


TOASTMASTER®



Intercultural Connections

Protocol for communicating globally.

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The Dark Side of Leadership



“A long time ago in a galaxy far, far away ...”
— from the film *Star Wars*

It is interesting to reflect back and be reminded of a story, an experience or an incident that depicts the fight between the good and the bad, between building and destruction, between light and darkness.

When we think of leadership, the first things that come to mind are ideals, values, virtues and good deeds. Then the thought of “what if” surfaces. *What if* the purpose changes, *what if* the values are overshadowed, *what if* leader-

ship moves from light to darkness? Leadership is not only about the ability to fulfill visions and lead people toward a common goal. That is common practice for any leader when things go smoothly and adversity is far away. Real leadership comes into play when the unthinkable happens, when dark clouds loom in the sky, when storms are on the horizon and the need for new leaders becomes a necessity.

Real leadership comes into play when the unthinkable happens.

True leadership means keeping an eye on the path and its direction, and an eye on the other leaders in the journey, and that when the “*what if*” happens, knowing it is time to step in, speak up and straighten the course. True leadership means standing in the face of adversity. It means being able to maintain a clear lookout and remain on course in the light, to enjoy success and reject failure.

Darth Vader was once a light-seeking leader, and then something happened that turned him to the dark side. He lost his purpose, hope and values. There are times during a leadership journey when despair takes over and when the outlook is gloomy. The true side of leadership is revealed in these times. We may not ever cross over to the “dark side,” but preventing others from crossing over, or bringing someone *out* of the dark side, is what makes us complete leaders who look toward the common good rather than to personal gains.

I know that, by now, you are used to reading uplifting stories and messages in my Viewpoint, but I decided to add a bit of philosophy this time, to help us in our journey. Because every leadership journey has its ups and downs, it is important for us to understand the dark side to be able to keep it out of our journey and, if need be, force it out. **■**

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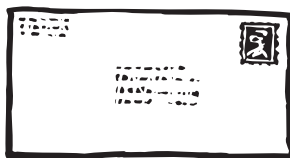
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“There is room for every personality type in Toastmasters!”

— Matt Mercer ACG, ALB

Thriving Under Pressure

As a Toastmaster for more than 10 years, I still remember my Ice Breaker speech. I was put on the spot when a prepared speaker cancelled and I was asked to speak. Seeing my perplexed look, the meeting Toastmaster said, “Go for it!” With trepidation I walked to the lectern, took a deep breath, narrated a story from the Bhagavad-Gita, and told how karma had brought me to Toastmasters.

Fast-forward a decade: I am the meeting Toastmaster and two speakers cancel their presentations. I put one member, Latasha, on the spot. After her opening sentence she froze, apologized and walked out of the room. Some members followed her, and returned with Latasha ready to speak again. We then witnessed Latasha’s well-structured speech, although with a nervous delivery.

Latasha amazed us with her resilience. She later thanked me, saying had she not come back she would not have forgiven herself.

We all need a challenge. It will indeed test our mettle, but we will rise to the occasion. What makes such things possible is the supportive environment of Toastmasters. Let’s help one another become strong!

Premnath Menon, DTM
DIAtribe Toastmasters
Auckland, New Zealand

Common Ground

I had to smile at John Cadley’s January column (“Know Thyself”) about being an introvert because the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) indicated he was. I have used the MBTI for the last 18 years, and recommend this tool to all Toastmasters. Its accuracy depends on who is administering it, but the assessment helps me

understand and communicate in ways I would not have had I not discovered it. As an INFP (introversion, intuition, feeling, perception) type myself, I fit right in standing next to John, but there is room for every personality type in Toastmasters!

Matt Mercer ACG, ALB
Thursday Nite Live Toastmasters
Parkland, Washington

Growth in China

Club membership is booming in China. Our club gets 10 to 20 guests each week, and two or three people join each month. We all have a desire to improve our English and public speaking skills, which is very important for career success in China. Our new members are passionate about Toastmasters; however, with our limited number of experienced members, and the culture differences between the United States and China, it is difficult to keep meetings authentic.

The *Toastmaster* magazine is the cure—I love it! It connects me with Toastmasters International, and maintains my momentum. It is like an old friend I hear from once a month (I started as a member in California, then joined another club after I moved back to China). It helps me to know what is going on in the organization, and I learn from members more experienced than myself. I encourage everyone to read it.

Winifred Yang, CC
Hutong Bilingual club
Beijing, China

Inspiring Story

What an inspirational profile on Nita Patel, DTM, “Engineering a Positive Approach” (December)! Toastmasters has changed many lives, and Nita’s story is another amazing example of someone taking an opportunity to advance their life. The recounting of the opportunities she had from a very early age, her decision to join Toastmasters and her dedicated leadership in a number of districts is a success story to be shared.

Many members will have the privilege of meeting Nita personally as she and her clubs host the District 45 First Conference in Manchester, New Hampshire.

Cheryl Grant, ACS, ALB
Fredericton Toastmasters
Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada

Credibility Factor

As I read “The Credibility Factor,” the December Viewpoint by International President Mohammed Murad, DTM, it touched my heart. When I joined Toastmasters last year, I received my first two handbooks. After I achieved a Competent Communicator award, I faced a crossroads and wondered: *Which track should I focus on first?* It was exactly like what our president described in his column.

I have come to realize it is not about which track you work on first; it is the credibility you radiate each time you speak. Credibility brings the speaker one step closer to the audience.

Cheryl Wang, CC
ALE Ultimate Toastmasters
Taichung, Taiwan

Need Toastmasters?

I recognize the positive changes Toastmasters has made in my life, yet I often hear potential members say, “I don’t plan on giving any speeches or leading any group.” The amazing results of membership are much more than this.

In the past, when dining at a restaurant, I waited for the server to look in my direction before I raised a hand to ask for assistance. My quiet voice went unnoticed in a noisy restaurant. But recently, while at a restaurant with my son, he attempted to request hash browns. He waited for the server to look our way, but she didn’t notice him.

I said in a loud, friendly voice, “Excuse me ma’am!” The server looked, and I said with a smile, “He has a question for you.” She smiled, came to our table and heard his request. When the server left, my son looked at me and said, “Mom, everyone in the room heard you. That must be your Toastmasters voice.” I felt like a million dollars.

Florie Barry, CC
Zenith City Toastmasters
Duluth, Minnesota

DO YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY?

Write it in 200 words or less. State your name, member number and home club, and send it to letters@toastmasters.org. Please note: Letters are subject to editing for length and clarity, and may be published in both the print and electronic editions.

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By Julie Bos

 **TABLET SPECIAL:** Discover more tips from Sheppard.



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Articles

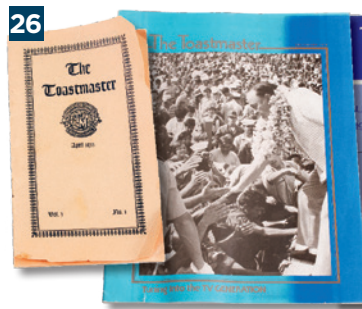
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Magazine has grown dramatically in size, scope and circulation over the years.

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AROUND THE GLOBE

MEMBER MOMENT



Finding Her Inner Speaker

Stacey Shipman, ACS, ALS, spent most of her career in marketing and research—and avoiding communication. If you would have told her years ago that she would become the self-employed professional speaker and communication consultant she is today, the yoga aficionado would have laughed and possibly sunk into the “Child Pose” at the thought of it.

Despite her trepidation about public speaking, Shipman, from Weymouth, Massachusetts, joined Toastmasters in 2005. Through her workshops, consulting, books and resources, she helps people strengthen client, employee and community relationships.

As a division governor, Shipman oversees 24 clubs and is active in her home club, Hanover Toastmasters. She is a member of her local chamber of commerce and its education committee, and has taught a Youth Leadership Program for teens. A promoter of wellness—a healthy balance of mind, body and spirit—Shipman stresses the benefits of yoga and meditation for public speaking.

Why did you join Toastmasters?

I joined just before I left my corporate job to pursue my passion for yoga and fitness. The time had come to deal with my fear of public speaking.

In what ways have the skills you learned in Toastmasters impacted your life?

Thanks to the confidence I gained, I shifted careers and launched a speaking and media business for one reason: *I believe your voice can make a difference.* I want more people to know they can tell their story, share their knowledge, connect with opportunities and ultimately make a bigger difference. My new career as a speaker, writer and entrepreneur allows me to bring my whole self—my communication and leadership skills and interests in yoga, wellness and community—to my work.

How do you incorporate yoga and meditation into your career?

Yoga can build confidence, resilience, presence and vulnerability. It teaches you how to be with people instead of thinking about what you'll say next. Meditation can help quiet the critics in your head so you can tune in to your voice and desires.

These practices help center me before a presentation or conversation. I use elements like controlled breathing to calm my nerves and simple poses to improve my confidence, energy and posture. Sometimes I use poses in my presentations to demonstrate a point (e.g., I once guided a volunteer into a headstand to show the importance of trust and relationships to achieve goals.).

What tips would you give for strengthening relationships?

I would tell people to listen more. To show compassion and empathy—we never know someone's story unless they tell us. Be curious, helpful and kind—you never know when you might need help some day. Leave your ego at the door. Be appropriately vulnerable. Organize your thoughts before you speak and make sure to relax, and have fun.

What would you tell a prospective member who wasn't sure about joining?

Visit a few clubs to find a comfortable fit. Expect the unexpected. Most people join to strengthen their communication skills, but the program offers so much more: new friends and new career opportunities! The possibilities are endless.



Stacey Shipman, ACS, ALS

In Brief

CELEBRATE EARTH DAY

On April 22, countries around the globe will demonstrate their commitment to environmental protection. Plan a green-themed meeting in your club, and visit earthday.org to pledge an “act of green.”

LANGUAGE-LEARNING APP

Download **Duolingo** on your iPhone, Android or Windows device for a fun way to learn a new language. It's free! duolingo.com

GO PAPERLESS

If you prefer to read the *Toastmaster* on your tablet or online, you may opt out of receiving the print edition. Send a request to membership@toastmasters.org.

SPEAKING RESOURCE

Go to www.toastmasters.org/Tips for public speaking advice on various types of speeches and presentations, including sales pitches, eulogies and technical briefings.



SNAPSHOT



The Nottingham Robin Hood Speakers' club of the United Kingdom takes part in a Festival of Words in Nottingham's famous Old Market Square, where acclaimed poets and novelists, storytellers, new and emerging writers, bloggers and journalists celebrate week-long. Above, Club President John Cox, ACB, ALB, and Roma Cox, ACB, ALB, communicate with locals about the benefits of public speaking.

