

September 1975

THE toastmaster

Talking to the TV Generation

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



Right On!

The message by International President John Diaz, DTM, that appeared in the June, 1975, issue of the THE TOASTMASTER ("Today's Youth—Your Club's Greatest Asset") is "right on," as the youth of today so ably phrase it.

Here's a case in point: Two clubs in District 31 were failing, due, in part, to a lack of membership. The older members were leaving, some were being transferred and few, if any, new members were being signed up. What did we do? We conducted a Youth Leadership Program in a newly opened vocational high school. Of the twenty-eight young people that participated in the program, five went on to join the local Toastmasters club.

This can happen to you, too! But now is the time to start. Talk to your school's officials and make your plans to get your program in motion as soon as school opens. Just 13 short weeks later you should be able to fill out several Form 400 Membership Forms and be the hero of your club. If we can do it, so can you.

Gene S. Selig, ATM
Framingham, Massachusetts

One for the Road

Your "How to" feature by Gene Tesreau, ATM ("Be a Doer, Not a Dud," July, 1975), brought a surge of interest and familiarity to me. Its timing was almost alarming in that I mentioned the very same club in Ballwin, Missouri, as

I was being installed as president of the Las Vegas Windjammer Club 2628-33 the other evening. How ironic!

I was invited to a Toastmasters club meeting by the president of that Ballwin club, who was in the same profession as myself. He said, "Jerry, how about coming up to our Toastmasters club meeting tomorrow evening?" My immediate thought was, "What do I want to get involved with a bunch of drunks for—I don't even drink!" I gave a feeble reply that I was busy that evening.

Some fifteen years passed before the suggestion was again put to me, but this time with a brief explanation of what Toastmasters is all about.

Well, that was 18 months ago. I've been a member of two clubs, an officer threetimes, and simply can't get enough. I just wonder what would have happened fifteen years ago if I had been a drinker?

Jerry S. Willick
Las Vegas, Nevada

An Educational Tool

I would like to comment on the diatribe you ran in the "Letters" column in the July issue by Fred Stockbridge.

Fred seems to feel THE TOASTMASTER should print, unedited, every complaint letter received by the editor. I disagree.

If Fred wants to act like a clubhouse lawyer because the Board gave short shrift to his political views, that's his privilege. But please, spare us from the likes of Fred Stockbridge. Let's use THE TOASTMASTER as an educational

tool of benefit to its members. The Board was elected in open convention. They have the right, and the duty, to set policies to promote the progress of Toastmasters. Not everyone may agree with those policies. It seems to me that if Fred has any legitimate beefs, he would be best advised to spell them out to the writing the President of Toastmasters and the Board members.

But the fact that the editor would print such an obstructive letter, without a single constructive thought, certainly gives the lie to Mr. Stockbridge's contention that he can't get a forum. Any other editor would have given his philippic the hasty burial it deserved.

Barney Kingston, ATM
Chicago, Illinois

A Warning on Humor

I missed reading the June issue of THE TOASTMASTER until yesterday. For this reason, my comments on "Let's Take Laughter Seriously" are somewhat late.

The article is interesting and informative but lacks an important warning that should be included in every article on how to make a humorous speech. In the future, all such articles should contain these words: "WARNING: It takes more time to prepare, organize, and practice a humorous speech than any other kind of speech."

C. D. Cleghorn
Jacksonville, Florida

"Letters to the Editor" are printed on the basis of their general reader interest and constructive suggestions. All letters are subject to editing for reasons of space and clarity and must include the writer's name and address.

TOASTMASTERS INTERNATIONAL is a non-profit, educational organization of Toastmasters clubs throughout the world. First Toastmasters club established October 22, 1924. Toastmasters International was organized October 4, 1930 and incorporated December 19, 1932.

A Toastmasters club is an organized group, meeting regularly, which provides its members a professionally-designed program to improve their abilities in communication and to develop their leadership and executive potential. The club meetings are conducted by the members themselves, in an atmosphere of friendliness and self-improvement. Members have the opportunity to deliver prepared speeches and impromptu talks, learn parliamentary procedure, conference and committee leadership and participation techniques and then to be evaluated in detail by fellow Toastmasters.

Each club is a member of Toastmasters International. The club and its members receive services, supplies, and continuing guidance from World Headquarters, 2200 N. Grand Ave., Santa Ana, California, U.S.A. 92711.



Dr. Ralph C. Smedley
Founder, 1878-1965

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ADVERTISING REPRESENTATIVE

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In this electronic age of quadrasonic sound and super-sensory cinema, the spoken word comes off like a steam locomotive—beautiful, powerful, a sensitive tool in the right hands, but somehow out of tune with our media-mad age. But there is something you can do about it. You can add visual channels.

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George C. Scott

A Man With Ideas

On August 21, 1975, George C. Scott, DTM, became the 45th President of Toastmasters International.

A Toastmaster for over 22 years, he is a man of action... a man with ideas. He shares some of those ideas and answers some important questions in the following interview, recently conducted by members of THE TOASTMASTER magazine staff.



THE TOASTMASTER: Your presidential theme for 1975-76 is "Toastmasters is... Dedicated to You." Could you tell us about it?

MR. SCOTT: It expresses my idea of what this organization is all about. Toastmasters is made up of individuals and it's my feeling that everything the organization does should be aimed at filling these individuals' needs. That's why the Toastmasters organization was established in the first place. Our clubs, areas, and districts supply the necessary communication and leadership opportunities, while the officers provide the individual member with the help he needs to gain confidence in himself and to achieve the personal growth he is after.

TM: How does the individual's personal involvement fit in with the organization?

SCOTT: Toastmasters is based on personal involvement. Without it, we have no organization. Unfortunately, I'd like to say that this involvement is not as complete as it should be.

TM: Why do you say that?

SCOTT: Because involvement is dependent on how well the member's needs are met, and, at the present time, I don't think that enough clubs are providing programming that will allow the member to receive the individual self-development that he really wants and needs.

TM: What can be done about this?

SCOTT: Well, first of all our officer training program is one that we have to be strengthened considerably. We have a very big problem in getting our club officers trained, and since these officers know what to do and how to do it, the member will not receive what he is entitled to from our organization.

Secondly, our officers are going to have to know what the members' needs are. And the only way they are going to find that out is by talking with each individual member, by sitting down with him and communicating. The member tells the club officer what he would like to receive from our organization and what kind of programming he would like to see provided.

TM: What can the member do to help operate?

SCOTT: He should know what

programs are available. This should have been accomplished by the club at the member's orientation. After he informs the club educational vice-president of his needs, the club can then plan the programs which provide the growth opportunities necessary to fulfill those needs. In this manner, the individual is able to apply the broad Toastmasters program concepts to his personal needs and change his weak points into strong ones.

In addition, there should be a periodic review of the member's activity at the club level. I choose to refer to this as a personal achievement interview."

TM: How would this personal achievement interview work?

SCOTT: As I stated earlier, each new member is supposed to be interviewed when he joins the club by a member of the club educational committee. This serves as a guide to the club educational committee and its program planning group. Then, approximately six months later, a personal achievement interview should be conducted with the member by the educational committee. At that time, a review of the member's accomplishments to date and the establishing of his objectives for the next year could be discussed. At the end of another twelve months, or sooner if desired, a personal achievement interview should be conducted again. By doing this on a continuous basis with all members of the club, the programming will automatically satisfy the members' needs and the individual will develop and build the skills he is trying to develop by joining Toastmasters.

TM: How would you characterize the educational programs that have been developed by Toastmasters over the years?

SCOTT: Basically, the Toastmasters programs are tailored for the self-development of the individual. Toastmasters is not trying to pour everyone into a mold. The individual concentrates on those areas which he feels need strengthening, and by making effective use of the Communication and Leadership manual, he can make his strong points even stronger.

TM: What can the individual member do to assure himself that he is getting all he

can out of these programs?

SCOTT: Participate—he must get involved. The Toastmasters programs are centered around the learning-by-doing concept. Recognition of a weakness, through the process of evaluation in the club meeting, helps the individual. After identifying that weakness, he can then work toward overcoming it. The Toastmasters programs are flexible enough to allow the member the opportunity to concentrate on a given problem area for as long as he feels necessary.

TM: How about the club officers? Where do they fit into these programs?

SCOTT: Holding an office in and of



itself is a leadership learning opportunity. Of course, with this learning experience goes responsibility. Officers at all levels should keep the members informed of the programs available to them and how they work. Area governors, in particular, should recognize the importance of proper club officer training and follow-up. Officer assistance interviews should be conducted between all levels of officers to help in this continuous training process. This, in turn, leads to quality club programs which are based on the club membership needs.

TM: People who have been involved in Toastmasters programs tend to become

leaders in their communities. Is there any relation between this and the skills they have developed as Toastmasters members?

SCOTT: Yes, very definitely. Toastmasters provides opportunities for the individual to develop his communication and leadership skills. It would naturally follow that the individual would put them to use.

TM: So you're saying that the skills a Toastmaster acquires in his club can be carried over into his community?

SCOTT: Yes. If an individual has completed the Toastmasters Communication and Leadership program, he has, obviously, worked toward achieving something. And, hopefully, he will have received some benefits from his participation. If he has gained skills in leadership or communication areas, then he can obviously use these same skills in his home, work, community—or wherever he may be.

TM: What about the Toastmasters community programs? Programs like Youth Leadership, Speechcraft, and Speakers Bureaus? What do you see as their purpose?

SCOTT: They provide additional growth opportunities for the individual, as well as being a benefit to the community. If an individual can put into practice what he has learned within the club, then he is still growing, still expanding, and, obviously, still developing his skills.

TM: The membership program for this year is Sharing Membership Opportunities. The general opinion seems to be that this is more of a membership *building* program than a *sales* campaign. What are your feelings on this?

SCOTT: I definitely look at this program as a building process. When someone has something he is proud of, he usually likes to share it with somebody else. He never looks at it as a sales pitch. He approaches it with the angle of, "Hey, I've got something great here. Why don't you take advantage of it as well as me?"

TM: Do you think that we have to sell the Toastmasters programs?

SCOTT: Once the individual recognizes the growth opportunities available to

him, the Toastmasters programs sell themselves. As I've already mentioned, since individual growth depends, to a great extent, on the people in the club and the programs provided by the club officers, it will be a greater building experience if you have more people in your club to work with. There is nothing so negative or discouraging as to have four, five, or six people sitting around a table trying to hold a full-fledged club meeting. It just can't be done. So, obviously, if you have more people there, sharing with each other their talents, their ideas, their experiences, and their skills, everyone is going to benefit and grow from it. Sharing Membership Opportunities, to me, is a good, positive approach to our program.

TM: Membership then, to you, is something more than mere numbers.

SCOTT: In Toastmasters, we learn from each other. I think that's the very foundation of our organization. If Toastmasters was just you and me, our individual growth would be limited to what our thoughts and ideas are. But by expanding the number of people the individual member is exposed to, the educational growth opportunities are expanded accordingly. As a fringe benefit of expanded membership will come better program material from World Headquarters, because Toastmasters International will have the finances to provide it.

