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June 2008

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the Interminable
Questioner**

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Singaporean Laugh**

Answer: Know our culture.

**Ready to
Blow a Fuse?**

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VIEWPOINT

A New Year Begins...

✦ Yes, in just a few weeks this Toastmasters year comes to an end and a new year begins. Congratulations on what you have accomplished so far! I trust you've found the year to be productive and rewarding. As Toastmasters around the world focus on completing this year in great shape, it's not too early to be thinking about goals for the year beginning on the first of July. How will you continue to shape yourself in 2008-09? How will you contribute to your world's shape in the coming year?

Let me introduce you to a principle of military operations that applies to Toastmasters, and in fact to anything you choose to do in life. It's called: "Selection and Maintenance of the Aim." Simply stated, this principle means "Be very thoughtful and deliberate about the aim you select, and then maintain your focus and energy on that aim until you see it through to accomplishment." Think of this from the perspective of the member, the club and the district.

For the member, what is your aim in 2008-09? Is it to achieve the Competent Communicator award? Is this the year you complete the requirements for Distinguished Toastmaster? Do you want to become the World Champion of Public Speaking? Whatever is important to you, make a deliberate choice to get there, and stay focused on the prize throughout the year.

Newly elected club officers, what is your aim for your club? Get back up to 20 members? President's Distinguished Club... again? Institute that mentoring program you've talked about for so long? Be clear, be specific, and then apply your collective energy to achieving that aim. Distraction is the enemy of success, so don't allow other fascinating but less productive things to divert you from your mission.

At the district level, one aim district leaders will certainly want to focus on is achieving Distinguished District by June 30, 2009. What else does your district need to do to get into – or stay in – great shape? Perhaps a clear focus on low-member clubs is in order. Is now the right time to make a concerted effort for new-club development in a specific industry sector? Clarity of aim and concentration of effort on your aim will pay handsome dividends at year-end.

By applying the principle of Selection and Maintenance of the Aim, regardless of where you are in this Toastmasters world, you will hit the ground running when the new Toastmasters year starts. And if you're running right from the very start, you're bound to be in great shape as you cross the finish line!

Chris K. Ford, DTM
International President



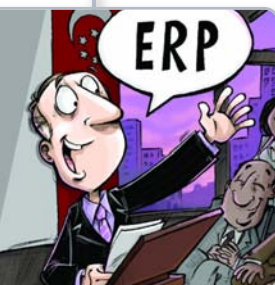
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The Toastmasters Vision:

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.

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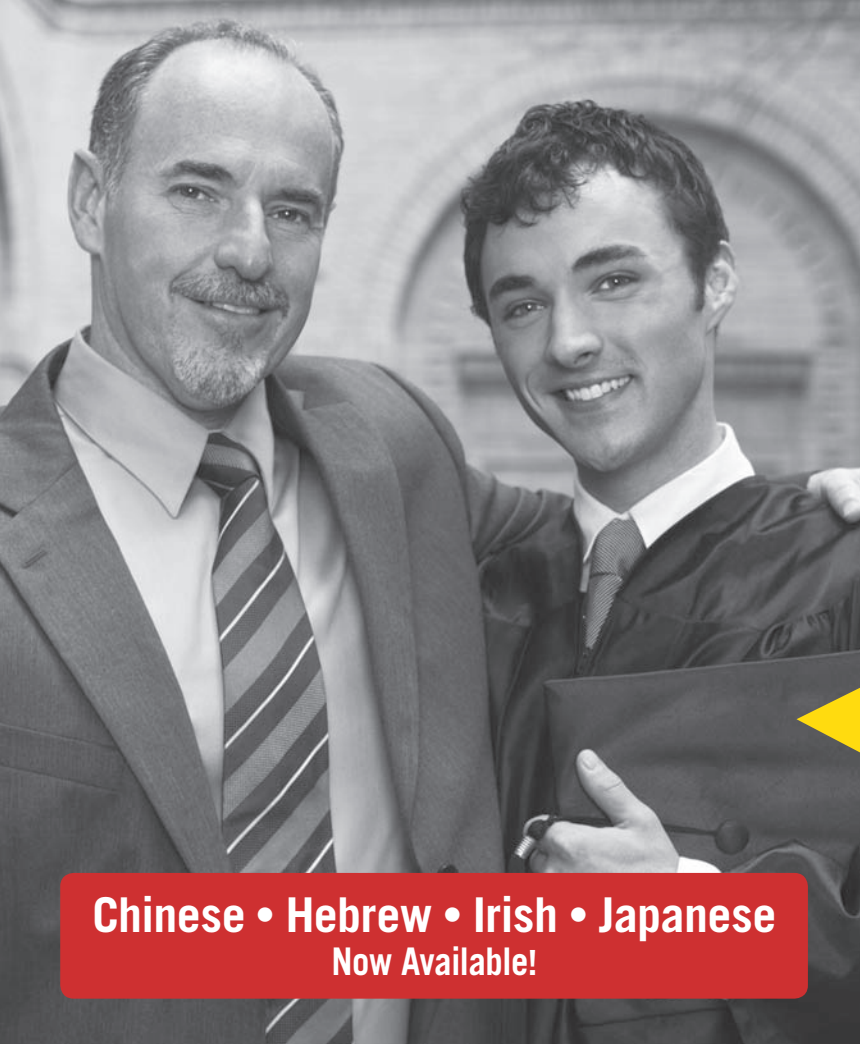
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Tips: Toward a Transcending Ending

Bob Leo's tip to spend five or 10 minutes preparing for Table Topics "Mastering Table Topics," (April 2008) defeats the purpose, at least from the point of view of my club here in Brussels. As we use it, Table Topics is supposed to help you learn to think on your feet. We seldom have a theme, so the topics can be widely disparate, not to mention bizarre.

My best Table Topics tip under these circumstances is: Aim for the finish. Since the topics are virtually always a total surprise, you never know how you are going to start your talk. Therefore, devote your time to thinking about how you are going to end it. This sets a target, so however much you may meander until then, your path down the home stretch will be straight and true.

There is nothing like a firm, confident finish to give the impression that you knew what you were talking about all along, even if you didn't.

Philip Yaffe • Claddagh Toastmasters • Brussels, Belgium

A Gender Offender

Neil Chethik's article, "Speaking to an All-Women Audience...When You're a Man" (April 2008) lost me at "...I'm not on the prowl." I found much of his advice demeaning to women and thoroughly unhelpful. Some of the generalizations I found troubling were: "...women don't like to be pelted with facts" and "Some women are initially suspicious of a man who assumes authority..."

If women are interested enough in a subject to pay to see someone speak about that subject, they don't care whether the speaker is a man or woman, they want facts, and they don't want to listen to a man who thinks he's so appealing he must

first establish his marital status to prevent swooning. The insert giving advice for women was below par as well. It assumes all women are diminutive, wear clothing to make themselves appear sexy, are over-dramatic Valley Girls, and will get their feelings hurt if the audience doesn't over-react to their speech.

I find most of the articles in your magazine very helpful and interesting, which is why I was doubly disappointed about this particular one.

Jeanette Bartley • State Farm Speakeasy Toastmasters Club
Bloomington, Illinois

The shocking generalizations Neil Chethik makes in his article left me speechless (no pun intended). I often speak to audiences dominated by females, and never once have I had to question my speaking skills or presentation techniques. I'm not sure if Mr. Chethik knows this, but women are (brace yourself), human beings.

I don't deny that a male speaker needs to be careful using certain types of humor in front of a female audience, but anyone who is even contemplating potentially offensive jokes in front of any audience simply should not be speaking. Such glaring stereotypes as "the odds are against" a man getting a laugh from an all-female audience is blatantly offensive.

Please remember that all male speakers can treat the women they stand in front of with the same respect and professionalism they would give to any audience.

Dan Bocchino • IEEE Livewires • Piscataway, New Jersey

Switzerland to the Rescue

It's always a treat when the *Toastmaster* appears in my mailbox. However, a graphic in the last issue (March 2008) made me grimace.

In "Remedy for a Lifeless Speech," there's a Swiss passport lying on top of the stethoscope. Most likely, you were confusing it with the Red Cross, symbolized by a red cross on a white background. However, a white cross on a red background is the national flag of Switzerland.

As a member of a Swiss Toastmasters club, I found this both amusing and sad. While it's fun to get some publicity for this beautiful country, it's a pity that people confuse the nation with the medical organization.

Susan Vogel-Misicka, CC • Zug Toastmasters Club
Zug, Switzerland

Editor's Note: *Many apologies for this embarrassing oversight.*

President Chris Ford on TV

How thrilled I was this morning, Tuesday 15th April, to see our International President being interviewed on a local Australian television station.

I live in a very rural part of Australia, a four-hour drive from Sydney and two and half hours from Canberra, where the nearest Toastmasters clubs are located. This is too far for an 80-year-old lady to travel to attend meetings, but yet I still retain my membership via the Eurobodalla Shire Club at Moruya.

It was wonderful to hear Mr. Ford. His manner was so easy and friendly and I heartily endorse his message that shaping yourself can shape the world.

Thank you, Mr. Ford, for taking the time from what, I am sure, must be a very busy schedule to talk on our television sets so that we who live in rural Australia can see and hear such a very nice man.

Coral M. Ordish, ATMB • Islander Club • Berridale, NSW, Australia

My 15 Minutes of Fame

▼ The author, Rose McCall, with WSFA-TV12 weather anchor Rich Thomas.

✦ In September 2007, I had a conversation with Ken Selvaggi, general manager at my favorite TV channel, WSFA-TV 12, here in Montgomery, Alabama, about its lack of positive news and information. I asked him if I could write an editorial for presentation on the network. After receiving my e-mailed essay titled, "What Happens Now That Summer is Here?" he wrote back to ask if I would be willing to come down to the station and record it. Since my college drama class, I've had visions of doing television, but I never thought I would get the opportunity. So my eager response was...Yes!

I have been a Toastmaster for many years and even attended club meetings around the city. My home club for more than six years was the Blue-Gray Toastmasters Club on the Gunter Annex of Maxwell Air Force Base and now my membership is with the CAVHCS-West Toastmasters Club at the Veterans Administration Office here in Montgomery. Over the years Toastmasters has helped me prepare for various speaking roles, such as giving Beauties of America pageant interviews, being a junior high-school PTSA president, judging a Junior Miss contest, teaching Sunday school and acting as Mistress of Ceremonies. But television?

I had written articles for several beauty pageant publications but nothing remotely related to television news! I knew that the timing for the editorials was two minutes or less. To some, that may seem like very little time, but Table Topics gave me the perfect training ground.

I also remembered what my drama teacher taught me: Lips, Teeth and Tongue – say it clearly and you will be well received. I try to write my

guest editorials as clearly and to the subject as possible and leave no time for rambling. If you delay getting to the message, people will change the channel, tune you out or walk out of the room.

Nobody walks when I talk! I know they listen, based on the amount of feedback the station gets when my comments air. In addition, every person I meet tells me how much they enjoy the commentaries and to "keep up the good work." Some people assume that I work at the station since I am on once a month on average, but as I told someone, I consider it my public service to the community to speak on such topics as "Bullying," "Uncommon Courtesies" and "Baggy Pants." Over a seven-month period I have recorded nine editorials and all of them have been aired on Channel 12. The station calls me their "local celebrity," my pastor calls me "Miss TV Star" and my kids, well let's just say they hear all of the commentaries before I read them on TV, and they still call me Mom.

How did I get my 15 minutes of fame?

I asked, the door opened and I stuck my foot in! Fortunately I was good enough that they kept asking me back. My nickname at the station is "One-Take Rose" because we usually shoot it in one take! I read the copy I wrote from a teleprompter and stand or sit where the regular news anchors sit on camera.



How do you get those 15 minutes?

First, prepare yourself with Table Topics! Second, learn to write as clearly as possible on a subject of your choice and then see if your local station accepts guest editorials. My comments run within every news broadcast for two days starting with the 5 or 6 p.m. slot and running until 6 a.m. or noon the next day. Third, type it up in a Word document and e-mail it to the general manager with an opening comment introducing yourself.

Practice your presentation in front of the mirror and try on different colors to see which one looks best on you on camera. This is very important! Some colors will wash you out under bright lights and some will make you look dull. I usually wear red or a bold color pattern with black for contrast.

The most important thing is to have fun, relax, enjoy the experience and do those Table Topics! **T**

Rose H. McCall, ATMB, is a member of CAVHCS - West Toastmasters in Montgomery, Alabama.

District 57 Speakers Bureau founder delivers keynote in Beijing, at China's first Earth Day summit.

