

TOASTMASTER®



How to Be Fascinating

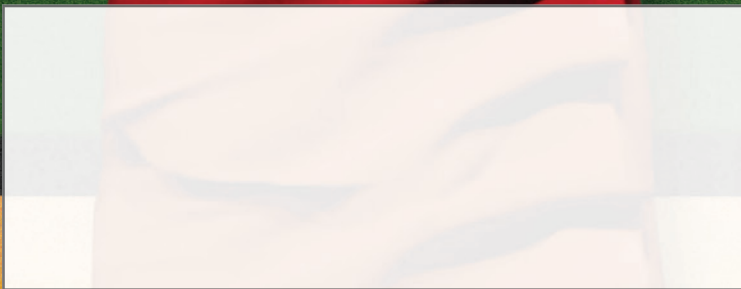
Sally Hogshead shares tips on how to captivate your audience.

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Today's Influential Bloggers

Tap into the power behind their posts.

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A Heartfelt Smile



In my early teens, I used to travel with my grandfather to his farmhouse in Ras Al Khaimah, one of the seven Emirates in United Arab Emirates. On the way, we passed the Emirate of Sharjah, where a huge sign on the side of the road read, “Smile, You are in Sharjah.” That was special to me.

When we think of places to visit or people to meet, we wonder what the initial interaction will be like. Will we be greeted warmly? Will we see a smiling face, or will we be met by a flat expression of dissatisfaction and despair? And isn't that exactly what the other person wonders as well?

Throughout the years, I have learned a valuable lesson from the people I have met about the importance of a positive first impression. The fact of the matter is it only takes a smile to make a good impression.

People are not merely interested in your smile; they are interested in what is behind it.

That sounds easy, but it works only if we receive a smile back. What I have come to realize is that people are not merely interested in our smile; they are interested in what is behind it.

There are three types of smiles.

The Heartless Smile: This lasts only a few seconds, even though the person is still engaged in conversation.

The Half-hearted Smile: This comes from a person who is courteous but preoccupied with other matters or people.

The Heartfelt Smile: This one is most welcomed. It is smooth and effortless, and most importantly, it is genuine.

You might notice that the quality of a person's smile doesn't depend on how wide it is, how many facial muscles are involved or how white the person's teeth are. What matters is that it comes from the heart.

Humans are born with the amazing skill of being able to feel the “vibes” in their surroundings and the emotions of other people. Make *your* vibes genuine.

After decades, the sign on the side of the road to Sharjah is no longer there. However, I still smile whenever I approach the area. Sharjah never expected anything from its visitors, and it always prompted people to smile, gently but consistently. But it's not the sign, it's the warmth of the city that prompted me to reply with a smile.

A heartfelt smile does not come easily. It takes a trained heart. So smile a heartfelt smile, because you are in Toastmasters. **T**

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International President

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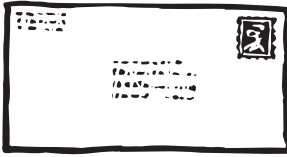
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“Much thanks to our International President for highlighting something really important.”

— Craig Wedge, ACB
BizTalk Toastmasters
Auckland, New Zealand

Facing the Shadows

“The Dark Side of Leadership,” the April Viewpoint written by International President Mohammed Murad, was first-class. It is tempting in our organization, and in life in general, to always focus on the light, without giving proper attention to that which is hidden, unacknowledged, unexpressed.

Real growth occurs when we are willing to acknowledge and address the shadow side of life, however scary this may be, getting the support we need along the way. Much thanks to our President for highlighting something really important.

Craig Wedge, ACB
BizTalk Toastmasters
Auckland, New Zealand

New Travel Plan

When I travel to countries or regions outside the U.S., I yearn to connect with the local people. It used to be that if I visited a different town on the weekend, I’d attend a religious service. Other times, I’d look for association meetings to experience this connection. Today, looking at the “Traveling *Toastmaster*” section in the May issue, it hit me: From now on, the first thing I will do when I make travel plans is look up Toastmasters clubs in the areas I’ll visit.