TM: What's the best way to achieve this growth?

SCOTT: On a one-to-one basis. I am not discounting the tremendous growth opportunities with company clubs, but even there it's the one-to-one contact that maintains the club membership.

TM: One membership problem TI has had over the years is that after the member finishes the Communication and Leadership Program, he feels the organization has nothing more to offer and drops out. If I were an average Toastmasters member and had just completed the Communication and Leadership Program, is there any reason for me to remain in Toastmasters?

SCOTT: Certainly. Besides continuing with the Advanced Communication and Leadership Program, there are many

leadership opportunities at all levels of the organization. If a member becomes proficient in a particular program, he can also become a specialist and help other clubs as needed. This is another growth opportunity for the individual member.

TM: In following this emphasis on the individual in your presidential program, can you tell us what purpose an organization such as Toastmasters serves in today's world?

SCOTT: As far as Toastmasters is concerned, it is designed to help an individual gain confidence in himself and help him learn how to organize his



thoughts so that he can communicate them to others in an understandable fashion. It is designed to build the individual. There is definitely a need for that.

TM: What do you see in the future for Toastmasters? Can you realistically see a one-hundredth anniversary?

SCOTT: Definitely. I am thinking positively. We've had some problems with membership in the past and everyone recognizes it. But it's not just with us. Other organizations are experiencing the same thing. We have something that people want and we can provide it to them in such a way that they can gain

experience and skills, which will help them throughout their lives. As long as we can provide for the individual the things he wants and needs, we will have a viable, vibrant, and moving organization.

TM: What can we do to attain this goal?

SCOTT: I see six basic areas that, in order to accomplish this goal, we must concentrate on right now. First, we must strengthen all of our officer training programs at all levels, particularly the training of area governors and club officers. Second, a closer and more frequent contact must be made between area governors and the clubs, which will result in a better utilization of the area governor as a resource person by the club. Third, there should be frequent discussions between the club education committee and the members, concerning the members' progress and needs. Fourth, we need club programs designed to fit the members' needs. Fifth, we should make greater use of the Distinguished Club Plan, and sixth, there should be a positive attitude toward achieving all of these things. Our membership growth will come automatically if these six items are accomplished.

TM: Is there anything else you would like to add?

SCOTT: I have every confidence in the Toastmasters organization, its people, and its programs. I think we need to look at this coming year as a turning point in our organization. We are going to move forward and share what we have with others.

There is a basic statement that has been made by many people: "Let every person learn his duty." If you are an officer, that really applies. If you are a member, and learn what your duties are as a member, you'll find that it means following the programs, using the manuals, putting in a little bit of time on preparation, thinking about what you're supposed to be doing.

I believe there is the possibility of having an organization with two or three hundred thousand members. There is no doubt in my mind that it can happen if we all do what we're supposed to do. If everybody works together, we can do it... we will do it. □

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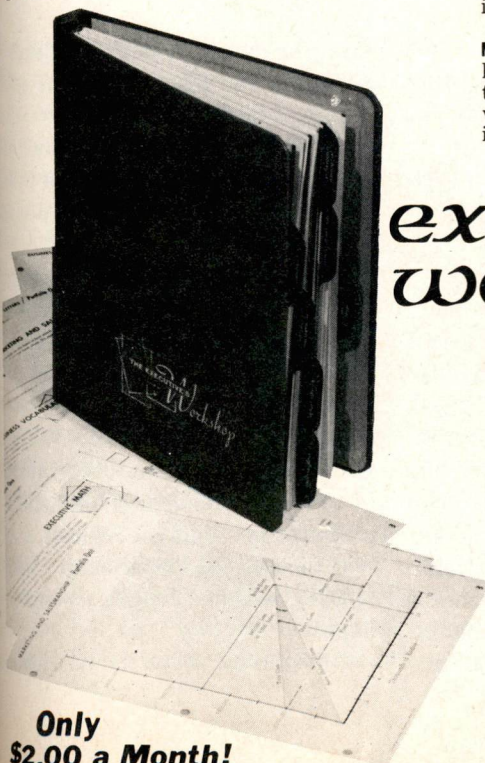
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by Ron Carter

If your audiences these days all seem to suffer excessively from glazed eyeballs and seat fatigue, it may be that you're using a horse-and-buggy speaking technique in the age of quadrasonic sound and super-sensory cinema.

The electronic media that bombard us almost hourly all have one thing in common: they convey several levels of information over several channels of communication at once. Stacked up against a barrage like that, the spoken word comes off like a steam locomotive—beautiful, powerful, a sensitive tool in the right hands, but somehow out of tune with our media-mad age.

It's sad, but—according to communication experts—true. The “new audience” out there has a revved-up ability to absorb data, but too often speakers dole out information slower than Arab oilmen shipped crude oil at the height of the embargo.

So what can you do about it?

Add channels. With a little imagination, a visual channel can be added to almost any spoken presentation, and if the visual content is planned as carefully as the spoken part of the presentation, the amount of information communicated in a given talk can be *quadrupled*.

It's How You Use It

You don't have to be an electronics wizard, either. A chalkboard, a flip chart, or even a simple poster can be just as effective as the most sophisticated sound-synchronized slide system available. It's all in how you use it.

The key to using visuals effectively is to remember a simple rule: Pictures and words must *supplement* each other. After all, one reason for combining sight and sound is to multiply the amount of information that is communicated per minute. You don't do much multiplying if your visuals simply repeat what you are saying in words.

A Baltimore real estate agent addressing a Junior Chamber of Commerce group recently demonstrated (unintentionally) how *not* to use visuals. He had

his lecture room rigged up with a perfectly-focused slide projector which he was able to operate unobtrusively from the podium. “Real estate values in the inner city are dropping sharply,” he intoned. And *Flash!* Up on the screen popped the words, “Real estate values in inner city dropping sharply.” He went on. “There are three basic reasons for the decline.” And sure enough, as he named each of the three reasons, up it went on the screen, *repeating* what he had just said.

Compare that to the technique used by campus recruiters for Martin-Marietta, a Daytona Beach aerospace corporation and one of the most skilled audio-visual users around. While the recruiter recites statistics about living conditions in Florida, the screen in front of the room lights

soon cease to be aids and become instead the focus of the presentation. If a graphic is simple and clearly labeled, it can speak for itself as readily as can a photograph or sketch. Think of how much more effective that Baltimore realtor's comment on the decreasing prices of inner city property might have been had he accompanied it with a bar graph showing the 1964 price average looming like the Washington Monument over a square 1974 column.

Make your graphs truly graphic and you won't have to explain them.

Once you have an idea as to the content of your visuals, how do you choose the right format in which to present them?

Some media just naturally go with certain topics. Can you imagine a tra

Talking to the

up with pictures of parks, beaches and Florida orange groves. Two levels of information reach out to the audience at once.

The lesson is simple. Let your visuals—whether slides, posters, charts, or whatever—speak for themselves.

Speak to the Audience

Note that when you do this you automatically avoid one of the major pitfalls confronting the speaker who decides to use visual aids—the tendency to speak to the visual aid rather than to the audience. We've all run into the teacher who gets so carried away with his chalkboard that he winds up with his back to the class, his nose pressed into the chalk dust, and his words lost somewhere in the swirl of diagrams, formulas, or whatever.

Now and then, of course, visual aids

talk, for instance, without slides or film? Can you picture someone explaining a mathematical procedure without using a chalkboard? So, for those of us who specialize in travel talks or in mathematics, media selection poses a problem.

For the rest of us, though, some guidelines are needed. Let's look first at stimulus value, the “attention-getting power of a visual aid.

Color, intensity, sharpness—all contribute to the stimulus value of a visual. And all these are key attributes of color slides. Furthermore, slides projected in a darkened room, a focus that focuses the visual sense more intensely and thus heightens the impact.

Does this mean you should accom

our talks with slides whenever possible? Not at all.

The high stimulus value of a slide program can, in fact, be a detriment. A speaker I know recently tried to enliven a dull lecture on tax law by preparing a sound and slide accompaniment. His talk dealt specifically with the anticipated effect of certain proposed tax laws on farming, so he pulled together some colorful shots of farm life, added some background music by the Boston Pops Orchestra, and laid it on his audience while he droned on about precedents, depreciation and subsidy levels.

As you might suspect, his audience watched the slides, listened to Arthur Fiedler, and learned absolutely nothing about how the proposed tax laws might

your audience or a technique that is nothing short of electrifying, by all means use slides or film. (Dramatization, for instance, can often be heightened immeasurably by adding a slide and music accompaniment.) But the rest of us, faced with the task of making our rather mundane topics interesting, might be well advised to look to other formats for our visual aids.

Avoiding the Foul-Up

Flip charts and mounted illustrations are two of the most versatile and accessible visual formats around. They can be used with blow-ups of photos, with sketches or paintings, with graphs and diagrams, cartoons, almost any two-dimensional display you can think of. And you don't have to contend with equipment foul-ups, a very real hazard

artists's concept of an ideal city, a futuristic space island straight out of a science fiction novel.

The speaker changes each illustration once. First, the ghetto scene gives way to a photo of a cleaned-up city street, a neat row of townhouses with the residents gathered for a block party of some sort. The science fiction city is replaced with a picture of a neighborhood in Reston, Virginia, one of the three or four "new" cities constructed in recent years. The speaker's visuals, as well as his spoken remarks, merge the real and the ideal into a vision of what can actually be done now.

The same technique can be used to good effect with graphs. If you want to contrast an upward trend in one area with a downward trend in another, you can use crisscrossing lines on a single graph, but why not graph each trend separately and reveal each at the most dramatic possible moment in your talk?

Part of the Speech

Even "the best laid schemes o' mice and men gang aft agley," said Robert Burns. Even though he wasn't talking about visual aids, the warning still applies. The speaker who can't operate his flip chart without disrupting his entire presentation might as well leave out the visuals altogether.

Remember, visual aids are a natural adjunct to your speech. Think of them in this way and you'll be able to handle them smoothly and efficiently.

Probably the biggest mistake novice speakers make is to "introduce" the visuals. The speaker who makes a point in his talk, for example, and then says, "Here's a little chart I prepared to illustrate that point," is implying that the audience might not have noticed the chart had he not pointed it out to them. Ridiculous! Visual aids cannot be overlooked and, if clearly labeled, need no special mention. The city planner, whose presentation we have already mentioned, labels his final illustration "Reston, Virginia: A Planned City Built in the Past Decade." When he describes Reston in his talk, he simply uncovers the illustration. He doesn't pause and say, "Here's a picture of Reston, Virginia."

TV Generation

affect farmers in the area.

