

November 1984

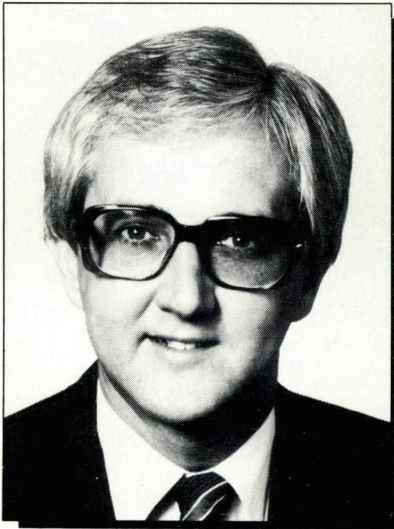
THE TOASTMASTER



Special Issue:
Tackling Special Speaking Problems

Breaking Communication Barriers

A popular part-time job for students in New York in the late '50s was to work as store clerks in local supermarkets. So, in my last year of high school and for four years of college, I worked stocking the shelves and operating the cash registers in a small A & P Market in Yonkers. I loved the work because it was a nice distraction from the pressures of engineering school.



One day I remember speaking to a new-hire—a butcher who had recently immigrated from an English-speaking country in Europe. He spoke so rapidly that I had a hard time understanding him. As experienced as I was with the wonderful accents and dialects common to the New York area, I still had to ask him to repeat his sentences slowly.

Similarly, when I first moved from New York to the Los Angeles area, I found many people asking me to do the same thing—"don't talk so fast." Even back in 1964 when I tried to explain a moving vehicle violation to an East Los Angeles traffic court, the judge asked me

"to slow down to 35 miles per hour."

It wasn't until I joined Toastmasters International that I was able to take definite corrective action, not only to slow my speaking rate but to rid myself of most dialect-type roadblocks to effective communication.

A watchful grammarian and an effective evaluator fulfill two very important assignments at a club meeting. They are not there to eliminate your foreign accents or regional dialects, but they can tell you if you're being understood, and that's very important. In my case, I was told on many occasions to give each syllable its proper volume of air and to use the "power of the pause."

If you face a unique challenge in communicating your ideas to your audience, before your presentation discuss with your evaluator your plans to meet that challenge. Don't be discouraged if you are unsuccessful in your initial attempts to eliminate these challenges and roadblocks. Speaking habits developed over many decades are not readily altered.

Effective communication is a skill and it takes both knowledge and practice to enhance that skill. Our weekly club meetings offer us many opportunities for practice and progress.

For those Toastmasters who are not hindered by a regional style or dialect in word pronunciation, the pre-speech conference with your evaluator is still very important. If you think in terms of each opportunity to speak at club meetings as an opportunity "to experiment" with the Toastmasters communication formulas, a properly prepared experiment with a watchful evaluator will always produce more meaningful "test" results.

If you wonder how the Los Angeles traffic court judge ruled in my case back in 1964, he dismissed the violation after listening to my excuse. He was patient enough to give me sufficient time to express myself.

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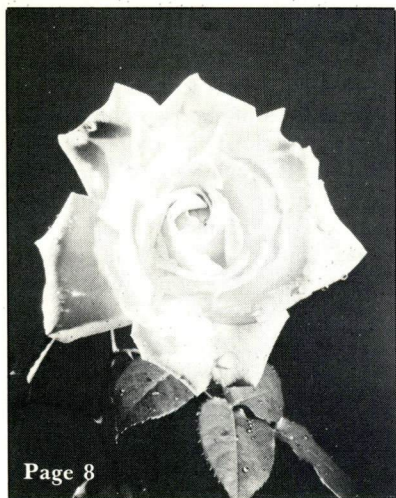
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Page 8

FEATURES

5

**Sculpt Your Speech
from Research**

by Thomas Montalbo, DTM

8

**Women—The Toughest
Audience of All?**

by Marcella L. Murphy

10

**Tricks for Memorizing
Your Speech**

by Gene Perret

15

**Public Speaking in
Private Places**

by Niamh O'Kiersey

19

Mastering that Awful Moment

by Mark Bruce

23

TI Board Report

Page 19

DEPARTMENTS

4

Update

14

How To

22

Letters

28

Hall of Fame

21

Look Ma! No Notes!

by Barney Kingston

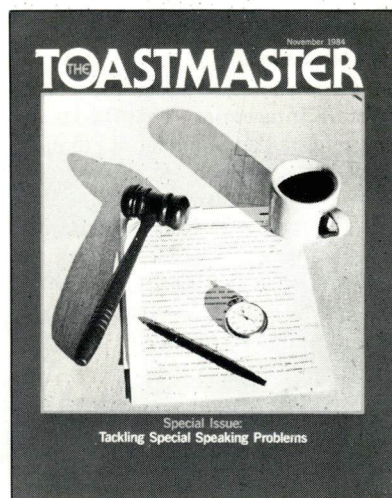
25

Quick! Think on Your Feet!by Diana Wickes, CTM and
Dora J. Reynolds, CTM

26

Be Prepared for Table Topics

by Kathy M. Schmitz



COVER

Speechmakers face a variety of unique problems, from gathering and using data to memorizing material to facing sometimes unfriendly audiences. In this special issue we examine these challenges and present tools for mastering them.

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New WHQ Manager Announced

Frank Chess has joined the Toastmasters International World Headquarters staff as Manager of Finance. In this capacity, he will also serve as Secretary-Treasurer on the Board of Directors of Toastmasters International. Frank graduated from Fordham University in New York City in 1969 and completed his graduate studies at Long Island University in 1972.

Ticking Timer Mistaken for Bomb

Toastmasters are familiar with a speech that goes over like a bomb, but a recent event in England nearly brought the house down.

The English Army's bomb squad was called to the Oxford Union in Oxford, England, when passersby heard ticking coming from a box (which contained a Toastmasters lectern and timer) and thought it was a terrorist's explosive device. Deciding it was better to be safe than sorry, the Army blew up the box.

The lectern and timer belonged to the Oxford Speakers Club 3297-71, which conducts its meetings at the Oxford Union. Club member Andrew Moss said, "I'd borrowed the lectern and I put it in a box and simply put it back where I had found it, in the billiards room at the Union."

Security-conscious staff at the Union saw wires sticking out of the box, heard the ticking and called the police. They evacuated the building and sent for the bomb squad whose officers covered the box with sandbags and blew it to pieces.

Upon learning of the lectern's fate, Moss said, "I was quite distraught. Some of our cups and trophies were in the box too, though probably the damage didn't come to more than 100 pounds. Now I think it is really quite amusing." Luckily, there was no damage to the billiards room.

Toastmaster Beauty Takes Title

Juli Sunday, a 21-year-old Native American and an Oklahoma Toastmaster, has been named Miss

Oklahoma and will represent the state in the 1985 Miss America Pageant.

Juli joined the Black Gold Toastmasters Club 2599-16 in January, 1984, to receive evaluation on her verbal communication skills. She spoke to several outside clubs in the Speaker/Evaluation Exchange Program. The input was invaluable to her.



Juli's quest for the Miss Oklahoma title began in 1981, when she won the Miss Owasso Crown and placed in the top 10 of the Miss Oklahoma Pageant. In 1982 she won the Miss Grand Lake title and was first runner-up for Miss Oklahoma. In 1983, Juli was named Miss Tulsa State Fair and again won first runner-up for Miss Oklahoma.

Juli accepted her "defeats" with determination to improve her areas of weakness and consequently joined Toastmasters. Juli is quick to say her Toastmasters training has been one of the ingredients to her success.

Toastmasters Wed During Meeting

Frequently we hear that, to ensure vitality in our clubs, we need to incorporate variety and innovative programs in our meetings. District 33's Division D clubs in Las Vegas, Nevada, have always been strong advocates of this philosophy and have always scheduled interesting programs. However, a recent joint meeting of I'll Drink to That (IDTT) Club 3254-33 and Windjammers Club 2628-33 established a new standard

for variety.

The joint meeting convened with the usual program scheduled. About 60 members of the two clubs were present and the Toastmaster, IDTT President Pate Church, ATM, was a little surprised at the number of visiting Toastmasters from other Las Vegas Clubs. In addition, it was unusual for 12 non-Toastmaster guests to be present.

Everything progressed normally until the first scheduled IDTT speaker, Judge Earle White, DTM, called for some assistance from the audience. Even when White donned his judicial robes, Toastmaster Church was not shaken since two judges are current members of IDTT and courtroom drama enactments are not foreign to the club. Toastmaster Church's composure did slip slightly, though, when music began wafting from the rear of the room.

The members' puzzlement ended when Jean Desmond, resplendent in a white lace dress and carrying a bouquet, entered on the arm of IDTT member Mike Leviant, CTM. As Jean was informed later by the groom, Frank Poyet, Area Eight Governor, it was probably the first time a bride entered to a standing ovation.

According to Judge White's evaluator (Toastmaster Church recovered quickly and moved directly to the evaluation phase upon completion of the ceremony), Judge White evidenced an unusual amount of nervousness for a DTM while performing the ceremony.

Frank, the groom, explained the surprise wedding meeting to the audience: Since most of the couple's friends are members of the two clubs, he and the bride felt it appropriate to be married in a surprise wedding at a joint meeting. Since only about 10 of the 80 people present were forewarned, it was indeed a surprise.

Upon adjournment, the wedding cake was wheeled in and the bar opened for a reception. All present agreed the ceremony did add variety to the meeting and was one they would always remember. Jean and Frank are now searching for ideas to top their unique meeting.

Sculpt You, Research from Research

by Thomas Montalbo, DTM

Research is a high-hat word that scares a lot of people. It needn't. Essentially, it is nothing but a state of mind—a friendly, welcoming attitude toward change. It's going out to look for change, instead of waiting for it to come to you. It is the problem-solving mind as contrasted to the let-well-enough-alone mind." This is how Charles Kettering, the famous engineer and inventor, defined research.

Research can be the treasure map to gold for speechmakers. It can make the difference between a speech that's ordinary and one that's superior. For unless your talk includes facts, figures, quotations or other pertinent information obtained through research, your speech may fall flat.

Speaking only about what you're personally familiar with limits your scope as a speaker and as a person. On the other hand, researching broadens your range of perception and enlarges your opportunities for speaking.

Yet, for many of us, the mere thought of doing research is unpleasant and research is often skipped or done haphazardly. Why?

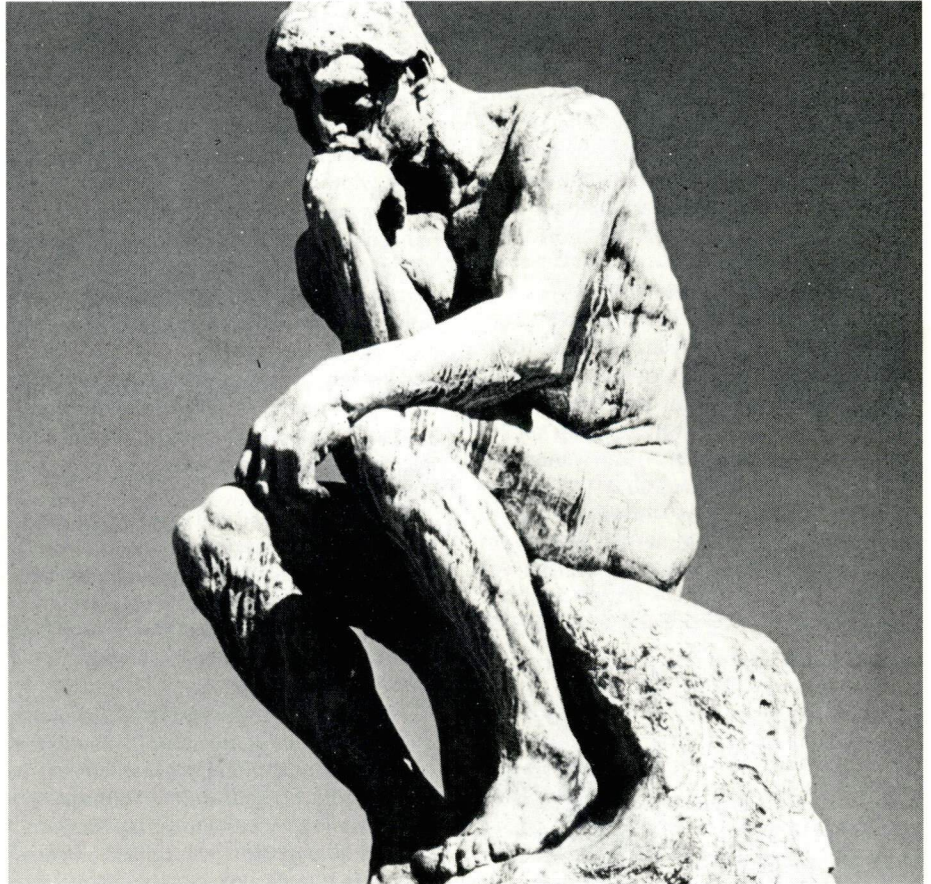
People link research with scientists and scholars. This connection is found even in dictionaries, which define research as "scientific or scholarly investigation or inquiry." Not all research, however, is intended for or results in laboratory discoveries, inventions or doctoral dissertations.