Promoting Environmentalism

In 2002, Jill Buck sat at her kitchen table in Northern California and wrote the Go Green Initiative (GGI), a plan that launched a non-profit organization designed to promote environmental responsibility on school campuses. Within a few years, her groundbreaking program has reverberated in the White House and as far away as Africa and Asia. Buck's secret weapon isn't corporate backing or a huge amount of funding. When asked about her success in growing this grass-roots organization, which focuses on tactics such as recycling, she cites one factor above all: Toastmasters.

"The skills I gathered in Toastmasters have been paramount in the success of this program," says Buck, who as GGI's founder and executive director regularly speaks throughout the world about environmental issues. In April, she delivered a keynote speech in Beijing, at China's first Earth Day summit.

"I don't have a big advertising budget," she adds. "The genesis of this program, and the way it continues to grow, is primarily through word-of-mouth advertising. Whenever I speak, new schools sign up for the program, and it's the strong communication and leadership skills I mastered in Toastmasters that have helped me grow the organization

and reach my full potential. In every speech I make, I mention the organization and urge people to join."

Based in Pleasanton, California, GGI is now the largest and fastest-growing environmental education program in the United States. Uniting parents, students, teachers, businesses and local governments in an effort to make real and lasting environmental changes, it operates in four continents, 10 countries, 49 states and 1,500 schools.

As Buck sees it, good communication skills are pivotal to any endeavor. "Speaking is a learnable skill, and when you are a great public speaker, you will go far, no matter what your chosen profession," says Buck, who constantly refers to her advanced Toastmasters manuals for advice and guidance. "When I wrote the Go Green Initiative, I was neither an environmentalist nor an educator. I was simply a parent concerned about the fact that our population is increasing at an alarming rate, and the world's natural resources are rapidly being depleted."

Buck was a naval officer in San Diego when she joined a Navy Toastmasters club in 1993. At her very first meeting, she discovered how beneficial Toastmasters could be.

"A crusty old naval commander asked during Table Topics why



men have nipples," she recalls. "That was a challenge to discuss, but I did it, and it was that sort of training that helped me become the speaker I am today."

As a legal officer trained in military justice, she did a great deal of public speaking for the Navy, including training large groups. "I would represent the Navy in courtroom proceedings," Buck adds, "which involved cross-examining witnesses in front of a panel of senior officers and using persuasive speaking, as well as making opening and closing remarks."

When she retired from the Navy in 1999, Buck and her husband moved to Pleasanton in Northern California and she joined the Pleasanton Toastmasters club. By 2000, she founded the District 57 Speakers Bureau, which is still active today.

"I started the Speakers Bureau for two reasons," she says. "I knew a lot of advanced speakers who really enjoyed their clubs but wanted something more challenging, as well as new feedback. Many of them had a message they were passionate about and issues they

wanted to share with others, and the Bureau provided a ready-made vehicle for connecting those speakers. The Bureau also served as a great membership promotion tool, attracting a lot of folks from other organizations such as Kiwanis."

Professional speaker Craig Harrison, founder of the Laugh Lovers advanced club and a member of the Lakeview Toastmasters in Oakland, met Buck when both were members of the Pleasanton club.

"While Jill arrived in District 57 already polished and well-spoken, I've been so impressed with how she's gone out into the world and launched the Go Green Initiative," he says. "She's making a real difference by using her communication and leadership skills to raise consciousness, mobilize resources and inspire the next generation. She's as fluent speaking with politicians, educators and parents as she is with students of all ages."

Former White House federal environmental executive Edwin Pinero met Buck in 2004 and says he immediately became a big fan.

"Jill is very passionate about what she does, and her passion is contagious," says Pinero, who now

directs the New York state Pollution Prevention Institute. "She has a gift of pulling you in and making you believe what she's saying. I've seen her develop her leadership skills over the last few years, growing an organization whose concept was literally written on the back of a napkin into a worldwide mission.

"With little or no leveraging and few sponsors, she is more effective and efficient than many of the huge, funded environmental educational organizations."

For Buck, one of the most satisfying byproducts of GGI is the fact that it has become a family affair.

"My kids are learning the message of stewardship of the environment, as well as how to be comfortable in the adult business world," she says of her children, Katie, 16, Andy, 11, and Mandy, 9. "The kids have seen the organization grow from the ground up and become a worldwide network, and they've become good communicators themselves."

Over the last couple of years, as GGI's impact has spread, Buck has become an in-demand and well-paid speaker. Often asked about her success with speaking, she is happy to share advice.

"It all starts with the content," she notes. "Just as a carpenter doesn't obsess about his hammer, but what he builds with that hammer, it's important to remember that speakers aren't hired for how they speak, but for the content they share with the audience."

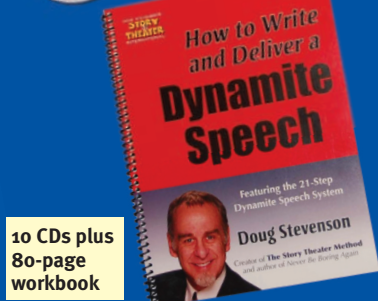
"Make sure to research your audience, and go out of your way to tailor your message to them," adds Buck. "Provide tangible take-aways that will help your audience now, and give them an immediate call to action."

For more information about the Go Green Initiative, or to reach Jill Buck, visit <http://www.gogreeninitiative.org/>. 

Julie Bawden Davis is a freelance writer based in Southern California and a longtime contributor to the *Toastmaster*. You can reach her at Julie@JulieBawdenDavis.com.

Editor's Note: Do you have an inspiring story of how the Toastmasters program has helped you? Tell us at letters@toastmasters.org.

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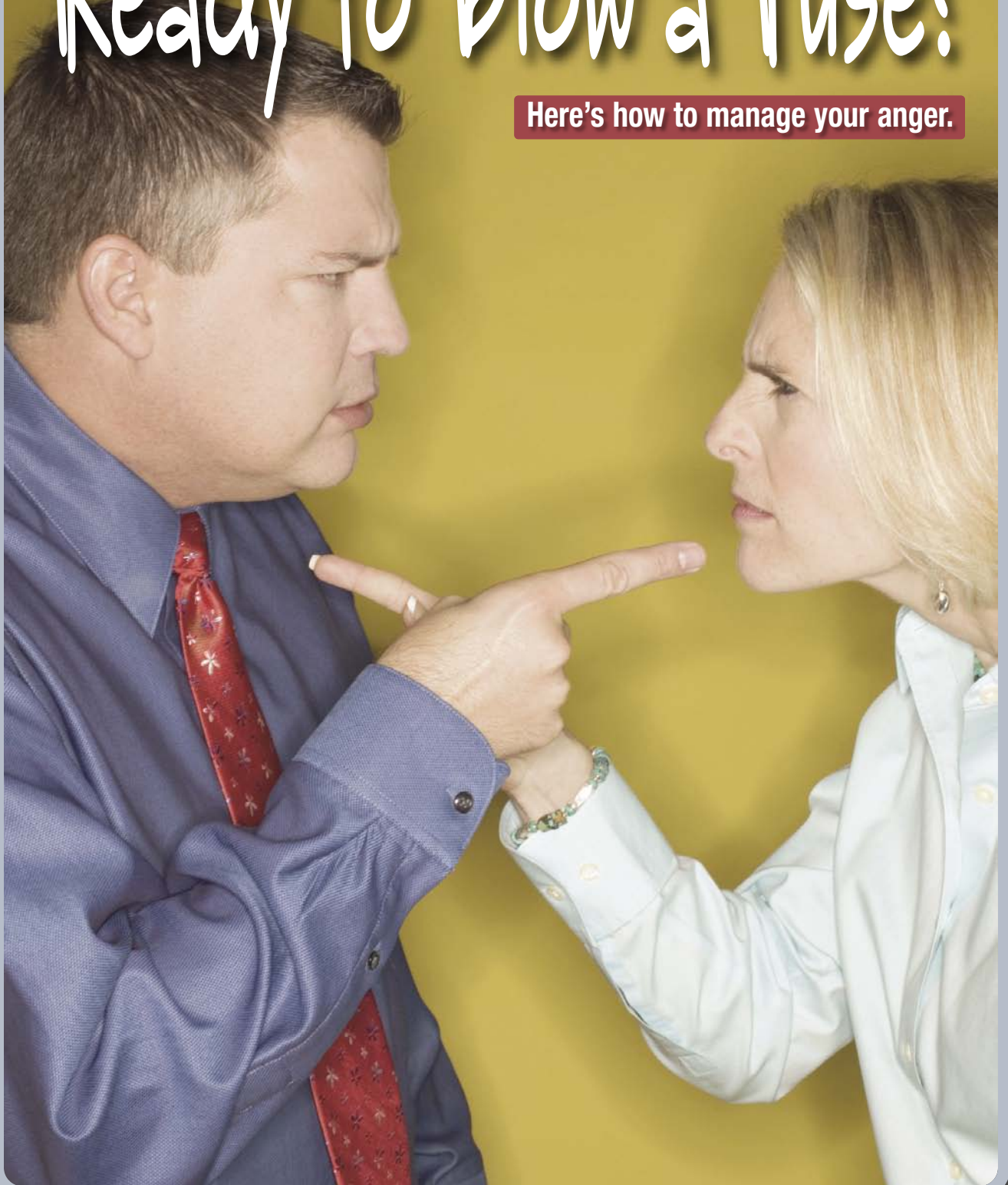
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Ready to Blow a Fuse?

Here's how to manage your anger.





he scene is painfully familiar, and timeless: A young kid drags himself home from school, nearly blind with frustration, rage and tears, having been victimized by a bully. His lunch money is gone, he's hurting from having been shoved into his locker, and the one thing he wants more than anything else in life is to push the bully into a wood chipper.

He is, in a word, *angry*.

If this scene were to play out in its most classic form, Dad would take the youngster in hand, coach him in what used to be called “the manly art of self-defense,” and the kid would return to school and punch the bully silly. But in the scenario envisioned by school psychologist Izzy Kalman, there are no fisticuffs. Instead, the kid might acknowledge to the bully’s face that the bully had wounded his pride, the big galoot would feel remorse, and the two would hopefully come to an understanding – perhaps even become friends.

Kalman says it is vital we control our anger when faced with confrontation and potentially explosive situations. It’s for our own good.

“Anger is the major cause of people’s social and emotional problems,” he says.

The author of the book, *Bullies to Buddies: How to Turn Your Enemies into Friends*, Kalman explores the subject of anger in workshops held around the United States. He maintains it can be easy to control anger, as long as we’re willing to part with some of our more instinctive reactions when someone turns the flame-thrower in our direction.

The healthiest way to deal with a tense situation, he says, is by using that old standby – the Golden Rule. But although you’d think it would be a natural reaction to treat others the way they themselves want to be treated, it’s not, explains Kalman. Anger is a primal, hard-wired instinct in people, while being nice is a learned behavior.

But once it is learned, the power shifts.

“I automatically lose when I get angry,” Kalman said in a workshop held in Irvine, California, earlier this year, noting that tormentors rejoice in our rage and frustration. But when we refuse to rise to the bait, he says, the conflict automatically stops. And we win.

“The Golden Rule is actually the ultimate in power,” says Kalman, who is also a psychotherapist. “The Golden Rule puts me in charge.”

Is anger ever an issue in Toastmasters?

We’d all like to think that the Toastmasters experience only produces positive and joyful situations. However, club members, like most groups of human beings, are a

mix of many types of people – some very easy-going, others more competitive, some forceful in manner, others more passive.

Benita Stafford-Smith, an executive coach from the Winnipeg area in Canada, has been a Toastmaster for 20 years and belonged to clubs in Manitoba and Saskatchewan. “I have seen it all,” she says. “Generally, I would say that Toastmasters are respectful and keep discussion on a positive level. After all, Toastmasters is about communication.”

However, she adds, the organization’s members “are only human and, of course, occasionally it happens that communication is ineffective and sometimes strays into the unacceptable. The difference, I find, is that Toastmasters usually see the folly of their ways quickly and come to the table prepared to come to an understanding.

“The Toastmasters training, plus the many speeches on communication a person hears, reinforces effective communication [between people].”

Stafford-Smith, who is a Distinguished Toastmaster and a member of the Canadian Association of Professional Speakers, says that if you’re involved in a discussion that turns heated, you have to rise above whatever mean or unfair things you feel the other person is saying.

“Do not take it personally,” she advises. “People need to learn how to get themselves out of the way, to remove their ego and personal stake [in the issue].”