FACTS WORTH KNOWING

How to Call Internationally

When calling between countries it's important to know that you need a code to dial out of your country, and another code to dial into the country you're calling. In general, the formula for calling a landline in a country other than your own is:

**your country's exit code / destination country code /
area or city code / phone number**

For example, when calling from the United States to a landline in Cape Town, South Africa, you dial:

*011 (U.S. exit code) / 27 (South Africa country code) /
21 (Cape Town's area code) / XXX XXXX (local number)*

You might see a plus sign before an international phone number. It suggests that you should enter the international exit code specific to the country you're calling from.

However, some cellphones allow you to dial the plus sign in place of the exit code.

In most countries outside the U.S., cellphone numbers are not geographical, and usually have unique starting digits that are used only within a particular nation. (The exceptions are Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Mexico, the United States and some Caribbean countries, where they use geographically based area/city codes.)



When calling people in other countries, make sure you know the right codes to use.

Do not add an area code to a cell number unless told to do so.

If your call won't go through, whether you are dialing a landline or cellphone, you may need to omit the "trunk code"—a single digit, often a zero, added before the area/city code that is used for domestic calls within many countries.

Also worth noting is countries within the North American Numbering Plan (NANP), including the U.S. and Canada, have a country code of "1." To see a list of NANP countries, or for more information, go to HowToCallAbroad.com.

AROUND THE GLOBE

WHAT'S THE BUZZ?

Does your club debate topics in meetings?

“Our club held a Persuasive Speech meeting. We had two topics, with two speakers per topic: one supporting an idea and one opposing it. Our Table Topics sessions carried the theme further, with a surprise subject and an assigned position—either pro or con. The Word of the Day was ‘move,’ e.g., can we actually move our positions on subjects? The meeting was fun, and thought-provoking!”

MeL Konrad

Noon Toastmasters
Santa Rosa, California

“The Toastmasters Interpersonal Communication program (for teenagers) culminates with debate. The program covers the many facets of effective listening, expression and communication. We are using it to coordinate a debate-based youth workshop with some local community groups. For those of you who are equally passionate about the skills you hone in debate, this may be a good way to strengthen your community while showcasing the Toastmasters brand.”

Dwayne Edwards, CC, ALB

Sound Shore Toastmasters
Port Chester, New York

“I experienced debate at an advanced club, where the meeting was based on the Toastmasters Debate Handbook. There, we enjoyed debating at every bimonthly meeting.”

Akira Sasaki, DTM

Saitama club
Saitama-shi Saitama-Ken, Japan

Join the conversation on the Official Toastmasters International Members Group on LinkedIn.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

“LEADERSHIP is about making others **better** as a **result of your presence** and making sure that impact **LASTS in your absence.**”

— SHERYL SANDBERG,
COO OF FACEBOOK

INTERNATIONAL INTERPRETATIONS

When in Vegas

Over the years, Las Vegas—the site of the 2015 Toastmasters International Convention—has drawn a great deal of attention for its glitzy casinos. But the Las Vegas of today is much more than that.

This city has become a cultural mecca, attracting millions of visitors from all over the world to its famous hotels, renowned restaurants, array of theater productions and concerts, and many other artistic attractions. With more than 200 languages spoken and nearly 100 countries represented, the city is southern Nevada’s cultural melting pot.

While the glamorous Las Vegas Strip is often the main destination for visitors, the city has much more to explore and experience. The Arts Factory, in the heart of the Las Vegas Arts District, displays the works of photographers, graphic designers and many other professionals. Other fine-art galleries can be found at the Bellagio hotel and at the Centaur Art Gallery, which features the works of master artists. In addition to art, Las Vegas offers a natural history museum, the Shark Reef Aquarium at the Mandalay Bay Resort and Casino, and gondola rides along canals that weave through replica Venetian architecture.

There is no lack of cultural cuisine, either. Depending on what you’re in the mood for, you could try Wolfgang Puck’s famous CUT Steakhouse or Fleur by Hubert Keller, celebrated for its global fare. Japanese, Chinese, Italian or Spanish—whatever style or influence you’re craving—there is no shortage of choices. For some after-dinner entertainment, you might check out the ever-popular Cirque du Soleil production at the Bellagio.

With magic, music, shows and shopping, as well as art, history and education, Las Vegas’ diverse streets welcome you with open arms.

Sources: lasvegasweekly.com and justluxe.com



The Welcome to Fabulous Las Vegas sign is a well-known landmark that will greet visitors to the 2015 Toastmasters International Convention.

90TH ANNIVERSARY

Catching Your Audience’s Attention

A featured article in the September 1975 issue of the *Toastmaster* magazine was titled “Talking to the TV Generation.”

That was 40 years ago, when electronics were taking everyone by storm. The article’s author, Ron Carter, urged speakers to use visuals to keep the interest of their “new audience,” who were rapidly absorbing data thanks to the many TV channels they could access.

“A chalkboard, a flip chart or even a simple poster can be just as effective as the most sophisticated sound-synchronized slide system available. It’s all in how you use it,” he wrote.

It’s a funny thought today, considering all of the presentation technology within our reach; but in that era, Carter stressed the need for visually interesting presentations to hold the attention of a generation raised on film and TV.

Four decades later, audiences are preoccupied with the content streaming from their cellphones, iPads and laptops. Imagine rolling out a giant chalkboard onstage during your next speech instead of using PowerPoint or video. Would it catch your audience’s attention?



MEET MY MENTOR



A. Alan Tuten, DTM

No one has the potential to influence a member's experience like a mentor. Patricia F. Copper, ACS, ALB, a speaker and business owner, is a member of Augusta Toastmasters in Staunton, Virginia. She shares how her mentor, A. Alan Tuten, DTM, a technical consultant and quality assurance engineer at ScholarOne, a Thomson Reuters company in Charlottesville, Virginia, helped her.

What drew you to Toastmasters?

I met a Toastmaster at a Women's History Month event and he invited me to visit the Harrisonburg [Virginia] club. I immediately saw how valuable Toastmasters could be in eliminating my nervousness during speaking engagements to promote my book, *A Father's Love*.

How did Alan become your mentor, and how has he helped you?

Al lived closer to me than any other member. Starting in June 2013, I intended to follow his instruction, but fell short, and he used my mistakes as a learning opportunity. He is responsive, his feedback is easy to accept, and he is generous with his time. I appreciate his attention to detail and his vast amount of knowledge. He helped me chair an area contest and achieve a High Performance Leadership award. Outside of Toastmasters, I have been a master of ceremony, a trainer and a keynote speaker.

Has being a Toastmaster helped you in your job?

Yes, it has given me more confidence. As a result, I accept more speaking opportunities.

Why did you sponsor a club?

My county had no club. I believed there would be enough interest locally. Al, and a few others, helped do a [demonstration] meeting. Because of Al's leadership, I sponsored the Augusta club after only three months of membership. I served as vice president education, knowing I could rely on Al's guidance.

What do you like best about Alan?

Al is always helpful and positive. He encourages me to have fun in my roles, and he is like a knight in shining armor, ready to help everyone. He is committed to doing everything the Toastmasters way—with excellence. He does not take shortcuts, and he expects the same from his mentees.

NOMINATE YOUR MARVELOUS MENTOR!

Do you know an exceptional mentor who has positively influenced you or other Toastmasters? Send a 200-word description and photo (1 MB or larger) of you and your mentor to MentorMoment@toastmasters.org.



TABLET SPECIAL: Download the tablet edition for a new mentor tip each month.



FROM LEFT: A. Alan Tuten and Patricia F. Copper

LOOKING AT LANGUAGE

The Power of Poetry



Poetry offers a rich world of rhythm and rhyme, imagery and insight. It can be a valuable resource when you write a speech. Reading a good poem can inspire you to use vivid, imaginative language and improve the flow of your words.

Look at this scene of outdoor labor evoked by the late Irish poet Seamus Heaney:

Under my window, a clean rasping sound

When the spade sinks into gravelly ground:

My father, digging. I look down

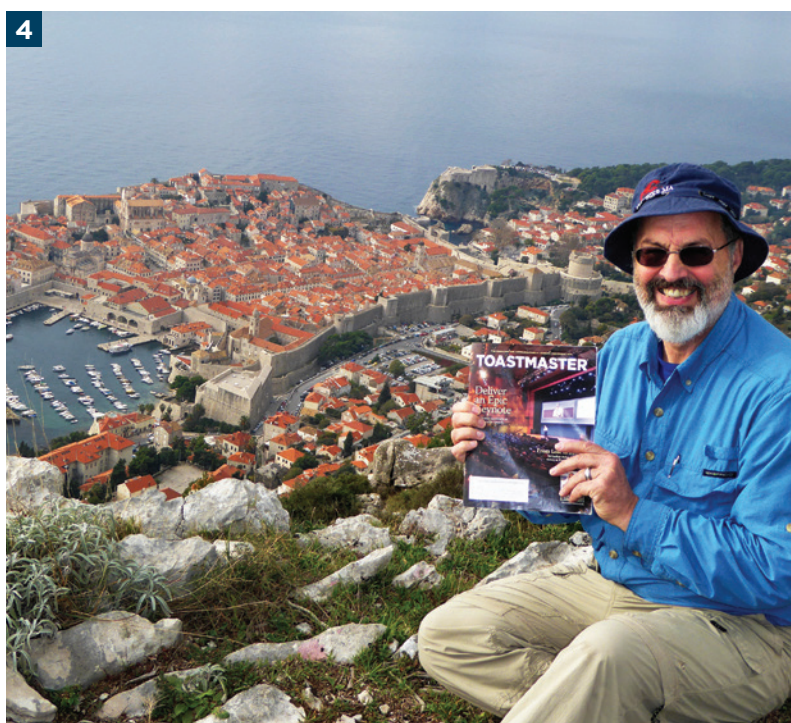
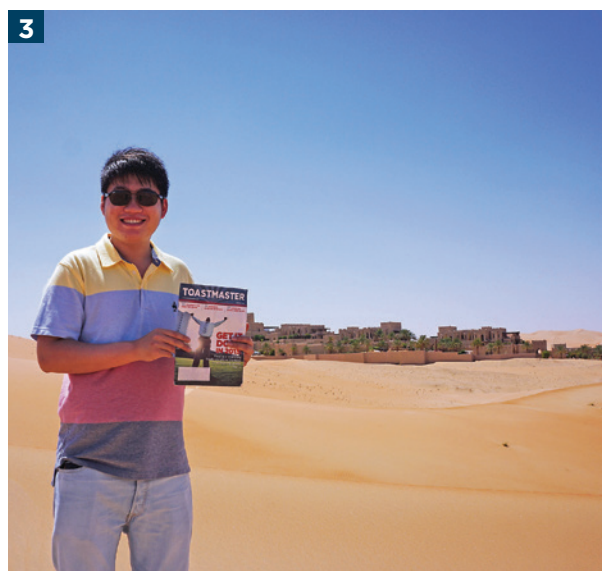
In those lines from the 1966 poem "Digging," you can almost see and hear the spade slicing the soil. And the melodic cadence of the lines echoes the physical rhythms of the work.

