarified and adopted new provisions in the procedural rules for International Officer and Director Candidates. Hospitality suites were defined more clearly. Provisions were included that prohibits candidates from visiting Clubs, Districts and Dis-

trict Officers outside their declared home Region. Overseas candidates may not visit any Clubs, District, or District Officers in the United States and Canada. In addition, display or distribution of audio and/or video materials is not allowed.

■ Clarified provisions in the Code of Ethics and Conduct policy regarding involvement of non-Toastmasters and/or former Toastmasters in the business of the organization. No Toastmaster shall assist, support, aid, facilitate, invite, or condone any conduct by any former Toastmaster, or any other non-Toastmaster, which has the purpose or effect of interfering in the programs, proceedings, or affairs of Toastmasters International or its member Clubs.

For example, former Toastmasters who appear at a Toastmasters event and who attempt to exercise undue influence on the proceedings shall not be aided or supported by any Toastmaster. On the other hand, non-Toastmaster spouses of Toastmasters are welcome to accompany their spouses at Toastmasters functions where spouse participation is customary and appropriate.

■ Reaffirmed the value of the District Assistance Program and recommended revisions.

■ Granted District 34P, Mexico, full District status effective July 1, 1996, and commended the District for its performance in the Distinguished District Program.

■ Reviewed a reformation plan submitted by District 56 and directed the District to proceed with the reformation process.

■ Made additions to policy to make it clear that no Dis-

trict can change, modify, or add to District Officer position titles nor change the function of these positions as described in the District Administrative Bylaws.

■ Assigned primary responsibility for promoting achievement in the Distinguished Club Program to the Lt. Governor Education and Training; Reaffirmed that the LGET is responsible for training, which should focus on the achievement of the Toastmasters International Vision, Mission, and Promise.

■ Strengthened policy regarding District fiscal management, putting into place financial control that will better enable Districts to carry out their fiduciary responsibilities in the use of Toastmasters International funds entrusted to Districts.

#### THE BOARD ALSO:

■ Reviewed a draft of a new Success/Leadership module on working in teams and commended World Headquarters on its quality. The module should be available for purchase in September 1996. Watch for announcements about its availability in *The Toastmaster*, *TIPS*, and the *District Newsletter*.

■ Discussed the timing and method of Club Officer training by Districts and recommended that to receive credit for the Distinguished Club Program beginning July 1, 1997, Club Officers must be trained between June 1–July 31 and/or December 1–January 31.

The reporting form must be sent into World Headquarters postmarked no later than August 31 for the June-July period and February 28 for the December-January period.

To receive credit, Club Officers must be trained by authorized District representatives in a live training session. While audiovisual aids may be used to enhance training, they may not be the sole method of training. This training should be based on material supplied by Toastmasters International.

■ Discussed how to help Clubs build membership and recommended that Clubs be encouraged to use tools like *The Successful Club Series* and *Patterns in Programming* in their Club meetings, and that they regularly include short educational presentations focusing on critical success factors and quality meetings.

Districts are asked to encourage Area Governors to present "Moments of Truth" during Club visits and Area Council meetings, and to publicize and encourage the use of Club building materials available from World Headquarters in their newsletters.

■ Reviewed how Districts build Clubs, recommending a greater emphasis on prospecting for new Clubs at all organization levels and reaffirming that District Governors need to focus resources on both Club extension and existing Club support. Districts also are encouraged to involve Area and Division Governors in Club building, to publicize demonstration meetings well in advance, and use Speechcraft programs to help start new Clubs.

■ Discussed how Districts identify and assist weak Clubs and recommended Districts keep in contact with Area Governors and Clubs and use Area Report of Club

Visit forms and Toastmasters International reports to determine weak Clubs.

Districts should help weak Clubs by conducting Speechcraft programs for them, using Club Support Committees and the Club Specialist program, and conducting programs from "The Successful Club Series." Districts also are encouraged to have stronger Clubs and/or Club Visitation Committees assist weak Clubs and also to present low member Club seminars at District Conferences.

The Board also recommended that World Headquarters draft a Club Assistance Contract which would be completed and signed by the Club President and Club Specialist.

■ Discussed how Districts identify and assist Clubs that are not producing CTMs and ATMs, suggesting Districts identify these Clubs by using reports provided by World Headquarters and by receiving feedback from Area Governors based on their Club visitations, Area Council meetings, and other Club contacts.

Districts can assist these Clubs by promoting weekly Club meetings, encouraging the display of Member Program Progress Charts, using the District newsletter to promote the value of educational completions, encouraging Clubs to recognize members' educational accomplishments, and encouraging Clubs to help all members set and achieve educational goals.

The Board also recommended Districts emphasize the minimum Club standards in their communications and contacts with Clubs and members. **T**



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.

- William E. (Bill) Baxter, 4438-F
- Bruce F. Meaker, 5134-2
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- Marie Knutzen, 89-33
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