Sandy Dunning is a 20-year member of the Long Beach Gavel club in Signal Hill, California. The club is 75 years old, so its members clearly know what to do in terms of interpersonal communication.

“We’re pretty sensitive to the feelings of others,” says Dunning, who has served as president of the group three separate times. “That’s one of the things that people have brought up about our club.”

The Long Beach club has had its share of thorny issues over the years. At one point, there was a man in the group who had a disrespectful attitude toward women and would consistently talk to them in a degrading manner, says Dunning. Understandably, the group’s female members were furious. So Dunning was asked to speak to the man.

Ten Simple Ways to Mend Fences

By Michael LeFan

As surely as the sun rises in the East, we are all going to deal with irate people from time to time. They may be family members, work associates or customers – and they will be hot under the collar. The problem is this: How do you best deal with these folks? If you are serious about developing your communication and leadership skills – not to mention your personal relationships – you will benefit from the following fence-mending tools:

- **Be quick to listen and slow to speak.** When conflicts arise, ask what went wrong. Don't interrupt. Listen. When the other person finishes, say, "I can see why you're upset. Now I want to figure out how we can resolve this problem."
- **Be sincere.** Look the other person in the eye and say, "I'm sorry." If you are on the telephone, make "eye contact" in your mind. Be genuine.
- **Explain your own view** of why you behaved as you did – but don't make excuses. Just try to describe what you think happened from your viewpoint, and without fixing any blame.
- **Compensate.** Offer helpful ideas to make up for the inconvenience experienced by the other person, to soothe ruffled feathers.
- **Defer to another person in a position to help.** If the problem is customer-related, ask the customer if he or she would prefer to speak with someone else in authority.
- **Follow through.** Make sure the other person knows that you will cure the difficulty – then do so quickly.
- **Set a deadline.** Express a timeframe for straightening out the situation.
- **Fix the problem.** Don't fight – make things right.
- **Follow-up.** Keep communicating. Stay in contact while the problem is being solved.
- **Remember – business customers don't need us, but we need them.**

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

She took him aside after a meeting one day to explain how upset the club was with him. (Dunning says this is a communications strategy her club always employs: When someone has sparked the anger of other club members, a club officer meets with that person individually, away from the others, to try to defuse the problem before a group confrontation erupts.)

It's also important that you use the right words when positively asserting yourself with a difficult member – just as with any person you're having difficulty with.

In meeting with this particular female-bashing man, Dunning says she didn't want to come across as attacking him, yet she needed him to understand that his actions were harmful to the club.

"You want to maintain their self-esteem," she notes, "but I also let him know that he was offending another person." Sometimes you have to walk a fine line, she adds, when trying to calmly convey to someone why you or others are angry with them.

"You end up using the same kinds of phrasing strategies and wording that you use as an evaluator [for a Toastmaster's speech]: Instead of coming out with a direct statement of fact or a criticism, you say something like, 'It appears to me...' or 'My impression is that if you...'"

The Long Beach club, which includes Sandy's husband, Bob – the two met at a Toastmasters International Convention – had another situation where a club member

caused problems for others in the group. In this case, however, it wasn't his words that were offensive. It was his smell.

Seems the man was...well...hygiene-challenged, and according to Dunning, his body odor made it increasingly unpleasant for those seated in his proximity at the weekly meetings.

Now, how do you deal with *that* issue?

Once again, the Long Beach club chose an individual – not Dunning this time – to meet one-on-one with the member and explain the situation to him. Apparently, however, the man didn't take kindly to the suggestion that he try to smell better: He never returned to another club meeting.

What if you're in a situation where you feel your temper simmering? Something has you about to blow – but you want to keep a lid on it. What to do? According to the American Psychological Association (APA), it's okay to express yourself. Just do it in a productive manner.

"Expressing your angry feelings in an assertive – not aggressive – manner is the healthiest way to express anger," an APA Web site tutorial says. "To do this, you have to learn how to make clear what your needs are, and how to get them met, without hurting others. Being assertive doesn't mean being pushy or demanding; it means being respectful of yourself and others."

The Association also recommends other techniques for dousing the fire when the fuse of anger starts to sputter:

"Anger can be suppressed, and then converted or redirected. This happens when you hold in your anger, stop thinking about it, and focus on something positive."

But the tutorial also makes it clear that consistently suppressing your anger, rather than directly confronting the problem is not healthy.

Theatrics can also be valuable. At Kalman's workshop he did a bit of role-playing with an audience volunteer to illustrate the "soft answer turneth away wrath" approach. After a simulated heated exchange, he asked his volunteer to simply deflect his expressions of insult and outrage with expressions of understanding, sympathy and commiseration. The result, the volunteer admitted, was a feeling of being in control rather than being victimized.

Kalman summarized this approach with six rules that might be called the "rules of non-engagement" when applied to arguments or confrontations:

- **Refuse to give others the power to get you mad.** Anger, he says, is something we do to ourselves. Let it flare and it creates disrespect and enemies.
- **Treat everything people tell you as the words of your best friend** (even if they sound angry and hateful). Tell yourself that whatever they are saying is because they really love you and care about you (although that doesn't mean you have to believe it).
- **Do not be afraid.** Fear creates strength in an adversary, and it indicates that you consider that adversary an

enemy, a feeling that will be reciprocated.

- **Do not defend yourself.** This produces the same reactions as fear. However, dispassionately explaining one's position rather than defending it is okay.
- **Do not attack.** It takes two people to fight. If one won't, the fight's over.
- **If someone hurts your feelings, just show that you are hurt;** do not get angry. Chances are good the other person didn't intend to hurt you.

Kalman cautioned that these rules do not apply in situations where someone is actually dangerous. In that case, he says, go ahead and defend or attack – whatever it takes to win.

Kalman's method may fly in the face of every John Wayne, Clint Eastwood and Arnold Schwarzenegger movie, but it works, he says. Yes, anger can make for superb theater, he adds, and it might even spur you to new heights of eloquence as you're blistering your imagined foe. But the fulminating always ends the same way. Kalman lets sociologist and author Lawrence J. Peter have the last word on that:

"Speak when you're angry – and you will make the best speech you'll ever regret." **T**

Pat Mott is a Southern California-based writer and regular contributor to the *Toastmaster*. **Paul Sterman** is an associate editor at the magazine.



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The Never-ending Question

By R. J. Stove, CC

Coping with hecklers is one thing, but what's the best method of coping with the interminable questioner?

was entirely clueless as to what he'd wanted to ask about.

It's all very well (and all very necessary) to cope with hecklers. Hecklers, like the poor, will always be with us. They are a recognized hazard of the public speaker's life, outside such ultra-courteous environments as Toastmasters itself. Much less recognized, but with just as great a potential for taking the wind out of a speaker's sails, is the interminable questioner. Or, rather, the interminable speechmaker who offers up his unsolicited autobiography and hopes it'll be accepted as a question.

Certain environments are particularly conducive to assaults from the Never-Ending Questioner. Broadly speaking, a corporate presentation where it costs dollars just to blow your nose is not likely to attract the Never-Ending Questioner. No, he shines at informal gatherings, where the bill of fare is either very inexpensive or altogether free. The book launch finds him in his element (he will seldom, of course, actually buy the book), but he is apt to haunt the modestly priced one-day seminar also. Best of all, as far as he is concerned, is the sort of televised studio audience where the emcee requests audience feedback. There he will demonstrate afresh to the surprised emcee – and, all too probably, to several million horrified TV viewers – the merit of that ancient

It should have been a most enjoyable book launch. The book itself was well worth reading. The author – a clergyman visiting from Oxford University – spoke with intelligence, with a good flow, and with a nicely judged line in self-deprecation. The audience wanted to be there, and it clearly esteemed the author's long-demonstrated talents. The speech itself was concise: 15 fat-free minutes, with clichés and tautologies mercifully absent.

So what went wrong?

What went wrong was what so often goes wrong at such things: Question Time. Specifically, the hogging of Question Time by one particular narcissist, who droned on and on and on and on, indifferent to the author's topic, and impervious

to the wishes of any other questioners. The rest of the audience, like a ballet troupe, made a perfectly synchronized movement of staring ostentatiously at their watches as the questioner bumbled forth. By the time he'd paused for breath, everyone – including, probably, himself –

proverb: “Be careful what you ask for: you just might get it.”

The Never-Ending Questioner does not actually mean to bring the proceedings to a screaming halt. He is simply so in love with the sound of his own voice – and with all the multifarious ideas that are snapping, crackling and popping away inside his head like Rice Krispies – that in his eyes the speaker and the other audience members have effectively ceased to exist. But that doesn’t make it any easier for the speaker to cope. Many a speaker, after having delivered the formal contribution with skill and charm, comes to grief when the Never-Ending Questioner expects (indeed demands) a response to his twittering.

How, then, can you, as a speaker, avoid coming to grief in such circumstances? The following tips might help – these would’ve saved me considerable embarrassment if someone had suggested them to me in my earliest days as a speaker:

- It’s crucial to understand that the Never-Ending Questioner’s behavior is, as Mafiosi would say, “nothing personal.” If it wasn’t you (and your audience) whom he was subjecting to the story of his life, it would be someone else. Think of the number of captive hearers on whom Forrest Gump unleashed his reminiscences.

- Once you’ve perceived that he has no interest whatever in the theme of your talk, and that he is merely babbling for babbling’s sake, it’s best not to try and match his verbiage, syllable for syllable. Sometimes it’ll make sense to say outright: “I’m sorry, I’m not quite sure what your specific concern is, could you perhaps approach me about it afterward?” In nine cases out of 10, the Never-Ending Questioner won’t accept this implied invitation, any more than a heckler would follow up on a similarly phrased

invitation. Meanwhile, you have scored points for politeness, and have thereby given extra time to audience members who really do have genuine questions to ask.

- Understand that some of the most famous people of our time have suffered, and suffered severely, from the Never-Ending Questioner. Take Orson Welles, who once said about certain newspaper interviewers: “They ask long questions that are the answers, I nod, and the question is printed without the question mark, as my idea.” Compared to misrepresentation on that scale, the average Never-Ending Questioner is positively harmless.

- Why not sound out the event’s president/director/chair beforehand, about Question Time itself? Agree with that person in advance on the number of permissible questions. You will never have as much time, at any event, as you’d wish. It’s best, therefore, for the meeting chairperson to make it clear to the audience, before Question Time starts, that because of your own other commitments (you might have a plane to catch, for instance), there will need to be a cap on the number of questions that Question Time allows. (Four questions is a good number: high enough to enable various viewpoints to be heard, but low enough to minimize the dangers of running overtime.) If a Never-Ending Questioner knows that other audience members will be under pressure to make their own queries terse, it will be harder for him to get away with bloviating ad **infinitum**.

Good luck! 

R. J. Stove, CC, is an editor, writer and composer living in Melbourne, Australia. A member of the City Centre Toastmasters club, he can be reached at stoverobertjames@yahoo.com.au.



He worked in
education and research.

She was a nurse for 30
years.

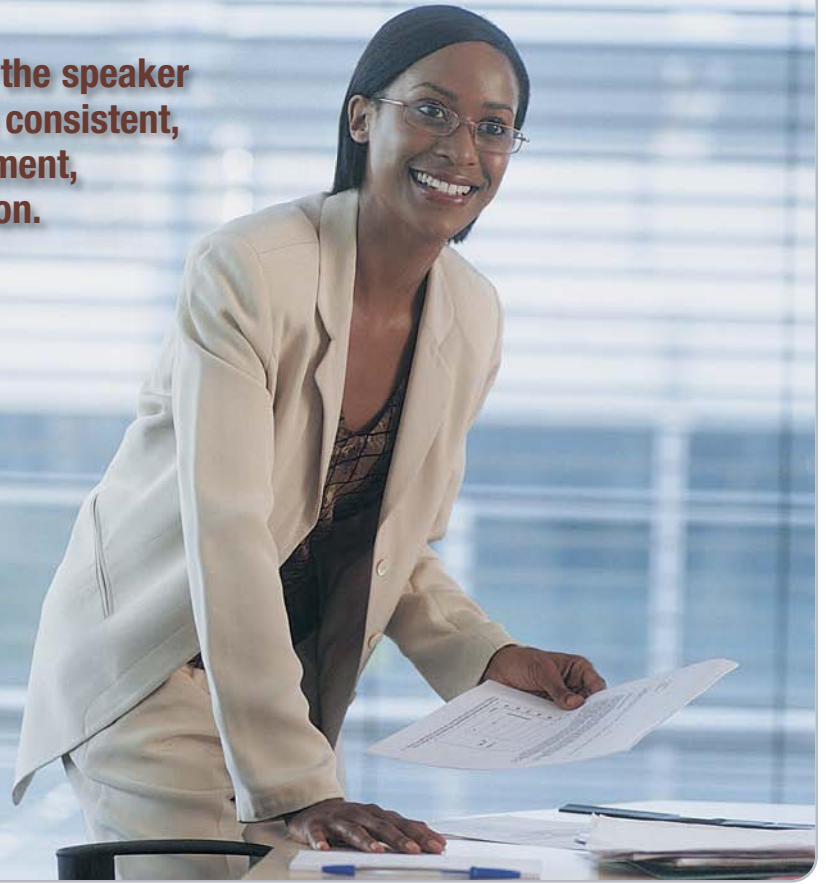
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The Sergeant at Arms prepares the speaker to fight the battle by providing a consistent, well-equipped meeting environment, free of distractions and confusion.