Giving parts of your speech a musical quality, in terms of flow and phrasing, can captivate an audience. Search for musicality in poems; strong examples may offer tips for speakers. As the poet Maya Angelou once said, "Poetry is music for the human voice."

Her poem "Phenomenal Woman" is an example of that quality. Celebrating the author's womanhood, the piece offers these lines at the end: *It's in the click of my heels / The bend of my hair / the palm of my hand / The need of my care / 'Cause I'm a woman / Phenomenally / Phenomenal woman / That's me.*

For ideas and inspiration, read some of the great poets—figures like Emily Dickinson, William Butler Yeats, Pablo Neruda, Sylvia Plath, and of course, the Bard himself, William Shakespeare. Most important, though, read poetry that you enjoy.

TRAVELING TOASTMASTER



1 | PATRICIA TONDOBALA AND HER HUSBAND, RIO ARISTO, FROM JAKARTA SELATAN, INDONESIA, celebrate their big day in Uluwatu, Bali, Indonesia.


2 | ELLEN MCCURDY, DTM, FROM SCITUATE, MASSACHUSETTS, explores the Stonehenge monument in England.

3 | LEON LIU, FROM HARBIN HEILONGJIANG, CHINA, travels to Qasr Al Sarab Desert Resort by Anantara of the Liwa Desert in Abu Dhabi.

4 | KEN WADLAND, DTM, FROM ALBION, RHODE ISLAND, overlooks the view in Dubrovnik, Croatia.



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Coming to America

How my Gavel club helps me prepare for college in the U.S.

BY SCARLETT XU

When I first learned about Toastmasters, I was hesitant. A new teacher at my high school in Jiangsu, China, was developing a Gavel club. My hesitation turned into trepidation when I had to give an audition speech to enter the club. The prospective Gavel club was very popular with other students in my class; the competition was challenging. I prepared rigorously for the audition speech. However, when I started to speak, I became paralyzed by the stares of my classmates. My memory morphed into a blank screen. I stammered, looked at the ground and forgot what to say.

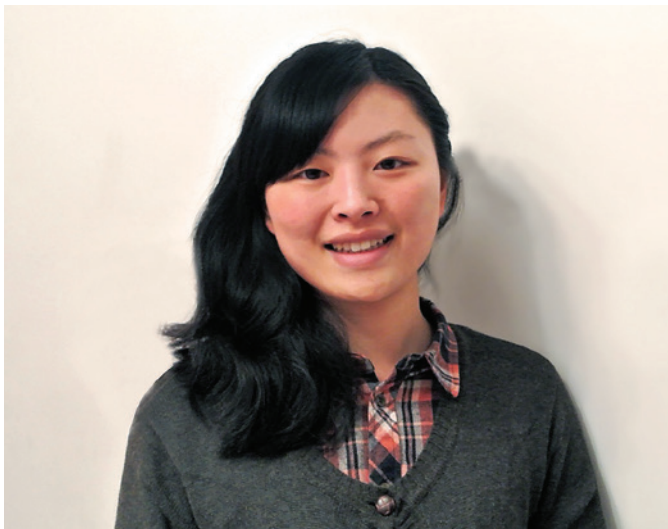
Somehow, I was able to collect myself and complete my speech. I was both surprised and delighted when I was accepted into the club! Currently it has about 40 students as well as three teachers.

When I finished, my parents told me they were shocked by my performance and were profoundly proud of me.

In the club, my consistent practicing began to translate into tangible improvements. I still felt trepidation before giving speeches and would often lie awake at night thinking about how to improve my abilities; but gradually the quality of my speeches did improve.

For me, a lot was at stake. I needed to continue improving, because the verbal skills I was developing would help my performance on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). This English-language test is recognized by more than 9,000 colleges in 130 countries; completing it successfully is necessary to enter a prestigious university in the United States. As a high school senior, I have now taken the TOEFL test and applied to many colleges. I am proud to say that Rutgers University in New Jersey has already accepted me.

The awards from Toastmasters and the success they represent have also helped me. In addition, the democratic and self-expressive nature of Toastmasters is helping me to prepare for the culture of the United States.



Scarlett Xu is finishing high school in Jiangsu, China.

As I continued working hard in Toastmasters, I was asked to take on progressively important roles at my school. Another student and I served as emcees at a Halloween program that was attended by 160 students and teachers. I felt nervous, but my Toastmasters experience helped me to control myself and project confidence. Following this, I participated in a dubbing competition held at my school, where the students inserted their own sound effects for a particular section of an English-language film. The team that I was on won the first-place prize.

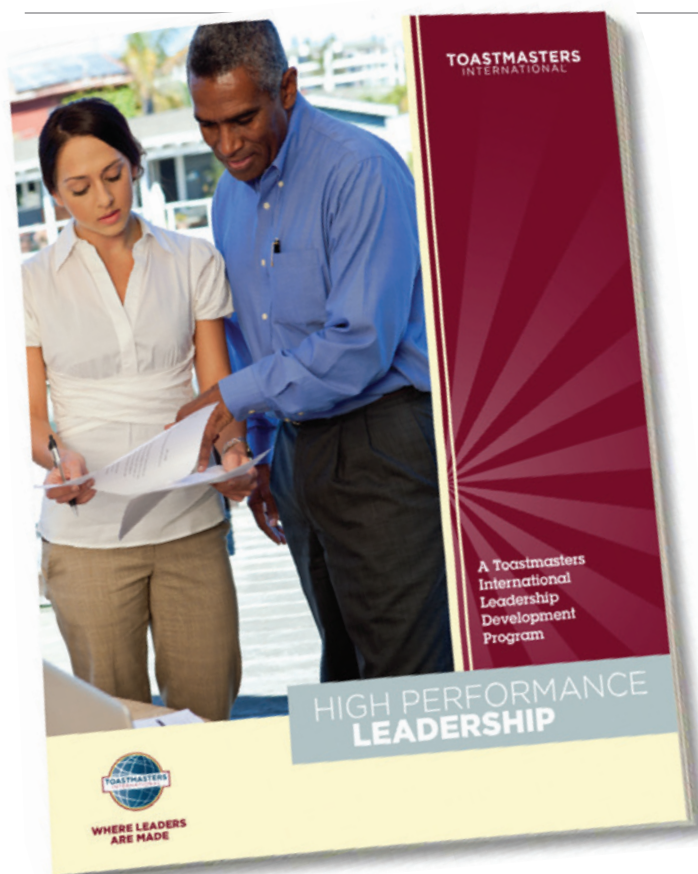
My team advanced to a contest where we competed against several other schools from all over China. At this event my piercing screams as the evil witch in the movie *Enchanted* brought the house down. Perhaps my screams still haunt the dreams of those who were in attendance! When my team was awarded the third-place prize, I knew I could not have contributed so well without my Toastmasters experience.

Not long after this event, I was asked to emcee my school's Christmas Eve program. While standing on the stage in front of hundreds of people, I realized that, finally, I was not overcome by nervousness. I was able to interact with the audience in a natural, enthusiastic and effective manner. When I finished, my parents told me they were shocked by my performance and were profoundly proud of me. My classmates said my performance had improved dramatically from the initial speeches I had given in the Gavel club. My teachers praised me, saying it was the best Christmas Eve program they had ever observed at the school.

Most recently, I gave speeches in my Gavel club on topics such as my childhood, my idea of an ideal life, the importance of having a strong body, and the process of making Chinese medicine.

Thanks to Toastmasters, I have overcome my trepidation of public speaking and I am now far better positioned to enter adulthood and take my journey as a student to the United States. **T**

SCARLETT XU is currently a 12th grader and will attend college in the U.S. in the fall.



Push Yourself with High Performance Leadership

How one member wrestled with taking a risk—and helped save his son’s team.

BY JOHN LENTE, DTM

My wife and I gathered in the high school auditorium with dozens of other parents of students on the wrestling and swim teams. The school’s athletic director was there to speak to us, and he didn’t mince words: Both teams were on the chopping block due to budget constraints, lack of interest and participation, and the loss of money every year for four years in a row.

Many of the parents’ feathers were ruffled. Fingers were pointed and blame was laid, but none of it mattered; if we parents couldn’t

High Performance Leadership encourages a level of growth that should be uncomfortable at times—like taking risks always is.

turn these teams around, they would be gone after this season. In my mind I heard the words of Ed Tate in the speech that won him the 2000 Toastmasters World Championship of Public Speaking: “If not you, then who? If not here, then where? If not now, then when?” That’s when I realized I was going to start the Wrestling Booster Club.

I talked it over with my wife and reviewed my vast experience with parent-teacher-student organizations. Booster clubs I’d participated in: none. Parent-teacher associations I had actively joined: none. Similar projects I had run: none.

This would be an interesting challenge for me, but I knew the perfect resource to help me through it: Toastmasters’ High Performance Leadership (HPL) program. As I discussed the idea with my fellow Toastmasters and researched message boards online, I discovered that too many members view High Performance Leadership as an

obligation—and one they would rather avoid. They view HPL as simply another box to check off on their way to achieving the Distinguished Toastmaster award. But what may seem like a rote exercise in gathering signatures, getting easy approval of a pre-conceived plan, and giving two brief speeches is actually one of the most underrated and misused opportunities for self-development and servant leadership that Toastmasters International has to offer.

Project Possibilities

According to the *High Performance Leadership* manual, possibilities for HPL projects can include “projects for your community, church, and association or professional group, or some other organization. Your project, in fact, can be almost anything as long as it is legal, ethical, and socially responsible, and your activities are not represented as being endorsed by Toastmasters International.”

I knew right away this manual would be my guide for forming and leading the Wrestling Booster Club. While the *Competent Leader* manual is a valuable guide to developing essential leadership skills, High Performance Leadership takes self-reflection to a considerably higher level and encourages a level of growth that should be uncomfortable at times—like taking risks always is. After all, the only thing that grows in our comfort zone is our waistline.

In clubs we reassure our guests and new members that Toastmasters is a safe place to fail. In putting myself out there as the booster club founder and leader, what was the consequence of failure? The wrestling team would be disbanded, dozens of student-athletes would lose their sport of choice, and countless parents and administrators would be able to say I wasn’t up to the task. I definitely felt the pressure!