The same thing might have happened to the Martin-Marietta recruiter if he had not keyed his statistics directly to the concerns of his audience. Rather than read from a census report, he told them how much they could expect to pay for a Daytona Beach apartment, how much their weekly food bills would run, and how much would be deducted from their weekly paychecks. In that instance, the audience had their ears locked onto the recruiter's spiel and their eyes locked onto the pictures of Daytona Beach.

Subject and Technique

So, stimulus value is not an end in itself. It's something that must be balanced against subject and technique. If you have a subject that will automatically switch on the adrenalin valves in

with the more sophisticated media.

As is the case with all visual aids, imagination is the key to using flip charts or mounted illustrations successfully.

Instead of a single easel, try using a pair, one on each side of the speaking platform, and work with contrasts. A well-known writer and lecturer on city planning has developed a striking technique that requires only four mounted illustrations, displayed two at a time. He calls his speech "Cities: The Dream and the Reality." As he begins his talk, an easel on his right bears a blown-up photo of a cluttered city street with trash strewn all over the sidewalk and a wino sprawled in the gutter. On his left is an

Set your visuals up before you begin speaking. You may wish to have illustrations visible right from the start. Fine. If not, you can cover your flip charts with blank sheets of paper or cardboard until you are ready to reveal the first picture. Plan to be standing beside your easel at precisely that point in your talk. Pause momentarily and remove the cover sheet. Then, face your audience and resume talking—naturally. Do the same when it's time to switch from one illustration or chart to the next.

Mark Your Notes

Don't try to key the change to a precise word or phrase—no matter how dramatic the effect might be. Such close timing is difficult to pull off, and failure to do so can be ludicrous. Rather, mark your notes with a readily visible sign and let that be your signal to begin moving over to your display.

One final word of warning: Although visuals should supplement and not repeat words, don't be too subtle. A few years ago, a speaker delivering what was supposedly an objective account of the origins of the Vietnam conflict accompanied his talk with some pen and ink sketches of famous scenes from the American Revolution. He was attempting to make a point, no doubt, but half the audience was convinced that he had brought along the wrong set of visuals.

Practice and planning—two key ingredients in any successful speech—apply equally to the successful use of visual aids. Next time you prepare a speech, try adding a visual channel to your spoken words and see if the glazed eyeballs don't brighten up and the slumping spines suddenly stiffen. For today's audiences, raised on film and TV, even Daniel Webster might have needed a flip chart or two. □

Ron Carter teaches communication skills at Rappahannock Community College in Warsaw, Virginia. A graduate with an M.F.A. in English from the University of Iowa, Mr. Carter has also taught communications-related subjects at community colleges in Missouri and Maryland and has worked as an advertising copywriter and technical writer.

A "How to" Feature

The "Clip-and-File" Method

by
**M. L. Wardinski, ATM
Club 2014-36**

Have you ever struggled to get an idea for a speech? I have. Although I'm surrounded daily with many interesting experiences and activities from which the bases for thousands of speeches are available, ideas never come easily. My search for "the speech" usually continues from one meeting to the next, many times occupying my entire weekend with numerous false starts that usually end in frustration. The eve of my meeting usually finds me no more prepared than the time before. So, as before, a speech is slapped together from some current thought gleaned from the headlines of the daily newspaper or a discussion at the office and fitted to my particular speech project. Rehearsals? Rewrites? Hardly. Can't say much for the presentation that follows either. As a matter of fact, it is often suggested that my speech be re-presented.

If you had a member in your club who confronted you with this problem, what would you recommend as a solution?

You might suggest the "clip-and-file" method—a system that can be compared to the vertical reference file found in most libraries or the so-called "morgue"

used by many newspapers. It actually works.

For the past few years, I have maintained a similar file on my particular areas of interest (Russian History, Bridge, Chess, Education, Homeowning Tips). The list of categories is endless, limited only by your imagination. Care should be taken, however, to tailor your clip-and-file to your individual needs. Even in a few weeks of normal reading, you'll be able to clip enough articles from old newspapers and magazines to give you a wealth of background material for several speeches regardless of the particular project you have confronting you.

When you couple this clip-and-file method with that of "immediate note-making," you can't lose. How many times has a thought come to you out of the blue, only to be forgotten in a few minutes or hours? It has happened to me. But, if you make it a practice to jot down all of these thoughts as they occur on a small three-by-five card, you'll have more ideas than you can handle in a lifetime. Incidentally, these jottings should be filed, according to category, with the other materials you have been clipping. Certainly, not all the things you clip or jot down will materialize into a speech. With time, the material may even become dated. Therefore, some weeding-out is periodically required. As you review the materials, be weeded out, you may want to start specializing and redirecting your research efforts (and ultimate speeches) along a somewhat narrower field.

Regardless of the method you use, I'm sure you'll have your weekends free to yourself and your approach to speech projects will become more creative and enjoyable. The energy expended before in false starts and stops—frustration—can now be redirected into the actual creation of the speech, rehearsal and rewrites. Your entire club will benefit in the long-run. You'll be a participating Toastmaster who will always be available with a "hip-pocket" speech and without hesitation, to speak at the end of an invitation. □



Bicentennial Speech Topics

"The Land of Plenty" has been selected as the second topic to be discussed by speakers and writers all over America who will celebrate the Bicentennial by participating in the American Issues Forum.

Scheduled for September 28 through October 25, 1975, the second topic is built on the idea that America is more than a symbol—it is a land to be settled, owned, rented, mined, seeded, plowed under, asphalted over, built upon, played on and lived in. Using this general heading as a theme, the four weeks of the month have been divided into the following subjects:

Sept. 28-Oct. 4: *A Shrinking Frontier*. How did each area of the frontier affect the lives of the early settlers and how did the settlers change each place they lived? Is the whole colonizing, pioneering, prospecting spirit still a significant element in our character? Does a frontier spirit still spur us on?

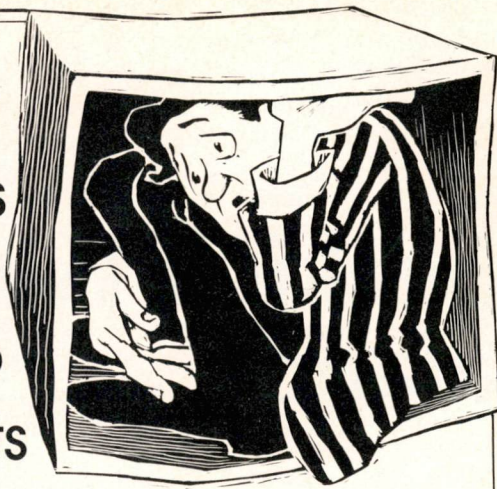
Oct. 5-Oct. 11: *The Sprawling City*. Seven out of ten Americans now live in cities compared with five percent 200 years ago. Are our biggest cities becoming places where only the rich and poor live, while the middle class commutes from suburbia? Why do we live in cities—because we want to or because we have to?

Oct. 12-Oct. 18: *Use and Abuse in the Land of Plenty*. Our land is our most fundamental resource. Have we pushed it too far? Must we now conserve dwindling resources by making do with less? Can we count on our technology to bail us out? Will our grandchildren sing of "America the Beautiful"?

Oct. 19-Oct. 25: *Who Owns the Land?* Whose land is it? Why is the ownership of land so important to us? Should we be entitled to use land in any way we fancy because we own it? How are the rights of private ownership to be balanced against the good of society as a whole?

Join the thousands of communicators throughout the United States who will be participating in the American Issues Forum. You'll be doing your part to help everyone appreciate what America's 200th birthday really means... and what it means to them. □

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Sometimes
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Speaking With Balance

by Art Fettig



Every time I watch a professional speaker I remember an act that I once saw on the old Ed Sullivan Show. This fellow had these flexible sticks and he would spin a plate on the end of the stick and when it was really spinning he would put the stick in a holder and let it spin. Then he'd take another stick and another plate and repeat the process. Whenever one the plates would slow down, he'd shake the stick and get it going again. Before long, he had a dozen plates spinning and then it was a continuous battle between time and the man's ability to get around and shake the sticks before the plates fell.

A professional speaker is a lot like that fellow shaking the sticks. The audience is a bit like the plates . . . and if that man let up for just a minute, he would have a real catastrophe on his hands.

Avoid the "Turn Off"

How many times have you watched a speech contest and known in your heart the exact second that a speaker lost out? Things might be moving just great and then you hear something or you see something that really loses you. A professional speaker must know what it is that causes an audience to turn off, and he must be on constant alert to avoid

these traps.

What are the traps that turn off an audience? Well, the number one trap you can fall into is telling an off-color story. People in your audience might laugh and applaud, but, unfortunately, they do not speak for the entire audience. With every off-color story you tell, you will lose at least one friend in that audience, and a professional knows that he needs all the friends he can muster.

Transitions are another problem for many speakers. How do you get from one piece of material to another without losing your listeners? If you watch a pro, you will usually discover a faster pace at the beginning of a new subject. Many of them use the gesture of walking from one side of the podium to the other. A change in voice helps. Many of the pros I've watched rush into a new piece of business with such excitement and enthusiasm that they are saying, "Enough of that other subject; this here is so important that I just can't wait to share it with you."

Structure helps hold interest a great deal. There is something very comforting in an organized speech. I don't hold to that theory, "Tell 'em what you're going to tell them, then tell them, and then

tell 'em what you told them." Too many people who follow that formula do not have anything worth telling in the first place, and then you get a triple load of nothing.

Often, members of the audience are amazed that a speaker can go on for an hour with just a dozen words written down for notes . . . or else, with no notes at all. It isn't always that the speaker gives the same speech every night . . . no, the secret is in knowing your segments. Yes, segments, clumps, vignettes, bits, and pieces.

A Testing Ground

In the Battle Creek Toastmasters (established 1927-62) we now have three speakers working as professionals at fees ranging from \$50 to \$800 per talk. They all agree that Toastmasters is a great place to work on new material. Hardly a week passes that one of them isn't trying out some new piece of business on members—just to see how it works.

Developing a professional speech takes months and months of research. It's to steal a bit here, a bit there . . . you know to write and rewrite new material. It's

You work on your humor, rewriting each story so that it is fresh and exciting to the audience. You polish . . . and



formance. Just tell an audience that you are closing and then don't close if you want to cause a disaster. NEVER, NEVER promise to close without closing. There is an unwritten code that says, "Once you say you are gettin', get."

One thing we are learning as professionals: Speak as often as you possibly can, and, at first, speak for any fee you can get. The fees grow as your reputation grows. While I was writing this article, the phone rang... a program chairman for an executive club. Someone on their Board had heard me speak and... In today's mail I received a letter from the program chairman in a neighboring state. Several members of their management club had heard me and....

This afternoon I had a telephone call from the president of a prominent cassette tape firm. They'd previewed my cassette tape, "Humor-ize Your Speaking," and they'd like to add it to their list.

No question... if that tape is good, then part of the reason is because I joined Toastmasters. If those speech bookings continue to come in, then it is at least partially because of the things I learned at Toastmasters. If I'm able to help other professional speakers, then it is because I had my ear tuned in at Toastmasters meetings.