By Ernest Ray Raynor III, CC



Sergeant at Arms:

Leadership Through Service

Visitors arrive at the meeting hall and see the large, impressive banner: Toastmasters Meets Here! A powerful first impression is formed by the banner and the well-organized room. As the visitors enter, they are warmly greeted by the Sergeant at Arms, offered an opportunity to sign the guestbook and provided a place to sit where they're surrounded by friendly and enthusiastic people. The meeting proceeds smoothly, and they watch the

speakers develop their skills through the gentle guidance of the evaluators. Such a positive experience motivates the guests to join the club and prepare for their Ice Breaker speeches to be given at the very next meeting.

Is this happening in your club? Smoothly run meetings that entice visitors to join are not created by accident. An active and committed Sergeant at Arms ensures those strong first impressions based on a well-laid-out room, a warm greeting and an organized meeting.

Nearing the end of my term as Sergeant at Arms, I considered the

impact this position of service could have on a meeting and realized that the organizational health of the entire club is affected by my position.

A Sergeant at Arms is considered to be the lowest ranking officer in a Toastmasters club. While I wouldn't presume to question the rankings, I believe you'll find it enlightening to explore the origins and significance of this vital, active office.

Origins of the Term

Sergeant is a word derived from the Latin *serviens* and means "servant." In medieval England, these servants ensured that their knights were ready

for battle, they trained and equipped peasant soldiers, and maintained security in the meeting hall of their lords. Some of these sergeants were appointed to maintain safety and order in all the king's functions.

These were the first to bear the title Sergeant at Arms and were later used to ensure orderly meetings in the British Parliament. This office grew in importance as meetings became a preferred method to establish rule and settle disputes. Today, national assemblies, financial conclaves and nonprofit clubs all use the office of Sergeant at Arms to ensure orderly meetings.

Significance of the Office

In Toastmasters, the Sergeant at Arms still maintains safety and order in the club meeting. Safety doesn't just happen – it requires observation and diligence. Are there power cords crossing the walkways of the

meeting room? People could trip on the cords, causing injury. This is a potential liability case the Sergeant of Arms can prevent.

Rearrange the room if possible, to lessen the hazard. If that is not possible, tape down the power cords with packing tape or purchase some with safety enhanced molding that prevents the cords from catching on people's shoes.

Are there emergency exits from the room or from the building? Are they accessible? Knowing how to quickly and safely evacuate a building may save lives. As a Sergeant at Arms, periodically announce the location of the emergency exits and appoint a safety warden to assist in an emergency.

While election to this office hardly qualifies one to serve as a medic, a standard first-aid kit will help you deal with mild cuts or headaches. There are other safety issues unique to each club, and each Sergeant at Arms should take the opportunity to evaluate the building, equipment and personal needs of the members and guests and take steps to ensure the safety of all.

The Sergeant at Arms also maintains order by assisting the other club officers and members as they fulfill their meeting roles. This officer ensures the room is prepared, that equipment and administrative forms are available, and all guests are greeted and made to feel comfortable.

A missing gavel, a shortage of ballots, or a disorganized meeting room can distract and frustrate members when they accomplish even simple tasks. Visitors may notice the confusion, sense the frustration, and refrain from joining the club. Toastmasters should be an oasis of order and purpose amidst the chaos and confusion outside our meeting halls.

Your efforts to produce a well-planned meeting will be appreciated! When I noticed club members struggling to rip portions of ballots and

contest judging forms, I equipped the club's supply box with scissors. I received grateful applause during the next contest. Upon discovering that one of our club members had a headache, I produced a choice of over-the-counter painkillers from a first-aid kit I'd assembled for the club. My fellow members praised me for my preparation. When the club needed an alternative meeting site, I visited a prospective location to determine

“Toastmasters should be an oasis of order and purpose amidst the chaos and confusion outside our meeting halls.”

our equipment and seating requirements and then was complimented on my diligent planning.

These simple acts of preparation averted any inconvenience that could have hampered the professionalism and fun of our club meeting, ensuring that all participants were free to concentrate on their respective tasks. This has hardly been a thankless job, and the positive feedback I've received inspires me to find new ways to enhance the meeting. A well-prepared meeting galvanizes all participants and observers to become part of the experience – finding purpose, professional development and enjoyment in the activities.

While moving chairs and tables may not be as exciting as sharpening swords, imagine how dull your meetings would be if the speakers were unable to concentrate on their speeches. Overcoming nervousness is a significant battle in a speaker's development, and the Sergeant at Arms prepares the speaker to fight that battle by providing a consistent, well-equipped meeting environment, free of distractions and confusion. Even the mundane tasks of

this office can lead to exciting changes in club members and continue the proud traditions of this historically important role.

When you think about it, the Sergeant at Arms helps sharpen club members to make them more effective in their personal and professional lives the way the Sergeants sharpened swords for battle in days of old. He or she helps to make an impact in the community!

My club boasts members who represent the American Red Cross, the Army Corps of Engineers and a community college. Our members mentor youth groups, lead book readings, promote travel, and organize and lead home school associations. Dynamic and intelligent people such as these can be found throughout Toastmasters. And behind every successful club member, there's a sharp, diligent Sergeant at Arms.

Once you know the origins and significance of the office of Sergeant at Arms, you'll understand why this position of service is an opportunity for serious leadership training. Would you like to become an invaluable team leader for your club? Talk to a Sergeant at Arms and learn more about this important role. Look for these leaders in all Toastmasters clubs; they won't be hard to find. **T**

Ernest Ray Raynor III, CC, is Sergeant at Arms for All Stars Toastmasters in Tulsa, Oklahoma. He teaches English at the local community college. Reach him at prof.raynor@sbcglobal.net.

By Michael Chan

How to Find the Right Club

Many people visit Toastmasters clubs with the goal of improving their speaking skills. They know that Toastmasters offers an effective and enjoyable experience that will no doubt help them reach their goal. However, what they often overlook is the importance of selecting a suitable Toastmasters club to join – a club that meets their particular needs and preferences. Being involved with the right group can mean the difference between having a good experience or a great one.

Our club often has guests who need help in selecting the right club for themselves. So I've outlined some useful tips that will not only guide guests in finding the right club, but will also give clues to existing club members on criteria used by guests when evaluating their club. Here are some of the topics you should consider and discuss with potential guests:

Take Your Time. The great thing about Toastmasters is that there is never any pressure for guests to join. Guests are free to shop around looking for the right club. In fact, our club always encourages guests to observe our meeting, how supportive the environment is, and how members can really improve their public speaking skills. Some guests

may not realize they can go from club to club, observing which one best suits their personality. It is our duty as Toastmasters to let guests know that taking time to find the right club is an important process and should not be rushed. Make sure guests know there is no obligation to join, and they are free to visit as often as possible until they are comfortable that your club offers the right fit for them.

Schedule. This is obvious; you want guests to join a Toastmasters club whose meeting times fit their schedule. Keeping good attendance is always a top priority for all Toastmasters clubs. One way to ensure good attendance is to make sure meetings are conveniently scheduled. Everyone has a life outside of Toastmasters, whether it is a job, family or other commitment. Make sure guests know how often meetings take place, when meetings usually start, and for how long meetings usually last. For instance, many Toastmasters clubs have meetings that run in excess of one hour, which would make it difficult for members who meet during their lunch hour. Our club keeps meet-

ings efficient and on time because some members have a long commute back home. You may notice that some guests have a very busy schedule and recommend they join a club that conducts its meeting during lunch hours.

Location Location Location! Make sure the guests find the location of your club convenient. It is always best to join a Toastmasters club that meets in an accessible and easy-to-find location. One of the most important factors in determining how often members show up for a meeting is determined by how easily they can get to the meeting spot. Ensure the guests know that all meetings will take place at a certain location and regularly ask if that location is convenient for them.

Atmosphere. Let guests know the type of atmosphere your club has. Is it relaxed, where meetings are



run in a causal manner, or is the club fairly strict in dress code and how meetings are conducted? Ideally, you want guests to join a club that fits their personality type. If you are more of a casual dresser who enjoys wearing flip flops, than joining a club that requires members to wear business attire would not be suitable.

Specialization. Finally, some Toastmasters clubs are specialized for a particular organization, occupational background or skill. However, many specialized clubs are still open to the general public. Other Toastmasters clubs are restricted to the people who work in that organization. Ask the guests if they are looking for specific career interests and see if your club offers a good fit. At this point, if you club does not fit the

specialization of the guest member, you should direct them to a local club that might better fit their needs.

Don't be offended by this! Some people forget that Toastmasters

technology-based professionals. But I don't work in information technology! In fact, I am technologically-impaired but did not let that deter me from joining our club. In fact, I believe that joining

“Being involved with the right club can mean the difference between having a good experience or a great one.”

meetings are also an excellent place to network with others in their field of work. But make sure the guests know that even if their interests does not align with your club, it does not mean they would not benefit by joining your club!!

Speaking from personal experience, I am a member of Toastmasters I.T., which was primarily for

a club that is out of your comfort zone encourages you to grow by exposing you to different people, learn new skills and increase your knowledge base. 

Michael Chan is a member of Toastmasters I.T. in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. You can contact him at michael.s.chan@gmail.com.



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My Day in Prison

By Susanne Riehle, ACG, CL

A Toastmaster is inspired by the women behind bars.

Jean Lawson – my friend and former area governor – asked me for a favor. Jean was mentoring a new club and asked me to go with her. The club was a long distance away...and in a setting very unlike our own club. It was in a women's prison.

I wasn't expecting much. But life has a way of hiding surprises in the most unlikely places.

As it turns out, the timing of this opportunity was most fortunate. As VP Education in my club, I'd been asked questions about how to do that hardest of the Competent Communicator speeches: the Inspirational Speech. Our visit to a women's prison helped me figure out some important things about inspiration.

This new club is mostly comprised of inmates but is open to the community as a way of fostering goodwill and furthering the skills and understanding of all parties. It's brand new and the members were giving Ice Breaker speeches. As I listened to one of the ladies talk about herself, it was clear that Ice Breakers are difficult speeches to give. I was struck by the courage of these women as they strove to understand their pasts and to work toward a new future. It also struck me how true this is in any Toastmasters club.

As a former club president and current officer in my club, I'm most proud of how many people have

changed their lives through membership in Toastmasters. We have a large number of people who decided to pursue master's degrees, and a few who are working on their bachelor's degrees. We've had members start businesses. We've had major career changes. We've had people reach higher in their careers. In my club, as in the prisoners' club, the members are searching for better, more effective ways of enacting change in their lives. Not surprisingly, Toastmasters find that simply articulating dreams is an effective first step toward achieving those dreams. And it's true inside or outside prison walls.

More importantly, I realized that for these ladies – or for any Toastmaster – inspiration must be found in your immediate environment. If these inmates don't find inspiration in their environment, then they most likely won't find it at all. Is it any different for the rest of us?

- My first lesson of the day was that the **best inspiration is found locally**. I vowed to communicate this to my club when I returned: If you are looking for a topic for an inspirational speech, look around you for what inspires you.
- My second lesson of the day was that **inspiration must be personal**. If you wish to inspire people, then the topic must be relevant to the audience. In the case of

Tips and Tricks of Inspirational Speeches

Topic selection

Local: Look for topics in your own world. The best inspiration is that which surrounds you.

Personal: Look for topics that are meaningful to your audience.

Vibrant: Look for ideas that can be explained in a vibrant and emotional way.

Structure differences

Persuasive speeches have an opening, a few supporting points and a closing.

Inspirational speeches have an emotional theme: Use a few emotional arguments that build in strength and close with a strong emotional comment.