One of the first steps in the HPL program is assembling a guidance committee to advise you through your project. In forming my guidance committee I drew upon three people who had unique perspectives on, and different stakes in, my project. I asked the school's athletic director to help, since his understanding of the sports program would be invaluable. I asked a good friend and fellow Toastmaster to help, since she had a military background similar to mine (I served in the United States Air Force for more than 19 years), and I regard her opinion highly. Lastly, I asked my wife to help, since she knows me better than anyone else and could offer advice no one else could.

From the athletic director, I learned about the wrestling team's debt, annual losses and the costs involved in running

before and during matches, as well as for other fund-raising efforts.

We then appointed volunteers to committees run by each of the coordinators, and gave the coordinators wide leeway on how to accomplish their goals. Since we were starting from nothing, any accomplishment would be an improvement!

Following Up

Over the course of the project, I discovered that a key aspect of leadership is follow-up communication and that I was lacking in this area. I assumed too much of some volunteers who preferred more guidance and structure, and they floundered when I stepped back and let them go on their own. This frustrated me until I realized that the failure wasn't theirs but mine.

Over the course of the project, I discovered that a key aspect of leadership is follow-up communication and that I was lacking in this area.

such a program. This let me know where we were starting from and how far we needed to go. The athletic director gave the team excellent opportunities to raise funds, such as through raffle ticket sales and concession stand sales at other teams' events, and it was up to us parents to make the most of it.

Next in my project, I met with the other parents and formed an action team. This was the group that would take the steps needed to accomplish the project goals. The parents were eager to rally behind me and I quickly discovered the high enthusiasm so many of them had for the team. They had only been lacking in focus and leadership. We named coordinators for transportation, concession-food sales, and for providing food

Though I have undergraduate and graduate degrees in organizational leadership, nothing compares to the application of leadership in real-world scenarios. People need to be led the way *they* need to be led, not necessarily the way *you* want to lead them. At the same time, I grew in my capacity to show appreciation for people and to develop other leaders through positive reinforcement. Simply explaining to a person how his or her actions positively affect a group helps that person feel significant and important.

I was also careful to make sure that each parent who led any group—or did anything—received full credit for it; I called for applause and praise whenever we had booster club meetings. Seeing the smiles on parents' faces at those moments

as we collectively built their confidence and cheered our success was worth any anxiety I felt about the project.

I'm sad to say that the school's swim team didn't have a leader who emerged from the crowd. They didn't raise their needed funds and the school disbanded the team halfway through the season. The wrestling team, on the other hand, won the county championship after only a month. From there they went on to win two regional championships and sent two wrestlers to the state championship.

This coming academic year the school will host those regional and state championships, which promises a great return in concession and merchandise sales. Over the 2014–2015 season we raised several thousand dollars and showed the school that we take our sport seriously.

Had I taken a narrow view of the High Performance Leadership program, what would have happened? Maybe another parent would have stepped in and formed the club. Maybe not. Regardless of that, I wouldn't have learned about myself as a leader to this degree, or gained the irreplaceable experience of forming this booster club and leading it through the challenges we faced.

As I progress toward my next DTM, I eagerly anticipate what my next HPL project might be. Organizing a competitive blood drive? Running a regional wrestling tournament? Maybe I'll just host a party for my Toastmasters club. That'll count, right? ■

JOHN LENTE, DTM, is a member of the Augusta Toastmasters in Augusta, Georgia. He retired from the Air Force in 2014 and is now building a health and wellness business. View his professional profile at [LinkedIn.com/in/JohnLente](https://www.linkedin.com/in/JohnLente).



Members of Downtown Coquitlam Toastmasters discovered the value of body language while giving speeches in their native tongue.

A New Twist on Table Topics

Lessons are learned from impromptu speaking in members' native tongue.

BY VALERIE WATT, DTM

Canada certainly deserves its reputation as a land of immigrants and a land of many languages. Its 2011 census, the latest one conducted, revealed that one out of five Canadians was born elsewhere. The country has two official languages—English and French—but more than 75 percent of immigrants speak English or French as a second language. The census noted more than 200 mother tongues in addition to the two official languages.

This vibrant diversity is evident in many of the country's Toastmasters clubs, especially in the big cities where most immigrants settle. The Downtown Coquitlam Toastmasters club, which meets weekly in the Vancouver suburb of Coquitlam, is a prime example.

English is a second language for most of the club's members—they originally hail from one of almost a dozen countries in Asia and Europe. The club conducts meetings in English, but only nine of its 27 members speak English as their native tongue. The remaining 18 members were all born outside Canada, and Club Vice President Membership Helena Chan, ACB, ALB, says eight distinct native languages are spoken among them. They all acquired English as a second language later in life—some as children, but most as adults.

Club members consider this diversity a strength, and at one meeting last November the Table Topicsmaster celebrated that strength with a new slant on Table Topics. The theme for the meeting was "homeland"

and the word of the day was "language." Table Topicsmaster David Reilley decided ahead of time to play off both words to tap into the club's linguistic diversity.

He began the Table Topics session by asking who among the group could recall being inspired by a speaker who spoke in a foreign language. Every person in the room raised a hand. He then surprised everyone, including the Toastmaster and the Table Topics evaluator, by announcing "a little experiment." He said he was only going to call on members whose native tongue wasn't English to answer a Table Topics question in his or her native language.

Afterward, there would be a vote on which speaker the group wanted to come

back and repeat their answer in English. Only volunteers were called to speak.

“I wasn’t trying to embarrass anybody with this unannounced experiment, so everyone could opt out if they wanted,” says Reilley. “What’s interesting is that nobody backed away.”

A Rich Mix of Languages

Four Toastmasters participated, speaking Arabic, Farsi, French and an Indian dialect. One participant, Mozghan Bahadori, spoke in Farsi, her first language. “I was one of the first speakers, and I was a bit uncomfortable because I thought I wasn’t getting through to the group,” she says. “When I saw how

speakers and the audience. “I knew our multilingual members rarely did public speaking in their native tongue, which is typically used only in situations like at a family dinner table or in one-on-one business meetings, but not at the lectern,” he says.

“I was hoping if they stood up in public using a language they had grown up with, the experience might help them discover new insights or some hidden strength they could apply when they went back to public speaking in English.”

Reilley also said the entire exercise forced speakers and audience members alike to look past the words and focus on the speaker’s hands, eyes, face, body

said the exercise taught her a powerful lesson about using nonverbal communication. She put that lesson to work for herself a week later at the next meeting when she delivered a five-minute speech.

“I didn’t understand the words during Table Topics,” she says, “so I was watching the [non-verbal] moves *really* carefully, and the little light bulb went on in my head. The whole thing was like a special clinic on how to make the most of your body language when you’re talking.”

In fact, Reilley says one thing he’d do differently is emphasize more strongly to speakers that the exercise is all about non-verbal communication. He says he’d tell participants to try to leave the audience thinking, *I have no idea what was said, but I’d totally like to hear it in English, because it sure sounded interesting, and now I’m really curious!*

The other change Reilley would make is to allow a bit more time for this version of Table Topics. “If we only do this once a year, we can afford to have one less speech that night to make extra time,” he says. “We’d use the added time to bring up more speakers, and maybe ask two of them back for an English translation rather than just one.”

Reilley says he was pleased with the experiment and is recommending the club repeat the format annually at a meeting just prior to Canada’s flag-waving national holiday in July. “We already celebrate diversity on Canada Day, and a lot of new Canadians hold off until that holiday to get sworn in as Canadian citizens. At Toastmasters, we usually have a Canada Day theme for that week, so it all fits together.” ■

VALERIE WATT, DTM, is recently retired from employment with the Canadian government. A Toastmaster for 13 years, she is one of the founding mentors of Downtown Coquitlam Toastmasters club and serves as its vice president education.

“Now whenever I speak in English, I pretend nobody understands English, to force myself to use my face and body more than I used to.”

— Phillip Williams, CC

[the next speaker] handled it, with lots of body language, I learned from that.”

After Bahadori spoke, Phillip Williams, CC, addressed the group in Arabic, his first language. He says the experience was highly beneficial. “When I stood up to speak, I realized nobody in the room understood a word—so I had to rely on movement and gestures to convey the story,” he notes. “Here’s the lesson: Now whenever I speak in English, I pretend nobody understands English, to force myself to use my face and body more than I used to.”

Reilley developed the variation on Table Topics with specific goals in mind. “First, I wanted to celebrate that I live in a country and a city where we can have people speaking English with eight different accents on a day-to-day basis, and nobody gives it a second thought,” he says. “Vancouver’s just that kind of place.”

He also hoped the exercise would provide a slightly different lesson for both the

language, pauses and tone of voice. The multilingual format forced Table Topics evaluator Kusayla Nathan, DTM—who did not know about the experiment—to re-set her normal “measuring stick.” Although Nathan is fluent in four languages, none of those languages were spoken by the speakers that night.

“I didn’t understand a word,” she says, “so I evaluated each speaker on their ability to engage an audience they knew wouldn’t understand the verbal message.”

In the end, Phillip Williams was voted the best Table Topics speaker. But more importantly, everyone seemed to appreciate the Table Topics twist and they all enjoyed themselves. Vice President Chan says all the feedback she received was positive.

Lessons Learned

Club member Sarah Swanson, who has been a Toastmaster for only a few months,



HOW TO MODERATE A PANEL DISCUSSION

Tips for facilitating a riveting exchange of ideas.

BY KRISTIN ARNOLD

Your friend Sally knows about your speaking skills and asked you to moderate a panel at a forthcoming conference. Thrilled to be considered, you quickly answer, “Sure I will!” After all, how hard can it be to lead a discussion and conduct a question-and-answer session?

A few days later, after the initial excitement has passed, you find yourself wondering, *What was I thinking? I know how to give a speech, but I don't know how to moderate a panel discussion.*

Here's the good news: The speaking skills we learn in Toastmasters serve us well when moderating a panel. Just like in a speech, it's good to start strong and show the audience they are in good hands. As moderator, you'll introduce the topic within the first few minutes. Start with a short, interesting hook to grab everyone's attention, then share something about yourself and explain how you will introduce the panelists and facilitate the session.

But first you'll need to prepare for the session. Research the topic, the panelists and the audience beforehand, and consult the meeting chair and planner to learn more about the event format,



what assumptions have been made for you, and how much latitude you have to be creative.

The preparation work a moderator does is similar to the preparation done by a speaker, although being a good speaker does not necessarily mean you will be a good moderator. Rory Vaden, second-place winner of the 2007 Toastmasters World Championship of Public Speaking, compares the two roles: “When you are the speaker, the spotlight is on you. When you are the moderator, you become the spotlight operator. It’s your job to make the panelists look good and you should fade away into the background.”