The word "research" comes from the French term "rechercher," defined as "to seek out, to search." These words give meaning and value to research when applied to speakers.

The purpose of researching speech topics is to find facts and other material that can be worded into your talks to give them more substance and strengthen their effectiveness.

Abraham Lincoln sought authentic information to answer the question, "What was the attitude of the founding fathers on the control of slavery in the federal territories?" This was a topic he planned to address at Cooper's Union in New York City before he became president.

Lincoln sifted through records of congressional proceedings; examined many



laws, resolutions, speeches and letters on the subject; delved into political history books and read biographies of the founding fathers.

It turned out to be perhaps the most important speech of Lincoln's career. His research paid off. Widely acclaimed, the speech led to his nomination for president less than three months later.

Horace Greeley, editor and political leader, thought it was "...the very best political address which I ever listened to—and I have heard some of Daniel Webster's grandest."

Make Your Topic Specific

Right at the start, bear in mind that speech research doesn't require you to exhaust every conceivable resource.

Speaker Winston K. Pendleton tells the story of a little girl who went to the library to find out about the Ming Dynasty for a school assignment. She asked for help and the librarian brought her a stack of books about two feet high.

"There," said the librarian, "that will tell you all about the Ming Dynasty." The little girl thanked her and added, "But I don't want to know that much about it."

As the schoolgirl discovered, chances are that far more material exists on your topic than you care or need to know. So before you begin your research, you must know exactly what you're looking for.

Determine as precisely as possible your specific topic. Set your own common-sense limits. How broad is your subject? Will you dig deeply into it? Touch only highlights? Present just a few aspects?

Answers to such questions depend on your audience and how much time you've been allotted to speak. Try to fix in your mind how much you can expect your audience to know or to *want* to know about your subject, or how much they hope *you* know about it.

Narrow your topic down to the specific phases that concern you and your audience and that can be handled in the assigned time span. The more you narrow your topic, the less you have to research.

Title Your Purpose

Having limited your topic doesn't mean you can dash off to the nearest library. Not yet. Not until you select the purpose of your speech. Do you intend to inform, persuade, inspire or entertain?

Although you may aim to achieve several objectives, only one objective should dominate if your speech is to sound unified. Without the main purpose in mind, your research would tend to spread widely and loosely, moving in various directions.

Probably the best way to use your research time and effort is first to create a title that embodies your speech's topic and major purpose. Such a title will localize your research in the narrowest possible area as well as keep you on target and prevent you from wandering into pointless research.

With a title serving you like a magnetic compass, you know the scope of your topic and the direction your re-

search should take. Now you can make a list of questions that require researching. Use the list as your research guide.

Research Sources

• **Encyclopedia**—A useful starting point for researching almost any subject is a general encyclopedia, found in the reference section of all libraries. The encyclopedia is a good place to begin because it gives you a brief, factual overview of your subject.

Usually, in researching for speeches, you don't want or need articles containing exhaustive details. Someone said, "Encyclopedias are the barebones of all subjects and the rotundity of none."

A wide range of encyclopedias is available, varying from the one-volume compilation of the *Columbia Encyclopedia Americana* to the 30-volume *Encyclopedia Americana*. If time permits, you may find it worthwhile to consult more than one encyclopedia.

Written by experts in their field, encyclopedia articles are arranged alphabetically by subject. At the end of most articles you'll find a short list of books on the subject.

• **Library card catalog**—The next source of information to check is the library card catalog, an alphabetical index which gives the library location of books and other publications. Every book has at least three card-catalog entries: author, title and subject.

A great research time-saver, the card catalog provides information about the book itself and offers cross-references to other books. If you follow through on the cross-references, you may find a book that pinpoints the object of your research.

Search the card catalog with a supply of three-by-five cards on hand. Use only one side of the card to write the information you need about each book (author, title, year of publication and library call number), so you won't have to return to the card catalog later.

To determine what books exist that are not in the library, refer to the *Subject Guide to Books in Print*. In this guide, available in the library reference section, you can find lists of books under particular subjects.

You rarely need to read an entire book when researching a speech topic. Each book may contain a wealth of interesting and valuable material, but much of it doesn't apply to your specific topic.

Always use a book's table of contents and index—they make it easier to locate material directly related to your topic. List page numbers on a card or sheet of paper. Referring to your list makes it unnecessary to backtrack between the

table of contents or index and the pages.

• **Standard reference books**—These are another research tool that contain material brought together from a large number of sources and arranged for your quick and convenient use.

• *World Almanac and Information Please Almanac*, updated annually and designed to give you answers to current as well as historical questions.

• John Bartlett's *Familiar Quotations*, set up chronologically by author, with key word and author indexes.

• Burton Stevenson's *Home Book of Quotations*, arranged by subject with author and key-word indexes.

• *Who's Who* books, containing noteworthy high-achievers' accomplishments and the address and phone number of each person listed.

• *Statistical Abstract of the United States*, useful for summary figures on social, political, economic and cultural activities and as a guide for further research because each chart or table provides the source of the figures.

• **Magazines and newspapers**—Not everything is written in books. To locate material that has appeared in magazines and newspapers, check such indexes as the *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature* and the *New York Times Index*.

The *Reader's Guide* is the best single source of finding reference to current and past magazine articles. It indexes the most widely-read general and non-technical magazines in the United States.

Author and subject entries are shown in one alphabetical index. Each entry provides you with the necessary information for locating the article in the magazines: author, title, name of publication, volume number, pages and date.

The *New York Times Index* contains abstracts of that newspaper's contents, arranged chronologically under subject headings, with date, page and column references. The *New York Times Index* can also serve as a general index to the dates of news items related to your subject. You take the *New York Times* dates and find news stories on those days in other newspapers (since most newspapers are not indexed).

Another useful research guide is the annual index to *Vital Speeches*, a semi-monthly magazine which prints the full texts of current speeches on virtually all subjects.

This index consists of two sections: (1) speakers with titles of their speeches; (2) subjects with speech titles and speakers' names. Under each listing, the index notes the issue in which the speech appears. *Vital Speeches* is on file in libraries throughout the United States.

• **Government and private associations**—A library is not the only research



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setting. The best and latest information may not yet have been published, or obtained by libraries. If you can't find certain facts and statistics on your topic in books, magazines, newspapers and other publications, you may want to write to various agencies of the United States federal government for information on many specialized areas.

To determine the appropriate agency to contact for your research, see the *U.S. Government Organization Manual*, which describes the purpose and programs of most agencies and lists names and titles of key personnel. See also the *Congressional Directory* for information on the government's legislative branch.

Private associations can also be helpful. Practically all professions, trades and industries have at least one such association. Names and addresses of persons and organizations can be obtained from a variety of directories available in public libraries, including:

- *National Directory of Addresses and Telephone Numbers*—This Directory lists leading U.S. corporations alphabetically as well as by industry, and indexes the corporations according to specific products or services.

- *Encyclopedia of Associations*—Organized alphabetically by subject, this guide lists national and international organizations, both professional and trade associations.

- *Thomas Register of American Manufacturers*—This guide covers just about every product, listed alphabetically.

Writing for Research

Using government agencies or private associations for research requires letter-writing. If you follow these steps, you improve your chances of receiving reasonably prompt replies:

1. Address your letter to a person by *name*, if you can, rather than "To Whom It May Concern," "Director of Research," or "Public Relations Officer."
2. Ask specific, short questions. Number the questions, if more than one. Let the person receiving your letter know the *exact* information you need.
3. Tell why you need the information and how you're going to use it.
4. State a deadline.
5. Neatly type your letter, preferably on only one page.
6. Leave room in the margins or at the bottom for short, handwritten answers. Or ask the addressee to respond on the reverse side of your letter.
7. Enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

Research Note-Taking

Note-taking methods during speech

research are a matter of individual preference. But these suggestions may help:

- Use a pad of letter-size, lined paper. Using 8½-by-11 sheets for such note-taking is better than writing on 3-by-5 or 5-by-8 cards because you have more space.

- Confine the notes you put on each sheet to one aspect of your topic. At the top of the sheet write a key word to indicate the nature of the notes, and identify the source (title, author, date of publication and page number).

- Write on only one side of each sheet; use a different colored pen for each subtopic.

- Jot down only the gist of the material you're interested in. Writing in your own words instead of the author's forces you to absorb your newly-acquired knowledge and imprints the information on your mind.

- Include the quote marks and the source or author when you use a direct quotation.

- Shuffle the note sheets around to help you organize your speech directly from the notes after you've completed your research.

Putting It All Together

Know when to stop researching. Don't dig down to bedrock. The law of diminishing returns applies to research as it does to business. After a certain point, profits diminish in proportion to the amount of further investment.

Likewise, research results decline in proportion to the amount of additional time spent. If the last quarter of your planned research time has yielded reduced productivity, you should stop searching.

Research alone doesn't make a speech and it is not an end in itself. Through research you gather certain raw material. Then it's time to take the raw materials and mold them into shape for your speech, just as the sculptor takes lumps


of clay and carves them into works of art. That calls for you to interpret the research materials and to carve them into your speech.

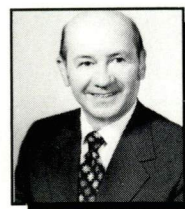
Research and Serendipity

Look at research not as a difficult or disagreeable task, but as a quest for knowledge and a method to strengthen your speech. After all, acquiring knowledge is among life's greatest pleasures.

There's also the possibility you might stumble upon fascinating facts and ideas that will generate several other speeches from the same body of research. The law of serendipity plays its part in research as it does in the fairy tale, *The Three Princes of Serendip*.

While searching for a fortune, the three princes made unexpected and lucky discoveries which turned out to be more important than what they were originally looking for. So it is in research. Your best bits of information may be the ones you find while searching for something else.

In any case, research provides you with material that can help you add dramatic impact to what you have to say. So next time you're writing a speech, gather the clay of research and create a speech sculpture! 



Thomas Montalbo, DTM, a member of *Sparkling Toastmasters Club 3602-47* in St. Petersburg, Florida, has been active in Toastmasters since 1963, is a Past Area Governor and has received a Presidential Citation for his articles in *The Toastmaster*. A former Financial Manager for the U.S. Treasury Dept., he holds a BA degree in English and an MBA degree in management and is the author of *The Power of Eloquence*, a public-speaking book published by Prentice-Hall, 1984.

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by Marcella L. Murphy

A FEMALE PROFESSIONAL OFFERS METHODS
FOR TACKLING THE ALL-WOMEN AUDIENCE.

You're a sought-after speaker on the lecture circuit. You are considered an expert in your field. You've made the rounds of the Rotary and Lions clubs, your professional organizations, maybe even colleges. You always leave them laughing and applauding.

Then you receive an invitation to speak that threatens to ruin your career as a lecturer. An all-women's professional association, impressed with your reputation as a speaker, has asked you to be the keynote speaker at their forthcoming convention.

Suddenly, the Toast of the Town goes into instant panic. Women! What do you say to a room full of women? You don't want to waste your time trying to explain everything to a group who cannot possibly grasp the complexity of your subject. And the vibrant good humor that has been your bread and butter—you can't tell those jokes to ladies!

Believe it or not, speaking to women, especially professional women, is really not different from speaking to a mixed or all-male audience. If you bear in mind the same concepts of audience appeal and good taste that should govern all public speaking, you will win over your new-found female following as easily as you did the men.

Fear of female audiences is no different from fear of audiences in general, and the solution to both fears is the same. Here are a few tips to help you get over the drawing-room jitters.

- **Relax.** The women in front of you are not your mother, your menacing brat of a sister, or that sadistic teacher you had in high school who always corrected your grammar and completely ignored your brilliant ideas. This female audience invited you to speak for the same reason any other group invites you—they are interested in what you have to say and are prepared to be impressed with the way you say it. They are not just your audience, they are your fans.

- **Get to Know Your Audience.** Just as with any audience, it will be helpful to get to know the group before deciding the tone of your talk. Before the event, read some of their advertising literature, their club bulletins or newsletters, and get an idea of the organization's purposes, the kinds of programs they have already had and particularly what rela-

WOMEN

The Toughest Audience of All?

tionship their goals might have to your subject.

Find out whether the group is primarily a social club, a professional association or a service auxiliary. Do they have a professional or lay perspective on your subject?

Frequently men in technical fields have difficulty lecturing to women with similar backgrounds. They are often inordinately afraid that they are talking over the women's heads or they are overly concerned about offending feminist pride.

If you find yourself in this situation, just let common sense prevail. No one likes to be talked down to, and everyone gets bored if the language is too full of "inside" jargon to be understood.

If you are not sure of your listeners' level of understanding, you might start your talk by asking some exploratory questions. This way you can insure audience attention while you learn a little about the organization.

At a workshop on "Earth-Sheltered Housing" presented for women in the construction industry, the male speaker handled his uneasiness quite well. His talk was peppered with variations of the "stop me if you've heard this" theme.

