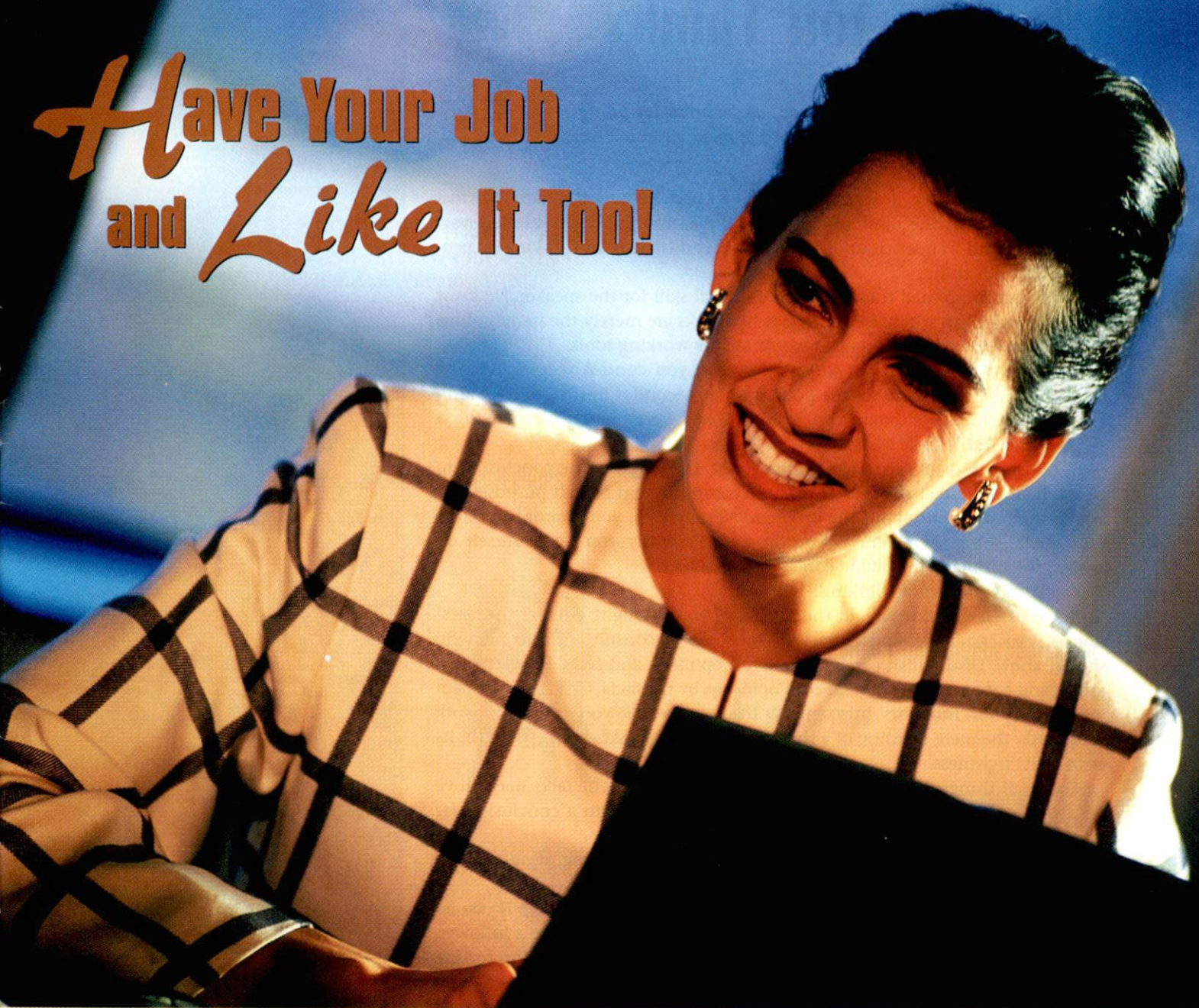


# The TOASTMASTER®

SEPTEMBER 2000

*Have Your Job  
and Like It Too!*



**ALSO INSIDE:**

Meet Jo Anna McWilliams, DTM: Toastmasters' 2000-2001 International President

●  
Achieving Average: Why Experts Say Average Is Best



## VIEWPOINT

# What Do You Think?

*"If you let other people do your thinking for you, then you are doomed to be a follower, never a leader."*

Thinking is hard work. Real thinking is a rare thing, because it is hard. The real thinker becomes the master of those who merely think they think. A vast amount of mind-wandering and daydreaming is mistaken for thinking by people who do not think.

Clear and disciplined thinking is an essential skill for the speaker. He must think before he can speak, for the words he speaks are merely the names of his thoughts and ideas. Thoughts and words are his working tools.

But how can you learn to think? How can you control your wandering mind? The first thing is to see the point and the second is to stick to it – to follow through to the ultimate conclusion. That is very much like making a speech, isn't it?

In the speech, you have to know the point, the purpose, the conclusion to be reached. You direct the speech to the accomplishment of that purpose. You ask yourself questions about the problem. Step by step, you approach the climax, establishing each item as you proceed. Presently you find yourself up against the ultimate, inevitable conclusion.

That is the process of thinking.

Ask yourself questions about the subject of your thought. Answer the questions if you can. Look up the answers in books or consult with people who should know. Distinguish carefully between opinions and facts, between prejudices and convictions. Test your own opinions by the facts. Criticize your own logic. Put your thoughts into words, the best words you can command. Frequently the mere wording of a thought reveals its weakness, its strength, its error or its rightness.

Above all things, think honestly, with an open mind. The facts may prove you wrong. Follow the facts, even though they lead you to a conclusion far from what you wanted it to be.

Honest thinking, concentrated thinking, controlled thinking, should be the goal of every sincere Toastmaster. But it is hard work.

If you can really do your own thinking, you can become a master. If you let other people do your thinking for you, then you are doomed to be a follower, never a leader. It is easier to follow than to lead, so if you are looking for the easy way, don't think.

"Man thinks, and at once becomes the master of the beings that do not think," said 18th century French naturalist George Louis Leclerc de Buffon.

*This editorial by our organization's founder, Ralph C. Smedley, was originally published in the March 1948 issue of The Toastmaster.*

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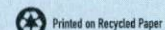
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#### *The Toastmasters Vision:*

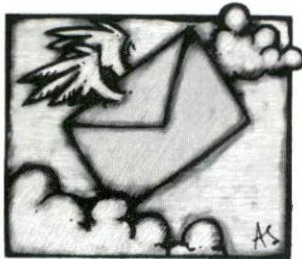
Toastmasters International empowers people to achieve their full potential and realize their dreams. Through our member clubs, people throughout the world can improve their communication and leadership skills, and find the courage to change.

#### *The Toastmasters Mission:*

Toastmasters International is the leading movement devoted to making effective oral communication a worldwide reality.

Through its member clubs, Toastmasters International helps men and women learn the arts of speaking, listening and thinking — vital skills that promote self-actualization, enhance leadership potential, foster human understanding, and contribute to the betterment of mankind.

It is basic to this mission that Toastmasters International continually expand its worldwide network of clubs, thereby offering ever-greater numbers of people the opportunity to benefit from its programs.



## LETTERS

### NOTE-WORTHY SPEECHES

I loved the article by Lt. Col. Robert E. Will "Defending the Lectern" (May). I have been a Toastmaster for 30 years and have wondered what has happened to speech contests. It seems all the contestants are speaking without the aid of a lectern or notes, as if they were automatic disqualifiers. The typical contest speech subject is about motivation ("You can make it to the top", "Dare to be great" or "Goals and You") or about dying friends and relatives. These are laudable topics, but should they be the only way to win?

My wife commented that a recent district contest seemed more like memorized bits from the stage than thoughtful speeches on a variety of topics. Are we serious speakers or are we actors? The greatest speakers in the world knew how to use the lectern and notes. Today, I watched a motivational tape by the famous speaker Og Mandino. He was wonderful from behind the lectern and used notes on a set of cards. His use of these "tools of the trade" was masterful. Let's not abandon these critical instruments but instead learn how to use them effectively.

Sam Charchian • Cosmopolitan Toastmasters Club 515-6 • Minneapolis, Minnesota

### NOTHING "BASIC" ABOUT MANUAL

Please be advised there is no "basic" manual in Toastmasters. I am tired of hearing the Communication and Leadership Manual referred to in these terms. This manual is the crutch we all learned to walk with when we joined Toastmasters. There is nothing basic about it!

After all, I don't think any of us join Toastmasters to learn basic skills but to become better communicators and leaders.

Patrick S. Walsh, CTM • St. Petersburg Toastmasters Club 2284-47 • St. Petersburg, Florida

### LAUGHING LAST IS BEST

"She Who Laughs Last," by Arlo Ranninger, ATM, (June) is an article with a worthwhile message for all. It is an excellent example of careful research, valuable content, splendid organization of material and outstanding writing ability.

Vincent Foy, ATM • Bill Gove Golden Gavel Toastmasters Club 6818-47 • Boynton Beach, Florida

### TOO MANY POSITIVE LETTERS

There seems to be a dearth of negative letters published in *The Toastmaster* magazine. Is it because you rarely receive worthy-of-publishing ones or do you aim to present all members as full of praise for the organization?

Perhaps Toastmasters International should stop emphasizing and rewarding the opening of new clubs and instead concentrate on raising the quality and quantity of the membership of existing clubs.

Kay Gredell, ATM • Mount Prospect Toastmasters Club 1500-30 • Mount Prospect, Illinois

### TAKE ADVANTAGE OF PUBLICITY

On the trip home from the Region II conference in Anaheim, California, I read an article titled "Toasting the Night Away" in the airline's *American Way* magazine. It was quite informative and accurate, and even listed the Web address of Toastmasters International! Imagine my delight when I discovered it was based on information provided by Executive Director Terry McCann.

This leads me to suggest that we can obtain a lot of publicity for our clubs by submitting similar articles to magazines and news media. We are the specialists in the communication and leadership field, and others will appreciate what we have to say.

Dan Winterburn, DTM • Gold Brickers Toastmasters Club 49-4 • Sunnyvale, California

### LOVES TECHNOLOGY

Congratulations to Toastmasters International for a wonderful article "TI Is Only a Mouse Click Away" (May). I must confess to having been an advocate of TI's Web site well before the article was published.