Some speakers find it difficult to shine the light elsewhere. They like being the “sage on the stage” and controlling a time slot. However, as moderator, once you get the conversation rolling

you become more of a “guide on the side”—ready to interject a question to keep speakers’ energy levels high and get the audience involved, or to intervene to get the conversation back on track.

For some, moderating a panel is terrifying. “You have no control over what people are going to say,” Vaden says. “You have to spontaneously navigate an infinite number of dynamics that are perpetually changing at any given moment. It’s difficult to weave together points, create value for the audience and shine an uplifting spotlight on panelists, all while keeping it entertaining!”

For others, the challenge of moderating in the moment is electrifying. As a professional meeting facilitator and panel moderator, I thoroughly enjoy enhancing the spontaneity of the conversation while making sure it provides meaningful takeaways for the audience.

Darren LaCroix, the 2001 Toastmasters World Champion of Public Speaking, says, “A great panel moderator needs to be able to listen, know when to cut people off and ask deeper questions. This is exactly why we do Table Topics in Toastmasters, where you have to think and be in the moment. You have to get comfortable with the impromptu style.”

Follow these tips to moderate a lively and informative panel discussion:

Select, invite and confirm interesting panelists. If panelists have not yet been selected, round up “DEEP” people who can sufficiently address the topic:

Diverse. Make sure the panel represents the demographic of the audience while ensuring a diversity of opinion and thoughts. A group that is in complete agreement can make a discussion boring.

Expertise. Invite a recognized authority or thought leader in the industry who possesses strong credentials. That person must establish credibility with the audience quickly via a biography or a 30-second introduction.

Eloquent. Panelists should be good conversationalists. Do they speak well on the phone? Did your interview with them produce a monologue or a discussion? Review video footage of your potential panelists to make sure they can keep the audience engaged and interested.

Prepared. Panelists must be willing to make a few key points and tell stories that illustrate those points.

Preparation makes the difference between a mediocre panel and an amazing one. Remember these important tips:

Research. It is your job to facilitate the conversation so the audience draws value from the panel’s expertise and perspectives. To do this effectively, you must be familiar with the panelists, the topic and the expectations of the audience.

Create a panel format. You don’t have to settle for the typical long, draped table. Why not spice it up using a popular television-talk-show format? At a recent sales meeting, we did a spoof on

PRESENTATION SKILLS



As moderator, take the time to consider the physical setup of the panelists' space and microphone placement to ensure the audience can hear the conversation.

the American TV talk show *The Ellen DeGeneres Show*, and had the moderator come out in a tie, vest and sneakers, as host Ellen DeGeneres does herself.

Write the welcome and introductions. Make them short and snappy—after all, panelist biographies are printed in the program, so you don't have to repeat them. Try projecting one slide showing each panelist's photo (in the same seating order as in the event) along with a headline and Twitter username for each person. Then say something interesting about each one.

Compile great questions. Get the conversation started quickly with well-prepared questions. Start with broad questions to raise a conversation about current events. Next, move to stating the reasons the audience should care, and then ask specific questions to spur the panelists to share anecdotes, concrete examples and implementation ideas. Be willing to let go of your planned questions when an interesting discussion emerges.

Select the Q&A format. You don't need to save your question-and-answer session for the end. You can take audience questions as you go, or dedicate specific times to take them.

Determine how you will entertain those questions: You can have audience members line up at the microphone and take "live" questions, or you can assign microphone "runners" to go to inquirers who have their hands raised. As moderator, you can also roam the audience to take questions. Another option is to "screen" queries and prioritize them in the moment using question cards or texting or tweeting (I love using [sli.do](#) for this). Another approach is to form small groups from the audience and ask each one to discuss ideas, and have a group representative present the best question.

Determine room logistics. As a public speaker, you know how crucial the setup of the room is to the success of your speech. The same thing holds true for a panel discussion. As a general rule for panels, a snug space helps everyone hear the conversation. You'll need to think through the furniture type and placement, screen, seating arrangement and microphones. Ideally, each moderator

and panelist should have his or her own lavalier microphone, and a cordless handheld microphone should be reserved for audience interaction.

Arrive early. Meet briefly with each panelist and review the agenda and ground rules. Do a walk-through of the room. Check the microphones and your slideshow.

Keep the conversation moving. If you have prepared the panelists appropriately, and you kick off the discussion with a few good questions, the conversation will start to flow on its own. Encourage each panelist to comment on particular parts of other panelists' statements. Be flexible about following the natural conversation path, as long as it is interesting and the audience is engaged. You may, however, need to interject a follow-up question here and there to keep the conversation moving at a brisk pace. Probe deeper, make bridges between ideas, present opposing views, catch contradictions, test the unsaid, shift gears, create transitions and intervene firmly and respectfully to keep everyone on track.

As a panel moderator, once you get the conversation rolling, you become more of a "guide on the side."

Be playful. Smile. Always be uplifting. Bring positive energy to the stage. Compliment the audience and the panelists. Never criticize, even if it's to get a laugh.

Use callbacks. Your biggest opportunity for humor is to use "callbacks" by mentioning something that has previously been said. Listen to anything that happens spontaneously in the room that causes a laugh and seek clever ways to reference it again. Callbacks make it fun for the audience, and they make you look witty.

Put a bow on it. Let the audience know the program is coming to an end by saying "We're almost out of time. There are a few key things to wrap up." Then, summarize the discussion (or have your panelists do it), and offer opportunities to extend the discussion beyond the session. Share each panelist's contact information and promote their agenda (now is the time for each one to make one short plug for their company, product or service). Make final announcements and conclude with heartfelt words of thanks and a round of applause.

Never lose sight of the fact that you are the champion for the audience. Always keep listeners in mind and make sure their needs are being met throughout the entire session. If you can do that, you'll be glad you said, "Sure I will!" to Sally's invitation. **T**

KRISTIN ARNOLD, a meeting facilitator, moderator, trainer and keynote speaker, is the author of *Powerful Panels: A Step-By-Step Guide to Moderating Lively & Informative Panel Discussions at Meetings, Conferences & Conventions*. For more information about how to moderate a panel discussion, see Kristin's free seven-part video course at [PowerfulPanels.com](#).

Roy Sheppard: Comfortable with Chaos

Moderator, speaker and author reflects on his 35-year career.

BY JULIE BOS

As Toastmasters members well know, many people are paralyzed by fear when it comes to public speaking. Roy Sheppard, however, is not one of those people anymore. In fact, this upbeat and versatile professional actually thrives in front of an audience—whether it’s thousands of conference attendees, a classroom of graduate students, or BBC TV viewers and radio listeners.

An expert conference facilitator, moderator, speaker and media journalist, Sheppard has built a successful decades-long career sharing his unique talent with leading organizations around the world. He has moderated private conferences for the Olympic

“As a speaker, the spotlight is on you. As a moderator, you put the spotlight on the panelists.”

— Roy Sheppard

Movement held in Beijing and Rio de Janeiro, as well as for the world’s largest trade association—the International Council of Shopping Centers—in Rome, Cape Town, New York, Dubai and Istanbul. He moderated the organization’s flagship event, RECon in Las Vegas, where more than 53,000 delegates have gathered.

Sheppard, who was actually exceptionally shy as a teenager, has written a number of books about relationships (including several aimed at teens), is a trained hypnotherapist (a skill that is surprisingly useful), and has worked as a visiting lecturer at management schools at Cranfield University and Henley Business School, part of the University of Reading, both in the United Kingdom.

Sheppard attended the 2014 Toastmasters International Convention, in Kuala Lumpur, at the invitation of his friend Robin Sieger, the keynote speaker.



Once a shy teenager, Roy Sheppard now moderates conferences and events around the globe.

How did you get started as a moderator?

Initially, I was asked to compère [host] a conference. I had no idea what to do, but all it involved was introducing speakers and not bumping into the furniture.

With all my years of doing live TV (in the days when things went wrong all the time), I learned to think on my feet and ad-lib. The more conferences I did, the more I got involved in the content. I am blessed with two particular gifts—thinking fast

and being genuinely curious and enthusiastic about everything.

I am fascinated by people and industries—so I built a reputation for being someone who really listens and understands what people are talking about. From that, it's easier to ask insightful questions.

What is the moderator's main role?

It's to bring people together and provoke meaningful, relevant discussions to help speakers and audiences gain value from attending an event, and it's to help achieve (or exceed) the stakeholder's objectives for an event.

“I've seen too many inexperienced people (usually speakers or consultants) ask questions that are longer than the answers.”

— Roy Sheppard

In so many ways being a moderator is the direct opposite of being a speaker. As a speaker, the spotlight is on you. People are there to listen to you. As a moderator, you put the spotlight on the panelists.

Great speakers often slave over speech structure, their points and each word. In Toastmasters, you're taught how to do that incredibly well. And you then deliver the talk the way you decide. You have control. By contrast, moderators have no control over what is said, or by whom. Thankfully, I'm comfortable with chaos.

Metaphorically, speakers, certainly advanced Toastmasters, are like exquisitely trained classical musicians. Being an experienced moderator is more like playing jazz—it's all about improvising. Even so, you can't improvise unless you are a skilled musician.

How do you prepare for the role?

In the weeks, or even months, before major international conferences, I have long, detailed discussions with the stakeholders (clients, producers and organizers). I absorb

vast amounts of information about the company, the industry, the people and the challenges they face, all while building trust with the speakers. I listen to everyone. And I usually pick up additional insights at receptions and dinners the night before an event.

How do you put speakers at ease onstage, and bring out the best in them?

Trust is at the heart of it. Ahead of time I help them clarify and streamline their messages so they realize my job is to make them look brilliant.

In 1994, you sought training as a hypnotherapist. Why?

I was working a lot as an interviewer on national radio and BBC television in the U.K. I became increasingly frustrated with how one-dimensional journalistic interviewing is. It focuses on the narrative, and doesn't explore deeper emotions. I never wanted to go into practice as a therapist, but the training taught me how to understand people better. It gave me the ability to tap into how people think in very different ways. It was a profound shift for me.

Do hypnotherapy skills help you as a moderator improve audience understanding and engagement?

Absolutely. When it comes to speakers and panelists, I seem to notice seemingly insignificant things. But when these clues are pieced together you can gain deep insights. This makes for more “real” interviews.

I have become very attuned to the energy in a conference room, too. It's an important component of an audience's

engagement. When I sense energy is leaking from the room, I use techniques to pump more in, without coming across as a TV game-show host.

Tell us about a challenging situation that you turned into a great experience for the audience.

One incident comes immediately to mind. I was in The Hague in the Netherlands for Symantec, the anti-virus company. I'd interviewed the company's CEO in front of 1,700 people. Afterward, a woman from another global technology company gave a presentation. Halfway through, she froze. She didn't forget her presentation—she mentally left the building. All that was left was this shell of a human being. Because of my [hypnotherapy] training, I knew instantly what had happened—she had “switched.” I'd seen it before.