The difference between a statement and an emotional argument

Statements speak to the head and emotional arguments speak to the head and the heart:

- **Statement:** "Everyone in this room could donate a pint of blood."
- **Emotional argument:** "If all of us in this room each donated a pint of blood, we could save 20 lives!"

Delivery

Take your delivery up a notch:

- Make strong eye contact.
- Move closer to the audience – especially when making key points.
- Use personal stories.
- Use picture and story words.
- Use pauses: A well-timed pause underlines the statements.

If at all possible, state your first point in a way to elicit nods from the audience. You are speaking to the head and the heart; it's always good to get both on your side! Example: "It's a shame to lose a single life."

prisoners giving Ice Breaker speeches, everyone in the room understood the journey of each speaker. That understanding was important to the speaker, but even more important to the audience. Understanding forges an emotional connection. And added emotionality is the difference that can make a speech inspirational.

- The final lesson of inspirational speaking is the one the young

prisoners' club is still learning: **Inspirational speeches must be vibrant.** Rich words, enthusiastic delivery and audience involvement are part of a vibrant speech. And I know what a challenge that must be, especially behind prison walls. But I also know these women will eventually do it.

I have supreme confidence in our prisoners' club. By the time these young club members get to

the 10th speech, they will have mastered the techniques of inspiration!

That day I wasn't expecting much. But life has a way of hiding surprises in the most unlikely places – even behind bars. If you ever have a chance to visit a new club, of any kind, look at it as an opportunity. You may find yourself inspired. 

Susanne Riehle, ACG, CL is an artist and engineer, and a member of Columbus club in Columbus, Indiana.

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Good Posture = Good Breathing

✦ During a recent grocery-shopping spree, I ran into an old colleague, a scientist, who suddenly opened his right hand to expose a big “b” on his palm. I looked at the letter, then at him. “‘B’ is for breathing,” he informed me. “It’s there as a reminder to breathe consciously, fully and deeply.” We enjoyed a hearty laugh together and went on our separate ways.

How you breathe, whether shallowly or deeply, makes a huge difference in how you feel, how you focus, how you respond to everyday situations and challenges, and how you are able to focus. Breathing literally keeps you alive. It also helps you in controlling and modulating your voice when you speak.

Think back for a moment on your Ice Breaker speech, or any other speech in which you had a heavy emotional involvement. Add to that

the audience as an unknown to you, and chances are that you started to feel nervous, alarmed and even panicked. Your heart beat faster, you had a dry mouth and your breath became shallow and fast. To compensate for all this, you conquered your initial shock by speaking faster, in an effort to get back to your seat as quickly as possible.

Now, imagine for a moment that you began your day becoming aware of your breath, then went to your Toastmasters meeting with a full awareness, and began your speech with a gentle and thorough exhalation that eased you into the cycle of your breath and the flow of your speech. By doing so you used your breathing to slow down, simplify and deliver.

While most of us take breathing for granted, conscious breathing benefits

us greatly. Begin by simply paying attention to your breath. Become aware of your normal breathing patterns. Note when you tend to hold your breath. Know also that breathing is an integral component of relaxation.

Let’s briefly touch on what happens when you breathe incorrectly. Perhaps you tend to slump either when sitting or walking. Your posture may not be conducive to correct breathing. Or perhaps you suffer from the “shallow breather” syndrome. In either case, you are bringing oxygen only into your upper lungs. When this happens, your breath rate increases, but ironically your body goes through a complex physiological response whose net effect is an actual oxygen shortage!

This situation clearly isn’t advantageous. It affects the muscles, the nervous system and the mind. In order to allow your respiratory system to work for you rather than against you, follow the exercises in the chart on this page.

Correct breathing tones the vocal cords and positively affects the tone and timber of your voice. Good posture and good breathing are intimately related. As you are breathing better, your body tends to straighten up and to convey a confident demeanor. Remember that good posture and good breathing are habits. Habits form over time through repetitions. Pay attention to these tips, apply them right now and all through the day. Your life and its quality depend on your breath! 

Gabrielle B. Dahms, ATMB, is a member of San Francisco Realtors Toastmasters in San Francisco, California.

Tip	Benefits
Check your posture.	Allows your spine to rise and your chest to open.
Relax your head, neck and shoulders.	Taking tension away helps the breath to flow more freely.
Breathe through your nose, not through your mouth.	Filters, warms and moisturizes the air you breathe in. You don’t eat through your nose, so don’t breathe through your mouth.
Inhale fully as though you were filling a glass with water and letting it spill over the sides.	The oxygen can penetrate deeply into your lungs, not just the upper lungs.
Exhale completely – let the outflow expand in a large wave.	Increases the capacity to inhale fresh, new air to release toxins, blockages and tensions.
Observe how you breathe. Is your breath jerky or smooth? It can tell you how you feel.	All else will follow naturally, almost effortlessly.

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How to Make a

Singaporean

Laugh

Answer:
Know our culture!
Learn how we think,
what gives us pain
and pleasure, and
what makes us tick.

By Eric Feng, ACS

***I**t takes a lot to make a Singaporean laugh these days. With the rising taxes, erratic weather and high cost of living, there isn't much to laugh about. We are the same country, remember, that created an uproar about Gotcha, a local TV program that's similar to Candid Camera. Why? Simply because we don't like to be made fun of.*

So when I received an e-mail from a friend, Toastmaster and Accredited Speaker John Kinde, asking me to tell his American readers how to deliver a humorous speech when in Singapore, my initial reply was: "I think it will be easier for me to write an article on why Singaporeans have *lost* their sense of humor!"

And then I remembered something. This past May, I attended an event here in Singapore called the National Achievers Congress. Almost all the speakers were from the United States and Europe, yet they were amazingly successful in making us laugh. That's when I realized that Singaporeans *do* enjoy humor – in fact, even more so in difficult times like these, when it provides an escape from the terrorism and natural disasters looming at our doorsteps.

So I figure that if I can help speakers find our funny bone then perhaps they can give us lots of things to laugh about.

Know What We're About

The number one rule to making us laugh is to, first of all, know our culture. It's analogous to the speaker's universal rule of knowing the audience, but it's even more important if you want to be successful in delivering a humorous speech in another country. Knowing our culture includes learning how we think, what gives us pain and pleasure, and what makes us tick.

Singaporean society believes in meritocracy. As a result, parents know the importance of giving their children a good start, which often means sending them to the best schools at all cost. Inevitably, there is elitism; students from the better schools think they're smarter than the rest.

So when one of the speakers at the National Achievers Congress, Andrew Matthews, brought up Singapore's Raffles Institution – known for many years as the top school in the country – the entire audience roared in laughter. Matthews was saying that one of the reasons our citizens aren't happy is because most of them aren't studying at Raffles. Which is true!

Singaporeans don't like to admit to this attitude, so the only way for us to express our feelings about it is to laugh.

Speak Our Language

I also notice that when foreign speakers attempt to talk in our language (Mandarin) or attempt to use "Singlish" (Singapore English), it almost guarantees laughter from us. Perhaps because they sound really silly. I suspect that the laughter is also an expression of relief – a feeling that people from other countries care enough about us to try to speak our language. That reflects a certain degree of approval.

When one of the speakers from that recent gathering spoke Mandarin for about a minute, the audience was

both amazed and amused. It was clear that he memorized the phrases, but the performance was still impressive, and we loved it.

In fact, I recently tried the same tactic. I was giving a presentation to the managers of Seylan Bank (in Sri

“Feel free to not only make fun of yourself, but your people too. If you are an American, go ahead and make fun of Americans. If you’re Chinese, make fun of the Chinese.”

Lanka) and decided to introduce myself in their national language, Sinhala. As expected, they bellowed with laughter. Why? Because I “sounded funny,” one of them said.

A rapport between myself and the group was immediately established, and the rest of the presentation became easier to deliver. Interestingly, those managers still volunteer to teach me new words every day – aching, I suppose, for another good laugh the next time I give a presentation in their country.

Speaking in Singlish is also very funny to us. The vocabulary of this language consists of words originating from English, Malaysian and dialects of Chinese. Though the Singaporean government discourages the use of Singlish in favor of Standard English, we are very proud of speaking in this tongue since we can call it our own. Let me give you some examples of Singlish at work:

When returning a phone call...

English: “Hello, this is Joe, did you call me?”

Singlish: “Hello, who call?!”

Expressing doubt about something...

English: “I really don’t recall you giving me the money.”

Singlish: Spread hands and say, “Where got?”

When declining someone’s offer to pay...

English: “Hey, put your wallet away – the drinks are on me.”

Singlish: Give a disappointed smile and blurt out, “Nonid” (no need).

So if you can pepper your presentation with some familiar Singlish phrases, you’re going to be very popular with a Singaporean crowd.

Know Our Alphabet Soup

In Singapore, we make jokes about acronyms. And that’s because we use a lot of acronyms. Too many, in fact! Our highways have acronyms, our government agencies have acronyms – even our mentor minister is called by his initials.

A few examples:

- **LKY** – Lee Kwan Yew (our much revered and feared mentor minister)
- **HDB** – Housing Development Board
- **PUB** – Public Utilities Board
- **GST** – Goods and Services Tax
- **ERP** – Electronic Road Pricing (Each time you pass a road zone, you pay.)
- **PAP** – People’s Action Party (the ruling government party in Singapore)

Of course, we put our own spin on this alphabet soup. Here are “translations” of the above acronyms:

- **HDB** – Highly Dangerous Building
- **PUB** – Pay Until Broke
- **GST** – Government Services Tax
- **ERP** – Everyday Rob People
- **PAP** – Pay and Pay

We even have one for our famous tourist attraction, Sentosa – a beach resort also known as “So Expensive and Nothing To See Actually.”

Another fail-safe way to be funny in front of a foreign audience is to make friends with the locals. And get them to tell you what’s humorous. You can hang out with the locals in food courts or pubs. Listen in on their conversations. Take notes on what makes them laugh. They may find you weird, but who cares?

Read our local newspapers, *The Straits Times*. Check out the columns written by our writers. Go down to the bookstores and pick up some Singaporean joke books. This research will help you tremendously in connecting with your audience via laughter.

My suggestion is to use local examples as much as you can for your humorous material. And if you want to introduce topics from your own country in order to tell a joke, make sure you explain what they mean before you proceed. If your audience can’t understand the context of what you’re saying, you’re going to have a hard time squeezing a chuckle from them.

Wow... I never thought I could write so much on how to make Singaporeans laugh. Here are two more tips before I call it a day:

Self-deprecating humor still works wonders with all audiences. As a foreigner, you are bound to experience

a lot of mishaps as you interact with the locals. For example, when I was in the United States, I tried to hitch a ride to Yosemite, but no matter how hard I tried, no car stopped for me. For a moment there, I thought Americans were racist.

It was later that I realized I was actually doing the hand sign for hitchhiking all wrong! Instead of a thumbs up, I gave oncoming motorists a thumbs down. And quite vigorously, too, since I was eager to get in a car. No wonder no car stopped for me. I should be thankful that I wasn't gunned down!

Feel free to not only make fun of yourself, but your people too. If you are an American, go ahead and make fun of Americans. If you're Chinese, make fun of the Chinese. You are warranted to do so. This simple tip has worked extremely well for me. It even helped bag me a first-place trophy when I competed in Philadelphia in a division's humorous speech contest.

My contest speech was titled, *There's Something About Singapore*, and for seven minutes I spoke on the misconceptions Americans have about Singapore. I mentioned how Singapore is tiny compared to America. How Singapore is so clean that you can eat from the floor

(and get soap poisoning). And Singapore being a "fine" city...you get fines for everything!

Finally, focus on telling funny stories instead of jokes. Jokes are a one-note strategy and may misfire. However, if your stories don't make the audience laugh, they could still make an interesting or relevant point. And remember, stories are universal. No matter who your audience is, they will appreciate personal anecdotes. Such stories create instant connections and keep audiences engaged and entertained.

So starting from today, begin to collect personal anecdotes or stories you read that tickle your funny bone. They will help form your arsenal of funny material. If you're worried that the Singaporean audience may not appreciate one of your stories, test it out on a smaller group or even your local guide. Check to see if it's effective and appropriate.

If you diligently collect humorous stories, I'm sure you'll find at least one that will have your audience laughing hysterically – even us Singaporeans. **T**

Eric Feng, ACS, is a member of the NUS Toastmasters club in Singapore. Reach him at his Web site www.ericfeng.com

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By comedians Jan McInnis
and Frank King

Quick tips for quality quips.

How to Be Funny On the Fly

Kick off your speech with a standard joke and everyone will see it coming. But get things going with a spontaneous, off-the-cuff joke about the event at hand, and listeners will connect with you quickly.

