



TOASTMASTERS
INTERNATIONAL



**WHERE LEADERS
ARE MADE**

CLOSING THE SALE

The Successful Club Series

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INTERNATIONAL®



CLOSING THE SALE

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Item 293A



**WHERE LEADERS
ARE MADE**

www.toastmasters.org

THE SUCCESSFUL CLUB SERIES

Toastmasters International's *The Successful Club Series* is a set of presentations addressing the subject of quality club meetings. Members will learn about the skills and standards they must strive to achieve for their club to be successful.

All presentations in the series may be delivered by any club member and require 10 to 15 minutes to complete.

CONDUCTING THE PROGRAM

"Closing the Sale" focuses on those critical final moments of a club salesmanship that determine whether a guest will decide to join. This product consists of four parts:

- ▶ Definition and explanation of the presentation
- ▶ Guidelines for your introduction to the audience
- ▶ Outline for the development of your speech
- ▶ PowerPoint presentation

In Your Own Words

The outline is not a script and should not be read word-for-word. Instead, use the document as a guide for presenting the material in your own words and with your own narrative style. The presenter's outline is a structure on which to build your presentation. Use the points of the outline to develop your speech, but be the author of your own oration.

Here are some tips on using this outline to develop and deliver your presentation:

- ▶ Study the outline in this manual carefully. Familiarize yourself with the general structure. Preparation is the key to a successful presentation.
- ▶ Use the outline to build your own speech using your own words. Prepare a set of notes indicating where you wish to pause, gesture, or add special verbal emphasis. Highlight key words or sentences to help you present the material most effectively.
- ▶ When delivering your speech, be expressive. Use all of the presentation skills you have learned as a Toastmaster, including vocal variety and gestures.

USING VISUAL AIDS EFFECTIVELY

Visual aids add interest to any presentation and help your audience retain information. You are encouraged to use them. If you plan to use the PowerPoint slides for this presentation as visual aids, make sure you have the equipment and technology needed to share the slides with your audience. It is recommended that you test your technology and equipment in advance. In the outline, there are indications for placement of the PowerPoint slides. Each is numbered. For example, V 1 refers to the first visual.

Please note that the first slide in the PowerPoint show is a title slide and is not included in this numbering system.

If your presentation is taking place in a fully in-person format but you do not have the equipment needed to share the PowerPoint, you could create a flip chart using the visuals from the slides.

Follow these tips when using visual aids in an in-person setting:

- ▶ Set them up and test them before the meeting begins. Place them so they are easily visible to listeners.
- ▶ Bring backup equipment in case your technology fails.
- ▶ Display your visuals only when they are needed. If you are using a flip chart, flip the page back out of view when you are finished with it.
- ▶ Remember not to stand between the screen or flip chart and your audience or you will block their view.
- ▶ Maintain eye contact with your listeners. If you must turn your back to point out something, pause as you point it out, and then resume speaking only after you are once again facing your audience.

Follow these tips when using visuals in the online or hybrid setting:

- ▶ Share your screen. Be sure your PowerPoint presentation is visible in the room and on the screens of those members participating from another location.
- ▶ Consider having someone else share the visuals so you can maintain eye contact with the camera.
- ▶ Consider an online whiteboard when sharing information, as it will be visible to both members in the room and those participating online.
- ▶ Consider enlisting the assistance of a partner to join the meeting on their computer in the room with you so that they can facilitate the remote attendees and monitor what is happening online. This is a good practice for all hybrid meetings.
- ▶ Test your online platform and technology before the meeting begins. Have an online participant confirm they can see everything as expected.
- ▶ Forgo visual aids altogether if you cannot be sure they will work for everyone in attendance.
- ▶ Share any handouts or other documents you use as part of your presentation with all attendees in advance or via the chat function of your meeting app so that all participants have access to them at the same time.

BENEFITS AND OPPORTUNITIES

By giving this presentation, you will be helping your club build excellence and move toward the possibility of being a Distinguished club—or reaching an even greater Distinguished status.