Building Your Reputation


And if you've finished your first TM book and think that it is time to move on, then think about it again. At Toastmasters you can go as far as you like in the speaking profession. It is the greatest classroom in the world. You can stretch your talents until people from all over the world learn of your reputation and call you to keynote their conventions.

Learning to communicate can be one of the most exciting and rewarding experiences in the world. Every time I learn to do a little bit better job of communicating, I find that my income has grown. There is a definite relationship between a man's ability to communicate and his success in the business world.

So really, professional speaking is simply learning to juggle all of those plates at once... learning to handle

organization, transitions, humor, audience involvement, pacing, and proper closing. I'm going to close now. No matter how good you are at public speaking, you can be better and there is no better way to improve than by setting your mind to it and then attending Toastmasters meetings regularly. □

Art Fettig is employee communications officer for the Grand Trunk Western Railroad. A member of the Battle Creek Toastmasters Club 1027-62 in Battle Creek, Michigan, he is the author of a new humor book, *It Only Hurts When I Frown*, and numerous fiction and non-fiction magazine articles. In addition, he has had a number of his humor and motivational messages made available on cassette tapes, the latest being "Humorize Your Speaking."



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C&L AWARDS

**Noted
Communicators
Speak
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Communication**

"We communicate with each other so much in mass media that you don't hear anything. We are overly communicative, but not precise."

So began Senator Hubert Humphrey as he accepted the Communication and Leadership Award for 1975 from District 6. In the six years since the award was begun, a steady growth in interest has been shown by Toastmasters districts in presenting this highest district honor each year.

Senator Humphrey went on to discuss the importance of communications in international understanding. "Communications, which is your art, is a big task," he told the Toastmasters present. "One of the reasons for much of the current disenchantment is that we don't get the whole picture. An essential ingredient in getting that complete picture is an understanding of the other side, no matter how different they may be," said Humphrey. "What went wrong in Southeast Asia? We substituted power for knowledge . . . Knowledge is power; power is not knowledge."

As an example, Senator Humphrey mentioned China. "How much do you know about China? China has 850-900 million people . . . I know a little about Chinese music, art, religion; and until you know the people's art, religion—until you know about their families, their heritage—you know nothing. All you know above that is superficial."

Humphrey concluded with a call for balance in communication. "As communicators, it is important that you expose corruption, inefficiency, and mismanagement. But you've also got to show that we can *do* things, because if you keep telling people, 'You're a failure; you're no good; the system is rotten,' that's the way it will be."

Although elected officials figured prominently in this year's Communication and Leadership awards, including Oklahoma Governor David Boren (D-16) and Governor Daniel Evans of

Washington (D-32), other government officials were strongly represented. One of these officials was Donald Alexander, the Commissioner of Internal Revenue who had strong praise for Toastmasters and its contribution to effective communication. "We have two (Toastmasters) clubs going full steam now and I'm delighted to see the organization of a third. We badly need, in Internal Revenue, to learn how to communicate *after* we've said that first tough thing, ahead of communication—think. And I'd like to add on the end: one is listening and the other one is understanding. So, your education process is great because it involves the listener, the understander, as well as the speaker."

Alexander concluded by saying, "Toastmasters is a great organization for our people in Internal Revenue throughout government to participate in . . . because there was never a time when it was more important than now for those of us in Washington—those of us in government—to be able to communicate."

The top district honors were not limited to government officials, however. Members of the press and broadcast media were also prominent in the distinguished list of award recipients, including editors, reporters, publicists, and broadcast newscasters. Among the latter was Roger Grimsby of WABC in New York City (D-46), who said, "The only thing that really puzzles about you Toastmasters is that you don't *have* to talk in front of people who don't *have* to—I *have* to do that!"

Additional Communication and Leadership awards were presented to businessmen, clergymen, educators, and other citizens who made outstanding contributions to their communities. In each district, the award served to draw attention on community leadership upon the value of effective communication. The efforts of Toastmasters nationwide to promote these values are a part of making these awards possible.

Playing the Game of Semantics

by
D. B. Shaw
Club 255-11

Detail work and I don't get along too good. (Even my old English teacher would agree to that.) As I've often said, I'm not a very good self-starter, but once I get rolling I have absolutely no perseverance at all. And that's why I am up to my ceiling in hot water with my fellow members of the Valparaiso Toastmasters Club 255-11.

Having been elected secretary in the usual democratic manner—the outgoing president pointed his finger at me and said, “Okay, kid . . . you're it”—I am responsible for putting out the biweekly bulletin that tells what the next meeting is about, who will speak, and other details for the evening. The trouble is, I am responsible for getting that darned thing out. Worse than that, I'm running out of reasons for not getting it out, and now I fear I'm being suspected of playing a game of semantics with my fellow members.

The dictionary defines semantics as “the branch of linguistics that involves the scientific study of word meanings, especially their development and alteration.” It is thusly that we reach a very fine line between “reason” and a whole bunch of other semantically-oriented evils.

First comes justification. That's a good one, but not as good as a plain old reason. I blew it once that way by getting my dates messed up and on another occasion by not having stamps. As you can see, all of this also falls under “excuse,” which is a reason for not doing something . . . or for doing it . . . although

when so used it is technically slang. (Technically slang is what you might say my fellow officers used to express their disappointment in my inability to deal with details.)

This brings us to extenuation—a deterioration of reason or justification because it is only a partial excuse. I've had that happen to me too. (For example there was the time that I couldn't get the copy machine to work and there was nobody around to help me.) I might have fallen on extenuating circumstances this past week when I moved my office, and so it has taken me two weeks to straighten out my papers—a task which is still not as finished as it should be. In other words, my Toastmasters papers became the victims of the “moving mix master.”

That leads us to rationalization, a goody in most circumstances if you can get anybody to buy it. If your story is good enough, you can usually get away with it. Here you find some extenuation involved and all you usually have to do is to fill in the loopholes with a plausible excuse. However, when you have reached this point in the line of semantics, there begin to appear indications of goofing off.

So next comes the alibi. If you are accused of committing a crime, but you can prove you didn't do it or weren't at the scene, you are said to have a good alibi. But if your alibi is mere hearsay (even though you made it up yourself, using rationalization) and you get caught, your alibi gets shot full of holes and you've had it.

Alibis can lead to pretenses, which

brings back a radio program of my youth called, “Let's Pretend” . . . fairy tales, like being mugged on the way to the post office and having the mugger rip off your newsletters. If it were the Liar's Club instead of Toastmasters, you might win a prize for such a tale. In my case, I'll probably get my fingers run through my typewriter and drummed out of the corps. A pretext is just as bad when you're using it to get off the hook for something, but pretexts more often fall into reasons for you being someplace at a certain time to “accidentally” run into that good-looking secretary that works down the hall.

In each case, you'll end up with an apology that has nothing to do with the other words (other than trying to get off the hook for blowing the job). I'm afraid I've reached the bottom of the barrel this time and I'll have to fess up. I didn't get the job done because I didn't do it. Oh, I could cop out with justification (moving offices), extenuating circumstances (I lost the mailing list), alibi (any of the above), rationalization (they won't want it anyway), pretext (I lost the list of speakers, the wind blew them away, I was run over by a steamship, etc.), or pretense (with my talents, I think I could come up with a real goody here—at least it's comforting, at this stage, to know that I can no longer harm my reputation). But after all has been said, I think my fellow club members will know what has really happened. I've been playing with words to cover my own inadequacies—and I haven't done too good a job of it.

I only mention the above tour of semantics for the benefit of others who find themselves in a similar situation. There are a thousand different reasons (and a thousand different words) that seem to justify putting something off until tomorrow. But playing with words can get you into a lot of trouble. So be careful with them. □

D.B. Shaw is a member of the Valparaiso Toastmasters Club 255-11 in Valparaiso, Indiana. He is publisher and editor of *The Scanner*, a weekly newspaper.

Meeting the Impromptu Challenge

For years, speakers have relied on Cicero's five areas of preparation to help them put their speeches together. Now you can do the same . . . and apply them to your next impromptu.

Extemporaneous speaking offers a challenging experience to every Toastmaster. But the speech requires sound analysis, clear organization, and effective delivery. In fact, any speaker's preparation may be examined from Cicero's five areas of speech preparation: invention (content development), arrangement, style, memory, and delivery.

Speech preparation relies on a good deal of previous research, formulation of a general purpose, and a clear thesis sentence, followed by supporting assertions and evidence. Advance research is the mark of a wise speaker. All too often, an individual will try to recall articles from back issues of news magazines, hoping by a twist of fate that he can remember the necessary information. Even at best, luck is no substitute for thorough research and preparation.

1

Sound research is the foundation of inventiveness. As Thonnsen and Baird suggest of Cicero's area of invention, "Care is taken to point out that the orator's painstaking investigation of the facts is indispensable to inventive skill. The accomplished orator will conduct research before taking to the platform." Much time should be spent in reading a wide variety of news sources. A local newspaper, *Newsweek*, *U.S. News and World Report*, *Time*, and *New Republic*

offer diversified reporting of news developments. Synthesis of news developments provides a wealth of information serving as a basis for topic analysis and speech content. In fact, an awareness of world conditions, national policies, and local developments provides clues for potential topics. A good speaker relies heavily on prior research and reading.

Inventiveness also involves the selection of a general purpose, a thesis sentence, supporting assertions, and evidence. The general purpose, which coincides with the topic, may inform, entertain, or persuade the audience of your thesis sentence. Depending on the topic and your approach, the purpose of the speech varies. For example, the topic asking, "What are the implications of the recent takeover of South Vietnam by the North Vietnamese?" may be informative, allowing the audience to draw their own conclusions after you have presented the facts. However, you may suggest a possible course of action after the implications of the topic have been evaluated. Choosing the best approach is a matter of personal judgement in which the speaker considers his abilities, the audience's likely response, and the topic itself. The general purpose is followed in the wording of the thesis sentence.

Developing a clearly-worded thesis sentence is essential to a good speech. The thesis sentence creates direction and offers the best beginning for a well-organized speech. Word the thesis accurately, so that it reveals the central idea of the presentation. Major assertions which support the thesis are added and, along with evidence, make up the speech con-

tent. It follows that the quality of the assertions, thesis sentence, and supporting evidence depends on the research done by the speaker.

Major assertions, which come from inventive skill, explain and develop the thesis sentence. Assertions are "good reasons why" the thesis statement may be true and represent the basic structure of the body of the speech. Supporting material such as examples, testimony, statistics, analogies, and visual aids which develop, support, and explain the major assertions, constitute the proof of your thesis. Likewise, the general purpose, thesis sentence, major assertions, and supporting material constitute the areas of inventive development.