By the time he reached the question-and-answer period, he was convinced that his female listeners were at least as knowledgeable as any construction-oriented lay group he had ever addressed, and his apologetic attitude had won the sympathy rather than the hostility of his audience.

• **Be Yourself.** The most important thing to bear in mind is that the group already knows you by your reputation. If your subject is highly technical, for example, they expect your lecture to bear the same degree of complexity as the lectures you typically deliver.

If, on the other hand, you are noted for your humor, they will be prepared for the best of your wit. Whatever you are noted for, don't be afraid to be "too (whatever) for the ladies." If that was not what they had wanted, they would not have invited you.

• **Be Prepared.** The biggest possible mistake you can make is to be poorly prepared with facts. Actually, I lied about the sadistic teacher. She is guaranteed to be lurking in the crowd somewhere, ready to call your bluff on the one item you neglected to research. She's the one who keeps grilling you on the same point for half an hour, even though it was incidental to your speech as a whole.

If you don't know an answer, don't try to fake it, and if you are not really the expert you claim to be, you had better cancel this engagement.

• **Be Sincere.** Don't profess to be a big supporter of women in the professions if you're really not. If you're afraid your beliefs will not be well-received and you do not want to deal with controversy, avoid the subject and talk about something more safe.

If you're not already known as someone interested in the advancement of women in your field, the women probably only chose you to speak because you were the best expert they could find. Don't disappoint them by getting off the subject in an effort to impress them.

BEWARE OF ENDEARMENTS!

• **Be Polite.** Remember a smile can always smooth over an awkward situation. If you take every opportunity to be gracious, you are bound to get a good reception.

One word of caution, however. Beware of endearments. Calling a woman "sweetie" or "my dear" is equivalent to patting a man on the head—either gesture may be accepted as a sign of affection, but the odds are overwhelmingly against it.

Unless your normal speech pattern is to address *everyone* as "honey," the proper form of address is "ma'am" for adult women and "miss" for younger ladies. Of course, if you can read their name tags, you will be a big hit if you call each lady by her own name.

In referring to the various officers of the club, you needn't be afraid to slip in appropriate complimentary adjectives just as you might at a Toastmasters' meeting: "my gracious hostess," "your beloved founders," "your accomplished president."

However, if you feel compelled to comment on the physical beauty of the women in your audience, do so in a way that shows you are aware their looks are not their only important quality. Make the reference short, light and not too unctious.

For example, you might say, "My speaking calendar makes me feel a little like Noah in the Bible. Last week I spoke before the Lions, the week before

that it was the Elks and tonight I have the pleasure of addressing all these lovely gazelles."

• **Pay Attention to Audience Response.** As with all audiences, humor can be very helpful. One caution, however. If your brand of humor tends to come at the expense of women, you are in big trouble.

If you stick to your style, you will certainly offend everyone, and such jokes typically don't work any better if you try to turn them around against men. (Besides, many of the women in your audience may have already heard, and been offended by, the original. Some may even have heard it from you.)

The best way to tailor your humor to a female audience is to use jokes that illustrate the same point as the anti-female gags do, but without directing the barb at women.

For example, suppose you are used to telling a joke about a very obstinate wife to illustrate the resistant sales customer. A large part of the humor here is derived from the "us vs. them" camaraderie men feel when they hear this story. If you try to change the joke's subject from an obstinate wife to a stubborn husband, you'll leave your audience wondering whose side you are on. But if you rearrange the details so that the joke's subject becomes "the bull-headed teenager"—voilà—instant audience appeal!

By keeping yourself and the audience on the same side of the joke, you maintain the "us vs. them" feeling of the original gag. In this way, not only will you survive the present ordeal intact, but you will expand your repertoire of narrative humor.

Most professional women are receptive and are eager to learn. They will probably be open to many ideas and concepts men think are 'old hat.' A female audience's receptiveness might be just the thing to make you feel your talk is worthwhile.

So go get 'em, tiger. You are long past the age for adolescent shyness. Those women are not going to bite you, so stand up straight, face them bravely and speak your piece. Who knows, you may even decide you like it. 🗣️

Marcella L. Murphy, a construction inspector, has been a member of Silver Voices Club 4607-4 and active in construction industry organizations, as well as University of California Alumni clubs.

YOUR IMAGINATION CAN WORK
MAGIC WITH MEMORIZATION.

TRICKS FOR MEMORIZING YOUR SPEECH

by Gene Perret

First of all, I'm not a memory expert or a stage personality who can meet one hundred people before a performance and then recall all of their names. I'm a comedy writer by profession, and a scatterbrain by avocation. My mom summed it up quite well when she said, "You'd forget your own head if it weren't screwed on."

My terrible memory prompted me to look for systems that would improve my ability to recall. None of the methods I'll list here are new or particularly innovative. They are astounding, though, if you give them an honest try. They require neither special ability nor long

sessions of study, and should work for you as soon as you are finished reading this article.

If you understand the principle behind these gimmicks (and they are that, but if they work, who cares?) you'll have more confidence in them and they'll work better for you. Let me explain how I discovered them.

In my work in television and in participating in some comedy productions, I noticed that a joke's straight line is forgotten more often than the punch line. There are two reasons for this.

Recall Needs a Trigger

First, the straight line is generally a

question that triggers the response—the punch line. The comedy line is easy to recall because it flows naturally from the straight line. However, no stimulus or sequence triggers the straight line.

An example of this is the questioning one must endure in applying for a loan, insurance or the like. The clerk asks you questions like "How old are you?" "Where were you born?" and so on. You don't need a cheat sheet to provide these answers, but the questioner needs a pen in hand and a sheet of paper to keep track of which questions were asked and which were answered. It's a bigger memory burden to ask the questions than to answer them.

Second, the punch line is more easily recalled because it is generally a graphic, bizarre image. Most comedy is not a series of words, but rather a visualization prompted by those words. Seeing the mental image helps the mind to recall the words. I'll demonstrate this shortly.

Based on this observation, our memories would be improved if we could find some gimmick that would trigger the recall just as a question prompted a response. The classic example is tying a string around one's finger.

We'd also need something vivid and graphic, otherwise we'd have the same problem the "string around the finger" cult often had. They knew they had something to remember, but couldn't recall what it was.

Graphic Images Help Recall

Let me show you with a simple experiment how much easier it is to recall images rather than abstract ideas. Below is a baker's dozen of simple items, numbered from one to 13. Even if you've seen this test before, take a moment to try it here. The results will be startling.

Study and try to memorize this list.

- | | |
|-------------|------------------|
| 1. Book | 8. Sink |
| 2. Crackers | 9. Ocean |
| 3. Window | 10. Baseball Bat |
| 4. Dress | 11. Encyclopedia |
| 5. Tiger | 12. Faucet |
| 6. Bicycle | 13. Pencil |
| 7. Lamp | |

Now cover the list with a card and see how many you can recall. Most people will remember the first few and the last couple of items. However, even if you are gifted enough to recall them all, try

to tell me quickly what the sixth item was...the tenth item. You'll probably have to recite them in order to do that.

Rhyme to Remember

Now try this two-part experiment. First study this rhyming list which represents the numbers from the previous list. Just reading it once or twice should serve to fix it in your memory. These words, which are easier to picture mentally than abstract numbers, are:

Bun Shoe Tree Door
Jive (for this I picture a person doing a wild dance)
Sticks Heaven Gate Wine
Pen (I picture a baby's playpen)
Elephant (arrived at by mispronouncing "eleven")
Elf Hurting (it almost rhymes with "thirteen," and I picture a person with his leg in a cast, his arm in a sling and his head bandaged.)

Go through these number representations a few times until you have them memorized.

For part two of this experiment, we'll go back to the original list of 13 items. You don't have to search back for it, because we'll go through the process together. By just reading through this with me you should be able to recall all but perhaps one or two items.

Visualize the Items

The first item is a book. Visualize a bun and then imagine yourself taking a sharp knife and cutting the bun into slices so thin that they resemble the pages of a book. Riffle the pages like you would the pages of a book. Perhaps even slide a bookmark in there.

Next, picture yourself putting your foot into your shoe and hear the crunch and feel the crumbs as the crackers that were loaded in there begin to crumble.

Visualize yourself leaning against a tree on your front lawn. The tree falls under your weight and goes crashing through your home's beautiful picture window.

For the fourth item, we see your front door. Nailed to it, like animal skins used to be nailed to a barn door, is a pretty frilly dress.

Jive symbolizes item five, so we picture a kid doing a wild dance, and his partner is a tiger. The tiger is a little confused, but dances right along any-

way.

Now pause briefly and review what you see when you recall these items: bun, shoe, three, door, jive.

For item six imagine a large pile of sticks and you riding your bicycle right into it. The bike stops, sending you flying through the air to land on your bottom.

For item seven, a lamp, picture yourself in a white robe, with angel wings and a halo. You're trying to read, but can't. You reach up to a cloud hovering overhead and pull a chain hanging from it. The cloud lights up like a huge, fluffy lamp enabling you to read more easily.

Now you swing open a gate and walk through. You immediately fall into a giant sink and struggle to keep from sliding down the drain.

Wine is the symbol for nine. Picture yourself having a romantic candlelight dinner. You open an expensive bottle of wine, but as you pour it, instead of wine coming out, the entire ocean starts pouring out of the bottle, soaking the table and washing your date right onto the floor.

Visualize putting a baby into a playpen. The child doesn't care for that so picks up a baseball bat and begins smashing the playpen to bits.

Review the Images

Again review what images you see when you think of sticks, heaven, gate, wine and playpen.

Elephants don't forget, so picture one reading an encyclopedia. He holds the encyclopedia up to his face with his trunk, and he's even wearing a pair of pince-nez glasses.

The elf which symbolizes the number twelve is too small to reach the faucet from the floor. He has to stand in the sink and reach up to turn the water on. As soon as he does, the water pours down over his head.

For thirteen, imagine a man who is hurting. His leg is in a cast, his arm is in a sling and his head is bandaged. As he walks down the hospital corridor, he slips on a pencil, goes up in the air and lands with a thud. It's cruel, but it's graphic.

Now take a moment to review elephant, elf and hurting.

You should now be able to write the entire list from memory. Note also that

you can immediately tell what the fifth item is by recalling the picture you associated with jive. If you want the twelfth item, just recall the image you have of the elf.

Another important facet of this memory gimmick you'll notice is that later today or even tomorrow, with absolutely no more effort on your part, you'll most likely still be able to recite this list of 13 items.

The preceding experiment illustrates the ease of using this method. This works fine for memorizing lists and can be used to make a mental outline for a speech. I find it somewhat cumbersome, though, because the numbers are superfluous.

Sequence is important in making a speech, but numbers are irrelevant. Who cares if "increasing productivity" is the fourth or fifth item in the speech, so long as you can remember where it belongs?

The Speech Outline in Images

Following are two methods for mentally outlining a speech which employ the same principle as the previous method—establishing the sequence, and using graphic imagery to stimulate the recall mechanism. Both of these procedures establish continuity without requiring a numbered sequence. Experiment and pick the one that works best for you.

Suppose you must deliver a speech in which you must welcome the attendees and make a few points before introducing the next speaker. Following is your outline:

- Welcome everyone
- Open with a joke about a politician
- Thank the committee for their hard work
- Ask for better participation
- Make them publicity-conscious
- Remind them to solicit new members
- Remind them of the next event, the upcoming dinner dance on March 9.

I've kept this purposely short, but the system works for longer outlines as well.

Establish a Sequence

The first method is to establish a se-

quence by mentally walking yourself through an area that is familiar to you. It can be your office, or an outdoor route, anyplace that you're familiar with.

In this example, I'll create a floor plan of a house. Remember that this is only a demonstration. When you use this, the sequence should be established by walking through *your* house or *your* office. It must be something *you* are so familiar with that remembering it is no effort at all.

Picture yourself walking up to the front door. On it is posted a huge sign, "Welcome."

You enter the door and the first thing you see is the umbrella stand. In it is a politician waving a flag, and wearing a red, white and blue tie. This reminds you to tell the great joke you know about the politician.

From there, you walk into your living room. It is a beehive of activity. Tables are set up with mailing sheets, people are licking envelopes. Other people are talking on the phones. All of them are working to make this evening a success.

You thank them for their work.

You continue your walk through your house, but in the doorway leading to the next room, one person is being man-handled. A person is shaking him and yelling at him, "You've got to do your

TO RECALL POINTS ONE, TWO, THREE, THINK BUN, SHOE, TREE.

share of the work. You're a lazy good-for-nothing." This is your reminder to make your plea for more active member participation.

You then walk into the dining room. A group of people with megaphones is standing on the dining room table. They're shouting to the whole world

what a great organization this is. One person even holds the megaphone to your ear and screams at you that this is a fantastic club. Now you recall that you want to talk a bit about publicizing the association and its activities.

Now you enter your kitchen and it too is feverish with activity. People are lined up at your kitchen table as if in a bread line, and one of your members is rubber-stamping their foreheads with red ink. The stamp reads, "New member." You recall that you have to tell your listeners to actively solicit membership.