It’s so perfect, because the traveling I’ll do in these next months and years is directly related to presentations I’ve developed in my local Toastmasters clubs, contests and conferences. Not only will such visits ensure that I learn what the locals know, I’ll surely learn how to speak their language.

Whatever club *you* belong to, if you visit Northern California, consider visiting the Talk of the Town club—your home away from home.

A.T. Lynne
Talk of the Town Toastmasters
San Rafael, California

Rising Above

In her article “Gaining a Better View” (March), Emilie Cortes, ACB, CL, explored two different perspectives on overcoming fear—and strongly correlated them. I was intrigued by the way she related her courage to speak in front of people to her experience climbing mountains. For a beginning Toastmaster like me who is about to give my Ice Breaker and who is from Nepal, a country roofed by the mountains (where I have seen few people like her), I can feel the sheer meaning of “courage” while reading her article.

It was truly motivational and a great read.

Bipin Gaihre
Westside Toastmasters club
Toledo, Ohio

Earthy Complaint

I was disappointed to see the *Toastmaster* encouraging its readers to “Celebrate Earth Day” (April) in the Around the Globe section. Earth Day is irrelevant to being a Toastmaster, so I assume this was a Toastmasters International endorsement to “give one day back to the Earth” and atone for the sins of science, technology and industry.

I hope TI won’t promote other campaigns, regardless of how politically correct they are. I don’t want to someday see the cover of our magazine urging us to “save the whales.” The organization should remain apolitical and stick to its mission.

Dwayne Roberts, DTM
Maverick Toastmasters
Mesa, Arizona

Timely Video Help

The article “Medium of the Moment” (March) came to my rescue at the perfect time. I work with the Emirates Group in Dubai, and the company had a video contest for the staff. We were encouraged

to create a one-minute video on the theme “Be There.” Since I’m not a tech-savvy person, this was a Herculean task for me—but I decided to take the plunge. On the very next day, I received my copy of the March *Toastmaster*, and it was a saving grace.

I learned about such tools as slidesource.com, goreact.com, noteandpoint.com, iconfinder.com ... oh, the list is endless. I applied the knowledge I gained from this research, and believe me, it was magical to see my very own video. I felt immense satisfaction to learn something new and challenging. I have decided to plunge even further and keep learning—and helping others learn too.

Thank you, *Toastmaster* magazine, for yet another amazing issue.

Shalini Menezes, ACS, ALB
Emirates Group Toastmasters
Dubai, United Arab Emirates

Inspiring POW Story

I was awed, inspired and humbled by the article about the late Air Force colonel Laird Guttersen (May). I’ve heard several stories of how prisoners of war coped with their captivity. Being a Toastmaster and a veteran, I found this one to be especially interesting.

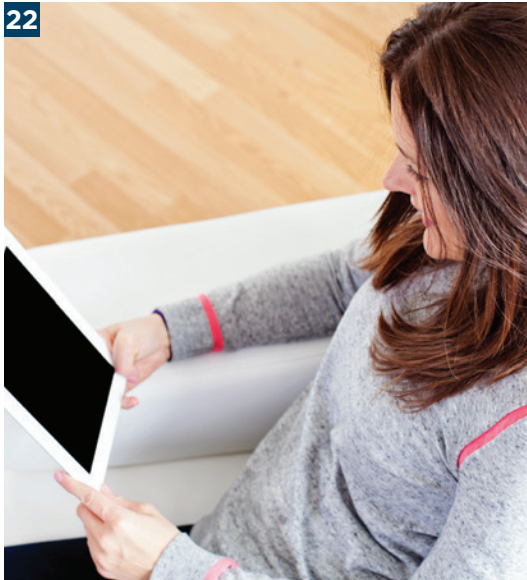
The Hanoi Hilton Toastmasters club co-founded by Guttersen stands right alongside the club started in the former Soviet Union back in the 1960s and the club in Iraq formed during the Iraq War as examples of just how uplifting a Toastmasters experience can be!