While this is an outlined presentation, it still provides a good opportunity for you to further practice speaking and build your presentation skills.

CLOSING THE SALE

Introducing The Presenter

TIPS FOR THE PRESENTER: WRITE YOUR INTRODUCTION

All prepared speeches in Toastmasters require an introduction. A proper introduction of you and your speech is important to the success of your presentation. Use the following as a guide in writing your introduction:

- ▶ Include the purpose of *The Successful Club Series*.
- ▶ Explain why “Closing the Sale” is important for a Toastmasters club, stating the purpose and one or more objectives of your presentation.
- ▶ Incorporate some background about yourself.
- ▶ Read *When You’re the Introducer in A Toastmaster Wears Many Hats* (Item 1167D) for further details on giving a proper introduction.
- ▶ Give your finished introduction to the person who will be introducing you.

TIPS FOR THE INTRODUCER

- ▶ Ask the presenter any clarifying questions.
- ▶ Rehearse the introduction.

CLOSING THE SALE

Outline

INTRODUCTION:

Perhaps you have heard the following words, “We are all salesmen in some respect.” Many of our speeches are structured around the persuasive approach. Beyond our speech assignments, salesmanship is part of the Toastmasters tradition for an even more important reason. To have excellent meetings with members who enjoy the club experience, plenty of active members are needed. To counteract natural attrition and prevent ambivalence among remaining members, every club needs a steady influx of new members. This means all members must be able to sell the club to others.

MEETING STANDARDS

Any salesperson will tell you that a useful product that benefits the buyer and offers solid value can easily sell itself. At Toastmasters, the product is the club meeting. Attracting new members is easier when the meetings demonstrate the following standards:

- ▶ **Meetings begin and end on time.** Since Toastmasters are busy people, every meeting needs to be conducted in a punctual fashion.
- ▶ **All program participants arrive early and are prepared to fulfill their duties and responsibilities.** Several days before the meeting, a call is made or an e-mail sent to all participants confirming the role they will play or the speech they will give.
- ▶ **Club officers fulfill their responsibilities.** Each officer is aware of the duties they need to perform and is committed to fulfilling those duties.
- ▶ **The meeting proceeds at a good pace, with no lags or gaps in the program.** All program participants understand how to approach the lectern, take control of the meeting, and return control to the person who introduced them.
- ▶ **Members are enthusiastic and enjoy attending the meetings.** High energy levels and positive attitudes are contagious.
- ▶ **Every project is from Pathways.** Members prepare and present speeches and assume leadership roles that reflect the guidance of the Pathways learning experience.

When club members work together as a team to maintain these standards, meetings become enjoyable experiences. Moreover, once that enjoyment is demonstrated to visitors, our product is easy to sell.

WORKING TOWARD THE WIN-WIN

Once a guest demonstrates an interest and willingness to become a Toastmaster, your next move is to “close the sale.” According to Robert Miller and Stephen Heiman, authors of *Strategic Selling*, closing a sale can have several outcomes. In a Toastmasters club, one of the following outcomes will occur:

V1

V2

- ▶ **Win-Win:** The optimal experience occurs when the club and the new member feel positive about the transaction. The stage is now set for the development of the individual as well as the overall advancement of the group.
- ▶ **Win-Lose:** The club “wins” a new member, but it is a shallow victory; despite having joined, the fledgling Toastmaster feels rushed and uneasy. Unless a strong and supportive mentoring program is in place, odds are high that the new member will be reluctant to participate and end up attending sporadically or possibly stop meeting altogether.
- ▶ **Lose-Lose:** When a visitor leaves without joining, both sides lose. The visitor forfeits the opportunity to learn valuable skills and interact within a friendly and encouraging group atmosphere; the club loses a potential member whose individual skills and talents would have brought new vitality to the group’s activities.

Your goal, of course, is to strive for the “win-win” outcome – the one that will not only achieve the short-term goal of adding a new member, but will provide the foundation for a pleasant and productive long-term relationship.