2

Cicero's second area of rhetorical development is arrangement. The speaker must be like the preacher who strives for clarity in his sermon by "telling them what he is going to tell them," "telling them," and then "telling them what he told them." The introduction, body, and conclusion, along with the major assertions, must be clear to the audience. "Telling them what you are going to tell them" corresponds to the introduction and should contain (1) an attention step, (2) a subtle statement of the thesis sentence, and (3) a preview of the body.

by
Henry T. McIntosh

expanded in turn with examples, analogies, testimony, personal examples, and statistics to create a well-developed argument supporting the thesis sentence.

"Telling them what you told them" concludes the speech. A quick review of the thesis and major ideas of the speech brings the organization and content of the speech into focus. The review is followed by a closing statement or observation pertinent to the topic which leaves the audience with a lasting impression.

3

The style used in delivering the extemporaneous speech may be dictated by the speaking situation. However, the qualities of vividness and clarity can be developed by the speaker. Clarity in organization is, as already suggested, one of the goals of inventiveness. A well-arranged speech, clearly structured, makes the skeleton of the presentation vivid. A major advantage is gained when the organization stands out in the audience's mind.

Clarity of meaning can be achieved through a well-developed purpose and clearly stated thesis. Likewise, the main ideas, when obvious to the listener, support and explain the thesis. Moreover, forms of support develop each of the assertions and add muscles to the skeleton. Unfortunately, many speakers fail to develop even a thesis sentence and wander aimlessly through their speech like lost souls.

Vividness of style enlivens the speech. Painting word pictures in the speech creates images in the listeners' mind. Images in turn convey meaning and produce vitality. The speaker using detailed examples, analogies, and hypothetical examples is sharing the speaking experience with his audience. Understanding comes when the audience shares the verbal images which portray the ideas, feelings, and values of the speaker. In short, the speech must *live* for the audience.

4-5

Memory and delivery complete Cicero's five areas of speech development. The Toastmaster who remembers his general purpose, thesis sentence, major assertions, and supporting material without notecards aids in the delivery of his speech. The gestures, facial expressions, bodily movement, and vocal inflections come more spontaneous. Similarly, good delivery comes from a well-researched, well-organized, and well-developed speech. Pre-arranged movements are artificial and add little meaning to the speech. Gestures, facial expressions, bodily movement, and vocal inflections should flow naturally from a concern to communicate. A desire to convey meaning is of greater significance than making a gesture. Practice in preparing and presenting speeches under the assistance of fellow Toastmasters will always improve your delivery, but concentrating on putting the message across will result in a more natural delivery.

Fluency can be achieved through practice. Your fellow Toastmasters and your club activities will provide you with opportunities for individual practice and evaluation. Reading such speeches as Russell Conwell's speech, "Acres of Diamonds," and Henry W. Beecher's "Liverpool Address," will provide excellent models for the development of future speeches. The more time you make available for research, development, organization, and delivery of your own speeches, the better your chances of success. □

Henry T. McIntosh is a member of the Colorado Springs Club 555-26 in Colorado Springs, Colorado. He is a speech teacher and director of the debate program at Coronado High School in Colorado Springs.

1974-75 International Hall of Fame

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Milt Laflen, DTM
Arizona

DISTRICT 5
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Southern California

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DISTRICT 15
Rulon M. Wood, DTM
Central Idaho, Eastern
Oregon, Utah, and Wyoming

DISTRICT 16
Larry Selby, DTM
Oklahoma

DISTRICT 33
James W. Eggenberger
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Central California, and
Southern Nevada

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North Shore Club 1085-21
North Vancouver, B.C.

REGION II
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WIIS Los Angeles Club
3181-52
Los Angeles, California

REGION III
Oliver Seale
Daybreakers Club 2899-25
Dallas, Texas

REGION IV
Bryce Neidig
Morning Club 1725-24
Norfolk, Nebraska

REGION V
Fred Weinecke
Rockford Club 1752-54
Rockford, Illinois

REGION VI
Andrew H. McKay
KPAA Film City Club
2647-65
Rochester, New York

REGION VII
Barry Kennedy
Fredericton Club 2204-4
Fredericton, New
Brunswick

REGION VIII
Edward D. Johnson
Tuesday Toasters Club
3004-63
Kingsport, Tennessee

President's Top Ten Distinguished Clubs

BLUE FLAME CLUB	2717-F	Newport Beach, California
NARRATORS CLUB	1398-1	Hawthorne, California
ROUNDUP CLUB	1839-3	Phoenix, Arizona
PARK CENTRAL CLUB	3527-3	Phoenix, Arizona
SUNRISERS CLUB	2140-6	Crystal Mountain, Minn.
SALEM CLUB	138-7	Salem, Oregon
ANTHONY WAYNE CLUB	1380-28	Toledo, Ohio
GOOD TIME CLUB	535-29	Eglin Air Force Base
UNIROYAL CLUB	2510-35	Eau Claire, Wisconsin
COLUMBIA CLUB	1393-58	Columbia, South Carolina

Top Ten District Bulletins

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SPOKESMAN District 11 R. Gerhart, Editor	DISTRICT FORTY FOUR BULLET-IN District 44 Jim Storey, Editor
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CALTECH TOASTMASTERS CLUB BULLETIN Caltech Toastmasters Club 3292-F Jane Burley, Editor	THE PROPMASTER Evinrude Toastmasters Club 3531-35 Tom Bell, Editor
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Outstanding Toastmaster of the Year

D- 1	H. E. Crowder, ATM	D-32
D- 2	William A. Fisher, ATM	D-33
D- 3	Fred Wienecke, DTM	D-35
D- 4	Raymond D. Chavez	D-36
D- 5	Sidney J. Gunst, Jr.	D-37
D- 6	Harry J. Berkowitz, DTM	D-38
D- 7	Vernon Rosene, ATM	D-39
D- 8	William O. Johnston, ATM	D-40
D-10	Ken Richard, DTM	D-42
D-11	Warren Rutz, ATM	D-44
D-13	George F. Burton, ATM	D-45
D-14	George Willis	D-46
D-15	Carl Miller, ATM	D-47
D-16	H. Lee Watson	D-48
D-17	George Doombadze, ATM	D-52
D-18	Donald H. Winslow	D-53
D-19	Louis Taylor	D-54
D-20	Lloyd Hagan	D-57
D-21	Don P. Couch	D-58
D-22	Robert Barr	D-60
D-24	Orm McGirr	D-61
D-28	Richard Rector	D-62
D-29	James O. Holloway, ATM	D-63
D-30	W. T. "Bill" Grieve	D-64
D-31	Lewis William Poole, Jr.	D-65
	Marion B. Lilienthal, ATM	D-66

Area Governor of the Year

D- 1	Christos L.I. Gratsinopoulos	D- 1	Neil Rowe	D-30
D- 2	Bob Peterson	D- 2	Larry Wells	D-32
D- 3	Donald F. Matthews, ATM	D- 3	Charles De Vol	D-33
D- 4	Larry Fenicle	D- 4	Daniel Shadd	D-35
D- 5	Carl D. Larson	D- 5	David H. Soule	D-36
D- 6	Jerome T. Crane, ATM	D- 6	Michael W. Marshall	D-37
D- 7	Ronald H. Clough	D- 7	Arthur Kull	D-38
D- 8	Donald Walker	D- 8	Rhuel Craddock	D-40
D- 9	Clifford Schall	D- 9	Charles Vandermark	D-42
D-10	Terry Peters	D-10	Dale Farley	D-44
D-11	Robert Mueller, ATM	D-11	Louis H. Haskell, ATM	D-45
D-13	Otto W. McCallister, ATM	D-13	John Sloan	D-46
D-14	Glen Chaney, ATM	D-14	Scott J. Hoehn	D-47
D-15	George J. Marsh, Jr.	D-15	Noel E. Donlin, ATM	D-48
D-16	John T. Heimer	D-16	Joe Operskalski, ATM	D-52
D-17	Richard C. Welch	D-17	William J. Custer	D-53
D-18	George E. Talmadge	D-18	Jeanne Houchins	D-54
D-19	Norman A. Pelissier	D-19	Manuel Escontrias	D-56
D-20	Al Mescher	D-20	Leonard Pratt	D-57
D-21	Delton Torno	D-21	Archie T. Wigger	D-58
D-22	John F. Noonan	D-22	Doreen Henley	D-60
D-24	Charles Thomas Scard	D-24	Jean Poulin	D-61
D-28	Edgar M. Kort, ATM	D-28	Lee L. Schultz	D-63
D-29	Jack Anderson	D-29	Bert Angus	D-64
	Joe Butler		Hal Blair	D-65
			William E. Reitelbach, Jr.	D-66

by
John C. Perham

The resume, bearing a Florida post office box number, came across the desk of New York-based recruiter John S. Studwell early this year. The executive was interested, he explained, "in exploring any attractive senior-level opportunities." Ticking off his broad experience in responsible staff and line positions, he added, "I pride myself on being creative, self-starting and goal-oriented." Then came the kicker. "Due to the sensitive nature of my position," wrote the job candidate, "I prefer to remain anonymous until we establish a mutual interest." Snaps Studwell: "That did it. To me, that man will always remain anonymous."

The Falling Ax

To be sure, in a time of record unemployment, few job-seeking executives are so coy as to make that particular mistake. But they do, executive recruiters and corporate personnel executives agree, make plenty of others. Wholly unaccustomed to being out of work, executives at the middle and upper echelons seem to have two reactions when the ax falls. First, they panic. Then, when they start job hunting,

they do almost everything wrong.

They are particularly maladroit in putting together a resume—which is, after all, the first essential step in finding a new job. Most executives, it seems, are unable to sit down calmly, take stock and then figure out how to present themselves clearly—and to best advantage—to a new employer. Instead, they tend to spill everything they have ever done down on paper, helter-skelter, and hope for the best. In short, most executives do not know how to sell themselves—and that is what the resume is all about. "The one thing every executive should keep in mind," says New York recruiter William Stack, "is that the resume is a selling document. Its sole purpose is to persuade the reader to grant an interview."

Something else equally essential that they forget: The resume must hit home immediately. "Every resume," observes John Studwell, "has only about thirty seconds to make an impression on the reader, good or bad."

Some personnel men argue that every resume should be limited to one page. The majority of specialists, however, feel that this is needlessly restrictive, particularly for the experienced executive. The consensus is

that two pages or even three is all right—long as everything on those pages is pertinent. Company personnel men could care less about the candidate's communal activities or his wife's several college degrees. They want the resume limited strictly to business. "What I want from a resume," declares Frederick Oswald, senior vice-president of personnel for Manufacturers Hanover Trust, "is the maximum amount of information in the minimum number of words."

The Basic Questions

Probably the personnel men's most insistent complaint is that many executive resumes fail to answer basic questions. The job candidate should state clearly at the beginning of the resume the area he is seeking for: finance, general management, whatever. And he should pinpoint as sharply as possible his own specialty. Says recruiter William Willis: "If a man has a financial background, for instance, the resume should clearly indicate whether he aspires to be a treasurer or a controller."