You proceed to the laundry room and find your spouse dancing. Sure, you must tell the audience about the next activity—a dance that will be held on March 9. How do you remember the date? Well, 3/9 is the age that Jack Benny always claimed he was. And you picture your spouse dancing with Jack Benny which immediately calls to mind the number 39 or March 9.

Now you've covered all the important points of your speech with no more effort than strolling through your own home.

The route you follow establishes the sequence, and the bizarre, outlandish images you confront trigger the subject matter. The more unusual the images you visualize, the easier it will be to recall them.

Continuous Chain of Events

The second method establishes the sequence of your talk with a continuous chain of events. Again, they are all zany visualizations that take place in your mind.

You are setting a welcome mat in front of your house. That prompts you to welcome your listeners.

A politician, perhaps dressed like Uncle Sam, takes it away from you. He claims you owe that welcome mat in taxes. Tell the story about the politician.

As he walks away, he passes by a group of committee members who are working furiously folding, sealing, stamping and mailing envelopes for this event. In their enthusiasm, they pick up the politician, stamp him and stuff him into a mailbox along with the letters. You remember to thank the committee for their hard work.

A mailman comes along to take the letters, but immediately a whole group of other mailmen come along too. They all want to do their part, which reminds you to talk about membership participation.

Instead of continuing their argument, the mailmen suddenly form a chorus line, dance and sing a song called, "We Are the Postmen." They're proud of

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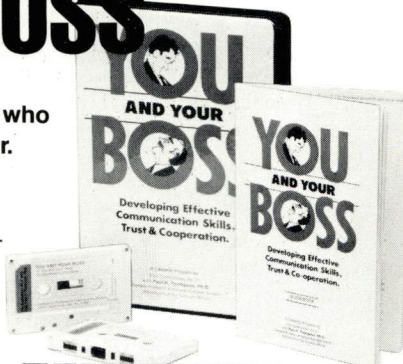
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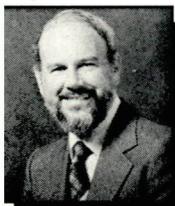
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their work. You remember to tell your members how important it is to publicize the club.

While they're singing, a civilian happens by. The mailmen immediately grab him, strip his clothing off and dress him in a postman's uniform. You now tell the audience that they should be soliciting new members.

Now a group of ballroom dancers come waltzing by. You tell your audience that the next activity is a dance to be held on . . . you visualize the dancers going behind a large tree that has bottles of wine hanging from it . . . oh yes, tree-wine, which recalls 3/9 or March 9.

It's weird, it's whacky, but it works. Give any one of these methods a try to challenge your memory and have fun doing it.



Gene Perret, author of *The Toastmaster* magazine's "Just for Laughs" column, is an Emmy-winning comedy writer based in San Marino, California. He's written for Bob Hope, Phyllis Diller and Carol Burnett and publishes a newsletter, "Round Table," for comedy writers and humorists.

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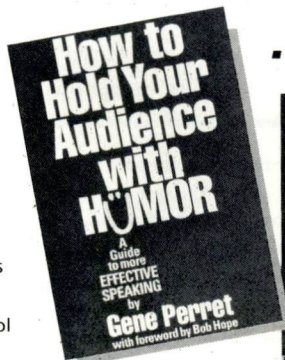
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RECAPTURE AUDIENCE ATTENTION

by Robert P. Levoy

During any speech, especially a long one in a warm, crowded room after a big lunch, an audience's attention is apt to drift, nay—likely to drift. The signs are unmistakable: glassy-eyed stares, clock-watching, stifled yawns, doodling.

What can a speaker do to regain the attention of his audience, make people perk up their ears and mentally rejoin the meeting?

Here is a sampling of ideas I've used and seen used effectively. You can modify and adapt them to fit your own particular circumstances.

Introduce a "Change of Pace."

The speaker who drones on and on and on has a soporific effect on his audience. To avoid this, vary the pace. Talk fast, talk slow. Talk high, talk low.

- Ask a rhetorical question—in a whisper.
- At an appropriate moment—slam the lectern.
- Stop talking altogether. Look at the audience. Say nothing for 10 seconds. One by one, you'll get everyone's attention. Continue by saying, "The reason I paused is..."
- Show something—anything. Don't miss an opportunity to *show* the audience whatever it is you're talking about. It could be a machine part, a fountain pen, a dollar bill, a drawing, a graph.
- Pick up the pitcher of water placed at most podiums and s-l-o-w-l-y pour yourself a glass of water. Simple as it is, it will get attention.
- Drink the water, or put it down.
- On an easel facing the audience, display several brightly colored showcards with just one word printed on each (in contrasting colors). These can be "key" words in your speech, representing the three or four points you really want to put across to your audience.

Flip the cards as their labeled points appear in your speech. Space them throughout your speech for maximum impact.

Involve the Audience

There are countless other verbal and visual "tricks" to recapture an audience's attention. One of the most effective is to get people involved and participating in the meeting itself. Ask them to *do* something.

For example, ask for a show of hands. The question they'd be responding to is unimportant. *Any* question will bring

SAY NOTHING FOR 10 SECONDS.

an audience back from its daydreams by engaging each person's self-interest.

Recently I heard a speaker ask his audience, "How many of you think this subject warrants further discussion?" Some audience members raised their hands in response. Then he asked, "How many of you think this subject warrants *no* further discussion?"

Pausing only a moment, not even long enough for a response to the previous question, he asked, "How many don't *give* a darn?" It broke up the house.

Another more serious way to get an audience involved and participating is to distribute a test or puzzle, particularly one that people can score themselves. This is always challenging and a sure-fire attention-getter.

Midway in a communications workshop I recently attended, we were given a test of our "powers of observation." The instructions were simply to read the

following paragraph once and count the number of letter "f's."

To appreciate the point that was later made, here's the test paragraph—try it yourself:

"The necessity of training farm hands for first-class farms in the fatherly handling of farm livestock is foremost in the minds of farm owners. Since the forefathers of the farm owners trained the farm hands for first-class farms in the fatherly handling of farm livestock, the farm owners feel they should carry on with the family tradition of training farm hands of first-class farms in the fatherly handling of farm livestock because they believe it is the basis of good fundamental farm management."

How many letter "f's" did you find? In my group, the number of "f's" varied from a low of 18 to a high of 37. Most people, including myself, reported in-between numbers. In fact, the amount of variation was surprising.

This "test" not only had everyone's attention but also drove home a point that was most appropriate to the workshop (and this article): *Never underestimate the communication task*—especially during a long speech in a warm, crowded room after a big lunch. 🎤



Robert P. Levoy has conducted over 2500 management and sales training seminars for business and professional groups, government agencies, leading universities and client firms throughout North America and overseas. He is the author of over 300 articles and two books published by Prentice-Hall, Inc.

PUBLIC SPEAKING

in private places

by Niamh O'Kiersey

There's a special art to giving a wedding speech or a birthday toast. You've got to use all your formal training to appear charmingly informal.

That's why John was so worried. His son Bob was due to be married soon. As father of the groom he knew the traditional format of his speech. What worried him was how best to personalize his piece.

Like many of us John would have felt far more comfortable if he were planning to speak at a business function. Obviously when speaking at a seminar or management meeting our speeches must be geared accordingly. They may have to be technical or statistical. They may have to sell a product, an idea or even ourselves. Such speeches must, in fact, be businesslike.

At a family function, however, it is only your *approach* to the subject which must be businesslike. Your preparation must be done so well that no one at the gathering suspects that any preparation was necessary. Ideally the speaker should give the appearance of being inspired by the occasion.

John's big day as father of the groom arrived. In addressing the family and friends gathered, John started by saying, "Weddings have, you will notice, different effects on different people. My wife, for instance, was worried about losing a son. I was worried about losing my voice. That would be an awful shame. As a mere dad it's not often I have a captive audience. In fact certain people have been known to disappear when I am giving a homily, even in my car!"

Sincerity must obviously be the keynote of the private speech. That should present no problem, since you are usually personally involved. At such a gathering your remarks generally do spring from the heart.

Consider the occasions in question. Speeches are an integral part of christenings, weddings and anniversaries. Somebody generally proposes a toast at

a promotion or a retirement party. A coming of age positively demands a few words of advice. In fact, whenever people gather to celebrate it's traditional a time of food, music and speeches.

Kind Humor

Humor is to such a speech what bubbles are to champagne. Humor lifts oration out of the ordinary, makes it something to be enjoyed as well as appreciated. That is, as long as it is kind humor. A family gathering is not the place for barbed witticisms or blue jokes. After all, even if the padre isn't present, your audience may well include some easily-embarrassed folk. Your host should have no reason to blush for you.

At a wedding, if you must refer to the patter of tiny feet do so cleverly. Interrupt your speech by "coming upon" a telegraph. "What's this?" you ask. "Ah, a telegraph from the meteorological office. Now what does it say? 'Warm and close tonight, maybe a little son later!'"

Veiled allusions must also be avoided. Your jokes must be self-explanatory. John's reference to the groom's tap

about current family happenings, but they are usually crystal clear about family history. If it's an office function try secretaries or the janitor. They are great sources of information.

You must, of course, know something about your speech subject, the guest of honor. It wouldn't do for him or her to be outraged or miserably embarrassed by your speech. That is not to say you shouldn't compliment them. Certainly they may be embarrassed, but nicely so.

There are some people, though, who would simply sink through the floor if your remarks were in any way over-familiar. Nobody can object to gently spoken words of praise. But you must be sure that your subject wouldn't object to ribald remarks on his or her achievements.

Joe, for instance, delighted Sam, the office flirt, at the party given in honor of Sam's promotion. Joe said, "You may think that Sam's promotion is because of his rising sales graphs. That helped a little of course. The real reason for his advancement, however, is because of money he's saved the company in heating costs. Whenever Sam is around the female staff the temperature soars!"

An experienced public speaker should always be able to make himself heard. However, at a party or a noisy wedding reception it is sometimes difficult to gain people's attention. Arrange for a formal or informal master of ceremonies to announce you loudly. Then pause for a moment before you start. The better-mannered will usually shush their noisy neighbors.

For this reason it is best to speak before the party gets *too* festive! If the room is huge or you are in a hotel hall you may need a microphone. Far too many speeches are heard only by those at the front.

A touch of pathos is always acceptable on such occasions. John might admit to the wedding assembly, for instance, that he will miss his son's company on his fishing trips. At an anniversary bash the speaker could perhaps refer to a

PERSONALIZE THE TALK. MENTION VARIOUS GUESTS.

dancing might cause hilarity amongst the groom's friends. But the bride's family may not know that the groom has two left feet and no sense of rhythm at all. So to include everyone, John could say that he was very worried about the groom at birth. He was the only baby in the nursery with two left feet.

As with any other speaking engagement your private speech should be well-researched. For a family party those maiden aunts might be just the people to approach. Failing that, try grandmothers. They may be a bit vague a-

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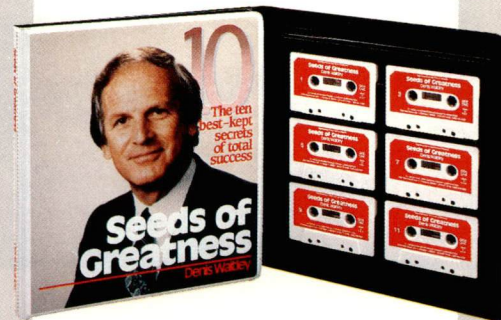
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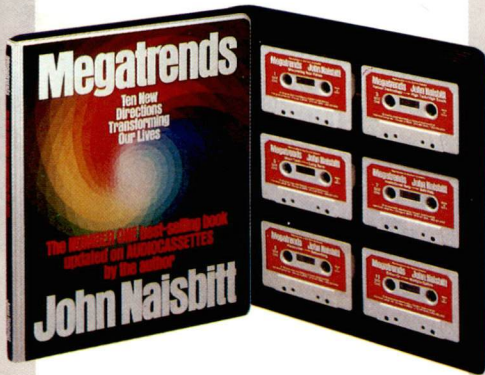
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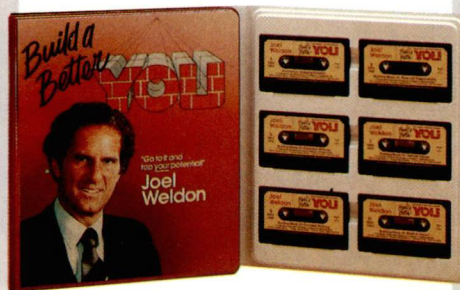
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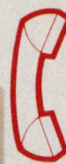
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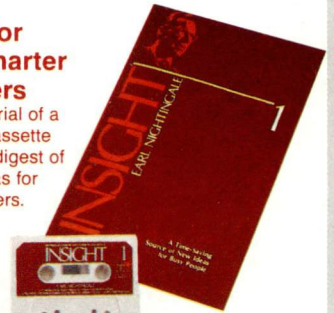


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A SCENARIO TO HELP YOU FACE THAT
FIRST ANXIOUS MOMENT AT THE PODIUM.