Doug Strand, DTM
Harco Toastmasters
Edgewood, Maryland

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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Learning from Influential Bloggers

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Their ideas, suggestions and tips may be useful in your Toastmasters journey.

By Rachelle Sparks

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Want to be more charismatic? Here's how.

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Attend the festivities in Las Vegas, Nevada, August 12–15.

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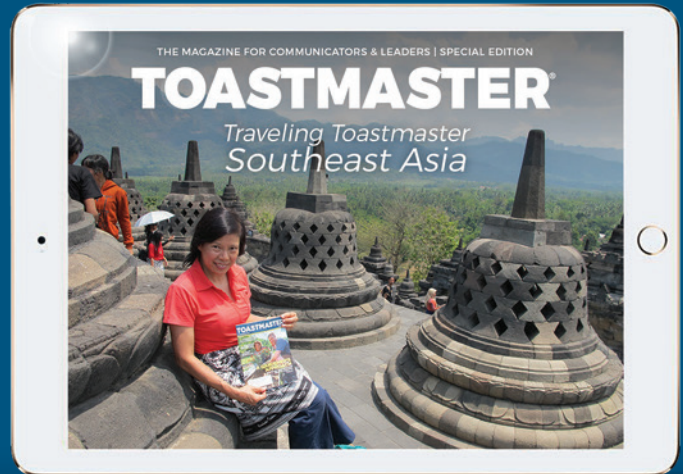
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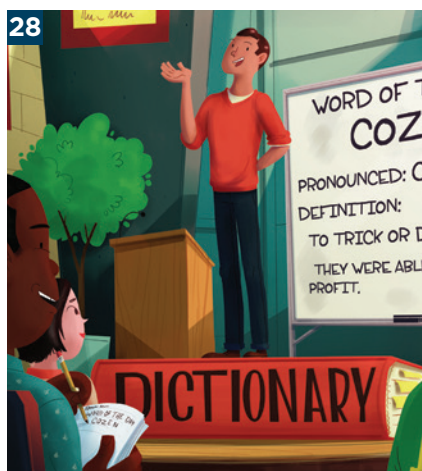
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TRAVELING TOASTMASTER

A Renaissance Man

From exploring the vast oceans by satellite to becoming a multifaceted media magnate, Edward Wedler's diverse career and travels make for interesting dinner conversations.

Born in Melbourne, Australia, Wedler, a DTM, is a self-described snowbird who travels between homes in Annapolis Valley, Nova Scotia, Canada, and Bradenton, Florida. A seven-year member, he is an Ambassador for Toastmasters' revitalized education program. He has served as an area governor and brand ambassador, and is currently a member of the Positively Speaking club in Sarasota, Florida.

How is your career diverse?

My career has evolved from the analytic to the artistic, from science, engineering and business to art and storytelling. The common thread has been creativity and communication. As a satellite oceanographer, my job was to explore the role and capabilities of earth-observing satellites and pass that knowledge on to others. I became a skilled instructor before a major career shift took me into the world of books, publishing and multimedia. To promote my business (and authors' books) I learned how to weave short digital stories for print, large-screen cinemas and workshops. Now that I have retired, I can share my experiences and help others.

How has Toastmasters transformed you?

As a small-business owner, my survival relied on effective speaking skills. Toastmasters taught me to listen, and be tolerant and patient. I also learned that when you raise others' self-esteem, you help make *them* more confident—and you a trusted companion. It all begins with a mutually supportive environment.

Why did you take on leadership roles?

I wanted to know what type of leader I could be. As an Ambassador for the revitalized education program [REP], I have enjoyed the role of a "beta-Toastmaster."

Because I am so passionate about the REP and where it is headed, my enthusiasm can only ignite the passion of others. I feel stoked to be on the front line and learn about what is coming.