As two comedians who have made their living in the corporate market for more than a dozen years, we've written thousands of jokes on the fly for every type of company and event. We can assure you that a well-placed quip about the event you are at is a great way to go – it grabs the audience's attention and reminds them that you're going through the same thing they are.

With that in mind, where should you look for the jokes? The great thing about comedy is that there are no absolute rules. Here are a few guidelines we've used for our own material. Use them in quickly formulating your own original material:

■ **Stick to the basics.** To be funny fast, use all the same techniques you would to write any joke, such as **creating analogies**, **taking things to the extreme** or **making word associations**. The bad news is you've got to find the material and formulate the joke quickly. But the good news is you can make speed work for you by referencing the experience everyone is having

in common at that moment. That means you need less setup to the joke, and it allows everyone to relate to you immediately.

■ **Check out the room.** There is all sorts of humor just waiting for you to bring to life. Is the room big, small, cold, painted a funny color, hard to find or near the expensive hotel shops? What is it about the space that's on people's minds? If the room is freezing, for example, it's probably distracting everybody, so make an analogy by quickly listing all the things you associate with freezing: think igloos, ice chest, freezer, snow, ice or the North Pole. From there, it's only a short hop to "It's my first time speaking at the North Pole."

Jan once performed in a room that had lots

of bizarre antiques, which gave her this opener: "This is the first time I've performed at a yard sale."

Everyone had a good laugh because she put a label on the room immediately. Another time, when the hotel room was a long way from the lobby, Frank said, "The walk was so long, and I've got that rolling luggage, I had to stop and rotate the tires."

■ **Pay attention to demographics.**

Is the group all female, all male, under 30, over 90? That's good news, because for once in your life you can actually use a stereotype! First ask yourself, what do I associate with

that group? For example, with women it might be makeup, perfume, asking



for directions or long lines at the bathroom. Then figure out what would most apply to them, and you'll have a great opening line. Jan once opened with, "It's nice to be in front of 900 women, but I've been trying to get in the bathroom since 8:30 this morning."

■ **Read the agenda thoroughly.** What else is happening? Notice how the agenda is ordered, if there's a misspelling, and even the titles of the other talks. Jan once noticed that a teambuilding exercise – during which the attendees beat drums and shook rattles – was followed by a talk on professionalism. Just by pointing out the irony, she was able to kick things off with a good laugh. Also, remember the agenda may not stop with you. If you're holding the audience up from something, use a comment such as "I'm the only thing between you and happy hour," or "you and rush hour traffic," or "you and the buffet lunch."

■ **Food is fair game.** Now, don't go slamming the cook, but if you didn't know what was in the mystery dessert, chances are few of the attendees did either. One great technique

is to make up a funny name based on what it looks like, such as "the-cook-has-quit special" or "the-end-of-the-week parfait" or "I-gotta-get-rid-of-this-now gelatin." Most jokes

as you don't go overboard being mean, a gentle ribbing may actually endear the previous presenter to you because you're reminding the audience of his or her speech.

"Ask yourself questions like, 'Why is this food at this conference?' and you'll get some funny answers."

come from making connections and pulling out the ironies. Are there cheese cubes at every break? Or is every booth giving out candy – at a dental convention? Ask yourself questions like "Why this food at this conference?" and you'll get some funny answers.

■ **Actually listen to the speaker ahead of you.** The audience is listening to them, so you should too. If the speaker pounds home a point over and over and over, such as, "Do not cold-call prospects," then you can lead with the opposite: "So I was cold-calling these prospects..." These jokes are great because you won't need much setup, and everyone will get the reference. As long

Coming up with jokes on the fly isn't that hard if you're looking for them, and they can really help you get off on the right foot. So take these tips and start everyone off laughing – you'll have a better time, and a better audience. 📌

Jan McInnis is a corporate comedian and comedy writer. Her jokes have been featured on *The Tonight Show*. Reach her at Jan@TheWorkLady.com.

Frank King is a Certified Speaking Professional with the National Speakers Association (NSA) who has been performing corporate comedy for 22 years full time. Reach him at frank@whitecollarcomedy.com.

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By Dave Zielinski

A look at new technology and how to build your Web-based speaking skills.

Podcasting, Webconferencing, Webcasting

When Bob Solimeno wanted to do some marketing to grow the membership ranks of the Toastmasters club in his company, International Paper in Loveland, Ohio, he sought a fresh approach to complement traditional tactics,

such as running ads in the company newsletter. So Solimeno created a series of *podcasts*, in essence short radio broadcasts online, trumpeting the benefits of joining the club. Prospective members could download and listen to these programs on their laptop computers or portable media players like iPods.

Creating the podcasts was fairly simple, Solimeno says. All it required was using software called *Audacity*, a free open-source application for recording and editing sounds, along with a headset and microphone connected to his laptop. Solimeno made each of the podcasts available by a hyperlink prominently displayed on his Toastmasters club Web site (<http://speakeasyclub.freetoasthost.net>), alerting people to new podcasts through a note in a weekly e-mail newsletter distributed throughout the company.

The podcasts made an immediate impact. During an open house a few weeks after the first audio recordings, Solimeno met many prospective members who had listened to the podcasts and offered positive feedback. As a result of the open house, podcasts and other recruiting efforts, eight new members joined his club.

Solimeno is among a growing number of Toastmasters using new technology-delivered presentation methods not only to recruit club members, but to speak to or train audiences around the globe without the need for travel. Distance-shrinking communication tools like podcasting, Webconferencing and webcasting have grown in popularity by virtue of their convenience, user-friendliness, the growth of broadband Internet technology and the attendant savings in travel costs and headaches. Whether it's demonstrating a new product to sales prospects, holding training sessions for workmates or providing a company-wide update, Toastmasters around the globe increasingly find themselves presenting to a computer webcam or speaking into a headset rather than looking into the eyes of a live audience. While face-to-face speaking will never go out of style, it's important to learn the ins and outs of presenting via these new technologies since you'll no doubt be using them yourself, eventually.

It's a Podcaster's World

The popularity of the iPod and arrival of new computer-based audio recording technologies paved the way for the growth of podcasting, which, simply put, is online audio content – what some call radio on demand – delivered in an automated way to a PC or portable device. Podcasting was first used for things like listening to music or self-guided walking tours, but soon was being used in corporate America for training purposes (for example, Q&A interviews with subject matter experts), to deliver organizational news or investor reports.

Although it may sound intimidating to the uninitiated, creating a podcast is relatively painless with the right tools at your disposal, as Bob Solimeno will attest. But for those who prefer some technology hand-holding, there are Web sites that will “host” your podcast for you. One



encing and

such site is **Podcastpeople.com**, which gives speakers a place to host their audio files – a subdomain on the Web site you can call your own, which you can design with pre-built themes if preferred. It also offers content creation tools and even provides the chance to have your podcasts sponsored by advertisers. “Using a podcast to talk about Toastmasters topics or recruit new members is a far more alive and dynamic tactic than simply sending out e-mail with text-based testimonials,” says Doug Taylor, founder and CEO of **Podcastpeople.com**.

But Taylor says choosing the right length for podcasts can make all the difference between creating rapt listeners and those who won’t bother coming back for more. Solimeno initially experimented with five-minute podcasts, but he received feedback that his shorter, one-to-two-minute recordings were his best efforts. Taylor believes less is usually more. On Podcastpeople.com, he considers about 15 minutes the right length. “That’s sufficient time to provide enough meat and detail, but not so long that listeners start to tune out,” Taylor says. And while you want good production values on podcasts, you don’t want to go overboard. “Many people feel like they need to create something that sounds incredibly professional the first few times out, so they’ll have a podcast produced in a studio,” Taylor says. “The prob-

lem with that is they set a standard they have to maintain, and it will inevitably fall off over time.”

He also says speakers who worry their recorded voice will do little to remind people of Larry King or Garrison Keillor need to readjust expectations and work on honing the voice they do have, improving pacing, eliminating distracting “ums” and “ahs” and projecting in the same way they would for a face-to-face speech. The beauty with podcasting, of course, is that editing can eliminate some of those flaws. “The blueprint of people’s voice is their greatest unknown asset,” Taylor says. “Most people are taken aback or even disappointed the first few times they hear their own voice on tape, but my advice is to learn to love your voice, because it’s your unique gift.”

Webconferencing: Presenting from a Distance

More and more organizations also are turning to *Webconferencing* as a way to give key presentations, hold critical meetings or train employees without the need for participants to travel. The technology enables geographically dispersed groups to share PowerPoint slides, review documents like contracts, budgets or quarterly reports, and to interact via text chat or audio all from the comfort of their own cubicles.

Resources for Building Your Web-Based Speaking Skills

There is plenty of help standing by for speakers looking to learn the ropes of Web-based presenting or facilitating. Two of the best starting points are the Web sites of WebEx (www.webex.com) and Netbriefings (www.netbriefings.com), pioneers in providing Webconferencing and webcasting services.

WebEx offers a two-week free trial of its conferencing software that walks you through its many features and applications. Click on an online demo and you'll have a WebEx expert at your disposal to answer questions or concerns about using the software. The company also offers a smorgasbord of training courses through its WebEx University.

For those looking to learn more about webcasting, Netbriefings offers free online demonstrations of its large and small group webcasting options, as well as online training courses and workshops.

And if you want to learn more about podcasting, particularly how podcasts might be used for marketing or educational purposes in a Toastmasters club, visit the club Web site of Bob Solimeno, where a number of podcasts are available for listening to or downloading (<http://speakeasyclub.freetoasthost.net>). Also, check out Toastmaster Bo Bennett's weekly podcast, "Talking Toastmasters," where he interviews writers from the *Toastmaster* magazine. You'll find it at <http://www.talkingtoastmasters.com>

Presenters new to Webconferencing usually are able to master its technical aspects after a few sessions. Once they learn how to use interactive features like annotation, audience polling and audience Q&A, it's simply a matter of opening a Web browser and launching the presentation. No need to worry about things like ports, platforms, firewalls or the like. A bigger challenge is adjusting to speaking to a webcam rather than a sea of faces, since you can't use body language cues to get feedback from the audience.

WebEx, a Cisco company based in Santa Clara, California, pioneered webconferencing software and is a dominant player in the market. We talked to Laura Vizzusi, WebEx's international marketing manager, and David Goad, a WebEx market segment manager who also is a member of Toastmasters, for some tips on how to deliver effective and engaging Webconferences:

- **Don't pooh-pooh prep time.** A belief that it's much easier to prepare for an online presentation than the face-to-face variety will usually come back to bite you, Vizzusi says. While it's true you can deliver a Webconference sitting at your kitchen table in your bunny slippers, if you haven't done the proper audience research, reviewed your PowerPoint slides, and planned (and practiced) some interactive events, you're likely to send your viewers off to snoozeland. Vizzusi suggests performing a dry run a week before the event – going through your slides, practicing using interactive tools such as document annotation and audience polling – and then reviewing again the day before your presentation.

- **Put your "phone voice" on the shelf.** One common misstep is when speakers use their workaday phone voice rather than their speaker's voice when using the audio feature of Webconferencing. Since your audience can't see you, the quality, pacing and pitch of your voice takes on even greater importance in online meetings,

presentations or training sessions. Vizzusi recommends that Web presenters stand up while they speak and use a headset, rather than a separate microphone, to help add energy to their voices. "Standing up while you are speaking allows you to project better and use the dynamic range of your voice," she says. "It's akin to the difference between being in radio and TV. Radio announcers have almost an exaggerated range and have to project more, because their voice is all they have to communicate. It's the same with Webconferencing."

Goad also advises against using a speakerphone, a mistake new Web presenters sometimes make. "A speakerphone creates distance, makes you sound farther away and less engaged in the session," Goad says, adding that it can make your voice fade in and out if you move your head around. "A simple mistake like that can ruin an otherwise great presentation."

He also suggests having one or two other people present with you, if possible, for the purpose of adding variety in voices that an audience hears. That might simply mean having a session moderator jump in on occasion, he says.

- **Give your visual aids more scrutiny.** Because the only thing a Webconferencing audience has to focus on is a computer screen, you'll want to move through your PowerPoint slides or other content at a slightly faster pace than you would in other settings. Vizzusi suggests using animations or other transitions as a way to keep antsy audience members from jumping ahead of you.

And because PowerPoint plays an even larger role in these online presentations, it's more important to have visually appealing slides that are relevant to the audience's needs. She suggests four to six bullet points per slide, and clean, simple fonts with few colors. To keep audience interest, consider experimenting with other images, such as photographs. Vizzusi believes presenting

your slides in full-screen mode, rather than as partial screen, also helps keep viewers more attuned.