It's freaky. When people are traumatized, they “power down” like a switched-off robot. So in front of all those people, I went up on stage, signaled to get the sound guys to cut my microphone so no one heard what I was saying to her, and with my back to the audience I managed to “get her back.” She snapped out of it. I asked her if she was ok, and she said she was. Her mic was back on for everyone to hear her say, “Why are you here?” She had no idea why I was on stage in front of her. It was an extremely weird experience!

What advice would you give a Toastmaster preparing to be a moderator?

Stop thinking like a speaker. Don't talk too much. I can't emphasize that enough. I've seen too many inexperienced people (usually speakers or consultants) ask questions that are longer than the answers. They wrongly believe they are there to impress the audience. By being more low-key, they actually end up being more impressive!

It's also not the moderator's job to have an opinion. Make others look good by drawing

out opinions and insights from speakers, panelists, other contributors and the audience.

What is the biggest challenge you have ever faced?

My teenage shyness was totally debilitating. Thirty-five years later, as someone who has earned his living as a performer on radio, TV and on stage all this time, I think I may have over-compensated.

What impact did your severe shyness as a teenager have on you, and how did you overcome it?

I couldn't talk to girls, which was a huge problem. As bizarre as this sounds, I was given a job as a disc jockey (DJ), and I had to talk in public (British DJs talked, American ones mixed music). Interestingly, I still couldn't talk to girls, but because I was a DJ, lots of girls started talking to me.

What is your greatest accomplishment?

The books I've written for young people. Really. This was brought home to me when I read the last line of my first review

for the British paperback version of my book *All About You: Cool Life Secrets. The Truth about Romance, Self-esteem, Health, Happiness and Inspiration for Teen Girls*. A 27-year-old woman wrote, "I don't have a child but I'm saving this copy for if I ever have a daughter. It's a treasured memento." I found my eyes welling up over that.

What advice do you have for young people today?

I speak at high schools and universities, often for free, weaving stories—many of which feature myself as an idiot who has made some very dumb decisions in my life. The students like to hear that! But it also helps the audience be more receptive to what I have to say. (Tip to speakers: Share stories where you are not the hero. Audiences will warm to you more.)

I created a concept called your *emotional* core, which is about how to develop your emotional strength, flexibility and stability to create a firm foundation for your future life. Those emotional "muscles" are self-esteem, happiness, attitude and

kindness (starting with being kind to yourself). One part is how you can train that internal critical voice, which, if left unchecked, can become a tyrant crushing your ambitions and making you feel bad about yourself.

Train that voice and you increase your ability to be upbeat in a downbeat world. Happiness is a choice.

What did you think of the 2014 International Convention?

It was absolutely brilliant. There was a wonderful, welcoming community of like-minded people who are making a difference while at the same time developing really valuable life skills. I genuinely wish I'd known about Toastmasters early in my career. I'm sure it would have had a profoundly positive impact on my professional life. 📌

Learn more about Roy Sheppard at www.facilitator.expert.

JULIE BOS is a freelance writer for the *Toastmaster magazine*.

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Do You Kiss, Bow or Shake Hands?

How to address global audiences with care.

BY TERRI MORRISON



Before you step up to the microphone in Dubai, Düsseldorf or New Delhi, consider which behaviors and topics can be construed as rude, controversial or even illegal in your host country. Your goal, from the moment you are introduced, is to establish credibility and progressively build it throughout your presentation.

Since intercultural communication issues vary greatly around the world, here are several tips to help you avoid some of the most egregious errors from the outset of your visit.

1 **Read their lips. A kiss is not just a kiss.**

Because *Kiss, Bow, or Shake Hands* is part of the title in a series of my books, I am sometimes the recipient of a kiss from the person who introduces me. They use the book title almost like an icebreaker; it gives them a perfect entrée for a warm greeting. *Les bises*, *un beso* or *un bacio* often occurs in France, Spain, Italy and much of Latin America as well. But in other regions of the world, I am exceedingly careful about touching my hosts. Even an air kiss can cross over from being merely awkward to alarming.

Avoid making the same mistake Richard Gere made at an AIDS benefit in Mumbai several years ago. He dramatically “dipped” and kissed an Indian starlet named Shilpa Shetty on her cheek. It was a typical theatrical gesture that would have played well in Hollywood, but some Hindus were highly insulted. Protests erupted, arrest warrants were issued, and both were hung in effigy.

Many cultures disapprove of public displays of affection between genders for religious or traditional reasons. These include:

India, Pakistan, Thailand, Myanmar (formerly Burma) and other primarily Hindu or Buddhist countries

In these cultures, executives may shake hands or greet each other with a *namaste* or a *wai*. Both gestures involve placing one’s hands in a praying position, and raising them to the proper height in front of the face or head.

Theocracies like Saudi Arabia, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Oman and Israel

In a theocracy, God tells you what to do. Both observant Muslims and Orthodox Jews are prohibited from touching the opposite sex in public.

China, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, Singapore and other parts of Asia

Although multiple Chinese presidents have received hugs from exuberant Westerners, your best bet is to offer a brief bow of the head and a reasonable (not heart-stopping) handshake. In the United States, a firm grip has long been an indicator of strength of character, but in much of Asia, a gentle, extended grip is normal and doesn’t reflect negotiating strength. Follow your host’s lead.

Germany, Austria, Finland, Switzerland and the Netherlands

These countries consider business a serious endeavor and view humor or physical affection as a frivolous waste of time at work. This may explain why at a G8 summit in 2006, the Chancellor of Germany, Angela Merkel, reflexively shrugged off former President George W. Bush when he attempted to give her shoulders a little massage.

2 **Stand up straight, chest out, head up, hands at your sides.**

Many nationalities are known for their excellent posture (e.g., Germans, French, Japanese), but a straight back is not the only criteria for a good greeting.

When Bill Gates went to South Korea in 2013, it wasn’t just his posture and open jacket that made headlines all over the country. Gates has a habit of leaving his left hand in his pocket when he shakes hands. That may fly in Seattle, but unfortunately, it looked disrespectful when he shook hands with South Korean President Park Geun-hye. The headlines blared: “An open jacket with hand in pocket? Way too casual!” And Secretary General Chung Jin-suk of the National Assembly of the Republic of Korea stated, “It was very regretful.”

3 **Use formal titles and last names, and know the correct usage of *tu*, *du*, *san* and *sensei*.**

Names represent much more than a moniker in many countries. They are a link to an individual’s personal history: parents, grandparents or even the town where he or she was born. Therefore mispronouncing a name is more significant in certain countries, particularly when the name is actually a patronymic—a name that incorporates your father’s name.

Your host’s behavior with his own countrymen, in his own country, may be vastly different from his behavior with you.

For example, if you were extremely close friends with the President of Russia, Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin, you might address him as Vladimir Vladimirovich. Among themselves, Russians often address each other by their first names and patronymic. Thus, Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin’s first name is Vladimir (which has been translated as “great, glorious ruler”), and his middle name (a patronymic) means “son of Vladimir.”

This tradition is more widespread than you might think. Many languages—from Arabic to Swedish to Spanish—integrate parents’ names into their progenies. If you cannot pronounce a name correctly, you not only insult the person in front of you but his or her ancestors as well.

Of course, you should be careful about more than just pronunciation. Formal situations present their own challenges. Let’s say that your first presentation is in Germany. Your host, the *Geschäftsführer* (CEO or executive director), Dr. Ernst Kohler, formally introduces you to a roomful of eminent guests. In response, you graciously state: “Thank you very much, Ernst, for that kind introduction. It is an honor and a pleasure to address this illustrious group!”



Bill Gates shakes hands too casually with South Korean President Park Geun-hye in 2013.

That may be an appreciative line in Miami, but it's too informal in Munich. Using the director's first name in front of such distinguished company is unacceptable. Correct protocol mandates that you state the doctor's title(s) and last name in public,

Your slides should be vetted by a local representative of the country you visit to ensure against the use of insulting topics or images.

at least until he invites you to switch to his first name, which in some cases may take years. Once you are a trusted, long-term friend, he may move from the more formal form of *you*—which is *Sie* in German—to the informal, almost affectionate term *du*.

Many languages have informal and formal forms of address: French uses *tu* and *vous*, Spanish uses *tu* and *usted* and other cultures use honorifics—like the Japanese terms *-san*, *-sama* and *-sensei*.

You should be aware that your host's behavior with his own countrymen, in his own country, may be vastly different from his behavior with you. For example:

Mr. Michiaki Nakano, a partner at the law firm of South Toranomom in Tokyo, is extremely familiar with Western customs, and is conscientious about making his international associates feel comfortable. So even though his Japanese colleagues address him in a very formal manner, generally with the honorific *Nakano-sensei*, he always invites English-

speaking attorneys to call him Mickey. This ensures that his Western associates will not lose face by mispronouncing his name or macerating his title.

Many other cultures with formal naming conventions (e.g., Germans and Nigerians) also conform to Western sensibilities when they work in Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom or the United States.

However, when you are in Rome (or in Tokyo, Seoul or Shanghai), try to behave as the Romans do, particularly when in front of an audience. The last thing you want to see is a video of yourself on YouTube, being too chummy in China—a target for Internet trolls in perpetuity!

There are many more naming conventions: In China surnames come first; in Saudi Arabia *binti* means “daughter of” and *bin* means “son of”; and in Spain a compound family name will probably list the father's surname first, then the mother's. One good source for further information is *Merriam-Webster's Guide to International Business Communications* by Toby Atkinson.

4 Avoid sensitive topics and images.

Once you get past the initial greetings and forms of address, there are other behaviors, topics and images you should circumvent. Here are three topics to avoid in your presentation.

Politics and Political Graphics

Your slides should be vetted by a local representative of the country you visit to ensure against the use of insulting topics or images. Some things may seem innocuous to you, like a map for instance, but if disputed territory is portrayed (e.g., the Spratly Islands, claimed by Brunei, China, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan and Vietnam), a lively question-and-answer session may follow. Remember that many websites are banned in China and the Middle East for politically incorrect content.

Sensitive Symbols and Content

Different religious groups have varying degrees of sensitivities. For example, some symbols require special care.

- **The flag of Saudi Arabia:** The name of Allah appears on the flag, so it must be handled with extreme care. It cannot be associated with any promotional items, and it must never be flown at half-mast.
- **Images of Buddha:** Travelers with tattoos of Buddha have been turned away at the airport of Sri Lanka.
- **Images of animals:** Not all animals are universally beloved. Although they are incredibly popular in advertisements, dogs are not always just mascots. You may still find them on the menu in Asia. And in much of the Middle East, dogs are



District Governor Alex Cheng (center) and Lieutenant Governor Marketing Yang Zhao (right), both from District 85, exchange business cards with other members at the 2014 District Leader Training in Kuala Lumpur. Various cultures follow different customs for exchanging cards.

considered unclean and would never be used in an ad or on business collateral.