But telling the rest of the story can be tricky, too. One vital thing most executives have trouble with, personnel men say, is achieving a proper balance in the resume between the jobs they have held and the

What's Wrong With Executive Resumes?



tal accomplishments in those jobs. men pack the resume with every title have ever held. But those titles are meaningless because they vary so greatly in importance from one company to another. A vice-president at one company, for example, may be little more than a glorified office boy; at another, he may be a man of great power.

Some executives, meanwhile, go too far in the opposite direction. They skip lightly over jobs, titles, even the companies they have worked for, and put all their emphasis on their accomplishments. Their resumes are filled with details about sales quotas topped, production goals exceeded and whole companies turned around. But the reader does not get all the facts he needs. One executive filled a whole resume with details of exploits—and failed to mention that the company he headed wound up in bankruptcy.

Observes John Studwell: "Many resumes are so full of accomplishments, whole pages of them, that they neglect to tell you what real jobs the man has held, and at what companies. You just don't get an accurate picture of the man, because you have no framework to hang his accomplishments on. To be effective," says Studwell, "the resume must combine the two and relate each accomplishment to a given job."

Hitting the Right Target

A specific suggestion for giving resumes a sharper focus comes from William J. Byman, vice-president of executive search firm Irving Trust Co. "I think every man should have at least three resumes," says Byman. "Each of them would emphasize a different aspect of his job background, and each, of course, would be sent only to the appropriate corporate targets. Take me, for instance," Byman goes on. "I could be a personnel specialist, an executive recruiter, an equal-opportunity specialist, or a labor relations man. So it would make sense for me to have a separate resume for each of these roles. I could draw out of each job I have held only the aspects involving labor relations, say, and anyone reading the resume would think I had spent my whole life in that field."

Adds personnel consultant Kenneth Porter of Southbury, Connecticut: "If there is one thing that gets my dander up, it is

the formless resume, where the fellow tells everything he has ever done but gives it no focus at all. He simply leaves it up to the reader to decide what kind of job he is suited for."

Porter has his own prescription for this widespread malady. "In the news business," he points out, "it has long been gospel that the most effective way to tell any story is with a headline and a lead paragraph to catch the reader's attention. Only then does the writer go into the rest of the details. The same approach works for the resume—which, after all, is news if it gets to the right recipient. A man should therefore give it a headline, clearly stating what his job objective is. Then he should put all the zip he can into the opening paragraph and punch the reader right in the nose with it. After that, he can tell the rest of the story in his own way."

What About Salary?

How to best tell his story, then, is the most important thing for the executive to figure out. But there are also a lot of other nagging questions to be decided. To begin with, what, if anything, should he say about salary? While personnel experts differ strongly on the subject, the prevailing view is that the job candidate should not mention his salary demands in the resume. The reason, of course, is that any such black-and-white figure may scare off some prospective employers because it is too high; others because it is too low. Either way, it limits the executive's chances of landing an interview and a job. Advises Ira Dorf, ITT staffing manager: "Don't mention salary in the resume; wait for the interview. Otherwise, you completely destroy your flexibility." Adds Dorf confidentially: "We at ITT have been known to bend a salary a little when an exceptional man comes in for an interview; I suspect other companies do, too."

Adds Ken Porter: "I advise my clients not only to make no mention of salary in the resume, but not even to mention it when they respond to an advertised job. Saying nothing at all about money," observes Porter, "serves as a sort of come-on. If the company is at all interested, it must have someone call the man to find out what salary he is shooting for—and that obviously gives him another chance to sell

himself."

Others say there is a useful middle ground between setting down a flat dollar demand and not mentioning the subject at all. The job candidate, they suggest, should mention salary only in a covering letter to each potential employer. But rather than an exact figure, he should give the salary range he is aiming at, adding the phrase "salary negotiable" to indicate that he is a reasonable man ready for a little give-and-take. But the range, to be realistic, should be limited. John Studwell, for example, recently received a resume whose author specified a range of \$15,000-\$30,000. "That grab-bag approach," says Studwell, "is ridiculous."

And what about those references, so often trotted out en masse by a job seeker trying to impress a prospective employer? Do they help the man's cause appreciably? No, say the personnel experts. Almost to a man, they agree that references have no place in the resume. And they offer several compelling reasons. Not only do references at that stage simply waste everyone's time, but they can actually harm a man's candidacy. "References in a resume are an imposition on all the people listed," says Thomas Buffum, head of a Boston-based recruiting firm. "If prospective employers have any interest in the candidate, those same people are going to be called about him again and again. Eventually, no matter how friendly to the candidate they are, they will begin to resent the intrusion on their privacy."

Moreover, if those people are called repeatedly, by one company after another, they instinctively start wondering what is wrong with the job applicant. Why is he applying to all these companies? More important, why has none of them hired him? Before long, consciously or otherwise, the recommendations his own friends give him are no longer quite so glowing. And his whole job campaign obviously suffers.

There is, personnel men say, only one exception to the rule about omitting references from the resume: if the candidate is singularly blessed with friends in high corporate positions. Quips Frank Metzger, former senior vice-president of CNA, the big insurance holding company: "The only time an executive should put a reference in

his resume is if the board chairman of General Motors has told the man personally to mention his name."

The time to bring references into play is when the executive is seriously discussing a job with a company. Even then, he should always warn in advance each person he uses as a reference. This is both a simple courtesy and a way of helping them pitch their recommendations to the particular job he is seeking. Later, there is another courtesy that most job candidates neglect. "When you do land a job," says Ken Porter, "for heaven's sake take the time to write a note of thanks to each person you used as a reference. Remember—unlikely though it seems now, you may be looking for a job again some day."

For some executives, deciding whether or not to mention their age in the resume can be difficult. For a man in his twenties or thirties, of course, there is no problem, since relative youth is a plus for most jobs. But for executives in their fifties—and there are a lot of them on the streets these days—age obviously can be more of a problem.

The consensus seems to be that since a man's age is going to be revealed sooner or later anyhow, he might as well admit it right away (even if he does it indirectly, omitting his birth date and giving only the date of his graduation from college, or of his first job). But there is no need to lead off the resume with this information. Says William Emmert, vice-president of personnel for Marmon Group, the Chicago-based conglomerate: "If a man is 45 years or older, he should put his age at the end of the resume. If he puts it up front, as so many executives do, the whole thing may be pitched right into the wastebasket."

The Neutral Factor

A few executives, generally younger ones, try to personalize their appeal by sending along a picture, to recruiters and companies alike. But in most cases, they are simply wasting time and money. By and large, personnel men are not impressed. Any company that is interested, they say, can get a much better sense of what a man is really like in the give-and-take of an interview. At that point, how he looks becomes decidedly secondary. Says Irving Trust's William Byman, "To me, a picture

is somewhere between a neutral and a minus factor. It may, for example, be ten years old—and then when you see the man you feel he has misrepresented himself."

Adds Tom Buffum: "Some men who think they are good looking send me an 8½-by-11 glossy. They have to be out of their minds to do that."

But if the executive's physical appearance is largely irrelevant, the appearance of his resume can help tip the scales for or against him. Obviously, a sloppy, smudged document that is hard to read will not impress anyone favorably. "To be effective at all," says Frank Metzger, "the resume has to look good."

At the other extreme, too flossy a resume also gets bad marks from experienced personnel men. They much prefer one that is neatly typed (and then copied) rather than printed. Says Chicago recruiter Donald DeVoto: "Not long ago a friend proudly showed me the resume he was just about to mail—a two-color job printed on glossy paper. I promptly told him to tear it up and send out something a lot less fancy. Otherwise, I warned him, it would look as though he had been out of work for ten years."

Boosting Your Candidacy

Personnel men have one particularly important bit of advice for the executive who has been fired through no fault of his own—as a lot of men have been in the past few months. Say he was a vice-president whose job suddenly became superfluous because his company merged with another. Instead of meekly sending out resumes in the routine way, he should get permission to use the letterhead of the company. "If a man can send out his resume on the letterhead of a \$100-million company, say, whose name is known throughout the business world, it will obviously be a major boost to his candidacy," says DeVoto.

Sometimes, of course, executives are tempted to go much further than that to make themselves look good. But no matter how desperate, few executives actually lie on their resumes—although nearly all personnel men recall being burned in this way at least once. Needless to say, the man who has been caught lying, about anything from his education to his previous job record, does not get hired.

But if falsifying the record is the exception,

exaggerating one's accomplishments is most standard practice. Says ITT's Dorf: "People *do* embellish the facts in resumes. Every man," he adds, "seems to be solely responsible for company's success."

More specifically, the job-seeking executive often gives himself more titles than the facts warrant. "Often a man will say his resume that he was general manager of a very successful corporate project," says Bill Stack. "And when you sit down with him, you find he was actually one of the general managers, each reporting to a man who was really running the show."

Should You Exaggerate?

Experienced personnel executives, however, expect and tolerate this sort of exaggeration. Says Irving Trust's Byman: "Within reason, embellishing the record is all right, because most recruiters instinctively discount it. I think every man should take full credit on his resume for the project he has shared in. Then he can lay down his claims when he comes in for an interview. But what he clearly should do is take credit for projects he was actually involved in at all."

In his desperation to escape the box he finds himself in, the executive is out of work for the first time often to anyone he thinks can help him among the people who offer their services are the so-called career counselors, "outplacement" specialists. In exchange for a fee that may run to four figures, they will put together a resume for him and apply it to a selected list of recruiters' companies.

Corporate personnel men, almost without exception, consider this a poor recommendation for the executive. A typical comment comes from Michael L. Moore, director of employee relations for NL Industries. Says Moore: "A man preparing his resume does need help—from his employer or from his friends. But the professionals charge him too much for what they give him. All we want are the facts, and in that respect their help is not worth the money." Adds recruiter William Willis: "Some of the career counselors prey on a man's desperation."

Some of these same counseling firms write the candidate's letter to prospective

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A Letter or Resume?

In some cases, for that matter, the executive should simply send a letter and not a resume. Sending resumes seems especially meaningful to top executives (though many of them do it). Declares Frank Metzger: "If a man is looking for a high-level job, he should write directly to the president of the company or to the top man in his particular department—finance, marketing, or whatever. He will almost always get more executive attention with a punchy, three-paragraph letter than with a resume—

which will invariably be turned over to the personnel manager."