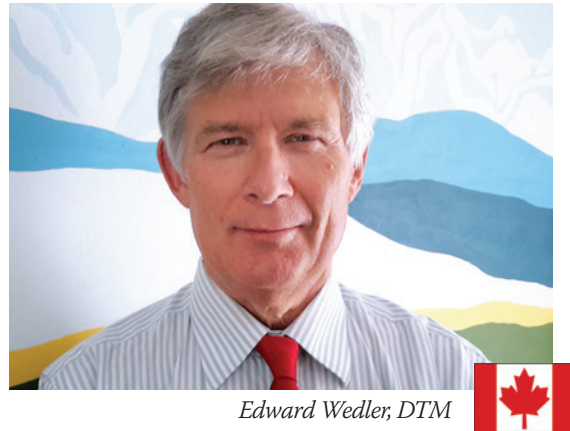
What advice do you have for presenters?

If your life depended on one sentence, what would it be? If it resonates with your audience, then you have found both the right message and the right audience.

French aviator and author Antoine de Saint-Exupéry said that you have reached that point, not when you have nothing left to add, but when you have nothing left to take away. This truism applies to all effective communication.

You also express your ideas through cartoons. What's that like?

Cartoons are like speeches. They let me be creative—to create something from nothing. A good, satirical cartoon can entertain and pack a powerful message—so can your speech. You can see them at www.dootdootdaddy.com.



Edward Wedler, DTM

In Brief

PHOTOS GALORE!

See three photo galleries of members from around the world at www.toastmasters.org/Galleries. Send your high-resolution photos (at least 1 MB) to photos@toastmasters.org for possible publication.

STAY IN THE KNOW

Speech ideas are everywhere. To find inspiration for your next speech, consider Feedly, an app that collects the latest news articles, blog posts, video and audio all in one place, on the topics of your choice. Download the app on your mobile device or web browser. feedly.com

OPTING TO GO PAPERLESS

If you belong to more than one club, you probably receive extra copies of the *Toastmaster* magazine each month. To request fewer copies, email membership@toastmasters.org. You may also request to "go paperless" if you prefer to read the magazine online or on your tablet.

Looking for more information on the
Revitalized Education Program?

Contact your local ambassador
www.toastmasters.org/REP



In Columbia, Missouri, Columbia Toastmasters club members Mark Clervi, CC, and Leaia Walker, CC, (center; facing each other), share their wedding day with fellow members during a special club meeting. Division Governor Kenny Freeman, DTM, (middle) was their minister; Vice President Public Relations Seth Jarboe, CC, CL, (right) was the best man; and Alice Reese, CC, CL, (left) was the bridesmaid.

▶ **CLUB SURVIVAL TIPS**

How to Survive Your Ice Breaker

You've heard speeches by club members and have probably participated in Table Topics. This is your opportunity to give your first prepared talk.

The best way to begin speaking in front of your club is to talk about a familiar subject—yourself. Follow these tips for a positive experience.

- **When writing your speech, create an interesting beginning and ending and memorize them.** Then select three or four main points and emphasize them by using examples, stories or anecdotes.
- **If you think you will need notes, write a brief speech outline on note cards,** which you can place on the lectern. Refer to them only when you need them.
- **Practice the talk until you are comfortable with it.** Don't memorize the body, or the main part of the talk, since you already know all about the subject.
- **Relax.** Nervousness is common to every speaker, no matter how experienced.
- **Begin by facing the Toastmaster** and saying, "Mr. (or



PROJECT 1:

Introduce yourself in four to six minutes.

Madam) Toastmaster," then face the audience and say, "Ladies and gentlemen ..." or "Fellow members and guests ..." Pause, then begin your speech.

- **While speaking, make eye contact** with various members of the audience, so people feel included in your talk. As you do this, glance periodically at the timer, and if you see the red signal while you're talking, move smoothly to your conclusion and finish quickly.
- **After you say your concluding words, nod at the Toastmaster** of the meeting and say, "Mr. (or Madam) Toastmaster" and enjoy the applause.

Cheer Convention Contestants!

One of the best parts of the Toastmasters experience is rejoicing in the success of fellow members. You'll have an opportunity to do just that at next month's International Convention, where 96 members—one qualifier from each district around the world—will compete in the semifinals of the International Speech Contest. Cheer on your district's representative!