When TNT debuted in Indonesia—a primarily Islamic country—Ted Turner, founder of the cable TV network, was careful not to include the Porky Pig character in the initial

Subtle nonverbal communications are the standard in much of Asia, and minimal gestures transmit tremendous amounts of information.

Warner Bros. cartoon lineup, because the consumption of pork is forbidden by the Koran.

- **Images of the human figure:** Images of humans are generally prohibited in Saudi Arabia, which abides by the Wahhabi branch of Sunni Islam. This took a rather interesting turn recently when northern Saudi Arabia experienced an uncommonly heavy snowfall, and a prominent Saudi cleric used his website to warn believers against building snowmen.
- **Images of alcohol:** Alcohol is also prohibited to observant Muslims, so avoid incorporating images of glassware associated with alcoholic beverages.

5 Keep body language in check.

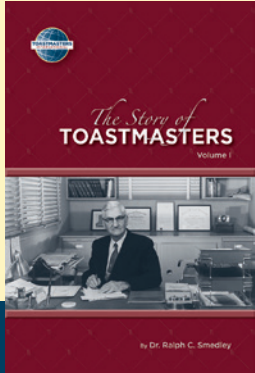
Finally, nonverbal communication can have an enormous impact on a presentation. Sometimes high-energy, animated gestures can be the antithesis of what clients expect. Subtle


nonverbal communications are the standard in much of Asia, and minimal gestures transmit tremendous amounts of information.

Therefore, if you take the podium and start gesticulating wildly—punching out your points with your fingers in the air, or whacking your right hand into your left palm—your crowd may pay more attention to your body language than to your words.

Clearly, people around the world are not alike. Different cultures have different customs, priorities and ways of thinking and negotiating. Inquiring about the protocol and business practices in each country will help you avoid delivering an embarrassing faux pas along with your brilliant presentation. **T**

TERRI MORRISON is co-author of nine books, including *Kiss, Bow, or Shake Hands: The Bestselling Guide to Doing Business in More Than 60 Countries*. She is working on her next book, which will be published by the American Bar Association. Visit her website at TerriMorrison.com.





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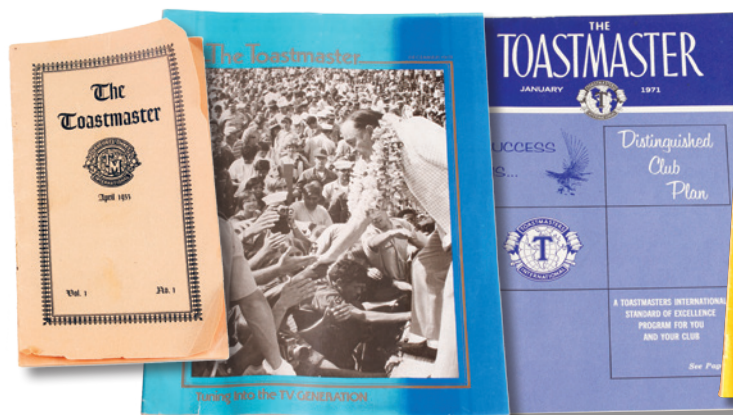
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The *Toastmaster* Turns 82!

Magazine has grown dramatically in size, scope and circulation over the years.



TOASTMASTER MAGAZINE THROUGH THE YEARS



Editor's Note: This article is condensed and updated from a story by Janet Whitcomb that originally ran in the April 1993 Toastmaster magazine.

Back in April 1933, a publication measuring no more than 6 inches by 3.5 inches (about 15 centimeters by 9 centimeters) was circulated among members belonging to each of the 20 Toastmasters

In the January 1942 issue, an article titled “Our Service to Men in the Service” discussed the importance of bringing Toastmasters training to the enlisted men who soon would be defending the principle of free speech.

clubs in the United States and Canada. Printed in orange stock and displaying a copyrighted title, logo and the inscription “Vol. 1, No. 1,” it offered 18 pages of club information and news, including updates on club attendance and new officers.

Toastmaster magazine has come a long way in the 82 years since that debut issue. With Toastmasters International now boasting more than 1,450 clubs in 126 countries worldwide, today’s magazine reaches a membership of more than 300,000. Now 32 pages long and measuring 8.25 by 10.75 inches (about 21 by 27 centimeters), it features articles on communication, leadership, humor, team building, cross-cultural awareness, mentoring, speechwriting, club

successes around the world, the latest presentation tools and technology, and more.

The *Toastmaster* of 2015 is also a reflection of the digital era: Besides the magazine’s print edition, an online version is available on the Toastmasters website, and readers with tablets can access a digital edition via a mobile app. The digital magazine, which debuted in 2013, enhances the print offering with interac-

tive elements such as video, Web links and photo slideshows.

Despite the dramatic differences in the *Toastmaster* magazine of then and now, the basic goal remains the same: to serve members interested in improving their speaking, listening, leadership and thinking skills.

Humble Beginnings

In 1924, after Ralph Smedley established the organization’s first Toastmasters club in Santa Ana, California, a growing number of clubs emerged over the next few years. To keep members apprised of each other’s activities, Smedley, in collaboration with two other Toastmasters, began publishing a mimeographed newsletter in

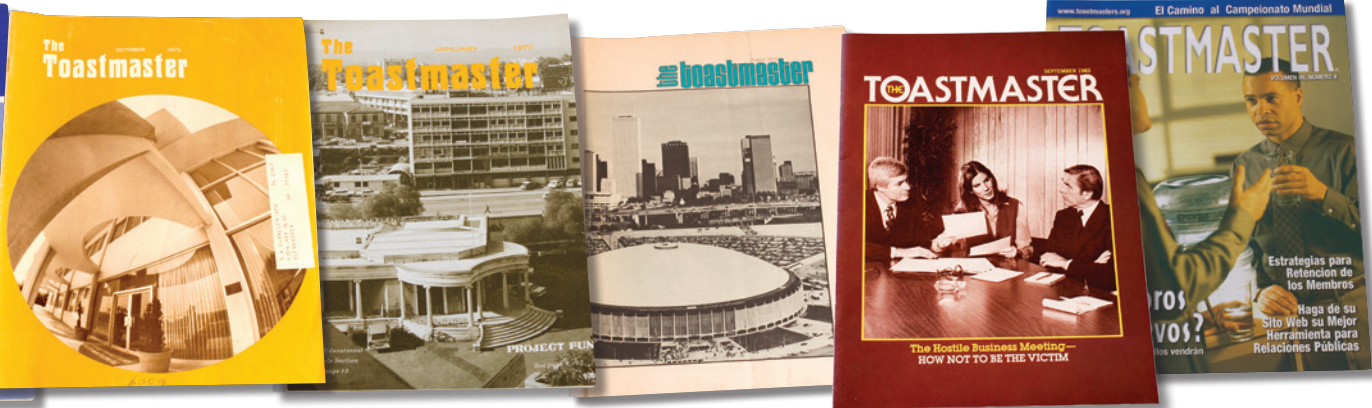
1930. Named *The Gavel*, each copy comprised two stapled sheets of paper.

From such humble beginnings sprang the concept of a bona fide magazine. The new publication was sent to nearby Los Angeles to be printed and bound, then mailed to each club’s secretary for distribution among members. After the premiere edition in April 1933, two more issues—measuring slightly larger in size—were produced in 1934. The following year, a set of ground rules was developed: *The Toastmaster* (for most of its history, the magazine’s name included “The” before the word “Toastmaster”) would be issued on a quarterly basis to those who paid the \$1 USD annual membership fee. And, by popular request, all magazines would now be sent directly to individual Toastmasters.

Throughout the decade, the magazine continued to arrive in households four times a year. But beginning in 1940, it was produced every other month, and six years later, as the U.S. entered a prosperous new postwar period, the magazine settled into its current publication schedule of once every month.

The appearance of the magazine also evolved. Photographs and artwork, used sparingly if at all during the publication’s first decade, decorated its pages and covers with increasing regularity. As the years passed, more pages were added and the magazine’s dimensions grew larger.

For many years, the magazine cover was dotted with a little color, but the 50-year



anniversary issue is the first time the cover was in full-color, using a four-color printing process. An illustration of Smedley adorns the front of that January 1974 issue.

During the 1970s, occasional smatterings of color could be found on the magazine’s pages. For example, an August 1974 article titled “They Speak a Universal Language” is highlighted by a headline of red and green print and full-colored reproductions of Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck. (The International Convention was held at Disneyland in Anaheim, California, that year.)

By the late 1980s, color print and photographs were used on two or three of the main articles in each issue. In 2002, the magazine began using color throughout the entire issue—and the publication has only become more colorful and visually inventive since.

Time Marches On

From the beginning, the magazine staff solicited opinions and contributions from its readers. The back cover of the first issue, for example, asked Toastmasters to “Obey that Impulse! Write the Editor and Tell Him What’s What!” At first, such contributions were compiled in periodic club reports. Eventually, however, a letters section was added to the magazine, and full-fledged articles—many of them written by members—soon appeared. Today the magazine continues to feature articles written by Toastmasters and others. (The sheer number of contributions is

impressive; the editors suggest would-be authors consult the magazine’s guidelines before submitting their prose for review.)

The magazine has not gone untouched by current events. Issues published during the Great Depression, for example, featured many articles and commentaries stressing the importance of Toastmasters training to men disenfranchised by a stricken economy.

During the years of World War II, many Toastmasters were called to serve their country. Civilian adjustments were also typical: Club meetings were sometimes canceled, as was the 1942 Seattle Convention. In the January 1942 issue, an article titled “Our Service to Men in the Service” discussed the importance of bringing Toastmasters training to the enlisted men who soon would be defending the principle of free speech.

Two decades later, on November 22, 1963, the sudden and tragic death of U.S. President John F. Kennedy brought tributes from Toastmasters around the world. Members realized that in losing one of the prime world leaders of that time, they had also lost a gifted and well-spoken orator.

Thomas Healy, president of the Scarborough Club in Ontario, Canada, wrote, “As a Toastmaster, listening critically to his

many powerful speeches [as well as] to his impromptu and often humorous asides, I have been delighted and proud to have lived in the times of John Fitzgerald Kennedy.”

Those who thumb through pages of decades-old magazines soon begin to sense that an important part of the equation seems to be missing.

This omission, however, was resolved in 1973, when Toastmasters International opened membership to women. Articles in the magazine soon began to reflect this dramatic change.