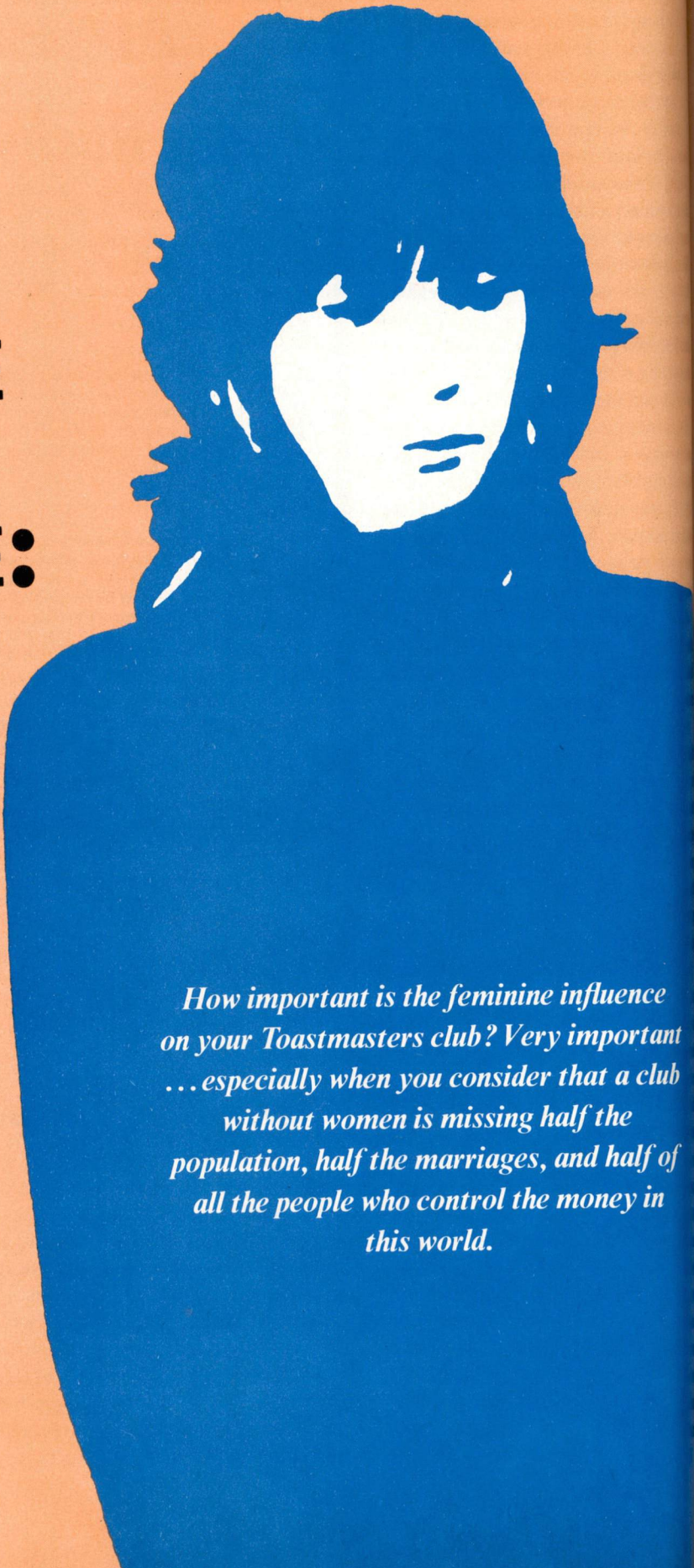
A final word of advice to the executive at every level: Whatever he decides to put in his resume and covering letter, he ought to keep a few items of interest to potential employers in reserve until he gets that all-important interview. It is in the face-to-face confrontation, after all, that the executive finally must sell himself. "There is a danger," says Tom Buffum, "in telling a company

too much too soon. In the days of the county fair, you may recall, the barker had a girl come out and wiggle a little, and then you had to pay to get inside the tent to see some more. But if the girl takes off too much at first, you may not think it is worthwhile to pay for the tent show. Telling too much in a resume may have exactly the same effect. □

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The FEMININE INFLUENCE:

How IMPORTANT Is It?



How important is the feminine influence on your Toastmasters club? Very important ...especially when you consider that a club without women is missing half the population, half the marriages, and half of all the people who control the money in this world.

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by
MYRA HARGRAVE COMISKEY

I'm usually introduced as the woman who broke the sex barrier in the Greater Victoria Toastmasters Club 2736-56. Recently, while progressing through and winning the Evaluation Contest in District 56, I found some truth in what I thought was a funny, attention-getting introduction. "Half the communication team's still on the other side of the barrier. But the barrier isn't strong. It's more like little fences."

One such fence that's crumbling and about to fall is put up by women too shy to say, "I'd like to be a part. It looks like it." Another picket fence that's losing its ground all the time is put up by a few male Toastmasters who don't realize that they're missing.

A club without women is missing half the population, half the marriages and half of all the people who control the money in this world.

Attitudes are, more often than not, the basis for these fences. A Toastmaster at a recent Southern Division Contest expressed relief that I wasn't in the speech contest because he'd "never competed against a woman." I pointed out that we're people, speak English, make grammatical errors and get scared—just like men.

Similarly, a Toastmaster at the District 56 Contest mentioned the irony in beating the man from his club. It seems they voted the week before the contest not to invite women into their club. They were concerned about not being as free in their talk, perhaps unable to say some of the things they are accustomed to saying. He admitted nothing out-of-the-way is said, but still they are uncomfortable. I told him that women tell jokes, too. I wish I'd said if men say it, women can hear it. After all, a Toastmaster recommends that its members use appropriate language. That's not out of deference to "lily-eared" ladies, but out of regard for good manners.

There's also a fence that is a little

camouflaged with a confusing bunch of codes on how you treat women. In our club the men fretted about what to call me. Toastmistress? Toastperson? No—I'm a Toastmaster. I convinced them of this by reminding them that all the magazines say no liberated woman worth her name wants to be called "mistress" of anything. They now call me Toastmaster Myra Comiskey to distinguish me from my husband.

My husband is an old Toastmaster who nagged me into joining. We talk about more than kids and finances now and have a common goal—to improve our communication. It's like finding a new life to share, a new goal to work toward together. It's a nice lift after 18 years and two children. As members of a family and of society, we need Toastmasters to help us express ourselves. But we're like every other Toastmaster in that we also have our business needs.

I'm a columnist and freelance writer and am called on to speak often. I need Toastmasters' help to improve. My husband is a partner in a CPA firm. He needs Toastmasters to help him communicate with clients, both on an individual basis and in corporate meetings. I've delighted in watching him blossom over the years he has spent in Toastmasters. Now, he's enjoying my growth.

I put off joining because of fears shared by many other women. We fear feeling "weird." After all, breaking sex barriers sounds pretty far out. But I find I'm most comfortable when Toastmasters shake hands with me and treat me like a regular member. I'm there to learn, not to be cushioned, put first in line, and helped around like a weakling.

Women have something to offer besides our numbers. In our society, men have been taught to hide feelings, to hide emotions, to keep a stiff upper lip, to be super-fellows. Women, on the other hand, have been encouraged to get in touch with feelings and to express them. We're good exposure for men. If we're included, we can open the door, enabling men to communicate on a deeper level, a level that includes carefully hidden emotions. When I was Table Topicmaster, men talked of how it "felt" to lose, how

it "felt" to have their name forgotten, how it "felt" to hate. It's not very easy to say how something "felt" when you've been hiding those painful feelings for all of your life.

Women are competitive critters. They take great pride in possessing the spotless house, the smartest, cleanest kids, on becoming the best bridge player or bowler, the most active clubwoman and on preparing the most delicious dinner. Toastmasters offers competition. It offers husbands and wives an opportunity to share competitive interests. It offers women an opportunity to grow in their ability to get ideas across.

Ideas? So, what if the woman is a "stay-at-home mamma"? She still has ideas, dreams, and fears. And she wants to express them.

It's exciting to be alive today. People are working double-time to improve communication, to be fully alive. This should be fairly evident from all the self-awareness seminars, retreats, and group therapy sessions that are currently being conducted. Toastmasters has been leading this pack since that first meeting in October, 1924. Since then, men have made dramatic changes in their lives. Now, women need a chance to benefit from and give our special abilities to Toastmasters.

So maybe you want us? How can you get us? Treat us like regular people. We don't want to stand out, to look peculiar. We don't want you to feel we've run barefoot and braless into your group, trying to take over. We don't want to break barriers and hurdle fences. We want to look you in the eye and talk to you. And, we want to talk to each other. There's no better learning place than Toastmasters. Stretch out your friendly Toastmasters grip. We'd like to join your team. □

Myra Hargrave Comiskey is a member of the Greater Victoria Toastmasters Club 2736-56 in Victoria, Texas. A recent winner of District 56's Evaluation Contest, she writes a humor column called "Myra's Merry-Go-Round" for the *Victoria Advocate*.

new clubs

3221-1 SPACECOM

El Segundo, CA—Wed., 12:00 noon, Hughes Aircraft Co., Bldg. 373, 909 N. Sepulveda (648-1173). Sponsored by Area Governor Charles M. Chesebro, ATM.

1281-1 FHP

Long Beach, CA—Tues., 7:00 a.m., Uncle John's Pancake House, Pacific Coast Hwy. (429-2473). Sponsored by International City Club 1377-1.

384-3 FARRELL'S

Phoenix, AZ—Fri., 12:00 noon, Farrell's Ice Cream Parlour, 7145 E. Indian School Rd. (268-8771). Sponsored by Park Central Club 3527-3.

387-3 HIGH NOON

Phoenix, AZ—Tues., 11:30 a.m., Del Webb Bldg., 3800 N. Central, Ste. 215 (261-4385). Sponsored by Bell-Talk Club 204-3.

1771-4 BECHTEL

San Francisco, CA—Wed., 5:00 p.m., Bechtel Cafeteria, 50 Beale (764-6683). Sponsored by Chinatown Club 2296-4.

103-7 ACCOUNTABLES

Portland, OR—Mon., 7:00 a.m., Bonneville Power Admin., 1002 NE Holladay (243-6333).

30-11 NORTHWEST

Indianapolis, IN—Tues., 5:30 p.m., Sveden House Restaurant, 5515 W. 38th St. (244-4010). Sponsored by Checker Flag Club 2007-11.

2579-14 CONYERS-ROCKDALE

Conyers, GA—Mon., 7:00 a.m., Holiday Inn Restaurant, Interstate Hwy #20 (483-6977). Sponsored by Decatur Communicators Club 1375-14.

2087-15 SPOKE'N WORD

Ogden, UT—Tues., 11:00 a.m., Ogden Service Center, IRS (399-6250). Sponsored by Mt. Ogden Club 1614-15.

2016-18 BALTIMORE GIANT

Baltimore, MD—Mon., 7:00 p.m., 3602 Milford Mill Rd. (922-8585). Sponsored by Giant Club 968-36.

728-29 ELLYSON

Pensacola, FL—Thurs., 12:00 noon, Chief Petty Officers Club, Bldg. 993, Ellyson Field (452-1305). Sponsored by Andrew Jackson Club 704-29.



20 YEARS OF SERVICE — World Headquarters recently honored two of its finest staff members on the anniversary of their 20 years' service to Toastmasters International.

Virginia Ryan (Shipping Department) and Almer Parks (Production Department) were presented with a gift and a Certificate of Appreciation from TI Executive Director Terrence J. McCann at a luncheon held in their honor.