If the Toastmasters Web site had a forum where Toastmasters could share ideas with each other in cyberspace, we could truly become "global Toastmasters."

Sharron May, CTM • Member of 3 clubs in Brisbane, Australia

Editor's Note: Try the chat group at [alt.org.toastmasters](http://alt.org.toastmasters)

### NO SMEDLEY GROUPIE

I'm increasingly dismayed at the deification of Ralph Smedley in Toastmasters literature. In the magazine, Smedley-related products are regularly advertised. At a conference in the United States, I was amazed at the continual accolades to Smedley. Toastmasters is a self-help vehicle; it is up to the individual to make it to the level he wants to go, Smedley notwithstanding. Speaking to a topic is not unique to Smedley; the ancient Greeks taught rhetoric quite well. I applaud the Toastmasters training vehicle and I applaud myself for making the most of the program's tools. But I think the Smedley groupies need to get a life.

Alistair Paterson, DTM • Canterbury Connoisseurs Toastmasters Club 8284-72  
Christchurch, New Zealand

By Dillard G. Higgins, CTM



# This Laboratory Promotes Good Club Chemistry

WHAT MAKES A VITAL AND VIBRANT TOASTMASTERS CLUB? THERE are probably as many answers to this very broad question as there are clubs of this description. Let me be more specific. Why does my club fit so nicely in this category? It's simple.

Members consider it a place to experiment with any presentation style. When I joined in April 1998, I heard, "This is your laboratory. You can try anything here." Another said, "Any speaking goals you have, practice for them here. You'll get constant feedback for fine-tuning them." Still another commented, "We really want you to reach your goals. So remember to use this club as your laboratory." I watched in wonder as the club met the diverse needs of our members. There were volunteers for non-profit agencies working on their presentations and "wannabe" stand-up comedians practicing their craft. Meanwhile, every variety of businessperson was honing interviewing skills, presentation skills and communication skills for full-time jobs, part-time jobs and/or his or her latest entrepreneurial start-up. Whew! It was exciting to be a part of the group.

One of the most unusual (and most successful) members was the lady who joined our club because she had been elected president of a national florists group. She wanted to become more comfortable in front of large groups of people. By the time she was to speak to her "audience of hundreds," she was an organized, confident, fluid speaker who could handle everything from hostile audiences to questions from left field. Why? Because she had practiced every part of her convention presentation in our club. Our members gladly critiqued and encouraged her in every possible way. After all, this was her laboratory and she was free to experiment.

As for me, I soon became a practitioner myself. I worked at my dream of becoming a prize-winning speaker. My first seven speeches featured my sense of humor. I entered the humorous speech contest but went over the time limit. My fellow members said, "Keep trying. You're getting close." In speech No. 8, I caught them off guard. I talked about my experience with cancer. "Now you're very close. Something like that with a little humor might make the perfect International Contest speech." That proved to be my very next speech. With speech No. 9, I

won club, area and division contests and earned 2nd place at District 55's International Contest.

My club's laboratory was perfect. It helped me reach my CTM and contest goals in one year. How could this happen so quickly? Once again, it was simple: I was encouraged and expected to experiment. The "old-timers" made numerous suggestions to keep me on course. I was free to pick and choose which to use and which to discard. But they kept me going. I believe the most important purpose of any Toastmasters club is to support, encourage and serve its members. Our club does this with wild abandon.

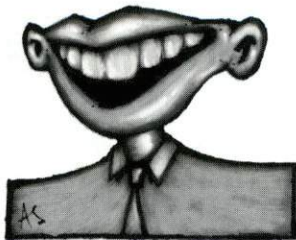
After two years of membership, I now feel I'm an "old-timer" who can be there for our many new members. I give them notes and suggestions: "This is what I think about your closing. The opening is fine, but try tying the two together. How about a bit more vocal variety in your story?" These newcomers can use what they like and discard the rest. Either way, it's a thrill to see their progress. As you can see, having a club that is a laboratory also promotes good chemistry among its members.

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## YOUR CLUB EARNS HIGH SCORES AS A LABORATORY IF:

1. Speakers and evaluators talk after the meeting for clarification, additional comments and suggestions.
2. Speakers compare notes on successful areas and those needing work.
3. Evaluations reflect the speaker's learning curve.
4. Members are friends and meet socially.
5. The atmosphere encourages questions, comments and advice from new members.
6. The club offers a formal mentoring program. All members are able to find someone to push, pull or help them meet goals as quickly as possible.
8. Members consistently bring guests.
9. Notes are passed from nearly all members to speakers when they finish.
10. There is an atmosphere of camaraderie and a general desire for everyone to succeed. 1

Dillard G. Higgins, CTM, is a member of the Highroller Club 3730-55 in Austin, Texas.



# A Funny Thing Happened On the Way to the Podium

In my eight years in Toastmasters, I have seen some funny, funny things on the way to the podium. I bet you have too. Sometimes I laughed so hard it almost obscured valuable lessons to be found within the events. Consider some of the funnier scenes I've experienced:

### ALL POINTS BULLETIN: MISSING TARGET SPEAKER

There was once a target, or test speaker, Steve, who left immediately after giving his speech. As each contest evaluator re-entered the room and began evaluating, there was a telltale pause as he or she struggled, in vain, to find the speaker. Finally, the last evaluator began with the customary, "Thank you Madame Toastmaster, fellow Toastmasters, most welcome guests, and especially Steve" – and promptly looked at me! Never mind that I wasn't the speaker to be evaluated. The evaluator needed someone to look at and for the next three minutes, addressed me as if I were Steve. It worked with the judges. He won that night's contest.

*The lesson I learned: Sometimes continuity and the greater good is more important than drawing attention to a lapse, oversight or glitch.*

### UPSTAGED!

As a guest speaker at another club, I was scheduled to speak first. The second speaker, preparing to speak about dental hygiene, sat near the front, anticipating giving speech No. 9, wherein he was going to use props to make his point. While in the middle of my speech, I looked down at this man and saw him fiddling with his props. Nonplussed, I continued speaking. A few sentences later, one of his props, an electric toothbrush, suddenly sprung into action and started ambulating across the table, right in front of the lectern. In all my years of speaking I've been upstaged by coughers, sneez-

ers, snoring, cell phones, pagers, fire alarms, crying babies and even a minor earthquake tremor, but never an electric toothbrush.

*The lesson I learned: While it is important to be unflappable, sometimes one must be unplaquable. Some have a brush with death; I had a brush with distraction.*

### SPEAKING HAS ITS UPS AND DOWNS

During my district's Leadership Breakfast at a local hotel, our district governor was doing a wonderful job recognizing nominees for the President of the Term Award. As was his style, he graciously invited each nominee to join him on stage. Before we knew it the stage teemed with Toastmasters. And then – Whoosh! The entire stage collapsed and down they went. Luckily, it was only a two-foot drop and everyone on the stage remained standing. It was the funniest sequence of events: 20 people drop two feet and are suddenly out of sight. Then 100 people in the audience rise up, in unison, to see what happened. Our focused district governor, in true Toastmasters fashion, never missed a beat. In fact, his humorous ad-libbing "set the stage" for the day's entertaining keynote speaker to follow.

*The lesson I learned: In life, it's less about what happens than how you handle it. A true leader is a situational leader. When no script exists, reflexes take over.*

### SMOOTH SAILING... NOT!

Once every seven years districts receive a visit from Toastmasters' International President. The President's visit to our district was my first opportunity to wear a tuxedo. In honor of the occasion I actually bought a tux, complete with special shirt, cummerbund and shiny new tuxedo shoes. What a thrill it was to wear



these items for the first time at our district's spring conference. Midway through the evening's affair my opportunity to speak arrived. I pushed back from my chair, rose and regally ascended the stairs to the stage. This was the thrill of a lifetime, to shake the hand of an International President. As I walked toward the VIP (visiting International President) to shake his outstretched hand, it happened very suddenly. I slid into the splits and became invisible to the audience. My brand new tuxedo shoes had bottoms so smooth I lost traction. The entire head table gasped. Among 200 Toastmasters there was utter silence. The suspense was palpable. Would he rise? Could he aright himself? Alas I did, and the emcee was heard saying, "He slides and is safe!"

**The lesson I learned:** *Sometimes one can be too smooth, or at least one's shoes can be too smooth! And many a misstep can be adroitly corrected with a choice rejoinder.*

### COMING TOGETHER

I'll never forget the time at our regional conference when an international director was presenting an award to the conference chairwoman and gave her a hug – that didn't

end! We knew there was mutual admiration but the audience held its collective breath and waited for the two women to break their embrace. But they didn't. More accurately, they couldn't! The director's brooch hooked to the chairwoman's sweater. This gave new meaning to the phrase "I'm stuck on Toastmasters."

**The lesson I learned:** *There is great value in speakers connecting with their audiences but one shouldn't take it literally! We never know when we will be expected to maintain our poise and dignity.*

### CLUES AND CUES: RETURN TO SENDER

Another amusing anecdote for my collection occurred when a past district winner of the International Speech Contest served as a test speaker for an evaluation contest. So as not to make the evaluations too hard for the contestants, he

made intentional gaffes. His title was deliberately "off" topic. His attire, by design, bore no relation to his topic. His speech was disorganized by design. Imagine his surprise when he was complimented on the very elements he had created for scrutiny!

**The lesson I learned:** *Be authentic and let the chips fall where they may. Furthermore, it's easier to be good than to try to be bad.*

Soon your district leaders again will be promoting upcoming contests and conferences. They will tell us about inspirational keynoters, wonderful educational sessions and other scheduled events being planned. What they can't tell you about are the unscripted, unexpected and unintended events that offer both entertainment and wonderful learning opportunities. So keep your eyes and ears open and soon you too will be telling audiences, "A funny thing happened on the way to the podium." **T**

**Craig Harrison, DTM,** is a member of Impressively Speaking Club 3150-57 in Oakland, California. He is a professional speaker who continues to witness funny things on and from the podium.

# Have Your Job and Like It Too!

**A** tremendous number of people... work very hard at something that bores them," observed British poet W.H. Auden. "Even a rich man thinks he has to go down to the office every day. Not because he likes it but because he can't think of anything else to do."