■ **Use interactive tools to keep audiences engaged.** One of the biggest challenges of Webconferencing is keeping audiences engaged and interested while narrated images parade by on their computer screen. WebEx offers tools like audience polling, Q&A and interactive chat to keep people involved. These diverse tools allow presenters to:

- ▶ **Take audiences directly to a Web site** or conduct live demonstrations of a software application. "Instead of the presenter just showing a screen shot of a Web site, they can take the audience right to it and navigate around it, allowing them to actually demo what is being talked about in the session," Vizzusi says.
- ▶ **Use polling tools to gauge how well the audience is grasping material**, to qualify sales prospects or simply to keep viewers engaged. WebEx suggests polling three to five times per session, throwing in a few humorous polls along with the serious ones. The polling feature automatically tallies results and presents on-screen summaries for viewers.
- ▶ **Use annotation tools** that enable Web facilitators to use an on-screen pointer, highlight text, jot notes or make other amendments to on-screen documents.

- ▶ **Employ interactive chat tools** to allow participants to communicate in online breakout rooms or private chat sessions, much like they would in a typical company or industry conference. "It's a great tool for breaking people out in small groups to brainstorm ideas or create solutions and then have them come back to report their findings to the entire group," Vizzusi says.

Another benefit of Webconferencing is the ease of recording your sessions. While you'd need to cart around a tripod and video camera to record an in-person speech, with Webconferencing you simply flip a network-based button and it records the entire presentation. "It also makes it easier to go back in and review your performance, which is a great way to continuously improve your technique as a presenter," says Goad.

Webcasting: Online Video Gains Traction

Although similar to Webconferencing, webcasting differs in that it relies more heavily on video, typically involves less interaction or data sharing among participants and is used more often for communicating to larger audiences.

A typical webcast might involve a CEO delivering a company-wide update, a moderator interviewing a panel of subject matter experts or a sales manager giving a motivational talk to his sales staff. The use of live or on-demand video in webcasts is designed to provide an

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Johnny Campbell, DTM holds the designation of Accredited Speaker, and was inducted into the Toastmasters Hall of Fame in 2007.

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Thanks to Technology

By Connie Frazier, CL

As a Toastmaster, I want to improve all aspects of my communication skills; podcasts are a valuable resource in achieving this goal. Just look at what I was able to accomplish during a recent session at the gym. Exercising on the treadmill, I turned on my iPod and listened to several podcasts in which the hosts were clearing up confusing grammar issues and expounding on various word origins.

Then I listened to a podcast featuring Toastmasters Bo Bennett and Ryan Levesque interviewing William Dasak, a fellow Toastmaster as well as a stand-up comic. Dasak was talking about an article he wrote in the *Toastmaster* magazine, and he shared some invaluable advice on what kinds of mistakes Toastmasters should try to avoid.

Wait, that's not all. On my bus ride home from work that day, I pulled out my trusty iPod again and this time heard a podcast showcasing Martha Barnette, an author who has written a number of books on the English language and who is insatiably curious about word origins. She talked about the way the English language has changed over the centuries. Contributing to the discussion was a lexicographer, Grant Barrett, who is also a dictionary editor. I learned about the origin of the phrase "olly olly oxen free" that's used in the game of tag.

All of that education in one day!

If you want to understand more about language and speaking effectively, I recommend listening to podcasts. To listen to podcasts, you use podcatcher software. I use the software iTunes. It is easy to use, and the software and all the podcasts are free. The iTunes software is for use with Apple iPods and can be downloaded at www.itunes.com. Once you have downloaded the software to your computer, it is easy to click on the podcasts directory in the left column to browse available podcasts. You can also click on the "iTunes Store" (in the right column), then click "Power Search," select "Podcasts" from the drop-down menu and type the title of any podcast you want to find.

If you don't want to download the podcasts to a portable media device, but instead plan to listen to them on your computer, you can still use these software packages, or just go to the Web site sponsoring the podcast and listen without any software installed. Web sites that offer podcasts have a link you can click on the Web page so you can hear the podcast. The podcasts mentioned here are all audio files, but there are also video podcasts.

Thousands of podcasts are available from all over the world in many different languages. If you know the name of a podcast you wish to subscribe to, you can type the name in the desired language, in the search box. Also, in iTunes, the Power Search option allows you to choose a language from a drop-down menu.

There are many interesting podcasts available. My favorite ones are about communication and the English language. What are yours?

Connie Frazier, CL, is a member of the Broadway Speakers club in Salt Lake City, Utah. Contact her at konn timer@hot mail.com.

additional level of connectedness between the speaker and audience.

Netbriefings of St Paul, Minnesota, is a leading provider of large group webcasting applications as well as small, rich-media meetings featuring its new communications tool Proclaim. Using Proclaim, presenters beam their own video image out to viewers via desktop webcam as well as show PowerPoint slides or roll in pre-recorded video clips.

One of the biggest concerns for new webcasters is how they will look or sound on computer screens, says Gary Anderson, founder and CEO of Netbriefings. "Not everyone has the looks or voice of a TV news anchor, but the audience usually doesn't have that expectation of you," says Anderson. He says the awkwardness of speaking to a webcam usually diminishes over time, but you do need to project and pump up the energy the same way you would when speaking to live audiences. "If you have something important to talk about and deliver a good message, people will listen."

Anderson believes more organizations are using shorter video messages to adapt to workers' increasingly busy work lives. Rather than delivering one 30-minute motivational message to salespeople every week, for example, a sales manager might break it up into three 10 minute messages that, delivered at different intervals, help keep the message top of mind.

Why is use of video important online? Experts say video helps forge a more meaningful connection with viewers through an inclusion of emotion and body language. All you need do is think of a powerful, motivational message, they say (try Martin Luther King's "I have a dream" speech for starters), then consider whether the impact would be the same without video – presenting audio alone. **T**

Dave Zielinski is a freelance writer who divides his time between Wisconsin and South Carolina.

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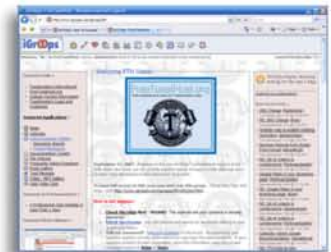
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Officer Candidates

Here's your introduction to Toastmasters International's 2008-2009 officer candidates. On Friday, August 15, you'll have the opportunity to vote for the candidates of your choice while attending the International Convention in Calgary, Alberta, Canada. Candidates were nominated for the positions of President, Senior Vice President, Second Vice President and Third Vice President by the International Nominating Committee. The committee's selection is presented here in accordance with Article VII, Section 1, of the Bylaws of Toastmasters International.

It is the right and duty of all clubs to participate in the vote, either through their representatives at the Convention or by proxy. All members are urged to carefully consider each candidate's qualifications. If you are attending the Convention, you'll have an opportunity to meet and talk with all the international officer and director candidates before the election.

(Additional nominations for international officer may be made from the floor at the Annual Business Meeting. International director candidates will be nominated at the eight regional conferences to be held this month.) International director candidates from districts not assigned to regions are endorsed by their districts.

Official Notice

The 2008 Annual Business Meeting will be held on Friday, August 15, at 8 a.m. during the International Convention, August 13-16, 2008, at the TELUS Convention Centre, Calgary, Alberta, Canada.

Nominating Committee:

Jon Greiner, DTM, Chairman; Dilip Abayasekara, DTM, Co-Chairman; Terry Daily, DTM, Co-Chairman; Ray Roman, ATMS; Mary Jones Williams, DTM; Denny Saunders, DTM; Sherri Wood, DTM; Justin Gottfried, DTM; Bill Bienia, DTM; Fran Gedra Greene, DTM; Loretta Sandy, DTM; Richard Stacey, DTM.



FOR PRESIDENT

Jana Barnhill, DTM – Senior Vice President, Second Vice President, Third Vice President, International Director 2002-2004 and District 44 Governor 2000-01. Jana's home club is Articulates 6145-44. She is an Accredited Speaker. As district governor, she led her district to Select Distinguished District. She received the Division Governor of the Year, Toastmaster of the Year, Excellence in Education and Training and Outstanding Club President awards. She was named Select Distinguished Division Governor, Select Distinguished Area Governor, and placed second and third in two World Championships of Public Speaking. Jana is Vice President of L.I.V.E. Speakers, Inc. and is a professional trainer specializing in management. She has a B.A. in Psychology, is a certified Myers-Briggs administrator and is a certified personality trainer. She serves on the Board of Directors for the Lubbock Women's Club and Lubbock Community Theatre and is active in numerous civic organizations. Jana and her husband, Robert Barnhill, DTM, reside in Lubbock, Texas.



FOR SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT

Gary Schmidt, DTM – Second Vice President, Third Vice President, International Director 2003-2005 and District Governor 2001-02. A Toastmaster for over 13 years, Gary's home club is Clackamas Stepping Stones 3697-7. Awards he

has received include the President's Distinguished Division Governor, Distinguished Area Governor, Select Distinguished Club President, Area Governor of the Year, District Toastmaster of the Year, and Excellence in Education and Training. He has helped start more than 60 Toastmasters clubs. Gary is a Field Representative for United States Senator Gordon Smith. He has a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science and a Master of Arts degree in Public Administration. He has held leadership, management and board roles in numerous settings, including government service, political campaigns and corporate, community and non-profit organizations. Gary resides in Clackamas, Oregon.



FOR SECOND VICE PRESIDENT

Pat Johnson, DTM – Third Vice President, International Director 2004-2006, District Governor 2001-2002. Pat's home club is Camosun 757-21. As district governor, she led her district to Distinguished District. She

has received the Excellence in Education and Training, and Area Governor of the Year awards, and she has completed her fourth DTM. Pat is the Asst. Director, Business Education for BC Pension Corporation and has business experience in corporate, government, not-for-profit and self-employed business environments. She has 25 years experience of strategic and financial planning as well as writing and revising policies and procedures. Pat has a Provincial Instructors Diploma, Adult Education Certificate, Conflict Resolution and Negotiation Certificate, Certificate in Facilitation, and is a graduate of Women's Leadership Seminar. She has served on boards of various organizations and currently mentors business leaders within Leadership Victoria. Pat resides in Victoria, British Columbia, Canada. She has one adult son.



FOR THIRD VICE PRESIDENT

John Lau, DTM – International Director 2005-2007, District 51 Governor 2002-2003. John's home club is Connections 708110-51. As district governor, he led his district to President's Distinguished District. He has received the Excellence in

Marketing, Excellence in Education & Training, and Excellence in Leadership and President's Extension awards. John is a business owner of Acme Group of Companies. He has 21 years of business experience in the USA, Europe and various countries in Asia. His focus is on human capital development, marketing and financial management, strategic planning, performance management and management information for systems for global-base clients. John has a Ph.D. in Strategic Marketing, a Bachelor's degree in Church Ministry and a Diploma in Marketing. He has served on various volunteer organizations and is a founding member of the Lions Club in Kuching. John and his wife, Rebecca Lau, DTM, reside in Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia. They have two adult children.



FOR THIRD VICE PRESIDENT

Michael Notaro, DTM – International Director 2005-2007, District 57 Governor 2003-2004. A Toastmaster for 22 years, Michael's home club is Oakland City Center 1250-57. As District 57 Governor, Michael led the district to

Distinguished status. He received the Excellence in Education & Training award and helped sponsor 11 new clubs. Michael is a practicing real estate attorney with critical thinking, problem solving and team-building skills. A former congressional intern, his professional experience ranges from trial advocacy to realtor training and motivational speaking. Michael is a member of Alameda Special Olympics, Kiwanis Club of Alameda, Italian American Bar Association, Federalist Legal Society and has served on the boards of various nonprofits, including the Alameda County Bar Executive Committee. He is co-author of *Law of Easements: Legal Issues and Practical Considerations*. Michael resides in Alameda, California.

HALL OF FAME

The following listings are arranged in numerical order by district and club number.