More than 30,000 members from 126 countries participate in the contest. Winners advance to the semifinals after club, area, division and district-level competitions. This year will mark the largest-ever group of semifinalists in the contest's history—a testament to Toastmasters International's growth. The convention is August 12–15 at the Caesars Palace Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas, Nevada, USA.

The top 10 contestants in the semifinals vie for the title of Toastmasters' World Champion of Public Speaking on Saturday, August 15. With such outstanding speakers on stage, the championship round is exhilarating to watch. Register for the convention at www.toastmasters.org/Convention. If you are unable to attend, you can still root for your district's winner by watching the contest online: Live streaming coverage of the semifinals and championship round will be available. Whether you are a new or experienced member, jump at the chance to participate in the next Toastmasters speech contest. No matter how you place, you will grow and benefit from the experience. Read the 2015–2016 *Speech Contest Rulebook* at www.toastmasters.org/Rulebook to learn the protocol for all speech competitions: International, Evaluation, Humorous, Table Topics, Tall Tales and Taped.



Members celebrate at the 2014 International Convention in Kuala Lumpur.

▶ WHAT'S THE BUZZ?

What way do you find best to invite, encourage and keep new members?

“

There is never a bad time to invite visitors. I joined a club in 2011 after attending a Speechcraft. These classes have been a great way for our club to gain members. We do it every year. Class attendees will sometimes join when they know that the fee they pay for a Speechcraft gets applied to their membership dues when they join. They also benefit from having up to three of their speeches from the program count toward their Competent Communicator award.

- Ge Lee, ACB, ALB

Russell H Conwell Club ▶ Minneapolis, Minnesota

“

Never pass up an opportunity to invite people to visit a club. Toastmasters is a great mystery to folks who are not aware of the organization. Have an 'elevator speech' about the benefits of club membership (other than just improving your speaking), such as networking, gaining new friends and new perspectives on life. Most think of it as an opportunity to do a Table Topic. Keep it to two minutes or less.

- Chris Eberline, ACB, CL

East Side Club ▶ Brookings, South Dakota

“

Create a friendly, warm environment, and have members greet all guests upon their arrival.

- Darryl Wright, DTM

SBC Toastmasters ▶ Savannah, Georgia

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

Mentor Saro Velrajan, DTM

Part of Abrar Ahmed's job as assistant general manager at NTT Communications is to deliver technical presentations to the company's customers. As he sought ways to reduce his nervousness and improve his communication, not only with his manager and customers but with his wife as well, Abrar picked up the book *No Sweat Public Speaking!* by Fred E. Miller. In it he found stories of how Toastmasters helps people overcome their fear of public speaking. This led him to join the Chennai Speakers Forum club in Chennai, India.

At a club meeting, Abrar met his mentor, Saravanan (Saro) Velrajan, DTM, director of technology at Aricent, a software and technology company. A former division governor, Saro conducts public speaking workshops and serves as a speech contest judge. He mentors dozens of members in different clubs throughout Chennai.

When Abrar had reservations about entering a Humorous Speech Contest in his club, Saro encouraged him to participate—and he did. After that, Abrar went on to participate in the International Speech Contest.

What makes Saro stand out as a mentor?

He is a one-stop resource for Toastmasters projects and for tips on public speaking, leadership and development. When we send him an email, we are assured a response by the next day. He is dedicated to helping his mentees with their presentations. He gives us feedback about speech content, both before and after we deliver our speeches, to teach us the best way to deliver a message.

What successes can you attribute to Saro's mentoring?

Saro has taught me that I can make a difference—either at work through my written or verbal communications with colleagues and customers, or through the speeches I deliver at my club.

Saro encourages me to think beyond common speech topics and advises me to incorporate one or two personal examples into every speech I make. My speeches became better as I followed his advice because doing so helped me to understand where I was lacking.



FROM LEFT:
Abrar Ahmed & Saravanan (Saro) Velrajan



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.