American humorist James Thurber wrote in *Fables for Our Time*, "It is better to have loafed and lost than never to have loafed at all." Similarly, British playwright J. M. Barrie, author of *Peter Pan*, said, "It is not real work unless you would rather be doing something else."

It is to be hoped that those sentiments do not embody your attitude toward work. And many people do have a more positive view of the work experience. Work, according to author Maya Angelou, is "something made greater by ourselves and in turn makes us greater."

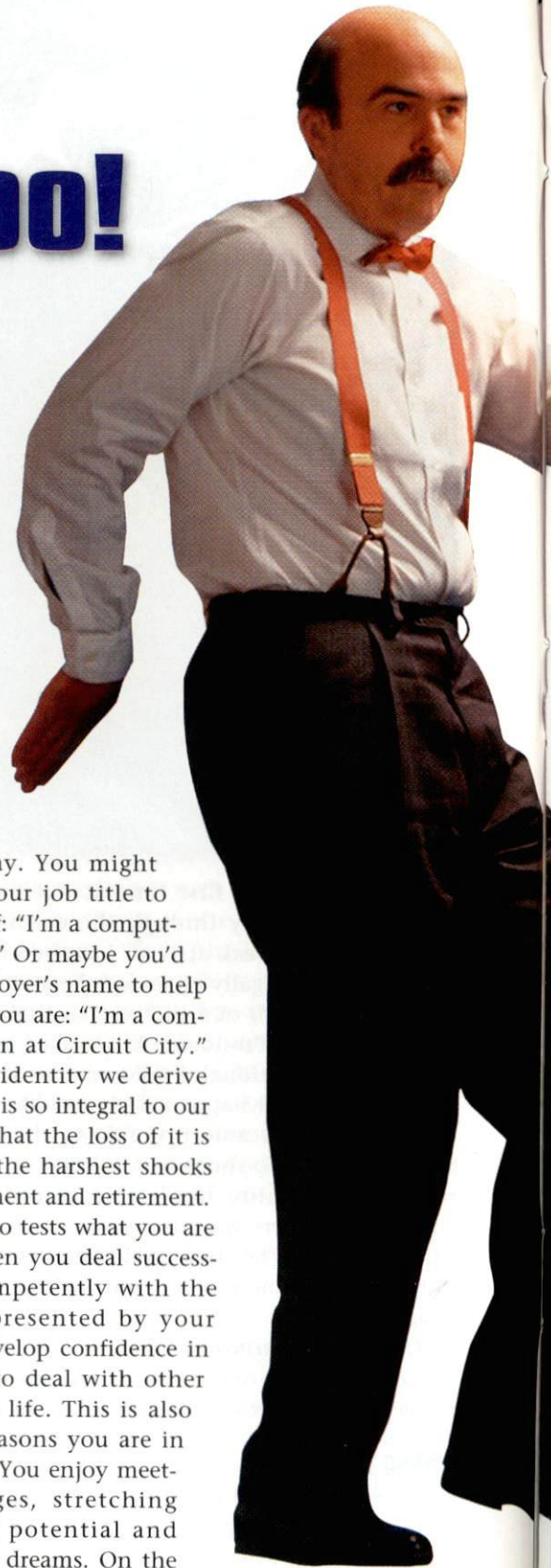
We all take occasional refuge in daydreams about escape from duties – usually when the task to be done is mundane or unpleasant. There's no harm in a little bit of escapism. When on-the-job daydreaming becomes chronic, however, it's a sure sign that you "have an attitude" toward your work. The psychologists say this can create unpleasant side effects both on and off the job.

Let's face it: If you are like most people, you work because you have to. Your job puts food on the table and a roof over your head. However, your feelings about what you do for a living go much deeper than that. "Work is life, you know," said John Lennon of the Beatles in a 1969 BBC interview, "and without it, there's nothing but fear and insecurity."

Your work constitutes part of your identity. If someone were to ask, "Who are you?" your answer would almost certainly include a mention of your job – what

you do all day. You might even allow your job title to speak for itself: "I'm a computer consultant." Or maybe you'd use your employer's name to help explain who you are: "I'm a computer salesman at Circuit City." The sense of identity we derive from our jobs is so integral to our personalities that the loss of it is often one of the harshest shocks of unemployment and retirement.

A career also tests what you are made of. When you deal successfully and competently with the challenges presented by your work, you develop confidence in your ability to deal with other challenges in life. This is also one of the reasons you are in Toastmasters. You enjoy meeting challenges, stretching toward your potential and reaching your dreams. On the





*"Work is something made greater  
by ourselves and in turn  
makes us greater."*

— MAYA ANGELOU

flip side of this coin, failure at work may create feelings of inadequacy in other things. Self-esteem – or the lack of it – is something you take home from work just as regularly as you do your paycheck.

Your job also shapes your social life. Associating with co-workers and customers facilitates the making of new acquaintances and the forming of new friendships. We all know that jobs have traditionally played a major role in determining status in the community, and that largely determines which people you are going to meet socially.

With so much riding on a job, it should not surprise you that job dissatisfaction can sabotage personal contentment and sometimes may even damage physical and emotional health.

Do you enjoy your work? If so, you're on the right track toward a happier life in general. However, if you feel disgruntled or dissatisfied, you would do well to spend some time reflecting on the reasons.

Is it the job or is it you? Your expectations of your job and what you actually derive from it are wrapped up in your perception of who you are and how you like to spend your time. Take the case of a young doctor. About halfway through medical school, he realized he had a keen interest in weather. He knew that he would rather be a meteorologist, but his parents had always pushed the idea of his becoming a physician, so he stayed with it and graduated. Now,

with his medical career becoming more and more a drudgery, he feels he made the wrong choice. He rarely socializes with his fellow doctors; while at work, he often feels restless and impatient.

Now what does he do? He could quit medicine and try to begin a new career as a meteorologist. But that is risky and not realistic for someone with financial obligations to a family. On the other hand, he could decide to look for personal fulfillment away from his career and arrange his life so that he has ample opportunity and energy to pursue his true interest. This means declining some patients at the clinic. True, they would mean greater income, and he will have to be comfortable with the idea of his colleagues out-earning him. But this arrangement will allow time to study weather and maybe begin a second career as a weekend television weatherman. He will derive what satisfaction he can from his medical career but he won't be totally engrossed in it. This could be a workable compromise for him, and his job would

*“Self-esteem – or the lack of it – is something you take home from work just as regularly as you do your paycheck.”*

seem less suffocating than before. In your own situation, if your job is not providing the satisfaction you had envisioned, then use your accomplishments in Toastmasters to enhance your self-esteem. Improved communication and leadership skills may create positive changes in your career.

The doctor's problem is that he developed a career path before he discovered what he really wanted to do. You could have that problem too. If you are unsure of your job preferences, or of what your abilities are, there are

tests you can take to find out. A local college or career-counseling agency could set one up for you. Actually, job unhappiness isn't always the job's fault. It could be the natural result of a bad fit between the job and the worker. The better you know yourself, the better your chances of finding a fulfilling niche in life.

There are definitely some good jobs and some bad jobs out there. Getting past the first obstacle – discovering what you'd like to do and what you're good at – is,

# 10 Ways to Get More Out of Your Job

By Michael LeFan

In the movie *Karate Kid*, young Daniel asks Mister Miagi to teach him karate. Miagi agrees under one condition: Daniel must submit totally to his instruction and never question his methods. Daniel shows up the next day eager to learn. To his chagrin, Mister Miagi has him paint a fence. Miagi demonstrates the precise motion for the job – up and down, up and down. Daniel takes days to finish the job.

Next, Miagi has him scrub the deck using a prescribed stroke. Daniel wonders, *What does this have to do with karate?* but he says nothing. Next, Miagi tells Daniel to wash and wax three weather-beaten cars and again prescribes the motion. Finally, Daniel has had enough: “I thought you were going to teach me karate, but all you've done is have me do your chores!”

Daniel has broken Miagi's number one rule, and the old man's face pulses with anger. “I have been teaching you karate! Defend yourself!” Miagi thrusts his arm at Daniel, who instinctively defends himself with an arm motion exactly like that used in one of his chores. Miagi unleashes a vicious kick, and again Daniel averts the blow with a motion used in his chores. After Daniel successfully defends himself from several more blows, Miagi simply walks away, leaving Daniel to discover what the master had known all along: Skill comes from repeating the correct but seemingly mundane

actions. The same is true of getting the most out of your job.

It takes practice to succeed, because success is the natural outcome of taking the time to do the right things well. Time is your most precious asset. Does it blow your mind to realize that whether your name is Richard Branson, Bill Gates, or Jane Q. Public, you have an equal share of this most precious commodity?

So, it must be that our success, failure or stagnation depends somewhat upon how we use our daily quotient of 24 hours. If you want to know how to invest your 24-hour golden nuggets of time so that they will produce success dividends, read on. As you read, place a check mark beside the ideas that you feel would really benefit you. Then act on them!

**1 Make Time for Thinking.** As Stephen R. Covey suggests in his book *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, make time to “sharpen the saw.” This is the surest path to success anywhere. It cuts down on costly mistakes. It makes your work more interesting. Before you act, make time to acquire fresh ideas and to consider your options.

**2 Make Time for Doing Things Right.** If your boss said, “I don't like this, do it over” – would you have

sad to say, no guarantee of euphoria on the job. Not everyone is skilled enough at his or her favorite pastime to make a living at it. You also must face the reality that job opportunities vary from place to place, and in relation to your educational background and other factors. But fear not – “good” jobs have enough in common to permit some helpful generalities.

Here are a few things that researchers and observers of the human condition have found to be the marks of a satisfying job:

■ **An opportunity to use your skills.** A job that challenges your mind and skills affords you a needed sense of achievement. This is also another benefit of your activities in Toastmasters. You develop and sharpen skills, and enjoy a variety of new accomplishments. Repetitive or routine “monkey work,” on the other hand, seems endless, boring and stifling.

■ **A sense of usefulness.** If you think the work you do is worthwhile and valuable to others, you feel good about your job. If you cannot see any point to your labors, your self-esteem suffers.

■ **A chance to be involved in decisions affecting you.** Most of us think of ourselves as responsible and reasonably capable. Therefore, heavy supervision or overly authoritarian direction may well create animosities on the job. Assembly line workers are generally happier when they have a voice in setting the pace of their work and when they are asked to suggest improvements in working conditions.