DTM

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

Mary E. Berg 3742-F, Irvine, California
 Lauren V. Bailey 6-F, Pasadena, California
 Lawrence L. Cole 743-1, Los Angeles, California
 Kimberly A. Rhodes 1028926-1, Los Angeles, California
 Karen Evons 3491-2, Redmond, Washington
 L. Brasher 923-3, Phoenix, Arizona
 Evelyn Jane Hughes 1820-3, Phoenix, Arizona
 Michael C. Lane 9629-3, Tempe, Arizona
 Kristin A. Gramando 9751-3, Casa Grande, Arizona
 William E. Bristol 607860-3, Luke AFB, Arizona
 Sue Andeen 609151-3, Phoenix, Arizona
 Tim C. Childers 595-4, Aptos, California
 Anne S. Hu 2943-4, Sunnyvale, California
 Arlene B. Gallegos 330-6, Minneapolis, Minnesota
 Rickard R. Holtmeier 5518-6, Victoria, Minnesota
 Jayshree B. Desai 5582-6, Minneapolis, Minnesota
 Kyle B. Dukelow 6986-7, Portland, Oregon
 Carole V. Petranek 589207-7, Sherwood, Oregon
 Leslie K. Keating 959680-7, Portland, Oregon
 Debbie J. Hyde 5585-8, Fenton, Missouri
 Gary L. Hildebrand 154-9, Pendleton, Oregon
 Sherry A. Watts 497-10, Westlake, Ohio
 John T. Frederick 5103-11, Louisville, Kentucky
 Emily A. Hyde 6741-11, New Haven, Indiana
 Grace LeFevre 105-12, Redlands, California
 Michael R. Rusnack 6820-15, Clearfield, Utah
 Lynn Lewis 8246-15, Boise, Idaho
 Betty B. Turner 186-16, Bartlesville, Oklahoma
 Biagio Vincent Schettini 1502-18, Dover, Delaware
 Douglas J. Strand 5078-18, Glen Burnie, Maryland
 Denise Gail Chow 1709-21, Vancouver, BC, Canada
 Neville Howard 1709-21, Vancouver, BC, Canada
 Donn F. York 1017095-21, Port Moody, BC, Canada
 Stephen D. Orthwein 3365-25, Irving, Texas
 Harry Clay 4963-25, Weatherford, Texas
 Jody E. Helton 6191-25, Fort Worth, Texas
 Steven Craig Calame 6530-25, Arlington, Texas
 Cindy M. Warmbrodt 621025-25, Keller, Texas
 Karen A. Willis 3314-27, Washington, District of Columbia
 Joann L. Heck 4676-27, Vienna, Virginia
 Marilyn S. Albee 1660-28, Plymouth, Michigan
 Kevin P. Olmstead 1069519-28, Ferndale, Michigan
 Gayla Reilly 1172-31, New Bedford, Massachusetts
 David A. Cohen 9906-31, Peabody, Massachusetts
 Dawn E. Nuckles 3470-33, Bakersfield, California
 Mary C. Sullivan 5575-33, Ventura, California
 Maria J. Boyd 9324-33, Las Vegas, Nevada
 Pamela S. Wilson 9758-33, Las Vegas, Nevada
 Charles F. Ebert 2121-35, Sheboygan, Wisconsin
 Alfreda Layne 3421-36, Bethesda, Maryland
 David W. Phillips 4654-36, Chevy Chase, Maryland
 Audrey K. Russ 5189-38, Collegeville, Pennsylvania
 Tracy P. Harrison 985-39, Sacramento, California
 LaWanna Gean Parker 2349-39, West Sacramento, California
 John L. Davis 5783-39, Reno, Nevada
 Leon L. Brandon 6378-39, Sacramento, California
 Brian Hatano 8375-39, West Sacramento, California

Charles F. Ashley 3002-40, Columbus, Ohio
 Rosemary Samalack 2511-42, Edmonton, AB, Canada
 Jacqueline L. Schnider 9905-42, Calgary, AB, Canada
 Bradley Harris 6046-43, Memphis, Tennessee
 Susan Francesco 5122-45, Plymouth, New Hampshire
 Gary A. Belding 6423-45, Fredericton, NB, Canada
 Dale G. Randall 6954-45, Concord, New Hampshire
 Robert W. Faust 892-47, Jacksonville, Florida
 Delia Arcelus 971-47, Miami, Florida
 Kristina P. Kihlberg 2004-47, Fort Lauderdale, Florida
 Matthew A. Kinsey 3383-47, Coral Springs, Florida
 Eleanor L. McCoy 3909-47, Tampa, Florida
 Kathy L. Furbush 4272-47, St Petersburg, Florida
 Lillian Koziol 5758-47, Weston, Florida
 Mary M. Smith 1782-50, Sherman, Texas
 Lee Swee Seng 954221-51, Kuala Lumpur, WP, Malaysia
 Beth Neaman 1256-52, Glendale, California
 Jim Parsons 542-53, Delmar, New York
 Raymond F. Durkin 1065-53, Stratford, Connecticut
 Rasheed Hooda 2892-56, Spring, Texas
 Hettie M. Allsup 1020503-56, Houston, Texas
 Jean Racine 5097-61, Sainte-Foy, QC, Canada
 Diane Labrecque 7041-61, Westmount, QC, Canada
 Michele C. Roach 585659-66, Richmond, Virginia
 Michael A. Nelles 3845-69, Brisbane, QLD, Australia
 Alison M. Cleaver 3865-69, Lismore, NSW, Australia
 Anna Victoria Bourke 6429-69, West End, QLD, Australia
 Liam Power 1896-71, Dublin Co Dublin, Ireland
 Lindsay G. Wright 1895-72, Gore, Southland, New Zealand
 Ellie Anne Young 9337-72, Rangiora, North Canterbury, New Zealand
 Thelma Wilson 710654-72, Wellington, New Zealand
 Stephen Forrest 3979-73, Kallista, VIC, Australia
 Michael G. Gow 4203-73, Kallista, VIC, Australia
 Moira E. Nicholson 4731-73, Lilydale, VIC, Australia
 Mark A. Richards 5769-73, Fremantle, WA, Australia
 Patricia Wallace-Bell 8453-73, Beeliar, WA, Australia
 Jedia Aquino 7417-75, Baguio City, Benguet, Philippines
 Michael L. Louviere 572-77, Birmingham, Alabama
 Ronda S. Asta 4838-77, Huntsville, Alabama
 Simon Koh Chiau Chye 3415-80, Singapore
 Yiang Ping Tay 8046-80, Singapore
 Clarita Richardson 2625-81, Willemstad, Curacao, Netherlands Antilles
 Donna M. Knight 7289-81, Kingston 5, Jamaica, Jamaica

Anniversaries

May 2008

70 Year

Arcadia Hoyt Curtis 115-F, Sierra Madre, California
 San Pedro 111-01, San Pedro, California

60 Year

Point Loma 198-05, San Diego, California
 Roseburg 604-07, Roseburg, Oregon
 Blue Mountain 618-09, Walla Walla, Washington
 Riverside Prime Time 130-12, Riverside, California
 Los Alamos 607-23, Los Alamos, New Mexico
 High Point 582-37, High Point, North Carolina
 Orlando 28-47, Orlando, Florida

55 Year

Oregonian 1226-07, Portland, Oregon
 Filibusters 1262-07, Portland, Oregon
 State College 1219-13, State College, Pennsylvania

Editor's Note: For a more complete listing of club anniversaries and DTMs, visit members.toastmasters.org and click on the "Toastmaster Magazine" tab and then the "Hall of Fame" tab. This information will be updated the first week of every month.

Northwood 1329-28, Southfield, Michigan
 Chehalis-Centralia 1290-32, Centralia, Washington
 Forsyth 1278-37, Winston-Salem, North Carolina
 Tarheel 1293-37, Raleigh, North Carolina
 Camden County 1189-38, Haddonfield, New Jersey
 49er's 1230-39, Sacramento, California
 Toronto # 1 1289-60, Etobicoke/Toronto, ON, Canada
 Kalamazoo 1270-62, Parchment, Michigan
 Western Star 894-78, Williston, North Dakota

50 Year

Harbor Lites 1927-F, Newport Beach, California
 Satanta 2761-16, Lawton, Oklahoma
 Burrard 1892-21, Vancouver (Downtown), BC, Canada
 Capital City 2747-24, Lincoln, Nebraska
 Downriver Ambassadors 2758-28, Wyandotte, Michigan
 Lehigh Valley 2706-38, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania
 Ridgewood 2639-46, Ridgewood, New Jersey
 Eureka 2704-57, Eureka, California
 Royal City 2735-60, Guelph, ON, Canada
 Victoria 2787-80, Hong Kong, Hong Kong

45 Year

Spokesmen 179-F, Huntington Beach, California
 NRL Forum 3614-27, Washington, District of Columbia
 NRL Thomas Edison 3617-27, Washington, District of Columbia
 Chicago 3559-30, Chicago, Illinois
 OPM 3594-36, Washington, District of Columbia
 Get Up And Go 1869-55, Austin, Texas

40 Year

Word Processors 2866-03, Phoenix, Arizona
 Early Risers 3265-16, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
 Surrey 2590-21, Surrey, BC, Canada
 NIST 3495-36, Gaithersburg, Maryland
 Tuesday Toasters 3004-63, Kingsport, Tennessee
 Forest 1541-70, Belrose, NSW, Australia
 Illawarra 2822-70, Hurstville, NSW, Australia

35 Year

King-Webster 2491-06, Roseville, Minnesota
 City of Atlanta 3411-14, Atlanta, Georgia
 Northern Nights 3808-22, Kansas City, Missouri
 Munich 2041-59, Munich, GERM, Germany

30 Year

Tonka Talkers 2119-06, Wayzata, Minnesota
 Toastburners 997-07, Salem, Oregon
 Cascade 993-09, Yakima, Washington
 Meadeaters 1746-18, Ft George G Meade, Maryland
 Spruce Capital 2171-21, Prince George, BC, Canada
 Langley 2743-21, Langley, BC, Canada
 Patuxent River 1081-27, Patuxent River, Maryland
 Ndaapenthouse 3618-36, Silver Spring, Maryland
 Settlement On Sturgeon 1437-42, St Albert, AB, Canada
 Graceland 3063-43, Memphis, Tennessee
 Norwalk 2785-53, Norwalk, Connecticut
 Speakers 3447-60, Scarborough, ON, Canada
 Windhoek 3562-74, Windhoek, Namibia, Namibia

Unhappy with your speech contest results? Do You Want to WOW the Audience?



In 1998, I never made it past Division 1
[Toastmaster]

"How do I write a world-class speech?" Toastmasters from around the world ask me this question because of my accomplishments. I tell them, "I wish I could spend a day with you! I'd love to sit down and show you exactly what my two speaker coaches taught me. But, I can't."

If you're anything like me... I wanted to know, "How do world-class speakers approach a presentation? How do they make it look so easy? What do they do? What don't they do?" What I realized is that I needed to learn a World Champion's "perspective."

If you were sitting across from me, the first thing I'd say is "you're looking at it wrong." You're spending way too much time trying to write that "magic" speech that's a surefire winner. A "great" speech is one that's synergistic with the presenter. That the message *is* the presenter: they are **one in the same**.

The second thing I would tell you is that you're trying to persuade *before* you connect. A winning speech is one that emotionally connects with the audience. You must connect **before** you can persuade. If you want to connect, you must speak from your own experiences rather than about some "hot topic."

A comment I hear over and over again from people is, "I've got a good speech... I just need to add some humor." As fellow World Champion, Craig Valentine, would say, "You don't add humor, you uncover it!" Humor isn't something to be "added." Telling a joke unrelated to the main point doesn't make somebody a world-class speaker. The problem is not usually "lack of humor." It often lies within the *structure* and *focus* of the speech. I personally had many problems while creating my championship speech. My coach was quickly able to point them out. It was easy for him to see my problems. Why? His *perspective*. Mark Brown had *been there before* and had won the World Championship.

I was an experienced speaker, so I thought I knew "enough." I was comfortable, I could hold the audience's attention, and I could even make them laugh. I just needed that *secret speaker pill*.

Well, I have finally discovered the secret! The secret is I want to be a world-class *speaker*, you want to be a world-class *perspective*.

I really wish I could spend a day with you. Instead, why not get the perspectives of seven World Champions (including Mark Brown, my coach) and the eight comedians who taught me to be funny?

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- The 4 commonalities of ten World Champions
- How to change the pace to keep the audience involved!

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"They are the best, most detailed, and most easily understood programs on public speaking that I have seen."

~ Michael Erwine, Eaton Rapids, MI

"I was able to take a good Area Contest winning speech, and turn it into a great Division Contest winning speech."

~ Mark Perew, Huntington Beach, CA

"After the contest, one of the audience came to me and said, 'I saw your improvement, and you are totally different!'"

~ Hubert, Taiwan

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Darren

Darren LaCroix
2001 World Champion of Public Speaking

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___ 6634	\$15.00 Gift Certificate.....	\$15.00

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