MASTERING THAT AWFUL MOMENT

by Mark Bruce

It's the most awful moment of your life. You're standing before a crowd of listeners, fumbling with your papers and mumbling vague apologies for not being better prepared. You haven't even started speaking and already you can hear the audience squirming in their chairs.

You were so busy cramming at the last minute for this speech that you almost missed your introduction. You rushed up to the podium like a fugitive and tried to grab the audience's attention by blurting out part of your speech before the applause even died down. The gallon of coffee you gulped nervously before speaking must've done something to your throat—it feels tight and blocked.

As you choke your speech out, you see some listeners checking their watches, so you speed up, hoping the agony will be over soon. You try to establish eye contact with someone but the first pair of eyes you meet belong to your boss—who doesn't look too pleased with your performance. You fumble with

your speech and lose your place. After some hemming and hawing, you end up repeating a whole dreary section.

When you're finished, you nearly run to your seat and slump over the table. You wonder if you can crawl into your water glass. . .

Your plight is nothing new. The pivotal point in your speech will always be that brief, anxious moment when you first confront your listeners. How you handle that moment can make or break the rest of your oration.

The problem is, even seasoned speakers admit that their stomachs wind up in knots when they first stand up to talk. Speaking anxiety doesn't necessarily go away with experience. So how do good speakers handle that opening moment?

Let's go back and re-live the day of your speech—this time with a plan to master that "awful moment."

Learn Your Speech Subject

It's early in the afternoon and you're on your way home from work. You know you have to speak tonight, but

there are a few hours yet and you're not worried. You prepared for this speech last night, and the night before that. . . perhaps every night for the last two or three weeks.

You not only know the speech quite well, you know the subject matter thoroughly. You know much more than you're going to tell your listeners tonight. You're not depending on personal knowledge alone, but have researched quite a bit on the subject. So even if you get lost in your speech, you'll be able to improvise with the knowledge you have in reserve.

Not that there's much chance of you losing your place in your speech. Even though you're reading a prepared text, you've read that speech aloud twenty or thirty times in the past few days. You could almost recite it from memory.

And when you stride to the podium tonight, even before you speak you will radiate the aura of a person who knows what he's talking about. Your confidence in your subject and your speech will show when you face your listeners.

Exercise Lightly

When you get home you change into your exercise togs. Perhaps raquetball is your game—perhaps you just do isometrics. Whatever your sport, you lightly exercise for about thirty minutes. The physical exertion will stretch some of those speaking muscles like the diaphragm. It will invigorate you and get your circulation going after a long day at work.

At the same time exercise will relax you by allowing you to work off the tension you might feel about speaking. You find, too, that exercise helps clear your brain and give it a needed recess from the cares and tasks of the day.

Still, you don't exercise too much. You don't try to finally crack that ten-mile mark you've been working on. And you certainly don't do something you're not used to that might endanger your health.

After all, you don't want to be so tired after your exertions that you fall asleep in your dessert. You're simply giving your body a tune-up for the physical work of speaking that night. If you're not used to exercise at all, even a brisk walk will help your body prepare for the night's speaking.

Perhaps you know an exercise that actors and singers like to try before a performance. You lie down on your bed, perfectly flat on your back, and tighten every muscle in your body while taking in a deep breath. You count to ten and let the breath out slowly while slowly relaxing your muscles, starting with the feet and moving up.

After two or three repetitions of this actor's exercise, you feel very relaxed—but get up before you go to sleep because you know that sleep will tighten your muscles again.

On your way to the speaking engagement, you don't cram for the speech because you know it already and going over it again will just bring on tension. Instead, you chat with your spouse or friend about something pleasant.

Enjoy the Event

At the function, you enjoy yourself, hob nob with the folks attending and enjoy any food that is served. You turn away any offers of alcoholic beverages, though, with a cheerful explanation: "I'm speaking tonight. I want to be on my toes, you know."

Actually, you know that depressants like alcohol will affect your tongue and diaphragm—two of the most important tools you speak with. Drink apple juice or water instead.

During the meal you avoid drinking coffee or tea because those beverages can cause a moist blockage in your throat known as phlegm (pronounced

"flem"). Similarly, milk, ice cream and other dairy products also cause phlegm, and tighten your throat besides. Therefore you politely refuse the vanilla scoop passed around for dessert.

To lubricate your throat, drink a bit of water. Not too much—you don't want to slosh through the speech—but enough to clear the throat passages of any food juices your meal has left behind.

The Moment of Truth

Now that everybody's finished their chicken and potatoes, the moment of truth is at hand. You quickly thumb through your prepared text to be sure the pages are in proper order. You're being introduced.

You wait until every wonderful thing your master of ceremonies has to say about you is said, then while the audience politely applauds, you stride up to the podium, head held high, shoulders squared but relaxed. This is the first glance of you your listeners will get, so make it a good one. It will impress them before you even start to speak.

When you reach the podium, you stand up straight, chest held high, knees not locked but slightly bent (to keep the circulation going to your feet). You don't throw your shoulders back because you know this creates tension in your upper torso and you want to keep that relaxed.

Before you speak, you take a brief moment to take three deep breaths. You collect your thoughts. You give your listeners a chance to adjust to hearing a new speaker. You balance on your feet with your center of gravity in your lower torso.

Although you've always heard that you need eye contact when you speak, you've found that it throws you off to look directly into someone's eyes. So you fall back on the old Army trick of looking slightly above the eyes of your listeners at their foreheads. This way you appear to be looking them right in the eye but their gazes don't throw you off.

All of this takes ten or fifteen seconds at the most. You're not rushing. The people have come to hear what you're going to tell them. They showed up tonight because they're interested.

Speak with Poise

You take a deep breath and begin to speak. Throughout the talk, you maintain your poise, even when you make a mistake. If the mistake is small enough that it can be ignored, go on as if nothing happened.

If you have to correct yourself, do it as quickly as possible, saying something like, "Or rather, we should contin-

ue..." "Excuse me, we must not stop..." No one will remember you made a mistake unless you make a big deal about it—so you don't.

During your speech, you don't concentrate on every little word; concentrate on ideas. Perhaps you've even marked passages of the speech with a topic word in the margin so you can remember where the speech is heading next.

And you take your time while you speak. Your words don't rush out in a desperate effort to keep the audience from walking out. You know they're not going anywhere—but they will stop listening if you wear them out by talking so fast you sound like you're calling a horse race.


Finish Confidently

Now you're finished. The applause begins. You graciously acknowledge the audience's appreciation for a second or two at the podium, then maintain your poise and good posture while you stride back to your seat.

You've seen some speakers collapse at the end of a speech as if glad the ordeal was finally over. And you know how much respect an audience can lose for someone who leaves the podium that way. By striding back to your seat in the same confident manner you approached the podium with, you've increased the respect the audience has for you—and your message.

You've become the master of that awful moment. You were prepared. You relaxed beforehand, perhaps with some exercise. You strode to the podium confidently. You took three deep breaths before you spoke and gave yourself and your listeners a brief moment of reflection before the speech began.

You spoke slowly and concentrated on ideas, not words. You quickly and casually corrected any speaking errors. And you had enough poise to leave the podium with the same confidence you strode up there with.

You were the master of that moment—and you gave a masterful speech. And your boss is smiling as you make eye contact with him when you take your seat. 



Mark Bruce is a law student at the University of California at Berkeley. A regular contributor to *The Toastmaster* magazine, he was a radio announcer and owned a public service show on an FM radio station. He also does over 60 different voices and impressions.

SPEAKING WITHOUT NOTES OR SCRIPT MAY
LOOK COURAGEOUS, BUT CAN BE HAZARDOUS.

Look Ma! No Notes!

by Barney Kingston

Remember the six-year-old boy who just learned how to peddle a bicycle? He wanted to impress his mother and show her what a daring fellow he was. So as he sped past his house where his mother sat on the porch, he screamed, "Look Ma, no hands!" Unfortunately at that moment he lost control of the bike and crashed into a nearby oak tree. As he did so his mother was heard to remark, "Look Ma, no teeth!"

What brought this childhood scenario to mind was a District 30 speech contest I competed in. During the contest one of the other speakers stepped away from the lectern to show everybody, "Look Ma, no notes!"

The fact that the talk was awful did not detract from his courage. Each of the other contestants worked from notes or scripts—and each had superior talks. In fact, the winners of first, second and third place each used notes.

At another District 30 contest I competed in, all six of the contest speakers disdained the lectern; somewhat redfaced I have to admit I was one of the culprits. I didn't have the courage to stand behind the lectern because I knew my chances of winning would be virtually zero.

Winging It

In my opinion this idea of disdaining the lectern and "winging it" is doing irreparable harm to the cause of effective public speaking. It is also, in my opinion, a major reason why so many newcomers leave the organization within a short period of time—they see most speakers delivering talks without notes and are scared away.

Until about 15 years ago all Toastmasters speech contests had a different format. Speakers drew their subjects out of a hat around noon and were required to speak on the drawn topic that same evening. This sort of extemporaneous speaking allowed little time for preparation and therefore did not demand use of notes.

But as a Toastmaster with over 20 years of experience participating in numerous seminars and listening to

literally hundreds of speeches in all situations, I can say emphatically that anybody who tries to "wing it" or deliver a talk without looking at notes is unnecessarily giving himself a sizable handicap.

Yes, there are *some* speakers who can mesmerize an audience with the sheer force of their personality and delivery. These entertaining speakers are in big demand—many corporations will spend \$5000 to \$7500 or more to hear them talk for an hour. It's true that these speakers rarely use notes; in fact many of them step away from the lectern for the majority of their talks.

But let's not forget these people are *professional* speakers who have plenty of time to memorize their speeches. They usually have a repertoire of around a half-dozen talks perfected and they play the circuit year after year with the same speeches altered to fit the particular occasion.

But realistically, how many Toastmasters will become professional speakers? Not more than a handful. The vast majority of Toastmasters simply want to acquire the ability to give a talk in connection with their business or job, the PTA, church, school or social functions.

Sure you can "wing it" extemporaneously, if you are an expert in a given subject or have spoken on the same subject many times. But you will always be far more effective if you work from a script or notes.

I once gave a talk in my club where I used notes to deliver a 15-minute Fourth of July oration. My evaluator said, "If Barney would stop using notes as a crutch he'd be far more effective." Nonsense. To say a sheet of notes or a script is a crutch is like telling Tom Watson, one of the world's top golfers, he'd play better if he wouldn't use a three-iron. Notes and scripts are essential tools of the speakers' craft.

Toastmasters International is not a theatrical organization that trains would-be speakers in the art of memorizing a talk or moving around a stage. But any Toastmaster who wants to make the

effort can easily memorize a five- to seven-minute talk.

I remember reading about a congressman from Michigan who gave a Republican keynote speech—he did a great job talking for 45 minutes without the use of notes. Reporters asked him how he was able to pull off this feat. The congressman replied, "I spent a week practicing for each minute of the talk."

All right I'll agree—maybe it is worth this kind of effort to deliver a once-in-a-lifetime speech. But for most of us, it's much more comfortable and less time-consuming to work from a script or notes.

A Tried and Proved Method

With a script or notes in front of you, not much can go wrong, compared to the risks of "winging it" or delivering a memorized talk. You'll be better organized. You won't repeat yourself so often. You won't have to depend on your memory.

With notes handy, you won't make mistakes relating items that require accuracy, such as people's quotes or facts and statistics. And being accurate is the golden key to your credibility as a speaker.

The odds are, if you're like most people and you try to "wing it," you'll fall flat on your face. Unless you're the one-in-a-thousand professional speaker you'll do better following the tried-and-proved method of delivering an effective speech:

- Decide on a subject you want to talk about.
- Do some research on the subject; build a file of relevant data and material.
- Write an outline of the talk and include the title. Ask yourself if the purpose of the talk is clearly achieved. If it is not, revise the outline. If the purpose is clear, write the first full draft.
- Practice the talk a few times over a couple days. Decide where changes should be made.
- Write the final draft with a view of fitting time requirements; figure about 135 words for each minute.

Convention Comment

The staff at World Headquarters deserves a well-earned "pat on the back" for a successful, well-planned, well-coordinated and well-executed 53rd Annual Convention in Orlando, Florida.

I have never seen so many Toastmasters pressing their "CAN DO" buttons. But then, how could we resist being motivated in that charged-up environment?

When you couple this enthusiasm with another "first" in the election of our new Third Vice President—not unlike the previous two "firsts" that gave us Helen Blanchard and Ted Wood—we are certainly encompassing our entire Toastmasters population, world-wide.

Building on the positive, long-range activities of presidents like Bill Miller and Eddie Dunn, we truly have the ingredients for continued growth and success. I am proud to be an active, participating member of Toastmasters International.