■ **A feeling of security.** Even though a job may be almost perfect, you won't be happy in it for long if you must keep glancing over your shoulder in fear that it may be snatched away from you at any moment.

To again quote the poet W.H. Auden, who knew the traits of a good job:

*“In order that people may be happy in their work, these three things are needed: They must be fit for it; they must not do too much of it; and they must have a sense of success in it – not a doubtful sense, such as needs some testimony of others for its confirmation, but a sure sense, or rather knowledge, that so much work has been done well, and fruitfully done, whatever the world may say or think about it.”*

time to do it over? Of course you would. So, why not just do it right the first time! “Good enough” is not good enough in today's competitive world. The men and women who are doing well in today's successful companies are people who make the time to do things right – on purpose, every time.

**3 Make Time for Cooperating.** This is the key to getting along with people. Cooperation is the secret to accomplishment. You won't be successful without making a go of teamwork.

**4 Make Time for Listening.** This is a major method for acquiring knowledge and expertise. Listening also makes you popular with others. When you are a good listener, you say to others that you're interested in their ideas, their concerns and their success.

**5 Make Time for Explaining.** When people ask questions about the company, about procedures, about their work, encourage them. That is a sign of a healthy relationship. They want to succeed – by learning. Make time to answer the questions and to help the person any way you can.

**6 Make Time for Putting First Things First.** You will find your career more successful and fulfilling if you deal with things in order of importance. You'll be amazed at how this will increase your efficient use of time, and how many tasks have no real importance at all.

**7 Make Time for Praising Others.** Make a conscious effort to compliment anyone who does an outstanding job. This spirit encourages men and women to succeed, and therefore everyone in the organization gains stature. Moreover, everyone is motivated to strive for even higher levels of accomplishment.

**8 Make Time for Handling It Now.** Don't procrastinate – do it *now!* The longer you put a thing off, the larger it looms. Create a reputation of success by letting people know that you get things done – now. Your example will inspire others to follow suit.

**9 Make Time for Facing and Correcting Your Mistakes.** Everybody makes mistakes. You don't see many Edsels anymore, but Ford is still building cars. In fact, successful people learn from mistakes because they seek to understand them, to correct them, and to avoid the greatest mistake of trying to cover them up with alibis.

**10 Make Time for Making a Life.** Form friendships, enjoy your family, be kind. Friends are like rare books of which there is but a single copy. Enjoy them. When you are at home, focus on your family and its needs and you'll be better on the job as a result. Wherever you are, be kind in every way – large or small. A little kindness goes a long way in making the world around you a better place.

Naturally, there are other job characteristics that matter to different people in varying degrees – things such as pay, status, opportunities for advancement. When you put them all together, you have a yardstick for measuring your job and your attitudes about it. If you have a feeling of unease, mismatches between your needs and abilities as compared with your job's demands may help explain your unhappiness. Ask yourself the following questions:

■ *Do I have unrealistic expectations of my job?* Typically, younger workers expect a great deal more intrinsic reward from their jobs than the job can actually supply. Older workers, on the other hand, tend to possess more job satisfaction – perhaps because they have advanced into more fulfilling positions or because they don't look for life's true satisfactions at work.

■ *Does my job demand too much from me?* You might like to have more time and energy for other pursuits. Alternatively, maybe your job challenges you more than

you think you can handle and, as a result, you feel fear and insecurity. You must lock horns with these problems and deal with them before they become the rut of your working life.

■ *Does my job demand too little of me?* This is just as deadly as being overworked, because it leads to listlessness and boredom.

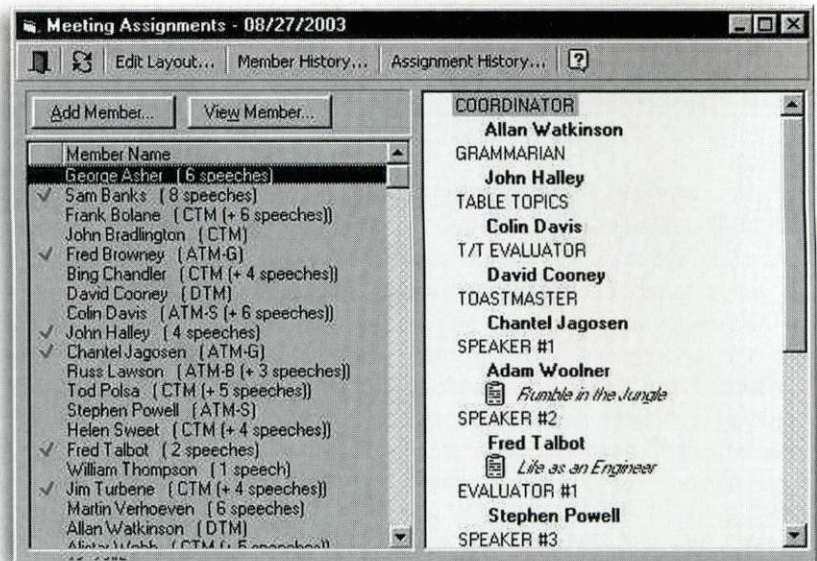
■ *Is my job taking me where I want to go?* If your goal is to make a lot of money, you probably won't be happy in a job that doesn't have a snowball's chance in you-know-where to do that. If other considerations are more important to your life's vision, you'd be miserable in a rat race grind where money is the supreme motivation.

The trick, as you can see, is to match your own personality to the career you choose. If you can pull that rabbit out of the hat, you'll be a lot happier off the job, too. **T**

Michael LeFan is a freelance writer living in Temple, Texas.

**At Last!**

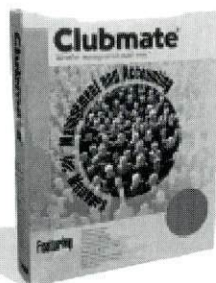
## Unique Software for Toastmasters Clubs



### It's time to get excited!

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[www.clubmate.com](http://www.clubmate.com)



By Charles Dickson, Ph.D.

# Learning Human Relations from Geese

THROUGHOUT HISTORY, NATURE HAS PROVIDED A CLASSROOM from which humans can learn to cope with their physical world and with each other. Perhaps no more powerful example of the latter has been given to us than by the

actions of geese, the web-footed frequent fliers that migrate as far south as Mexico in the winter and as far north as the Arctic Circle in the summer. Geese display a common-sense approach to life that humans would do well to emulate.

■ **Geese Fact No. 1:** As each bird flaps its wings, it creates an updraft for the bird following. By flying in a V-formation, the entire flock creates a flying range greater than if one bird flew alone. The U.S. Air Force learned from the birds' behavior and often employs the V-formation in military maneuvers.

**Human Lesson:** When people share a common direction and sense of community, they get where they want to go quickly and easily. That's because they have learned to travel on each other's strengths. Successful organizations know that a spirit of teamwork, with all workers pulling in the same direction, makes it easier to achieve goals. This holds true for such diverse groups as families, churches, athletic teams, business organizations – and Toastmasters clubs.

■ **Geese Fact No. 2:** When a goose falls out of formation, it suddenly feels the drag and resistance of trying to fly alone and quickly gets back into formation to take advantage of the lifting power of the bird immediately in front of it.

**Human Lesson:** If we have as much sense as geese, we will stay in formation and be willing to accept help when we need it, as well as to lend help to others when they need it. How often we see prima donnas on teams or in organizations deciding they can be noticed more readily by trying to go it alone. They may achieve a short-term goal, but over the long haul their actions have an adverse effect that hinders the group from reaching goals. Learning to "fly in formation" with friends, family members and fellow employees helps everyone achieve desired results.

■ **Geese Fact No. 3:** When the lead goose gets tired, it rotates back into the formation and another goose flies in the point direction.

**Human Lesson:** Geese instinctively share the leadership task and do not resent the leader. Unfortunately, human groups sometimes fail due to jealousy among members. Having too many chiefs and not enough workers is a

sure formula for failure. Much more likely to lead to success is shared leadership based on the belief that each person in the group can make a valuable contribution toward meeting an organization's goals. We may never know what others can contribute until we afford them the opportunity to use their talents.

■ **Geese Fact No. 4:** Geese in the rear sections of the formation honk to encourage those up front to keep up their speed.

**Human Lesson:** People need to learn the value of being part of a support system and to encourage other members of the group. Our "honk" may consist of an encouraging word, a pat on the back, a helpful suggestion or simply going the second mile to accomplish a task.

■ **Geese Fact No. 5:** When a goose becomes ill, is wounded or shot down, two other geese drop out of formation and follow it to earth to help and protect it. They stay with their disabled companion until it can fly again – or dies. They then launch out on their own or catch up with the flock.

**Human Lesson:** We humans also need to learn to care for others. If a fellow employee or group member is going through trying times or has simply been "shot down" by some event in life, we may do well to take some time to concentrate on that person's needs. When an organization begins to build a reputation of caring for its employees, group loyalty increases immensely and success becomes more attainable.

So like many other processes of nature, the behavior of geese provides humans with valuable guidelines for interacting with others. T

**Charles Dickson, Ph.D.** is a clergyman, college chemistry instructor and freelance writer living in Hickory, North Carolina. This article is based on a speech given by anthropologist Angeles Arrien, in 1991. Her source, in turn, was an article by Milton Olson in a periodical devoted to outdoor life.



# Using Your Five Toastmasters Senses

**P**eople are generally credited with having five senses: seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting and feeling. Our nerves and brains receive and react to certain stimuli in our environment such as light, sound and constrictions. As Toastmasters, we are given the opportunity to develop five more senses as we improve our communication and leadership skills: humor, accomplishment, direction, humility and timing.

■ **A SENSE OF HUMOR.** I am one of the most serious individuals I know. Even as an experienced Toastmaster, one of my last evaluations slips suggested I lighten up, that I should smile more often. I find it hard to believe that it takes more muscles to frown than to smile. I have always had an internal sense of humor, but not one that I could easily share. As a Toastmaster, I have been given the opportunity and forum to nurture my sense of humor. Through manual speeches and in speech contests, I declared my candidacy for president of the United States in 1996, ran for governor of my state in 1998, and sought the office of vice president of the United States in 2000. I added three hours to the day by slowing the rotation of the Earth, and I harnessed a renewable energy source by moving the moon closer to the Earth. Thanks to Toastmasters, I've approached and solved all types of problems by letting my creativity and sense of humor out of the closet.