Mrs. Ryan and Mr. Parks have been instrumental in providing outstanding service to the organization's members throughout the years. Toastmasters International is, indeed, fortunate to have two such dedicated employees.

3874-36 WESTWOOD

Bethesda, MD—Tues., 12:00 noon, Westwood Towers, 5401 Westbard Ave. (496-7036). Sponsored by Parklawn Club 502-36.

677-37 CIBA-GEIGY

Greensboro, NC—Wed., 5:30 p.m., CIBA-GEIGY Corp., Swing Rd. (292-7100 ext. 2623). Sponsored by Downtown Club 1386-37.

1975-45 HECTOR

New Glasgow, Nova Scotia—Wed., 7:00 p.m., Heather Motel, Foord St., Stellarton (755-1870). Sponsored by Cobequid Club 1368-45.

2155-47 TOP O' THE ROCK

Jacksonville, FL—Tues., 7:15 a.m., Prudential Ins. Co., 841 Prudential Dr. (399-2933). Sponsored by Bold City Challengers Club 2092-47.

240-52 ALPHA BETA

Northridge, CA—Mon., 7:30 p.m., Alpha Beta, 9100 Reseda Blvd. (371-9167). Sponsored by Alpha Beta Club 2757-F.

1256-52 GLENDALE CIVIC CENTER

Glendale, CA—Thurs., 12:15 p.m., or 5:15 p.m., Municipal Services Bldg., 633 E. Broadway (956-2140). Sponsored by Verdugo Hills Club 434-52.

418-52 SUNKIST GROWERS

Sherman Oaks, CA—Thurs., 12:00 noon, and Tues., 4:00 p.m., Sunkist Headquarters, 14130 Riverside Dr. (986-4800). Sponsored by Spellbinders Club 3252-52.

1931-53 MOHAWK

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1269-70 DANDENONG

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2122-U GUANTANAMO BAY

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583-U YOKATA SPEAKERS

Yokata Air Base Fussa, Japan—Fri., 11:00 a.m., Yokata Air Base.

How to Feature

The Turning of the Phrase

by
Dominic Martia
Club 1717-30

Of the many skills needed by a successful public speaker, few require more discipline than the skill of creating effective phrases. Making a flow of words merge into units that will sink deep into the listener's mind is an exacting job of composition—and composition is the earliest phase of your work. It is when you are sitting alone at your desk with pen and paper that you either succeed or fail to invent the successful phrase. For most of us, this is speechwriting at its most agonizing.

But it can be speechwriting at its most rewarding if you have ways of making certain that your phrasing is as good as can be. You can do several things to think about the best possible phrasing. First, you can turn your phrases around and inside out to see if you have chosen the best form for your purpose. For instance, if you have written, "His fate was sealed with a stroke of a pen," you might reverse it to, "With a stroke of a pen his fate was sealed." Or how about, "His fate—with a stroke of a pen—was sealed"? Or try the active voice: "A stroke of a pen sealed his fate."

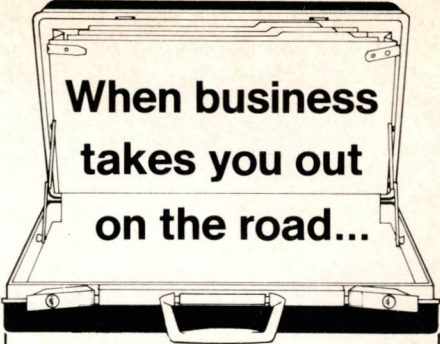
The first version, while a cliché, is perfectly adequate and follows a frequently heard English sentence pattern. Its effect is matter-of-fact. By reversing that pattern, the second example throws the emphasis on the sealing of his fate and adds a touch of finality consistent with the facts expressed in the sentence. The third example interrupts the completion of the main thought until the parenthetical

phrase is spoken, thus creating a moment of suspense. The final one endows the expression with the directness and force inherent in the active voice. One of these forms may be just the one for your speech; it will fit the prevailing tone and blend smoothly into the context of the surrounding phrasing. By formulating variants of one original phrase, you have produced choices that might not have occurred to you had you settled for the first phrase to drop from the pen.

A second way of assuring our arrival at the best possible phrasing is to substitute various words for the ones originally selected. Here, Roget's *Thesaurus* can be very useful. Suppose you've written, "The job ahead will take all our energy." For *job*, the words *task* or *challenge* might be substituted. For *take*, you might try *require*, *use*, *demand* or *exhaust*. Substitutes for *energy* might include *vigor*, *zest*, *dedication* or *strength*. The important thing to remember is not that certain words are better than others, or that your first choice must be rejected, but that the way to find the best possible phrasing is to have a number of alternatives available at your disposal.

So now you've turned your phrases around and inside out and tested a variety of words. You feel certain that you have the best words in the best possible form. You can now sit back and gloat; your work is finished. Not quite!

Now you must try out your phrases within the total speech to establish their appropriateness and consistency with the rest of the speech. For this final step, you need a pair of innocent ears that will listen impartially and tell you candidly whether a phrase is jarring or sounds strange. So now, read your speech to a listener and stop along the way to let your audience hear the difference between the phrases you have selected and those you have discarded. Let him tell you whether or not you've made the right choices. If your final choices cannot stand this test, you may want to reconsider your rejects or tackle the phrasing problem again. If your final choices come through this test, chances are you have found the best possible phrasing for your speech. □



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The Use (and Misuse) of Gestures

by Bruce A. Rowilson

As a Toastmaster, you have undoubtedly been exposed to a number of excellent speakers—speakers who have had a lot to say and have managed to say it in exactly the right way. While their subject matter and organization may have been superb, in most cases the one thing that really made their presentation come across was their delivery, or more to the point, their use of gestures to accentuate the important points of their speech.

Like subject matter and organization, effective gestures are an important part of any presentation. But unlike the other two, they can often be misused and can even be detrimental to your speech. For example, think back to some of the recent speeches that have been given in your club. Of all the gestures used in those speeches, which ones do you remember most? Was it the guy who got so relaxed as he spoke in front of the group that he inadvertently began scratching his head? Was it the guy who kept taking his glasses off and putting them on until the movement became tedious and actually distracted from his speech? Or, was

it the guy who used them as if he were carrying on a direct conversation with you instead of your entire club?

If you were to make a study on how gestures are misused, you would find that they take on a variety of forms. We find the speaker who uses gestures as punctuation, or even worse, as a rhythm-beating or tempo-pounding mechanism.

Many speakers do this because it serves as a release of nervous energy. However, they seem to be completely unaware of what this is doing to their audience. After a few moments of this constant beating and pounding, the speaker has transferred his nervousness to his audience and they begin to fidget

and grow uneasy. Stand in front of a mirror, speak slowly, and practice gesturing in rhythm with your words. This practice will help you channel your nervousness to aid your speaking.

We've all seen the speaker who does not look in the direction he is gesturing. This really confuses an audience. They don't know whether to follow his hands or his head, and if the speaker is keeping his eye on his audience, he should actually be able to see their frustration mounting. "Should I look at his hands? No, his hands? No, both? But which first?" A few minutes into the speech and 60% of the audience has given up and begun to play with their silverware or water glasses. Look in the same direction you gesture.

Perhaps the gesture we all misuse most is that of not holding our position long enough, or on the other hand, holding it too long. Success is most often found in the timing of the gesture, rather than the quality. If a gesture is too long the audience will not have time to understand what you are trying to say



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our movement. If the gesture is worth making, then hold it long enough to make your point. But don't hold it too long or you look foolish and your audience will tend to become somewhat nervous. Remember: Overemphasis is no emphasis at all.

The last example I want to bring into focus is that of the speaker who uses a gesture that is inappropriate for the mood he is trying to convey. Remember the minister who, in the passionate climax of his message, exclaimed, "God loves you! He really does!" His fist was clenched, his lips snarled, his jaw set, his forehead furrowed, and his voice angry. That's gesturing inappropriately for the mood he wanted to convey. What the religious leader really conveyed was the anger and justice of God, rather than His love. So many times we talk about world peace and gesture like a man of war, describe happiness and look sad, call for action while we stand passively. Gesture appropriately for the mood you want to convey.

My challenge to you is to broaden your gestures. Experiment. Dare to try something new and come unglued from that lectern. When was the last time you simply walked away from the lectern, opened your hands in friendship and smiled at your audience? Or when did you lean over the lectern, fix an expression on your face and point toward your club members convincingly?

In order to acquire the ability to gesture effectively, you must learn to study the physical expressions on your club members' faces and learn from them. We have a man in our club who gestures with his hands close to his chest. He has a hundred different movements, maybe a thousand, that hold us spellbound. Why? Because he looks comfortable and uses a variety in his hand gesturing to emphasize his points. It came as no surprise to any of us when we learned that this man is an orthodontist.

Another one of our members uses abbreviated gestures while speaking. One hand is slightly in front of his waist with the palm either up or down and fingers together. That is the extent of his gestures. You could almost guess that this

club member is an executive in a large company. Picture him in an executive board meeting, carefully aiding the communication of his idea but avoiding drawing too much attention to himself.

Our superintendent of schools uses gestures as a stalling tactic. When called upon for Table Topics, he plays with his chair slowly, frowns, touches his face or



glasses, and then begins. And, oh, how he begins—a joke, a clever remark, a brilliant bit of insight into a problem—making everyone feel that it was well worth the moment's wait that his gestures afforded him. Careful phrasing is 90% of his communication. Gestures account for only 10%.

He is often followed by a man for whom gesturing is 90% of his communication. His gestures are broad, his arms swing freely, and his body moves in and out like a boxer. He attacks you, not to destroy you, but to disarm you and win your friendship. He always awakens and brings excitement to our club. Gestures are 90% of his communication. You might have guessed that he is a successful car salesman.

The point I'm trying to make is that

none of these men is a "better" gesturer than the other. Each one has chosen gestures that fit him and enhance his speech. Isn't that the way it should be?

Want to improve your use of gestures? You can. Study the movements you make in your work or hobby and incorporate them into your next speech. If tennis is your game and the movements are a part of your life, why not incorporate them into a future speech? Can't you see a man with one foot behind the other, back hand high above his head with the other hand outstretched in front of him as if he were afraid of a situation, suddenly attacking the problem or situation fiercely, like a tennis player's game-winning serve?

If you are a bicycling enthusiast, you may become the first person in your club to use his knee in a bicycle-type gesture for double emphasis. Do you weed your flower garden? As you pull up and throw away those terrible weeds, picture yourself urging other Toastmasters to pull up and throw away laziness or boredom.

Gestures, then, are important to all of us. They can make the difference between an award-winning speech and an "also ran," an outstanding speech and an average one, a good and a not so good. Effective use of gestures can make the difference. Don't misuse them. □

Bruce A. Rowilson is a member of the Gilroy Toastmasters Club 3768-4 in Gilroy, California. The winner of last year's District 4 Speech Contest, he is a minister for the Gilroy Presbyterian Church in Gilroy.

hall of fame

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