Michael L. Wardinski, DTM
District 36 Governor
Alexandria, Virginia

Rx for Variety

In the August issue of *The Toastmaster*, Ms. Weiss ("Rx for Better Speech") comments on "distracting regional accents." Perhaps because I joined Toastmasters in Florida (where each club member spoke with an accent), I have always felt that regional accents were part of our national heritage. . . . that they add diversity to our speeches and color to our conversation. Do we all have to sound the same?

Let's look at the record! Many of the world's great speakers had regional accents: John F. Kennedy had a Boston accent; Franklin Roosevelt had an upstate New York accent. Winston Churchill had an accent to the folks in Wales and Scotland. Hitler, an Austrian, sounded funny to the residents of Hanover and Hamburg, Germany.

President Reagan, an excellent speech-giver, does, in fact, speak with a Midwestern accent (pronouncing all those silent "r's" at the end of words). Then again, those Sunday preachers, while they all have Southern accents,

are without doubt the best public speakers in America.

Sorry Ms. Weiss, I'll keep my regional accent. I'm an excellent public speaker; however, I am quite willing to forego perfection in order to keep my heritage and roots. We want color in our speeches, not blandness; we want flavor, not sameness.

Fred Bluestone
Educational Vice-President,
Merrillville Club 4599-11
University Park, Illinois

How Do You Say It?

I very much enjoyed the "Word Wisdom" column in the September 1984 issue of *The Toastmaster*. The foreign expressions were especially intriguing and I couldn't wait to try them out in conversations with my friends.

Unfortunately, I was robbed of the opportunity to do so because Mr. Rottman neglected to include pronunciation guides with the words. I could find only two of the given words in my *American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*.

Please be sure to include the proper pronunciation for words presented in the "Word Wisdom" column. Proper pronunciation is a must for Toastmasters!

Debra Brastrom
Clear Lake, Iowa

More Pet Peeves

I would like to add to Barbara DuBois' "Pet Peeve Alphabet" which appeared in the September 1984 issue.

"I" is for *introduction or introduce*. While no one tries to introduce an audience to a speaker, the advertisers are continually trying to introduce the public to their products. Shouldn't the product be introduced *to the public*?

"P" is for *podium or pulpit*. Since both of these are platforms, no one should ever be accused of leaning on them when that person is making a speech or giving a sermon. A *lectern* can be placed on these platforms, and it can be used by the speaker to inhibit his or her effectiveness.

J. Stephen Ogden
Ashland, Kentucky

Check carefully for idea flow, speech construction and organization. Revise until you feel you have a "winner."

- Practice the speech, with a copy of it resting on a table in front of you, so your hands are free to gesture. Practice the talk once a day for at least two weeks before you're scheduled to speak. (If you're a novice speaker, practice twice a day.)
- On the day of the speech don't practice. Relax; you need some spontaneity. Place the speech on the lectern and start talking. Refer to the script as needed in as natural a way as possible. Don't feel guilty; don't act as though you're committing a crime by looking at your script or notes.


You'll find as you gain confidence and experience you'll refer to the script less and less. And you will always deliver an effective talk.

A Greek Analogy

In ancient Greece the big super bowl sport was professional wrestling, held in the coliseum before huge crowds. But wrestling in this arena was nothing like the entertaining spectacle put on by present-day professional wrestlers. Greek wrestling was a brutal affair where one or both contestants were severely injured and sometimes even killed in the ring.

So a number of young Greek men who did not wish to risk the dangers of this murderous combat created an alternative sport. Greek writers of the day called it *akrobatics*.

Men would hoist each other on their shoulders or groups would toss each other on pyramids of young men. Spectators laughed and hooted in derision at the akrobats' antics and writers of the day accused the akrobats of lacking in manly skills and courage. But like the professional wrestlers of today they made a nice living.

Yes, the Greeks had a word for it: *akrobatics*. I think we as Toastmasters would do better to spend more time honing our skills in developing effective *messages*—and less on developing akrobatics skills. After all, since we're speakers, the audience comes to hear what we have to *say*, not to watch us *perform*. 



Barney Kingston is a member of Speakers Forum Club 371-30 in Chicago, Illinois. He has won 39 Toastmasters contests, including four district titles.

TI BOARD REPORT

1983-84

Yields Historical Changes

On July 1 of this year, the most extensive changes in the 60-year history of Toastmasters were implemented," announced President Eddie V. Dunn, DTM, in August during Toastmasters International's Board of Directors meeting in Orlando, Florida. "As a result, today our members have a wider range of opportunities than ever before to select personal growth programs and activities—programs that are designed to meet the individual member's needs and interests."

The individual member's needs and interests laid a foundation for the Board meeting, as officers discussed and reviewed our organization's administrative and educational matters. The Board's discussions were highlighted by the statistics of Toastmasters' outstanding growth over the past year:

- The number of Toastmasters earning ATMs increased 28 percent, a figure twice as large as last year's increase. The number earning DTMs increased an amazing 42 percent.

Communication and Leadership manual completions increased 11 percent, while Advanced Communication and Leadership manual completions increased 12.7 percent. These numbers will continue to rise as Toastmasters realize the increased opportunities offered by this year's changes in our educational system.

- Toastmasters' membership increased to an all-time high of 109,700 members.

- A total of 458 new clubs were chartered, for a record total of 5191 clubs, 511 of them outside North America.

- A record-breaking 1115 Youth Leadership Programs were reported.

- The number of Speechcrafts increased 17 percent.

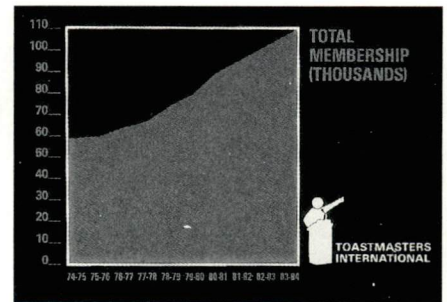
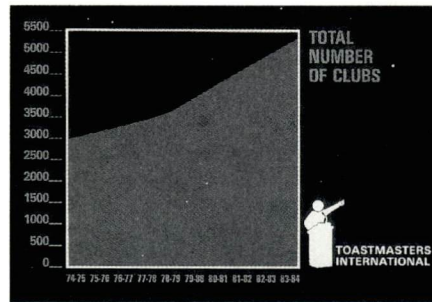
- The number of clubs on the President's 40 list reached an all-time high of 511.

This growth was complemented by several educational advancements:

- The development of a dual Communication and Leadership (C&L) track.

- The revision of the basic C&L manual from 15 to 10 projects.

- The development of two advanced



levels of ATM—ATM Bronze and ATM Silver.

- The development of two new manuals: "Technical Presentations" and "The Professional Salesperson." They will be available in December.

- The availability of a new Success/Leadership module, "The Art of Effective Evaluation," now in use.

- The development of a Success/Leadership module on thinking and a New Member Kit, both to be available in 1985.

President's Visits

In addition to these advancements, President Eddie Dunn had good news to report from his official travels during his year's term. He journeyed 80,600 miles visiting 16 districts and 56 corporations in a wide range of fields. "I found that Toastmasters International enjoys a very favorable image and reputation, especially in the business world," he said.

President Dunn related one executive's comment that in addition to helping employees develop communication and leadership skills, the company's several Toastmasters clubs helped the company overcome the challenge of employee teamwork and cooperation.

Employees who are Toastmasters also tend to have a positive attitude about themselves and their occupations—important benefits to a company. "I found the company representatives to be very receptive to the idea of endorsing

Toastmasters for their employees," said President Dunn.

In district visits with Toastmasters, President Dunn reported that "I couldn't help but sense the pride and enthusiasm that our members have about our organization and what it has done for them. It is evident that they have experienced the power of Toastmasters and are anxious to share the benefits with others."

In order to ensure that members continue to benefit to the utmost, Executive Director Terrence McCann reflected on our organization's role in the future: "Our world is becoming a literacy-intensive society where basic skills such as reading, speaking, listening and thinking will be needed more than ever. People are recognizing that if they want to prepare themselves, they have to train themselves. We therefore have to provide members with even more learning opportunities."

Board Actions

To create more learning opportunities and organizational growth, the Board made a number of important decisions. In the most significant actions, the Board:

- Approved changes in the judging procedures for the Accredited Speaker Program.

- Reviewed the Speech Contest Rules and recommended changes for the 1986 rules.

- Discussed Distinguished District Program point projection report and its

future. Recommended distribution be expanded to each District Governor after a detailed explanation of the report at the 1985 Regionals.

- Discussed the results of research on Area and Division Governor training and found that the timing of the training is of particular importance. Recommended that all Area and Division training be completed by July 31 each year.

- Approved a proposed amendment to the District Constitution clarifying qualifications for District offices. The amendment will be submitted at the 1985 Annual Business Meeting and

Convention for delegate action.

- Adopted suggested guidelines for the election of Area Governors by Area Councils; validation of credentials at District Council meetings; and operations of the District Nominating Committee.

- Studied the membership reward and recognition system of Toastmasters International and (1) changed the criteria for the President's Extension Award to reflect a net increase in clubs instead of the present gross increase, effective with the July 1, 1984 through June 30, 1985 year. This would mean counting only those clubs that are in good standing on June 30. (2) Created a "Presi-

dent's 20+" Award to be presented at the convention to the top three districts having the highest percentage of 20+ member clubs as of June 30, 1985.

- Brainstormed means and methods of encouraging stronger clubs to work with weak clubs or "opportunity clubs" . . . an "Adopt-A-Club" or "Buddy Club" concept. The criteria, means and methods for this system will be discussed at the February Board Meeting.

The next meeting of the International Board of Directors will be held at World Headquarters February 22, 1985. A report on that session will appear in the May 1985 issue of *The Toastmaster*.

TI FINANCIAL STATEMENT 1983-84

STATEMENT OF ASSETS OF ALL FUNDS

June 30, 1984
GENERAL FUND

UNRESTRICTED:

Cash and temporary investments, at cost . . .	\$ 1,037,742
Accounts receivable	89,646
Deposits, prepaid postage and other	22,312
Total—unrestricted	\$1,149,700

RESTRICTED:

Cash	\$ 112,081
Due from General Fund—unrestricted	78,877
Total—restricted	190,958
Total	\$1,340,658

INVESTMENT (ENDOWMENT) FUND

Marketable securities, at cost (estimated value of \$1,017,213)	\$ 992,368
Due from General Fund—unrestricted	12,967
Total	\$1,005,335

PROPERTY FUND

Property, building and equipment at cost:	
Land	\$ 45,716
Building	651,190
Furniture and equipment	507,349
Total property	\$1,204,255
Cash	60,748
Total	\$1,265,003

STATEMENT OF LIABILITIES AND BALANCES

OF ALL FUNDS

June 30, 1984
GENERAL FUND

UNRESTRICTED

Liabilities:	
Accounts payable	\$ 122,866
Sales tax payable	2,686
Due to General Fund—restricted	78,877
Due to Investment (Endowment) Fund	12,967
Deferred charter fees	16,700
Due to Property Fund	60,748
Funds held for TMI Regions	5,356
Total liabilities	\$ 300,200
Unrestricted—General Fund balance	849,500
Total—unrestricted	\$1,149,700

RESTRICTED:

District Reserve Fund balances	\$ 150,520
Restricted grants	488
Ralph C. Smedley Toastmasters International Memorial Fund	39,950
Total—restricted	\$ 190,958
Total	\$1,340,658

INVESTMENT (ENDOWMENT) FUND

Investment Fund balance	\$ 1,005,335
Total	\$ 1,005,335

PROPERTY FUND

Property Fund Invested balance	\$ 1,204,255
Property Fund Reserve balances:	
Reserve for additions and replacements	\$ 30,877
Reserve for maintenance	29,871
Total	60,748
Total	\$1,265,003

GENERAL FUND—UNRESTRICTED STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURES FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 1984

INCOME:

Membership charges	\$ 2,364,554
Club charges	275,930
Charges for optional educational materials and supplies	365,293
Other income	54,660
Total income	\$ 3,060,437

OPERATING EXPENSES:

Administrative	\$ 181,796
General services	325,819
District expenses	106,152
Membership and club extension	40,903
Publications and communications	428,060
Educational development	58,768
Educational materials	370,348
Club supplies, equipment, and insignia purchases	434,260
Employee benefits	245,360
General expenses	335,608
Maintenance and operation of property	135,736
Total operating expense	\$ 2,662,810

EXCESS OF INCOME OVER OPERATING EXPENDITURES \$ 397,627

OTHER DEDUCTIONS:

Provision for other replacements and additions to property	\$ 80,000
Total other deductions	80,000

EXCESS OF INCOME OVER EXPENDITURES \$ 317,627

HERE IS A SYSTEM FOR MASTERING THAT
DREADED SPEECH TASK, IMPROMPTU SPEAKING

QUICK!

Think on Your Feet!

by Diana Wickes, CTM
and Dora J. Reynolds, CTM

Your boss feels ill and at the last minute asks you to sit in on the monthly directors' meeting with the company president, "just to take notes." A hot issue surfaces during the meeting and most of the directors have something to contribute to the discussion. Then the president looks at you and says, "How do you think your department would respond to that?"