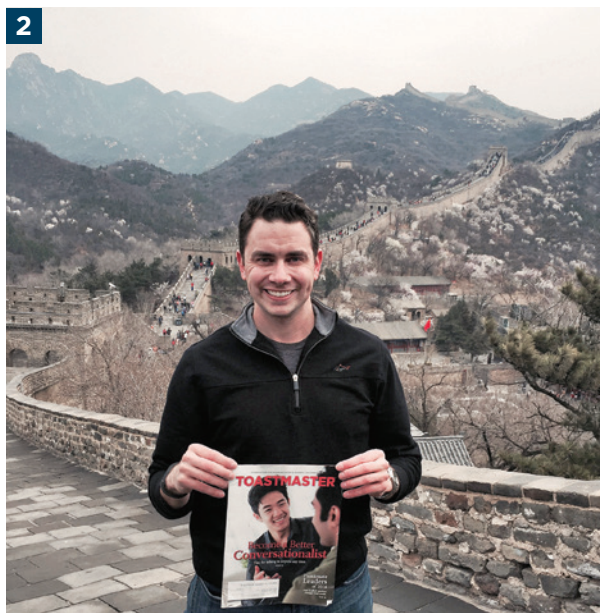


90TH ANNIVERSARY Going Back In Time

Members of the Cambridge Speakers Club, in Cambridge, England, dress in the fashion of the 1920s to celebrate the original Toastmasters club in 1924.



TRAVELING TOASTMASTER



1 | JUSTIN PAPERCK, CC, CL, FROM SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA, visits Torrey Pines Beach, one of his favorite local spots.

2 | DUSTIN GOFFRON, FROM DEERFIELD, ILLINOIS, poses on the Great Wall of China.

3 | AMINAH (LEFT), CC, CL, AND SUSANA TANANG, CC, BOTH FROM TANGERANG BANTEN, INDONESIA, visit the misty Mount Bromo, an active volcano in East Java, Indonesia.

4 | TANYA WONG, FROM SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA, braves the Arctic cold to see the Northern Lights in Whitehorse, Canada.



View more photos on your tablet or on our Facebook page: Toastmasters International Official Fan Page.



PICTURE YOURSELF HERE! Pose with the *Toastmaster* magazine —print or tablet edition—during your travels and submit your photos for a chance to be featured in an upcoming issue. Visit www.toastmasters.org/Submissions. Bon voyage!

Taming the Winged Creatures Within

How I overcame my fears and became a political candidate.

BY KEN V. KRAWCHUK, DTM

Butterflies? Hah! With me, it was more like pterodactyls.

Many people are uncomfortable speaking in public. Some are nervous. Others are just plain scared. They should all count themselves lucky, because for me, I was downright terrified.

Take, for example, the time I went to a political meeting. I'm a huge space buff, and I wanted to question my congressman about NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration). Well, I suddenly found myself standing there in front of all those people, and that's when the pterodactyls struck: Halfway through my question I suffered an asthma attack; and by the time I finished, my voice was hardly a whisper.

I have my own mantra, short and sweet: "If it is to be, it is up to me."

Afterward, a member of the audience approached me and observed, "Nervous, huh?" I could only laugh. He asked me if I had ever heard of Toastmasters. I wish I could remember his name, because his question was the first step of a journey that forever changed my life.

Not long afterward, I found myself hiding in the back of the room at my first Toastmasters meeting. It took me three meetings to finally muster enough courage to give Table Topics a try, then another six months before I dared to give my Ice Breaker. And when I finally did, all I could manage was to stand in front of the room and read directly off the paper in my shaking hands.

At every step along the way, the impulse to give in to my fears and abandon my Toastmasters folly was overwhelming. But I could plainly see the incremental improvements in myself. My superiors at work also noticed a change, and I found myself called upon to participate in staff meetings and then higher-level meetings, and then I was actually leading presentations. The quiet geek I had once been was slowly being replaced by a competent, confident communicator.



Ken Krawchuk makes a point about economic issues during his 2002 campaign for Pennsylvania governor.

I still attended political meetings, but asthma attacks were now a thing of the distant past. At first I found myself occasionally participating, and then routinely speaking out, even winning people over to my point of view. Before long I was being asked to run for political office.