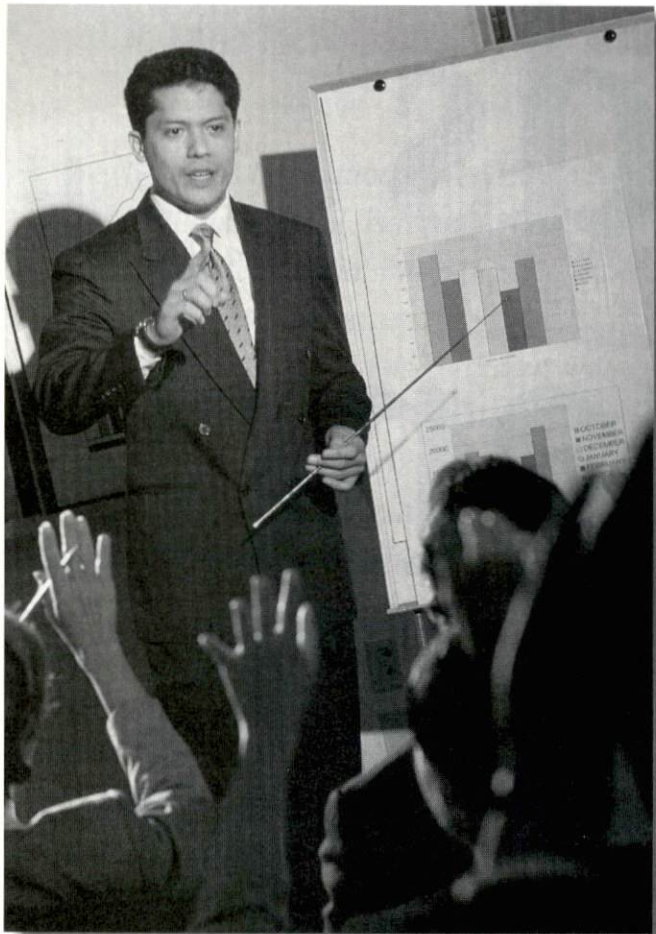
■ **A SENSE OF DIRECTION.** Some of us have a natural sense of direction, while others struggle to find their way through life. Toastmasters International recognizes that many of us need direction in our quest for better communication and leadership skills. The Communication and Leadership manual charts a course for natural progression in the skills needed to become a more effective

communicator. The formal evaluation process provides the feedback we need to measure our progress and make changes. Written comments from other members provide even more supportive advice. Mentors are able to give additional direction. The variety of advanced manuals offers more options for development, but each manual gives added direction and support. I'm impressed by the excellent and clear guidelines our organization provides to its members.

■ **A SENSE OF ACCOMPLISHMENT.** For several years, I was a paid presenter for a professional organization. The pay was good, but I never felt a sense of accomplishment or fulfillment from the process. Although the attendees formally evaluated each presenter through a questionnaire, I was never privileged to learn how I ranked. When I asked the seminar coordinator, he would simply say, "good enough that we will invite you back." I stopped giving the lecture because it failed to offer the growth and feedback I wanted, and instead I joined Toastmasters.

Each time I complete a manual speech, I feel a sense of personal accomplishment. Many of my speeches have left much room for improvement, but my evaluator has consistently offered detailed and constructive advice. Winning a ribbon or contest, and receiving a certificate or plaque have provided an even greater sense of accomplishment. Completing a speech manual or fulfilling the requirements for a CTM, ATM, DTM, CL or AL are accomplishments in which any Toastmaster can take great pride. The Toastmasters training structure is based on a system of incremental improvement and acknowledgment of accomplishments.

■ **A SENSE OF HUMILITY.** As much as we develop a sense of accomplishment through Toastmasters, it is balanced



by a sense of humility. Within the Toastmasters evaluation process, we are given feedback, which provides continued opportunity for growth and development. The excellent balance between accomplishment and humility and improvement and room for growth keeps us motivated and involved in club activities.

■ **A SENSE OF TIMING.** One of the most important skills we learn as Toastmasters is how to time a speech or presentation to be as effective as possible. We all have endured speakers who had a good point to make, but took so long doing so that the point was totally lost. "What was she trying to say?" We are constantly bombarded with the value of brevity in effective communication. All Toastmasters speeches have minimum time limits so that a particular skill can be adequately practiced to meet speech objectives. We also have maximum time limits, which teaches us to work within limits and respect the time allotted to other presenters. The ever-present timing lights further enhance our sense of timing.

Most of us are brought into this world with five senses: seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting and feeling. As Toastmasters, we refine our communication and leadership skills by developing five additional senses: humor, direction, accomplishment, humility and timing. **T**

**John H. Peck, ATM-B** is a member of Yawn Patrol Club 3306-62 in Lansing, Michigan.

## Dynamic video is excellent publicity tool

# Everybody's Talking About Toastmasters

Looking for an innovative way to publicize Toastmasters? Consider the video *Everybody's Talking About Toastmasters*. This fast-paced 12-minute publicity tool is perfect for Toastmasters wishing to:

- ❖ promote their own club
- ❖ build a new club
- ❖ orient new members
- ❖ energize current members.

Just as the name implies, *Everybody's Talking About Toastmasters* showcases enthusiastic testimonials—everyone from managers, engineers and other professional people like yourself, as well

as from Anita Perez Ferguson, President of the National Women's Political Caucus, and best-selling authors Les Brown, Tom Peters and Harvey Mackay. The video also features brief explanations of typical meeting activities, including:

- ❖ Table Topics
- ❖ Prepared speeches, and
- ❖ Evaluations

—making it perfect to show to prospective club charter members when it isn't possible to hold a demonstration meeting. And here's another idea:

Sending a copy of *Everybody's Talking About Toastmasters*, along with some helpful Toastmasters



literature, is a great way to reach busy personnel directors or other corporate leaders interested in starting a club within their company

Since production costs for *Everybody's Talking About Toastmasters* have been covered by contributions to The Ralph C. Smedley Memorial Fund, the video is available for the highly affordable price of \$6. Contact the Orders Department at World Headquarters and ask for a copy today!

TOASTMASTERS:

# Friends

HELPING

# Friends SUCCEED





## Meet Jo Anna McWilliams, DTM, Toastmasters' 2000-2001 International President

**N**ewly elected International President Jo Anna McWilliams, DTM, is ready to lead Toastmasters International into the 21st century. As only the third woman President in our organization's history, she is confident women will "continue to play a significant role in our organization as members and as leaders," and she cites statistics to support her point: "This year, 60 percent of all district governors and 43 percent of all directors are female."

Presiding over a network of 8,700 Toastmasters clubs comprising 175,000 members in 70 countries, McWilliams has chosen the motto, "Friends Helping Friends Succeed." She says the theme represents what Toastmasters is all about. "Our members stay in Toastmasters long after accomplishing their initial speaking goals because of the relationships they build and the friendships they develop."

President McWilliams lives in Dallas, Texas, with her husband, Bruce, who also is a Toastmaster. She first joined a club in 1981 and now considers the Roving 49ers Club 6590-50 her home club. She has a proven track record of superior leadership performance. During



Accountant and a member of the American Society of CPAs and the Texas Society of CPAs. She attends Prestonwood Baptist Church and enjoys attending both popular and classical concerts.

**Q:** How did you select your theme, "Toastmasters: Friends Helping Friends Succeed," and what is its message to each member?

**A:** I think it is important that, as an organization, we acknowledge how important we are to each other. Most of us joined Toastmasters to overcome the fear of public speaking. When we joined we risked our self-esteem, but we soon learned how supportive our fellow Toastmasters can be.

Our initial relationship with other Toastmasters begins with respect and trust which, given time, evolves into friendship. I believe this very important aspect of club membership, this evolving relationship among Toastmasters, is integral to the continued existence of our clubs.

Our original, club-based network of Toastmaster friendships expands as we become more involved in the organization and take on more responsibilities. We learn to work with others, developing deeper friendships, and we begin to realize how valuable our friendships can be in our quest for growth.

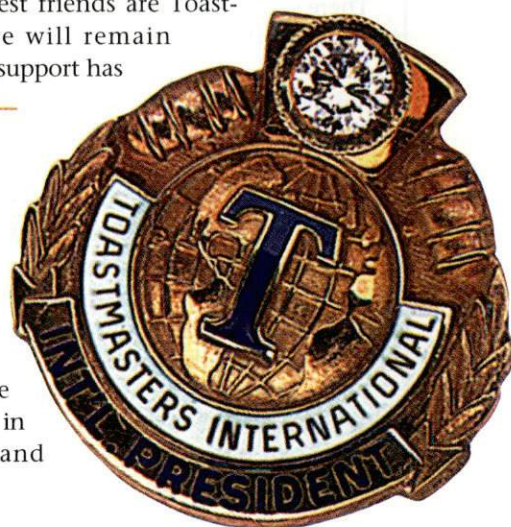
Many of my closest friends are Toastmasters; I know we will remain friends for life. Their support has

***"I think it is important that, as an organization, we acknowledge how important we are to each other."***

her term as district governor, District 25 was named a President's Distinguished District and received the President's Extension Award.

Professionally, Jo Anna is a senior principal consultant with Oracle Corporation. As such, she travels widely and helps clients implement Oracle's financial software – she is considered an expert on global, multi-currency implementations. McWilliams is a Certified Public

helped me succeed in my professional life, in my personal life and in my Toastmasters life. We've become "soul mates" in our quest for self- and club-improvement.



### **What do you hope to accomplish during your term as President?**

Too often we work apart rather than together, and I would like nothing more than to establish effective and sound teamwork at the club, area, division and district levels. If we have effective teams focusing on the mission of the club and the mission of the district, we could easily have a record year. I hope that I can help club and district leaders envision the possibilities.

Just imagine the benefits of effective teamwork: more educational completions by individual Toastmasters, new membership growth in the club and new club growth in the district. The possibilities are endless when we are willing to help each other succeed!