Fast-forward to 2015. The publication covers a wide range of issues that impact members around the world, from valuable club resources

to the latest in storytelling strategies, from innovative Toastmasters leaders to experts on body language, from Table Topics tips to organization initiatives such as the revitalized education program.

Change remains a constant for the 82-year-old magazine—as shown, for example, by the emergence of the online “flipbook” version in 2011 and the tablet edition two years later. As its evolution continues, *Toastmaster* magazine will continue to publish content that best serves you, its reader. **T**



Best of 2014 Club Videos!

It was another great year for Toastmasters International's Brand Video Contest. Clubs from around the world brought their passion to life in 2014 through short videos focused on the brand and spirit of Toastmasters. The top 10 videos for each month were selected and entered into a drawing, and one club was drawn to become that month's winner.

Since the brand refresh was introduced in 2011, clubs have made great strides to transition to the new brand. The contest, which will run throughout 2015, can help clubs with insufficient funds acquire branded materials.

Submit a video today for a chance to win some great branded items—such as a banner or a lectern—for your club! The best part is that winning videos are seen by thousands of current and potential members.

Due to limited space, this article includes only some of the 2014 winners. Download the April issue on your tablet to see all the winning videos.

THE LEADER SHIP CLUB
LODZ, POLAND
FOUNDED IN 2013
27 ACTIVE MEMBERS



"The Leader Ship club in Lodz has members from Poland, the United Kingdom, Belarus, Russia and Tunisia, and that's what makes us unique. Apart from developing our public speaking and leadership skills, we are friends who love spending time together; that's why the atmosphere in our club is magical.

— JUSTYNA SZUMINSKA, CC, CL,
CLUB TREASURER

NANIWA TOASTMASTERS
OSAKA, JAPAN
FOUNDED IN 2002
25 ACTIVE MEMBERS



"Naniwa Toastmasters is conveniently based in the center of Osaka and accommodates people from various backgrounds and occupations. We help members improve their English communication and leadership skills. Our friendly and supportive environment always welcomes guests."

— TAKUTO KAWASAKI, CC, ALB,
CLUB VICE PRESIDENT PUBLIC RELATIONS

AMSTERDAM TOASTMASTERS
AMSTERDAM, NETHERLANDS
FOUNDED IN 2002
50 ACTIVE MEMBERS



"At Amsterdam Toastmasters, we have 50 members from five continents and more than 20 countries. We share a common desire to develop and succeed, and we support each other completely on that journey. We think that's pretty special, and can't imagine anything other than Toastmasters achieving it."

—NOREEN MURPHY, CC



Please download the April tablet edition to watch all of the winning videos or view them on YouTube at ow.ly/zZjdx. For more information, visit www.toastmasters.org/BrandVideos

SPEAKERS BY THE SEA
PLAYA DEL REY, CALIFORNIA
FOUNDED IN 2003
30 ACTIVE MEMBERS



“At Speakers By The Sea, we’ve seen the power of our hands-on workshop format produce success. We build confidence, leadership and public speaking skills for life.”

— JEN HUNTZICKER, CL,
CLUB VICE PRESIDENT EDUCATION

ONE GLOBAL VIEW TOASTMASTERS
HERNDON, VIRGINIA
FOUNDED IN 2012
21 ACTIVE MEMBERS



“One Global View Toastmasters, a closed club within the Airbus Group, identifies with the global aspect of the Toastmasters brand. Our club consists of 21 international members striving for communication and leadership excellence. Toastmasters has brought motivation, camaraderie and personal development to the Airbus Group workplace.”

— ROXANNE LEDBETTER,
CLUB VICE PRESIDENT PUBLIC RELATIONS

DELUXE TOASTMASTERS
SHOREVIEW, MINNESOTA
FOUNDED IN 1990
38 ACTIVE MEMBERS



“Deluxe Toastmasters club members make every effort to become leaders and communicators by enhancing their skills at our weekly meetings. We provide a supportive environment where we encourage each other to be successful.”

— JIM PETERSON, DTM,
CLUB VICE PRESIDENT PUBLIC RELATIONS

MANITALKERS CLUB
MANITOWOC, WISCONSIN
FOUNDED IN 2010
12 ACTIVE MEMBERS



“Toastmasters gives me the confidence and skills I need to make a big impact in my community and the world.”

— JULIET KOSARZYCKI, DTM,
DISTRICT 3 AREA GOVERNOR AND
REVITALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM LEARNING MASTER



I Miss Meetings

Even after 12,672 of them, the memories linger on.

BY JOHN CADLEY

One of the topics that this magazine regularly covers is meetings, and if you expect me to make fun of them you are mistaken. I worked in an office for 33 years and I liked meetings. There are many reasons why, but let's start with the sheer numbers. Subtracting vacation days, sick days and those wonderfully mysterious personal days (A: "Where were you yesterday?" B: "None of your business."), I worked about 48 out of a possible 52 weeks, with an average of eight meetings a week. That comes to 384 meetings a year, or 12,672 meetings for the entire duration of my employment. No human being can hate meetings and endure that many of them. It would cause psychosis. I've seen it happen. One minute a person is calmly looking at slide No. 189 in a PowerPoint presentation and the next he's marching around the room shouting "I'm Donald Trump and you're fired!" Sad.

I especially liked the early meetings that everyone else complained about.

I liked meetings because it meant I didn't have to work. That's not a joke. In order to go to a meeting you have to *stop* work. It was a nice break in the day. I especially liked the early meetings that everyone else complained about. It was an absolute guarantee that the person who called it would bring free coffee and doughnuts as a peace offering for asking us to come in early. What's not to like about noshing on a Krispy Kreme, washing it back with a Starbucks Dark Roast, and having a person agree with everything you say because they feel guilty about asking you there in the first place? Works for me.

I also liked meetings because of their Entertainment Value Index. This was something I came up with to rate the potential amusement inherent in each meeting, depending upon the personalities involved.

For instance, I knew that if Barbara and Denise were invited I had an entertainment value of at least 5, since Barbara had just gotten promoted over Denise, whose response was to stonewall

Barbara's every request with massive amounts of passive aggression. If Tom and Jim were thrown into the mix I could easily bump that 5 to a 7, knowing how Tom's habitual lack of preparation drove pernickety Jim over the edge. Seeing Jim arrive five minutes early and place his neatly stapled stack of documents in front of him, then watching Tom come in five minutes *late* and ask if he can borrow a pen and some paper, and turning back to observe the vein in Jim's forehead turn a pulsating purple—that's entertainment, folks. Especially when Jim's been trying to date Denise and she's turned him down—for Tom. Can it get any better? Yes, actually—if the meeting is initiated by George, who calls more meetings than anybody so he (a) can think out loud, and (b) spread accountability if his project tanks. Miss *that*? Never. Denise staring icily at Barbara. Jim staring icily at Tom *and* Denise. George annoying everyone by asking them what they think so he can decide what he should think—that's an entertainment value of 10 on the index and we haven't even gotten to the conference call.

I really loved conference calls. They began by someone calling into a central number, followed by 15 minutes of: "This is Bob in Dallas"; "Ted here, in London"; "Where's Joanne? Do we have Joanne?"; "Yes, but you're breaking up." "OK, Bob? Bob? Where's Bob? We've lost Bob. Ted? Are you still there? Ted?" This is followed by hanging up and redialing while everyone curses the new phone system.

It got even more amusing when the call finally began. Bob, the client in Dallas, would start making requests that the people on our end thought were outrageous. But they can't say it because, well, Bob's the client—He Who Must Be Obeyed. It was always fun to see someone tell Bob pleasantly, "Sure, we can do that," while making an obscene gesture at his disembodied voice. It was even more fun when the call was over and people would excoriate old Bob with all manner of vicious names, only to stop suddenly for fear that perhaps he hadn't hung up yet. "Bob? Are you there?"

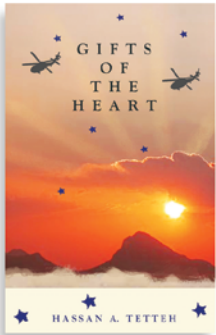
I don't miss work but I must say, I do miss meetings. **T**

JOHN CADLEY, a former advertising copywriter, is a freelance writer and musician living in Fayetteville, New York.

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The eBookIt.com bestseller *Gifts of the Heart* is a powerful and rich story that takes you on a fast-paced adventure around the world and changes your life forever. Hassan Tetteh tells the story of Dr. Kareem Afram, a young surgeon, who comes of age serving his country in the Afghanistan desert where he encounters the fragility of life. The story is at once raw and beautifully allegorical. The book transcends any particular creed. Ultimately, it is about living with a sense of unflinching gratitude for the gifts of life and using those gifts in service to something beyond ourselves.

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This simple-to-read fiction book is set in Singapore. *Happy Go Lucky* is about making changes in our lives based on what makes us happy and eventually we will attract happy people and lucky outcomes that we dream about. The key highlights includes Happy's birth

in 1984, living in a public flat, studying in a neighbourhood school, serving in the army to escort the President on the police bike, selling insurance, romances, achieving financial freedom with multiple sources of passive income and meditation to discover his purpose of living. In the end, Happy realised his ultimate dream of a happy family, running a resort and cruise service to connect with whales and dolphins in Australia!

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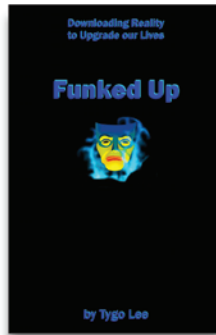
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In addition to all the good stuff in life, we tend to mess things up a lot too, and *ignoring* our difficulties or detrimental behavior doesn't make it all go away. In general, a lot of our problems arise from our *self-centered* and *materialistic* orientations along with our negative or violent *emotional swings*. Hey, isn't it about time we started getting ourselves...

unfunked? Besides enjoying many thought-provoking and inspiring *short stories* and *fantasy tales*, you'll explore a great variety of the *causes* of our frequent daily problems, helping you to live much more *happily* and *productively* in the future. (tygolee.com to see all of Tygo's 10+ books)

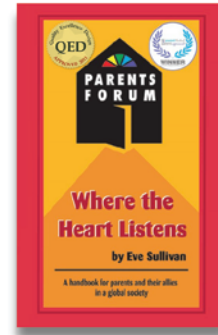
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This is a book written by movers and shakers, for movers and shakers. This is not for the fakers. If you want the substance, the content, the business frameworks, ideas to win, to progress in business, then learn how to create and use business-to-business network. Most people do not have a clue that corporations run the

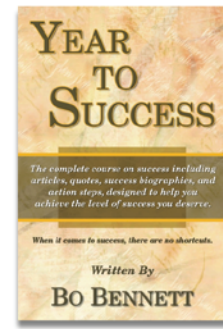
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