V3

DISCUSS THE BENEFITS

A good strategy is to discuss the benefits that are enjoyed by becoming a Toastmaster. Ask guests what inspired them to attend, and then mention why some of your current members joined the club. They might include the following:

- ▶ **Improved speaking abilities:** 80 percent of the Toastmasters population joined a club in order to improve communication skills.
 - Eliminate those awkward “ums” and “ahs.”
 - Develop excellent business presentations.
 - Enhance vocal variety.
 - Display the proper body language and gestures.
- ▶ **Leadership development:** The ability to lead is a valuable quality that each of us should develop. Most of us, at one time or another, will be expected to serve in some sort of leadership capacity.
 - Lead a discussion at work.
 - Conduct a training session.
 - Organize a friend’s birthday party.
 - Be grammarian, Toastmaster of the meeting, Ah-Counter, etc.
- ▶ **Better social skills:** While some skills can be learned by reading books, Toastmasters requires a more proactive approach.
 - Improve one-on-one intercommunication.
 - Receive praise and assistance while interacting with your peers.
 - Meet people face-to-face in a group setting – something that a computer interaction does not provide.

- ▶ **Greater self-esteem:** Public speaking is almost everyone's number one fear. Once we conquer that fear, however, we feel better about our speaking abilities and about ourselves.
 - Be empowered to overcome obstacles that were thought to be insurmountable.
 - Increase self-confidence through practice and repetition.
 - Gain recognition for speaking and leadership improvement.
 - Be valued as a member.

CLOSE THAT SALE

After discussing the benefits of Toastmasters with your prospect, you may sense some last-minute hesitancy. At this point, it is time to use your Toastmasters skills and close the deal in a “win-win” manner. Here are five approaches that may be used to effectively close the deal. You may note they form a convenient acronym:

Presenter:

Name the bolded words that spell out the acronym, CLOSE, before explaining each one individually.

- ▶ **Compare.** Remind your prospect that “for only a few dollars each week, you can be a part of a self-paced, user-friendly program. Instead of being shuffled through a three day training program costing hundreds or thousands of dollars, you’ll proceed at a comfortable pace in a sociable atmosphere for only a fraction of the cost.”
- ▶ **Lose.** Many deals have been cinched with the phrase, “What do you have to lose?” In the case of Toastmasters, new members have a great deal to lose, beginning with their fear of public speaking. However, there is also a considerable gain: confidence, ability, and interaction with others.
- ▶ **Opinion.** After reviewing the individualized ways that a Toastmasters membership will enhance your prospect’s life, ask for their own viewpoint. For example, you could say, “Based on what we’ve discussed, it sounds like you could benefit from being a member of our club. What are your thoughts on the subject?”
- ▶ **Story.** One of the most powerful closing techniques involves relating some of the ways that Toastmasters has enhanced the lives of your members. “Sheila just received a promotion which she attributes to the skills learned as a Toastmaster. Six months ago, Michael had a tough time staying up at the lectern. Today, did you notice how confident he appeared as he gave his seventh speech, and how much fun he was having?”
- ▶ **Example.** Tell your prospect what they can expect to achieve. “If you join our club today, you’ll receive your Welcome email next week, and you can begin accessing the *Toastmaster* magazine. In the meantime, you can participate in Table Topics® and take on a meeting role, such as timing speeches or serving as grammarian. Also, a club mentor will be available to coach you whenever you are ready to give your Icebreaker speech, which we all look forward to.”

V4

V5

THE VICE PRESIDENT MEMBERSHIP

Once you have closed the sale, your club's Vice President Membership should immediately assist the applicant in completing the Membership Application, after which the appropriate dues should be collected. Once the application has been submitted, the new member will get a Welcome email with more information.

Maintain the applicant's enthusiasm by assigning a mentor, providing information about the first speech and leadership projects, conducting an induction ceremony, and assigning some basic meeting roles such as timer or Ah-Counter. Thoughtful actions such as these will give your member-in-waiting a sense of immediate ownership.