### **When and why did you join Toastmasters?**

In 1981, a co-worker who is now a close friend, Jerry Coen, offered a Speechcraft program at our place of employment. Jerry invited me to attend. I needed to polish my communication skills and saw immediately, through that Speechcraft program, that Toastmasters was the answer.

I soon became involved in the Toastmasters leadership program and that was it; I was hooked for life!

### **Many members leave their clubs after a year or two. What has kept you involved for so long?**

That's easy. I love what we do in Toastmasters and I really enjoy the time I spend with my Toastmaster friends.

Toastmasters' founder, Ralph Smedley, said "ours is the only organization in the world dedicated to the individual." Not the group, not somebody else outside of you, but to each and every individual. That is so true. I defy anyone to devote time and energy to this great organization and not get more back in return than what they give. I've been on the leadership track fairly consistently for 18 years and I'm still getting back more than I give.

There's another reason I stay in Toastmasters, and it relates directly to my theme, "Friends Helping Friends Succeed." Soon after joining Toastmasters, we are encouraged to assume a club officer position. Although we might resist initially, we see by watching others how being a club officer helps a person grow, both professionally and personally. So we become a part of the club officer team, and we quickly realize how teamwork is integral to leadership. We learn to work with others, capitalizing on each other's strengths and supporting each other in overcoming our weaknesses. We become friends as we help each other succeed.

Then, if we are lucky, we discover an even greater sense of teamwork at the area, division and district levels. We begin to see a whole new world of possibilities and friendships opening up to us. We begin to develop, quite

literally, relationships and friendships all over the world. And the one thread tying us all together is Toastmasters.

### **If you had one message to every Toastmaster, what would it be?**

That you can have a significant and positive influence on someone in your club. Consider the power of Toastmasters training and what it has done for you, and then think of the many non-Toastmasters you know with whom you could share the same life-changing program you've benefited from.

If a friend or acquaintance is not a Toastmaster, invite him or her to a meeting. If they already are members, examine ways in which you can help them improve their skills. Perhaps encourage them to hold leadership roles or help you charter a club.

As a club or district officer, you can be especially influential. You can serve as a role model or mentor to new members, or revitalize your club by encouraging a membership drive. The possibilities are endless, really, when it comes to helping friends succeed.

### **What do you hope to accomplish during your district visits this year?**

To meet as many Toastmasters as possible and make new friends. I hope to inspire more Toastmasters to assume leadership roles by helping them see the benefits of taking on a new persona as a leader in their club or district.

During those visits I plan to make myself readily available for corporate visits and media exposure. I hope, through these visits, to help increase public interest in new clubs and membership.

### **What makes a successful club?**

Dr. Smedley said that we learn best when we are in an enjoyable environment. One of the most important traits of a successful club has always been club meetings that are fun as well as educational. Successful clubs also have a lot of high energy that comes from energetic and enthusiastic Toastmasters.

If the club is providing a positive and supportive learning environment, its mission is fulfilled. And the results are evident. The club produces a constant flow of educational completions, conducts quality meetings and has new members join on a regular basis. The new Distinguished Club Program is a good measure of a club's effectiveness. A Distinguished Club is a successful club.

### **What is the main challenge facing Toastmasters in the future?**

Our primary competitor is time – how people prioritize their time. With so many people and organizations out

there competing for our time, we must make sure that our members and potential members see the unique and significant benefits that club membership offers. They must feel they are receiving a significant value in return for the precious time they give to the club.

But people will flock to our doors when we demonstrate that we can deliver an effective product: a changed human life. Show them that, and they will break down the doors to get in.

### What is our organization's strongest selling point?

That out of all the promises that different organizations make, out of the thousands of self-help books and philosophies out there that claim miraculous results, our program really does work.

There is no doubt that Toastmasters training changes lives, but this incredible truth only comes about because of our members. In clubs all around the world, friends are helping friends succeed in any number of ways, from helping them overcome their fear of speaking to encouraging them to break out of their comfort zones to expanding their leadership abilities as club and district officers.

### Why is it important that every member become a CTM?

Success, to me, is a three-letter word: C-T-M! The Competent Toastmaster is "basic training" for effective communication and personal growth. If members leave a club before completing their CTM, the club is obviously not providing the environment most conducive to member achievement, which I've already addressed: Learning in an enjoyable environment.

The CTM should be the club's single most important goal for each and every member, because achieving the

CTM incorporates every positive aspect of the club's educational program. If you show me a club that is not actively encouraging and achieving CTMs, I'll show you a club that will not be in existence for long. To have every member complete a CTM should be a standard throughout the organization.

### What qualities do you most desire in a Toastmaster?

His or her interest in helping themselves by helping somebody else.

These are the Toastmasters who really care about their clubs and fellow members. These are the risk takers, the ones willing to go out on the limb with new roles, new responsibilities, new assignments, new opportunities. These are the Toastmasters who say, "We need to have a membership drive," and then promptly volunteer to put one together. Or the Toastmasters who, knowing the club can use just one more CTM or some other educational achievement to achieve Distinguished Club status, volunteer to give one more speech.

### Does each member have a responsibility toward his or her club and the organization as a whole?

Each member should be willing to fulfill the Toastmaster's promise. That means attending club meetings regularly, preparing good manual speeches, providing helpful evaluations, serving as a club officer, bringing guests and signing up new members.

But those are not "duties" or "obligations" that one should feel "forced" to do. How can doing things that benefit one's self be a duty or obligation? The purpose of the Toastmasters' promise is a two-way street, where every step one takes is a step toward better living.

## Are You **GOOD ENOUGH** to be a **PRO?**

*Toastmasters' Accredited Speaker Program  
is now accepting applications for 2001.*



**T**he Accredited Speaker Program is designed to recognize those Toastmasters who have attained a professional level of excellence in public speaking.

To qualify, you must be an Able Toastmaster or Advanced Toastmaster Bronze and a member in good

standing of a Toastmasters club. You must have completed a minimum of 25 speaking engagements outside the Toastmasters club environment within the past three years. Then, you must pass a rigorous two-stage judging process.

Those Toastmasters who earn the prestigious title of Accredited Speaker will receive widespread recognition both inside and outside Toastmasters International. They will have taken the steps that can launch them on exciting careers as professional speakers.

Only a handful of Toastmasters have what it takes to become Accredited Speakers. If you think you're one of them, write to World Headquarters for details on how to apply.

**The deadline for the 2001 Accredited Speaker Program is November 1, 2000.**



# 2000-2001

# District Governors



**F** Linda Northrop, DTM  
Huntington Beach, CA



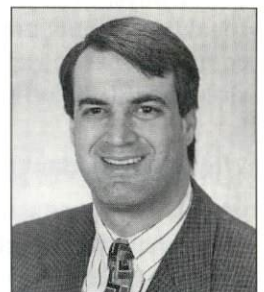
**1** Elise Dee Beraru, DTM  
Los Angeles, CA



**2** Gerald Weltner, DTM  
Redmond, WA



**3** Paula J. Glauz, DTM  
Phoenix, AZ



**4** Randy Preston, ATM-B  
Santa Clara, CA



**5** Richard Lee Cortopassi, DTM  
Lemon Grove, CA



**6** Leonard F. Glaeser, DTM  
Plymouth, MN



**7** Beryl Anderson, DTM  
Dayton, OR



**8** Cindy Larm, DTM  
Booneville, MO



**9** Lois L. Pritchett, ATM-B  
Moscow, ID



**10** Brenda Giguere, DTM  
Cleveland, OH



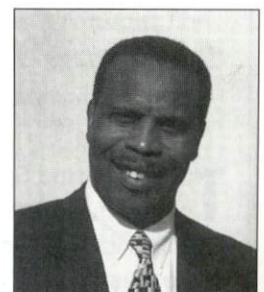
**11** Kathleen Blackham, ATM-B  
Indianapolis, IN



**12** Richard R. Snyder, DTM  
Upland, CA



**13** Joanne T. Noon, ATM-B  
Pittsburgh, PA



**14** James E. Fair, DTM  
Athens, GA



**15** Suzanne H. Potter, DTM  
Sandy, UT



**16** Patricia Ann Jacobson, DTM  
Oklahoma City, OK



**17** Josie C. Skibstad, DTM  
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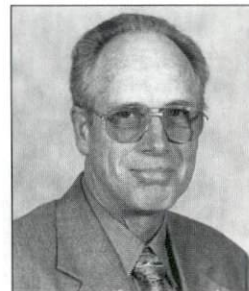
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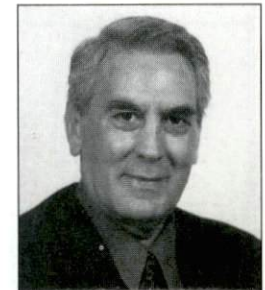
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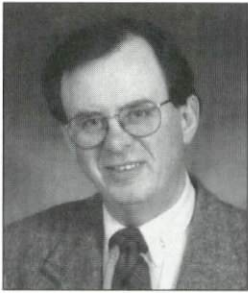
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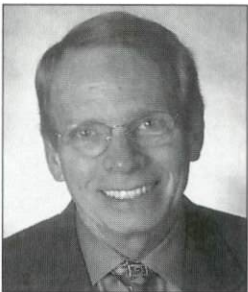
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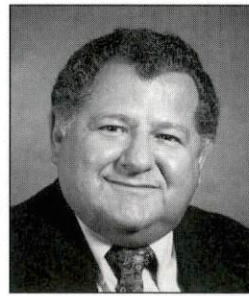
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**67P** Jorie Wu, DTM  
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## Test Your Skills:

# Help Form a New Toastmasters Club!

One of the most rewarding things you can do as a Toastmaster is to help form a new Toastmasters club. Yes, it takes time, energy and persistence, but it is worth it.

Think about it: Someone, at some time, made the effort to organize the club you belong to now. Now it's your chance to return the favor. You'll take satisfaction in knowing that you will be helping scores of people improve their communication skills, in years to come.

But not matter where, why, or with how many people, you'll need some materials to help you get started:



### NEW CLUB INFORMATION KIT

Contains a free How to Build a Toastmasters Club kit – a valuable guide that takes you step by step through the club building process. It includes an Application to Organize a Toastmasters Club form and various promotional items.

### EVERYBODY'S TALKING ABOUT TOASTMASTERS VIDEO

The perfect publicity tool! This 12-minute video features explanations of typical meeting activities and testimonials from a variety of people who've participated in the Toastmasters program.