You *know* how your department would respond to that. But . . . total blank. Not one word comes to mind. Your shiny Cross pen slips right between your fingers, your palm is so sweaty. With your other hand you nearly puncture the leather chair with your tight, tight grip of panic. You manage a "Mumble pfarph" before the president asks someone else. How many more chances do you think you'll get now to impress the top brass?

Thinking quickly on your feet is a skill and an absolute necessity, the way corporations are run these days. More and more frequently, business is conducted by committee or through presentations. And more than one career has been made or broken by the offhand question requiring a spontaneous response. But thinking quickly on your feet *is* a *skill*—and therefore can be learned.

Changing Your Outlook

It is natural to want to be a superstar when suddenly given a difficult question or asked to contribute your ideas on the spur of the moment. Unfortunately, fear of failure can totally immobilize a

person. It is possible, however, to prepare yourself mentally for such occasions.

Usually the listeners will judge you on how well you *sound* and on the general value of your ideas, not on the specific fine details of what you say. You should strive to appear self-confident, no matter how you feel inside.

To some degree, everyone, even the most polished speaker, is fearful of public speaking. In a recent survey of college students, many of them said they

tence. If you do not learn how to speak up, you may sabotage your whole career. Those who cannot communicate effectively and persuasively are frequently forgotten.

Organizing Your Thoughts

One of the first things you need to learn is how to organize your thoughts quickly. If you have any time at all to prepare, a brief outline of your major points will help enormously.

But, if you have only a moment or two, here's a helpful framework on which you can hang your thoughts. Use these four sentences and just fill in the blanks:

1. The **point** I want to make is ____.
2. The **reason** I say this is ____.
3. For **example**, _____.
4. In summary, my **point** is ____.

Here's a short cut for remembering this framework:

Point
Reason
Example
Point

The PREP method! This is an organizing framework developed by Ralph Carey, Manager of the Corporate Presentations Program at Hughes Aircraft Company in El Segundo, California. Carey makes his living teaching company managers how to make effective presentations. And he's doing a fine job: Outside nearly every staff meeting room, you'll see anxious-looking managers walking in, mumbling "PREP,

COMPOSE AN ANSWER WHILE YOU REPEAT THE QUESTION.

are so afraid to speak in front of a group that they arrange their entire college schedule around classes that do not require them to speak in front of their peers. Often they go on to choose careers on the same basis.

Just as a good athlete makes movement look easy, so a good speaker makes speaking appear effortless. And, as with sports, excellence in public speaking takes practice. Toastmasters is an ideal place to practice and improve your ability to speak extemporaneously.

The ability to communicate effectively is usually judged as a sign of compe-

PREP" under their breath. They usually come out smiling!

But does PREP really work? Let's use this article's opening nightmare as an example and see for ourselves. With PREP you might have handled it this way:

"Well, Mr. President, (the **point** I'd like to make is) our department would jump at the chance to tackle that issue. (The **reason** I say that is) we are fully equipped to solve the problem. (For **example**,) we have three people on our staff who've been through similar problems at other companies and have the know-how to approach the problem from just the right angle. And we have a computer program that can crunch the numbers like peanuts. (So, in summary, my **point** is) we'll take it on gladly!"

The schmaltz notwithstanding, do you get the idea? In the beginning, use the whole sentences. After awhile, PREP will become so natural that you will be able to make your point, reason, example, point without announcing what you're doing. Re-read the passage above, leaving out the words in parentheses. See?

Coping with Anxiety

When faced with an unexpected question, there are things you can do to keep the situation under control. First,

you must deal with the physical symptoms of anxiety. These arise as a result of your basic natural instincts.

When the human mechanism is faced with an emergency, there are two automatic ways of coping: fight or flight. Immediately the heart begins to pump adrenalin into the body to help cope with the emergency. Our culture doesn't permit us to literally flee or fight. Instead, we become almost rooted to the spot, skewered by anxiety because we can't take action.

The first thing to do is take two or three deep breaths. This will help release the tightness in your chest. Next, work on the parts of the body where you feel other symptoms. This may be difficult because anxiety is usually generalized "all over the body." If you tell your tense body to relax what happens? You just become more tense.

But you can use even *more* tension to begin to relax. Start by clenching various muscle groups and then releasing the tension. Be systematic. Begin with the neck muscles and work your way down, or the toes and work your way up. Simply tighten the muscle group for a few seconds...clench tighter...release. Concentrate on the way you feel as you release. Move on to the next closest set of muscles.

Along with deep breathing, this exercise should loosen you up a bit. And

it's not too hard to do inconspicuously. No one at the meeting will even notice.

Coping with the Question

Now, how do you cope with the question itself? There are several techniques you can use. In all cases, listen intently to the question. If it is not clear, ask that it be restated.

You might also repeat the question. This serves as a courtesy to others in the room who might not have heard the question clearly. It also gives you time to think about your response and organize your thoughts.

You have a decision to make. Will you answer the question head on, or will you skirt the question or "fog" it? (Used repeatedly, evasion can give you a reputation you probably don't want. But some situations simply demand an evasive response. An ounce of evasion is sometimes more valuable than a pound of truth.)

Another alternative is to give an honest answer: "I cannot do justice to that question on such short notice. I would like time to study it, and I'll get back to you with an answer soon." Remember, you do not have to know everything there is to know about a subject. People will respect your honesty and conscientiousness when they hear such an answer.

Humor and a smile can work miracles. If you can get the other party to

USE THE EVERYDAY SPONTANEITY LIFE PROVIDES TO BECOME A TABLE TOPICS GENIUS.

BE PREPARED FOR TABLE TOPICS

by Kathy M. Schmitz

There is no portion of the Toastmasters meeting which sparks such enthusiasm, anxiety and consternation on the part of my club's membership as Table Topics.

But no matter what the attitude toward Table Topics, there are two ways to approach extemporaneous speaking: barging head-on into the topic, or quietly organizing one's thoughts. Either method may result in a coherent, fine-tuned Table Topics speech. But the latter ensures a greater chance of this occurrence and contributes to a "prepared"

Table Topics speech (there *is* such an animal!).

Participants who are not comfortable with spontaneous speechmaking may find Table Topics sessions more palatable after using a "prepared" speech approach. This approach has worked for many inexperienced and veteran Toastmasters, and is derived from the wisdom and comments of many of my club members and associates.

Preparing for Spontaneous Speech

One doesn't need to search extensively

for spontaneous speaking opportunities. Life provides a variety of them—there are issues to meet, opinions to voice, responses to render. Unless one chooses to vegetate throughout life, he or she will formulate ideas on current events, cultural differences, provocative measures.

Life's spontaneity requires expansive data accumulation, sorting and reaction. In other words, life provides us with a "library" in which we retain opinions, data and details for reference and basis for action.

The more a person collects unbiased data in order to formulate his opinions and make his decisions, the more knowledgeable he becomes about an assortment of topics. It is this file of "data" to which a person refers when he performs his Table Topics assignment.

The logical primary resource for Table Topics, then, is the accumulation of data culled from life's experiences. A prepared Table Topics speaker reads newspapers, becomes sensitive to crises in his community, appreciates a broad knowledge of issues. He consciously attempts to build his data file and make a habit of referring to it often. In

THE 'PREP' SYSTEM PROVIDES A FRAMEWORK FOR ORGANIZING YOUR THOUGHTS AT A MOMENT'S NOTICE.

laugh, you have an ally. Humor should not be hostile, and you should never make someone else the butt of your joke, especially someone who isn't present. But if you can joke about yourself, you will be admired for your self-possession and composure.

Releasing Your Creative Thinking

Try to guard against certain assumptions which *inhibit* creative thinking. Fear of failure is the number-one inhibitor. Do not prejudge your performance, nor that of others. Avoid stereotyping and telling yourself there is only one "right" answer.

Fantasy and playfulness are two wings that can help you soar through difficult times. Don't rely too heavily on your logical left brain; instead allow your creative right brain to take over.

Other beliefs *enhance* creative thinking. Try to have an optimistic attitude. Tell yourself you will think of something. Try to remain curious and flexi-

ble in your thinking. Use thinking aids (PREP is a good example) to help you analyze a problem.

Stay focused on *your* goal; act on your own ideas, rather than reacting to the statements of others. This will help you maintain your stability and direction. Let the challenge stimulate you, rather than frighten you. Sometimes it helps just to start talking... then your ideas will start to flow.

Allow yourself to grow through achievement. When you have successfully negotiated one of those nightmares, give yourself a pat on the back. "You got through that one just fine. You will do even better next time!" Above all, persevere. If you feel you have a problem with thinking quickly on your feet, keep trying. Each time it will be easier. And these concepts can be applied in all areas of your life for more success.

The Point Is

Almost everyone gets butterflies when

These are inconspicuously performed, and set a comfortable mood for the speaker.

- During the entire Table Topics portion, the speaker *keeps his mind active*. When he is not performing a Table Topics assignment, he nevertheless mentally responds to each question as if it were assigned to him: "How would I answer that Table Topics assignment?" This mental exercise serves to keep his mind emotionally and intellectually prepared for his own question.

- Even as the Table Topics issue is assigned to him, the prepared extemporaneous speaker *formulates the introduction and conclusion of the answer in his mind*. This step only takes a split second as he rises to address the Table Topics master and the membership.

The next step he performs as he utters the formal address to the Table Topics leader and participants: As he states, "Mr. Table Topics master, fellow Toastmasters and guests," he uses the opportunity to mentally fill in the body of his speech. Finally, as he delivers his speech, he alters the content according to the emphasis he desires and the time allowed.

asked to answer a question off the cuff in front of a group. But you can cope with this situation and help yourself become more adept at answering unexpected questions. You have decisions to make and you have to cope with the physical realities of anxiety.

Armed with PREP and lots of practice, you will never be caught choking out a "Mumble pfarph" again. 🗣️



Diana Wickes, CTM, is a member of Hughes Spacecom Toastmasters 3221-1 and is Past President of Rockwell Plane-Speakers 2189-1 in El Segundo, California.

She is a Quality Circle Facilitator in Manufacturing at Rockwell International and is active in professional organizations.



Dora J. Reynolds, CTM, is Past President of Hughes Spacecom Club 3221-1 in El Segundo, California. She has served as Manager of Financial Information Systems at

Hughes Aircraft and in several administrative positions in Southern California higher education.

short, he is cosmopolitan; he is a "Renaissance man" in touch with life.

Mental data collection, however, is not sufficient preparation for extemporaneous speaking. A good Table Topics participant practices his art often. He discusses the Mideast conflict with his friends. He confronts local zoning problems at the town meeting. He involves himself with over-the-fence conversations about property values with his neighbor.

His speeches are not delivered solely at Toastmasters meetings, although these meetings reinforce his abilities and enhance his eloquence. The good Table Topics speaker takes his skills with him when he leaves a Toastmasters meeting and uses them in daily conversation.

Preparing at the Meeting

"Preparation" at the meeting is critical, due to the limited five- to ten-second time element between the assignment of the Table Topics speech and the speaker's response. So an alert Table Topics participant optimizes the following situations:

- If he suffers stage fright or tension in addressing a Table Topics issue, he practices slow, deep breathing exercises or relaxation exercises before the session.

Post Preparation

When the speech is delivered, the prepared extemporaneous speaker mentally evaluates his performance: Was it succinct? Did the speech have a definite introduction, body and conclusion? Have the grammar and lack of ah-ers improved? Which verbiage was particularly effective and can it be used in future speeches? The grammarian's and ah-er counter's reports will confirm the progress he notes for himself.

In addition to the above evaluation, the prepared Table Topics speaker translates the success of his formal speeches into his Table Topics performances. For instance, he experiments with gestures he has found effective in his formal speeches.

In short, a prepared Table Topics speaker practices total Toastmastering "through better listening, thinking and speaking" at every available opportunity. His Table Topics experiences therefore become an extension of his daily communication and response to life. 🗣️

Kathy M. Schmitz has been an active Toastmaster in District 46.

HALL of FAME

DTMs

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

Gladys M. Flint

Los Cerritos 192-F, Bellflower, CA

Suzanne Budovec

Ontario-Upland 1506-F, Ontario, CA

Henrietta Cole

Norton Toasters 1556-F, San Bernardino, CA

Lorena A. Wolf

East San Bernardino 3820-F, San Bernardino, CA

Donald J. Pulver

Totem 41-2, Seattle, WA

Stephen L. Garman

Toast of the Coast 5288-5, Encinitas, CA

Thomas D. Norman

Paul Bunyan 922-6, Brainerd, MN

Stew Thornley

Spirits of Babbage 3417-6, Minneapolis, MN

Samuel T. Randall

O'Fallon 994-8, O'Fallon, IL

Jack Arthur Rardin

Lincoln Trails 1354-8, Mattoon, IL

Norman C. Frank

Atomic City 1760-9, Richland, WA

Leo H. Kanter

Foremost 507-11, Evansville, IN

Neal Rice

Magnavox 2568-11, Ft. Wayne, IN

James H. Martin

Greater Fairmont 2773-13, Fairmont, WV

Iris O. Chandler

Magic Empire 652-16, Tulsa, OK

Leroy James Jr.