Presenter:

Taking time to review the Membership Application with your audience is a good practice. Once a club member is ready to "close the sale," they need to continue making an excellent impression on the applicant by demonstrating thorough knowledge of the organization's procedures.

HANDOUT
FORM 400

V6

FILLING OUT THE APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

The Membership Application has been designed to be easy to use. Recommend the application be submitted online through Club Central on the Toastmasters International website because the new member will receive faster service. If the member prefers, they can mail or fax the application to World Headquarters.

Presenter:

Briefly cover the importance of filling in correct District and club numbers, name of club and location of club, as well as the correct month and year.

V7

MEMBER STATUS

After filling out initial club information, determine member status. Check the box:

- ▶ **"New,"** if the member will be new to the organization.
- ▶ **"Reinstated,"** if the member is returning to the organization.
- ▶ **"Renewing,"** if the member has no break in membership.
- ▶ **"Dual,"** if the member-to-be already belongs to another club and wants to be a dual member.

- ▶ **“Transfer,”** if the potential member belongs to a Toastmasters club and wants to transfer their membership from their current club to your club. (Be sure to note the other club’s number and District number in the space provided.)

FINANCIAL

Once member status has been determined, you are ready to assess the amount of money that must be collected. In addition to individual club dues, which differ from club to club, a certain amount of money is payable to World Headquarters.

- ▶ Applicants who are new to the Toastmasters organization pay both a \$20.00 New Member Fee and a membership fee that is determined by the month in which they have joined. (A diagram on the Membership Application will assist you in pro-rating this fee.)
- ▶ Send the per month membership fees as shown on the payment schedule on the Membership Application to World Headquarters.
- ▶ If the applicant is a transferring member, however, and has paid dues to World Headquarters for the current dues period, *do not collect dues*. Simply submit the completed application and the applicant’s former club number to World Headquarters with a letter from the previous club verifying payment.
- ▶ Renewing, reinstated, and transferred members do not pay the New Member Fee and do not receive the New Member Kit. This is also the case for dual members, who must submit international fees for each club the dual member decides to join.

RECRUITER INFORMATION

If another Toastmaster has recruited the applicant, fill out the appropriate information in the areas provided.

SIGNATORIES AND PAYMENT

Ensure that the application form is signed by both the applicant and the club’s Secretary or club member responsible for seeing the form is properly completed. The application should be sent to World Headquarters immediately. If you are submitting the application online or by fax, be sure to include credit card information for the dues. If you are sending the application by mail, you have the option to enclose a check or money order payable in U.S. funds for the appropriate dues.

CONCLUSION

You have received a number of benefits from your membership in Toastmasters. It is important to share those benefits. Your enthusiasm about the program is the strongest selling point of all. Combine that enthusiasm with the techniques we have discussed, and then be sure to take care of your new members by immediately assigning them meeting roles, providing mentor assistance, materials and information, and officially inducting them into the club. The end result? You will have the satisfaction of closing an unlimited number of win-win sales for your Toastmasters club.

V8

V9

V10

V11

Evaluation Guide

Evaluator's Name _____

Presentation Title _____ Date _____

- ▶ How effective was the speaker's introduction in helping the audience understand the purpose of *The Successful Club Series* and the presentation itself?
- ▶ Was the presenter adequately prepared? How heavily did the presenter rely on notes or the outline itself?
- ▶ How did the speaker use vocal variety to enhance this outlined presentation?
- ▶ What other techniques did the speaker use to personalize and augment the presentation? Were they effective? How?
- ▶ Did the speaker display the visuals smoothly and at the appropriate times? How could the speaker improve?
- ▶ What aspect of the speaker's presentation style did you find unique? Why?
- ▶ What could the speaker have done differently to make the presentation more effective?
- ▶ What did you like about the presentation?

Notes

Notes



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