### PUBLICITY PACK

A professional-looking folder that includes a fact sheet, press releases, brochures, a sample issue of *The Toastmaster*, and other promotional items. Great for impressing corporate decision makers!

Of course you'll need help – club building isn't usually done by just one person. Your first step, then, is telling World Headquarters you want to build a club. They'll also help you get in touch with your local district officers for insight and assistance. After that you'll be on your way to bringing the benefits of Toastmasters to others – and enhancing your own communication and leadership skills as well!

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*Back*



*Art by [Signature]*



# Achieving Average

Why experts say  
being average is best!

*This is an average article. It wasn't written to make you laugh or cry. It isn't intended to motivate you to take any particular action. But, perhaps after reading it, you'll feel a bit different about yourself. A bit better.*

This is about *being* average. It's about letting yourself be middle-of-the-road, if that's the best you can be. And it's about being okay with it.

Averaging, as we'll call it, is to self-esteem what downsizing is to a company's bottom line. It's psychologically cutting back or scaling down. It's the mental equivalent of what all those best-selling books call simplifying your material life. It's being comfortable with your Timex even though your buddy sports a Rolex.

Allowing yourself to be average, instead of stressing about achieving, isn't a cop-out. It's not selling out. In fact, striving to be average, while it sounds like an oxymoron, is something to work toward. Why? Because experts say that being average may actually be better for you than being best!

Now there's a concept. Next, you'll be expecting to hear that consuming large amounts of chocolate is good for you. No. That would be exceptional. This story is just about average.

Let's take a look at Joe Average. According to Gyles Brandreth, author of *Your Vital Statistics: The Ultimate Book about the Average Human Being*, Joe stands about 5 feet 9 inches tall and weighs in at just about 162 pounds. He watches an average of 25 hours of television a week, blinks every five seconds and breathes every few seconds. He will live to be about 72 years old. That is, unless he's a perfectionist.

A perfectionist doesn't exhibit the same healthy tendencies that Joe Average does. In fact – quite the opposite. Those prone to be perfect suffer more from eating disorders, high blood pressure, ulcers and anxiety. According to information in the American Psychological Association's newsletter, very high achievers – those bent on perfection – are more susceptible to feelings of self-doubt, putting some on the verge of suicide!

Being a regular guy, however, has its advantages. Average people share better relationships with others, live healthier lives and feel more personal satisfaction than those driven to excel.

Projecting an average image, letting people know you're not perfect, allows others to relate to you more easily. Many of us shy away from the more polished person, afraid we'll be judged too harshly by them. But we can identify with the guy who occasionally blunders. He's human. Like us.

Orators, though they may be well-rehearsed, are most successful when they approach their audiences with this in mind. Plain talk. Simple messages. This is what gets

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***"Averaging is to self-esteem  
what downsizing is to a  
company's bottom line."***

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BY KIMBERLY A. PORRAZZO ■ ILLUSTRATION BY ANTHONY STROM

through. Throw in lots of complex theories and big words and your audience retreats.

"Can you say a few words to open the meeting?" your boss asks. If we didn't get all worked up over the request and really did just say a few words, we'd all be better off. So we panic and feel that we have to impress the listeners. But they don't want to be impressed; they want to listen to something and someone they can identify with.

"I had to learn that my standards kept me from doing things and thus thwarting my contributions to the greater good," says Linda Northrop, DTM, who is Governor of Toastmasters' Founder's District in Southern California. "In other words, instead of something, I did nothing when my something would have been of value." This is as true of public speaking as of any other endeavor in life.

Even Mother Nature prefers average. Researchers who study the relationship of the human body to its susceptibility to disease have found that it's better to be at the median point on the medical charts than too far in either direction. For example, you don't want your blood cholesterol level to be too high, nor do you want it to be too low. Being in the middle is best.

Being an average investor has allowed many people to retire comfortably. Not seeking immediate high returns, the middle-of-the-road guy can ride out the highs and lows of the market and take advantage of the good times, often ending up financially better off than the high strung day-trader or market junkie.

And perhaps, most importantly, Joe Average isn't afraid to try something new. Unlike the perfectionist, who won't try something unless he knows he'll be successful at it, Joe jumps right in. His healthy attitude may enable him to enjoy more opportunities in life because he's not afraid to fail.

Psychologist Kevin Polk, a time-management specialist, writes in an article titled "The Pitfalls of Perfectionism" that flawlessness is never achieved. He suggests that the moment a perfectionist reaches his goal, he is once again trying to improve upon it. Never being satisfied, he feels frustrated and this frustration turns to anger. This cycle sets up the perfectionist for an ongoing, self-defeating experience with constant feelings of failure.

Those on the high end of the intelligence chart – not necessarily perfectionists, but certainly not Joe Average – report feelings of isolation. Keith Vogelsang, a graduate student at UC Irvine, recalls his experience in grade school, where he was known as smart.

"I grew up in a lower-income, working class neighborhood," Vogelsang recalls. "I remember many confrontations with other kids who criticized me for knowing about certain things. I don't recall being boastful; it's just that I had a bad habit of questioning the statements made by other kids. In kid society this is not a popular thing to do and it would probably be different in a neighborhood or school where academic achievement was the norm and not the exception."

Vogelsang made it through the grade school teasing, but now as a father himself, he has firm opinions about parents of gifted kids. "I'm not convinced society values high intelligence in more than a superficial kind of way. Parents, of course, are thrilled if their kid is considered gifted or makes the honor roll. In a sense, parents get bragging rights without actually having to brag. For the kid, however, it can be a burden."

Strangely, parents push for their children to do better than other kids right from the beginning. They tend to track their progress in terms of accomplishments without any regard for their level of contentment. Maybe that's why so many of us are driven to push ourselves to keep up with crowd.

"He can already roll over," parents exclaim with a sense of pride that their baby is ahead of schedule. In contrast, the parents whose child is lagging behind a bit tend to question their own efficacy. Sadly, this careful monitoring can become an obsession, starting with pacifiers, progressing through potty training and continuing in kindergarten and throughout the child's school years. Yet, who asks at a high school graduation how old the graduate was when he was potty trained or learned to read?

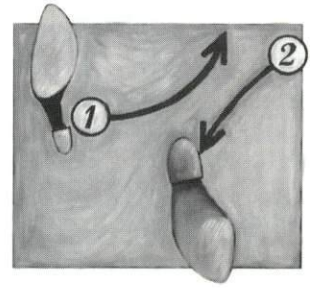
Beverly Anderson, a sixth-grade teacher at La Madera Elementary in Lake Forest, California, says, "The average kid seems to be more well-rounded. They are the ones who are going to run their own businesses and they'll end up hiring the straight-A kids to work in their labs."

Anderson, a former G.A.T.E. (Gifted and Talented Education) teacher has witnessed first-hand the symptoms of stress exhibited by some high achievers. They include tears, nervous panic over test scores and difficulty in getting along with others. Not all students show these tendencies, but according to Anderson, "enough that we would want to examine our own motives."

Didn't earn the top sales award in your company? Not the best slugger on your softball team? Ease up. Take a break. Relax. Perhaps in doing so, you'll actually perform better!

**Kimberly Porrazzo** is a writer living in Lake Forest, California.





By Shelia Spencer, ATM-G

# Beat the 80-20 Rule

HOW OFTEN DO YOU HEAR IT SAID THAT IN ANY TEAM EFFORT, 20 percent of the people do 80 percent of the work? If this formula rings true in your Toastmasters experience, this may be a good rule to break. Whether you are risking burnout by

doing too much, or surrendering to boredom by being more of a spectator than a participant, you can empower yourself and create a healthier balance in your Toastmasters activities.

Look at the ideas below and consider how they might help you maximize the educational value and personal enjoyment within our participatory program. Take charge of your activity level in your club through some simple, practical ways.

## IF YOU WANT TO AVOID BURNOUT:

- **Play hooky.** It is stressful when a key player is unable to attend a meeting (unless a backup member has been assigned). Ask newer members to serve as alternates for your key roles. Whenever possible, find a reason to excuse yourself (but give timely notice) so your alternate can benefit from the experience of filling your shoes for a day.
- **Identify your blind spots.** Without looking at a membership list, jot down the names of all your club members. Note the names you missed or those listed near the bottom of the page. These are the untapped resources you have unconsciously been overlooking. Commit to selecting these people when you are delegating important meeting roles.
- **Become a mentor.** Mentors aren't teachers; they are coaches. The best way to mentor members is to give them challenges and coach them as they perform. Assigning your most time-consuming or important responsibilities to your mentee gives you a break and lets someone else learn the ropes.
- **Plan your own obsolescence.** What dream could you fulfill if you applied all the time and energy you now use to maintain your club? Make that dream your new priority and start delegating all burnout-producing club commitments today. As other members see you pursue your educational goals, it will inspire them to grow. Lead by example and manage upward, rather than downward.
- **See yourself as a talent scout, rather than a talent.** Cherish the recognition you've already received and start looking for the newer stars on the horizon. If you

pass the effort and the recognition to the next generation, you'll soon find yourself applauding their successes while enjoying your own accomplishments.

## IF YOU WANT TO AVOID BOREDOM:

- **Volunteer.** You may be fooled by the finesse of your experienced members; they always appear to have the meeting under effortless control. However, there is usually a lot of last-minute pressure and detail work, which they would love to share with a thoughtful volunteer! So offer your assistance. You'll be amazed at how enthusiastically that offer will be received and how much you will learn about effective meeting facilitation.
- **Share ownership of the meeting.** After you've attended a few meetings, you should be accustomed to the format and rhythm of the activities. Did you notice that the gavel is missing or someone forgot to close the door? Anything that you can smoothly fix will enhance the meeting for everyone.
- **Call your mentor.** Reach out and ask for ideas on how to become more active. You don't have a mentor? Then get one! Select at least one experienced member whom you admire and ask this person to be your mentor. This member will give you plenty of ideas and projects to keep boredom at bay.
- **Attend officer meetings.** Did you know that club executive meetings are open to all members? Occasionally, the officers may need to address sensitive issues in private, but most executive meetings focus on accommodating all members' needs. Non-officers can provide fresh opinions and suggestions to enrich the discussion. Ask to attend the next executive meeting as an interested observer. Your presence will be welcome!
- **Visit other clubs and local Toastmasters events.** You'll see and hear fresh ways to approach programs and return with valuable insights that will benefit your fellow members. Soon, you'll be a vital part of the creative and supportive atmosphere that attracted you to Toastmasters in the first place!