Claremore Community 806-16, Claremore, OK

Mary E. James

Claremore Community 806-16, Claremore, OK

Georgia A. Burrows

Noon Flight 1062-16, Tinker Air Force Base, OK

George Foldes

Rich-Del 3767-21, Richmond, B.C., Can

Pat Koenig

Sandia 765-23, Albuquerque, NM

Russell A. Gregory

SAFB Orators 4987-25, Wichita Falls, TX

Don A. Clausing

Apollo 1132-28, Toledo, OH

C.W. Kinsman

Evergreen 333-32, Tacoma, WA

Lila L. Young

Condada Norte 903-33, Atascadero-Paso Robles, CA

Kenneth Forbord

Southwest 4955-35, Greendale, WI

Roland W. Dority

Potomac 827-36, Washington, D.C.

Kerley LeBoeuf

Alexandria 1748-36, Alexandria, VA

Harry Parsons

Catawba Valley 1193-37, Hickory, NC

Richard Edward Nasuti

Sea N Air 2314-38, Lakehurst, NJ

James J. Weber

C.B.A. 2882-42, Saskatoon, Sask., Can

Grant E. Hanna

Chinook 1448-42, Calgary, Alta., Can

Rutherford A. Bennett

Sec Round Table 1041-46, New York, NY

William Mirabello

Toastmasters 21 Club 3781-46, New York, NY

Delores Gaddy

Venetian 952-47, Fort Lauderdale, FL

June E. Bowers

Sarasota 1958-47, Sarasota, FL

Ramona Woods

Merritt Island 2537-47, Merritt Island, FL

Janice L. Heath

Shaklee 1745-48, Montgomery, AL

William E. Llewellyn

Blue-Gray 2459-48, Gunter Air Force Base, AL

Carroll W. Puckett

Capitol 4258-48, Montgomery, AL

Frank L. Givens

North Augusta 2947-58, North Augusta, SC

Joan H. Pyland

West Knoxville 3117-63, Knoxville, TN

Peter Rodney Ficek

Centurion Speakers 4852-64 Brandon, Man., Can

Kenneth H. Hull

Morning Knights 2875-65, Binghamton, NY

Harold W. Baur

Public Service 3174-68, New Orleans, LA

Gordon M. Thompson

St. Tammany Ozone 4325-68, Slidell, LA

Paul Jakobsen

Canberra City 986-70, Air Force Base, AL

Douglas Spinks

Hawkesbury Valley 2009-70, Richmond, N.S.W., Aust

ATM BRONZE

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

Samuel Stanley Eiferman

Hughes Intercity 3060-F, Anaheim, CA

Marc D. Nagele

Bartlesville Advanced 2330-16, Bartlesville, OK

Hossein Assadallah

Challenger 5301-16, Lexington, OK

Lee Mefford

Challenger 5301-16, Lexington, OK

June Poplar

Crown Center 2425-22, Kansas City, MO

Richard A. Skinner

Speech Invaders 4641-31, Milford, MA

E. Frank Poyet

Windjammers 2628-33, Las Vegas, NV

Paris L. Lanham

High Desert 3647-33, Lancaster, CA

Ronald G. Schall

Chanticleer 1624-39, Sacramento, CA

D.C. Stultz

Harris 1423-47, Palm Bay, FL

Ramona Woods

Titusville 3018-47, Titusville, FL

Tony Welch

Mercury 5183-60, Toronto, Ont., Can

Marvin Leonard

Lafayette 2678-68, Lafayette, LA

ATMs

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

Meredith J. Carter

IEC 479-F, Anaheim, CA

Marvin E. Schilling

Garden Grove Toasters 550-F, Garden Grove, CA

Ionna M. Sandlin

Norton Toasters 1556-F, San Bernardino, CA

A.M. Sam Sarem

76 Research, 3327-F, Brea, CA

David M. Gutknecht

Tustin 3733-F, Tustin, CA

Louisa Marushak

Rancho 3828-F, Bellflower, CA

Les I. Schulman

Anaheim Breakfast 3836-F, Anaheim, CA

Jacqueline Kazarian

Irvine Complex 4149-F, Irvine, CA

Gerald Kay

Palm Springs 4199-F, Palm Springs, CA

James W. Ritter

Babble On 4277-F, Huntington Beach, CA

Renee W. Ritter

Babble On 4277-F, Huntington Beach, CA

Cecil L. Milliner

Gavel 11-1, Long Beach, CA

Scott T. Hector

South Bay 280-1, Torrance, CA

Manuel J. Terrazas

Speak Easies 2001-1, Long Beach, CA

Diana Calista Wickes

Plane Speakers B-1 2189-1, El Segundo, CA

Liston Nobel Jr.

Redmond 2828-2, Redmond, WA

Robert N. Caires

Honeywell 4610-2, Seattle, WA

Charles J. Lacy

Honeywell Pacesetters 4692-2, Seattle, WA

Donald Kurt Peterson

Honeywell Pacesetters 4692-2, Seattle, WA

James S. Schaming

Honeywell Pacesetters 4692-2, Seattle, WA

Pat Freeman

Greyhound Early Risers 213-3, Phoenix, AZ

Perry E. Shilling

Tempe 1715-3, Tempe, AZ

Henry S. Morris

Scottsdale 2013-3, Scottsdale, AZ

James Robert Sprague

Park Central 3527-3, Phoenix, AZ

Shannon K. McCracken

Oak Creek Orators 4459-3, Sedona, AZ

Bonnie Lee Hyde

ITT Courier 4959-3, Tempe, AZ

Carter Wells

Los Habladores 1952-4, Sunnyvale, CA

Patricia Clute

Francisco 2369-4, San Jose, CA

Floyd E. Pederson

Memorex Speechmasters 4511-4, Santa Clara, CA

Cheryl Ilene Watkins

Tuesday Executive 4802-4, Sunnyvale, CA

Edward V. Carter

Felicita 4556-5, Escondido, CA

Maureen Lynn Palmer

Northwest Wind 692-6, Osseo, MN

Richard Lee Peterson

Marshall 1276-6, Marshall, MN

George Byron Thompson

Rochester Suburban 1883-6, Rochester, MN

Katherine L. Francen

Tonka Talkers 2119-6, Excelsior, MN

John B. Hannay

Sunrisers 2140-6, Crystal, MN

Bill Farkes

Minnehaha 2563-6, Minneapolis, MN

Dennis L. Maschka

Cedar Valley 2634-6, Austin, MN

Richard B. Mussler

Salem 138-7, Salem, OR

Bonnie Simmons

Lake Oswego 605-7, Oswego, OR

W. Conrad Howe

Webster Groves 461-8, St. Louis, MO

June Louise Dumas

Fort Leonard Wood 493-8, Fort Leonard Wood, MO

Lois Maddox

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5653-7 Regulators

Salem, OR—Wed., noon, Labor & Industries Bldg., Basement Conference Room (378-6638).

5654-7 Kalama Totem Talkers

Kalama, WA—Wed., 6:50 p.m., Columbia Inn Restaurant, 698 Frontage Rd. (673-4562).

5652-14 Live Oak

Fitzgerald, GA—1st & 3rd Thurs., 7:30 p.m., Ben Hill County Library, Main Street (423-5246).

5644-17, Jefferson Valley

Whitehall, MT—Sat., 7:30 a.m., Jefferson House, Legion Street (287-3411).

5657-28 Chelsea

Chelsea, MI—Fri., noon, Chelsea Hospital, 775 S. Main St. (415-1311).

5648-30 Cotter & Company

Chicago, IL—1st Tues., 11:30 a.m.; 3rd Wed., 4:45 p.m., Cotter & Company, 2740 N. Clybourn Ave. (975-2725).

5661-36 AAR

Washington, D.C.—1st & 3rd Thurs., noon, Association of American Railroads, 1920 L St., N.W. (835-9340).

5658-38 PMA Group

Philadelphia, PA—noon, PMA Group, 925 Chestnut St. (629-5478).

5646-39 One & Only

Sacramento, CA—2nd Fri., 7:30 p.m., Sierra Inn, Auburn & Fulton.

5660-57 Global Communicators

Pleasanton, CA—Mon., noon, AT&T Communications, 5758 W. Las Positas Blvd. (460-6357).

5645-60 Joie De Vivre

Toronto, Ont., Can—Tues., 5:30 p.m., Royal Bank Plaza, Bay & Front Streets, Lower Merchants Mall (699-7029).

5651-61 Quest

Sainte Foy, Que., Can—2nd & 4th Tues., 7 a.m., Le Petit Bourgeois, 2910 Chemin des Quatre-Bourgeois (831-1242).

5659-65 Wagon Wheel

Syracuse, NY—Fri., 1:15 p.m., Wagon Wheel, 343 Green St. (437-5534).

5647-69 Gatton

Gatton, Qld., Aust—2nd & 4th Wed., Royal Hotel, Railway Street (654278).

5655-70 Gunnedah

Gunnedah, N.S.W., Aust—1st & 3rd Mon., 8 p.m., Gunnedah Shire Building, Elgin Street, Committee Room (42-0009).

5650-74 Tygerberg

Bellville, South Africa—3rd Thurs., 7 p.m., Holiday Inn (97-1819).

5649-U Tapatio

Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico—Tues., 8 p.m., Club de Industriales de Jalisco, Condominio Guadalajara Piso 24 (10-40-30).

5656-U Sener

Las Arenas, Vizcaya, Spain—Sener Tecnica Naval E Industrial, S.A., Sener Apdo 8 (463-9400, x 318).

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Marriott Austin
Austin, Texas

REGION IV JUNE 14-15
Howard Johnson's
Rapid City, S. Dakota

REGION V JUNE 7-8
Excelsior Hotel
Little Rock, Ark.

REGION VI JUNE 21-22
Holiday Inn
Middleburg Heights, Ohio

REGION VII JUNE 14-15
Stouffer's Valley Forge
Valley Forge, Penn.

REGION VIII JUNE 7-8
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Freeport/Lucaya
Grand Bahama Island

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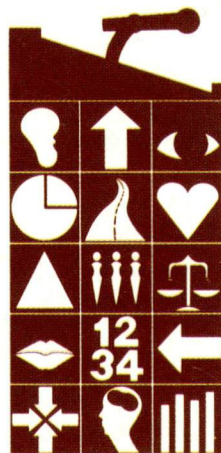
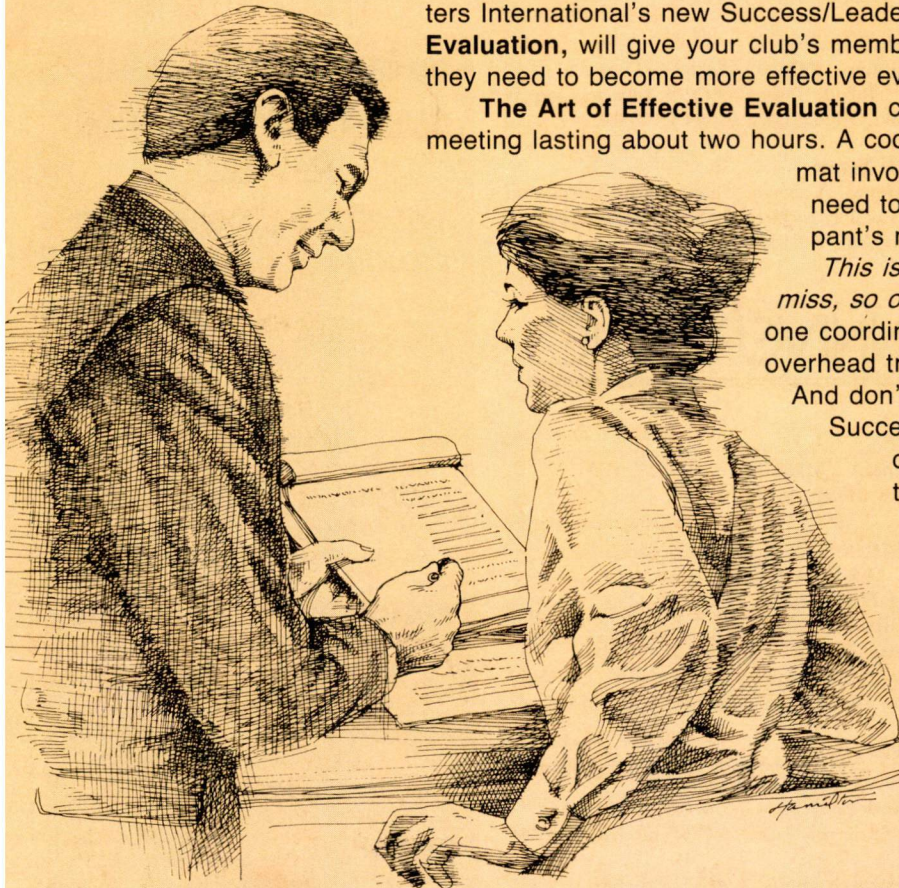
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