**Shelia Spencer, ATM-G,** is a member of Excelsior (Advanced) Club 94-46 in Kew Gardens, New York.



## FOR THE NOVICE

By Leslie Samori, CTM

What to do in this significant leadership role.

# When You are the Sergeant-at-Arms

**A**s sergeant-at-arms, you play a key role in your Toastmasters club. You serve as its diplomat, ambassador, greeter and spokesperson. You greet members and welcome guests with a warm smile, firm handshake and a brief orientation to the club and its meeting.

Your role is pivotal in determining whether guests – especially first-time visitors – enjoy attending your club's meetings. As a Toastmasters representative, you are the person these potential members see first when they walk into the meeting room. So make a memorable favorable impression on them: Wear a nametag, stand by the door, and sit near the door during the meeting so you can welcome late arrivals.

Make nametags for guests, and enthusiastically welcome them to a fun and informative meeting. Tell them where and when to help themselves to coffee and other refreshments.

Arrange for visitors and new members to sit next to experienced Toastmasters and introduce them to each other. Ask guests to fill out a short questionnaire that a member can use to introduce them to the club. Also let visitors know you'll be happy to answer any questions. Make allowances for latecomers. Place extra chairs near the entrance so that latecomers feel welcome and aren't required to sit where they will feel conspicuous.

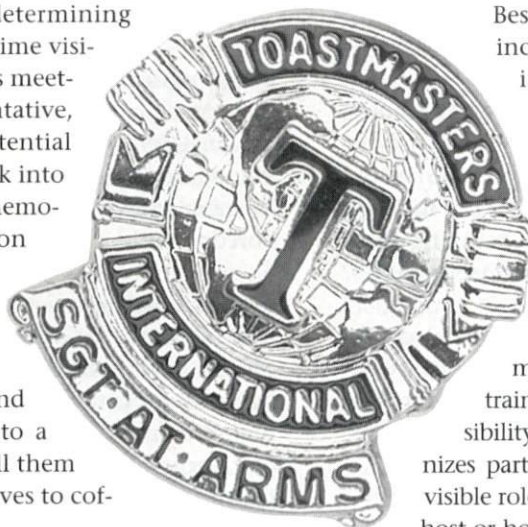
The sergeant-at-arms performs most of his or her duties at, or preparing for, club meetings. But this member of the

club's executive committee also has many other responsibilities, which are explained in more detail in the club officer handbook, *When You Are the Sergeant-at-Arms: A Guide to Effective Club Leadership*. Toastmasters provides one copy of each club officer handbook to each club once a year.

Besides welcoming members and guests – including the area governor and other visiting officers – the sergeant-at-arms is responsible for ensuring that the assembly room is reserved and set up for meetings, for maintaining club properties, and making sure that adequate supplies are available.

As a member of the club's executive committee, the sergeant-at-arms is expected to attend the committee's meetings and also district-sponsored officer training programs. Another important responsibility is chairing the social committee that organizes parties and picnics. In that unique, vital and visible role, your task is similar to that of a restaurant host or hostess; you must be flexible and versatile.

Although all sergeant-of-arms tasks are important, preparing for club meetings rank at the top of the list. In the week before a meeting, assess whether there is anything you can do to enhance the meeting atmosphere. For instance, you may arrange to have a tape player and appropriate tapes, banners or photos at the meeting. It may be helpful to phone in advance to get information to use in introducing the chairperson and the Toastmaster for the evening. As with other club officer duties, however, don't hesitate to ask for help.



Recruit volunteers to arrive at the meeting site early to help you set up the meeting area. Tasks will include placing chairs and tables; making sure the lectern is in place, with appropriate material placed on it; and carrying out other tasks to ensure that the meeting runs smoothly. Be sure that for each chair, there is a glass of water plus ballot sheets and agendas to be provided by the Vice President Education. Room arrangement should be completed at least 10 minutes before the meeting begins. The sergeant-at-arms and those assisting should arrive about 40 minutes early to ensure ample time to do the job, so as not to appear rushed when guests and members arrive.

One of my own suggestions is to consider the meeting table – and the rest of the meeting room – your artist’s canvas, an opportunity to create a colorful, decorative and festive environment. Arrange table material in an organized, attractive manner. Materials might include trophies, ribbons, flags, old copies of *The Toastmaster* magazine, newsletters, photos of past social functions, a guest sign-in book, Toastmasters brochures, business cards, nametags and plenty of pens and markers. Be creative!

Also, discuss with fellow Toastmasters their ideas and thoughts on trying different ways of setting up tables – possibly in a U-shape, row-by-row or circular.

Ask before the start of the meeting or during recess if any scheduled speakers want the lectern removed, a table or chair added, a flip chart provided, or other changes made for their presentation. In delegating to volunteers some of the responsibility for setting up the room, try to get different people to participate before each meeting. This promotes teamwork and gives others an appreciation of the sergeant-at-arms’ responsibilities, which should give your club a head start in electing your successor. One of your duties is to make sure your successor is fully prepared to assume leadership, once he or she is elected.

## DURING THE MEETING

- Make sure the meeting starts on time; try to give everyone a 30-second- to one-minute notice that the meeting is about to begin. It is up to you, as sergeant-at-arms, to set an enthusiastic tone for the meeting. During the meeting, lead the applause, and applaud vigorously and often.
- It is helpful before the meeting starts to make a list of guests’ names and the member you assigned to introduce each of them. Guests are introduced at the beginning of the meeting.
- You may want to remind the Toastmaster for the meeting to introduce late guests and to prompt them should they forget or make a mistake about an agenda item.
- One of your duties is to collect ballots and tally votes for awards including, for example, awards for best speaker, best evaluator and the Table Topics winner. In case of a tie, use your discretion. You could cast your own vote to select a winner. Or you could allow a tie

and have multiple winners – especially if the tie is between a new member and a long-time member.

- Awards are usually presented during the second half of the meeting – after a recess. Place the awards with associated ribbons in front of you so you can easily hand them to the Toastmaster.

Some clubs raise money by “fining” members, in a playful spirit – for such “offenses” as talking during speeches, arriving extremely late at either the start of the meeting or after the break, and forgetting nametags. The sergeant-of-arms usually collects the fines – in an atmosphere of lightheartedness and humor.

The sergeant-at-arms also has a responsibility during the recess between the first and second part of the meeting. He or she – or a helper – should refill water glasses, make sure music is playing, if applicable, and turn off the music before restarting the meeting. Give everyone a 30-second to one-minute notice to reconvene.

Before visitors leave, thank them for attending and make sure they take their guest information packets with them. You may want to turn on the music again. Have one or two members help you restore the room to the condition it was in when you arrived. Don’t undertake this job alone.

Everything you do as sergeant-at-arms should contribute toward members’ self-development and ultimately toward your club’s earning Distinguished status.

As you can see, serving as sergeant-at-arms can be an important part of your Toastmasters career. As the handbook points out, this office has many responsibilities but offers many rewards, including “the opportunity to develop and practice leadership skills that you can use in all areas of your life.” The more you put into this role, the more you project your club as a professional, friendly and supportive place to come back to, to become involved in – and to invite friends to. T

Leslie Samori, CTM, is a former member of Forest City Club 2729-60 in London, Ontario, Canada.

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Ray Peterson 8116-21  
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Sara Parry 5266-25  
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Samuel Kahle Conner 8532-27  
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Allan R. Coffey 5541-31  
Dacia Jones Nickerson 7831-31  
Donald L. Steiner 7216-32  
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Germon Earl Hill 3478-37  
Dorothy Ann Jones 1448-42  
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Margaret A. Probst 3146-42  
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### 65 years

Fullerton 37-F

### 60 years

Cosmopolitan 172-56

### 55 years

Kapasia 330-6  
Speakmasters 332-11  
Pioneer 331-21

### 50 years

South Hills 847-13  
Capital I 876-36  
Raleigh 843-37  
Chico 558-39

### 45 years

Pillsbury 1891-6  
Huron Valley 1909-28  
Calvary 1253-36  
Parthenon 1738-63

### 40 years

Heidelberg 1632-U  
Dawn Patrol 1646-13  
Goldcoast 2727-47  
Midtown 3167-66  
Barangay 3128-75

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Somerville 1103-46  
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### 25 years

Sargent & Lundy 336-30  
Knowledge Speakers 2194-30  
North Shore Badgers 2612-35

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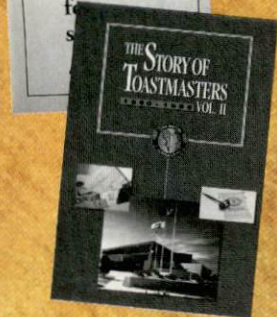
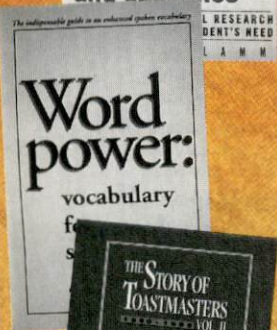
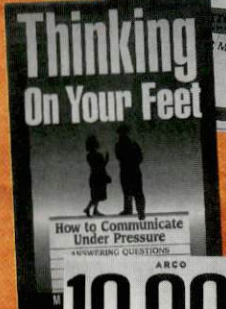
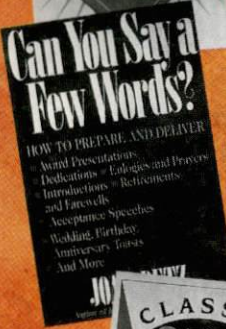
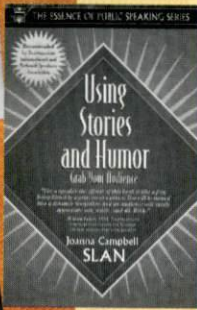
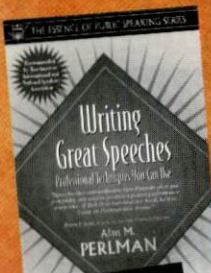
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