The philosopher Plato once said that people who are too smart to get involved in politics leave the field open to those who aren't. But I have my own mantra, short and sweet, 10 words of two letters each: "If it is to be, it is up to me." So I decided to run. After all, a good Toastmaster never turns down an opportunity to speak, and being a member had well prepared me for the candidate

role. Dealing with the media and participating in debates is nothing more than an extended Table Topics session, and organizing a campaign is a great way to fulfill the High Performance Leadership project.

At first I sought only local political office, but the closer I came to earning my DTM, the higher the office I went after: from town council to state representative to congressman. Although I didn't win any of these races, my performances were strong enough that I found myself nominated as the Libertarian candidate for Pennsylvania governor, both in 1998 and 2002.

In the 2002 contest, I participated in several nationally broadcast debates and gave speeches before cheering crowds of thousands. I came in third in the race, but I garnered over 40,000 votes—a record for the Pennsylvania Libertarian Party in a governor's race. And it all began with a stranger's offhanded question.

It's been 18 years now since I became a Toastmaster, and if you had asked me back then why I should join, I could not have dreamed of, let alone wished for, the great prizes that have fallen into my lap since that fateful day, all because of the skills I learned from my fellow club members.

And if this geek could triumph over the pterodactyls, there's no question: So can you. **T**

KEN V. KRAWCHUK, DTM, is a member of two clubs in Pennsylvania: *Positively Charged Toastmasters in Philadelphia* and *We The Speakers in Lafayette Hill*.

What's Your Message?

Reach a larger audience by mining common themes in your stories.

BY JUDY CARTER



Judy Carter

Do you have a secret stash of stories you tell friends or share at dinner parties? I'm talking about those stories you know inside and out—the really good ones that people *beg* you to tell over and over. And after you pretend to not want to, you turn a tale loose and leave people laughing, crying or sitting in amazement.

All good storytellers have these anecdotes, but what many don't realize is the hidden value a collection of stories with a common theme can have. My public speaking students are often amazed to learn that their crazy-boss stories or wild family-vacation tales or the story of how they survived an illness (or their childhood) often convey a much deeper message than just entertainment for a few friends. And when they harness that message, and frame it properly, it can be one that businesses will pay to hear.

In the speaking class I'm teaching now, I have a student who works in the public transportation system. She has *hilarious* stories about nightmare bus riders. Now she's putting a collection of them together to create a fabulous speech about using humor to deal with difficult people. Her humorous content is valuable not just to bus drivers but to *anyone* who has to deal with the public. So her potential audience could be ... hmm, let me see ... everyone?

Frame Your Expertise

Another student is an actress with wonderful stories about auditioning for commercials. Appearing in more than 200 commercials has made her an expert on how to interview for a job—and win and wow all audiences. Once we framed what she knew in the right way, she realized how valuable her experience is—not only for actors but for anyone who wants to get a job, land a promotion, win over a jury or just impress someone.

We've all learned something from our years on this planet. Even small, day-to-day struggles to overcome obstacles and

achieve success often have hidden treasure in them that corporations and organizations will pay to hear. I call that the "Message of You," and when we share that message (whether we get paid or not), we all can make a difference in someone else's life.

Are you ready to find your message? You can start off with this exercise from my book *The Message of You: Turn Your Life Story into a Money-Making Speaking Career*. Ask your closest friends, your family members and your co-workers two questions:

"What have you learned from me?" and "What are the stories I tell over and over again?"

When you ask these questions, you're going to be surprised by the responses you get. Try it and find the theme—and value—of the "Message of You." ■

JUDY CARTER is the author of *The Comedy Bible* and *The Message of You*. Free helpful downloads are available at judycarter.com.

Carter will present a session titled "The Message of You: Finding Extraordinary Stories in an Ordinary Day" on August 13 at the 2015 International Convention. For more information, see the next page and visit www.toastmasters.org/Convention.

MORE STORY SUGGESTIONS

Try these five tips to captivate your audience.

- 1 **Tell your stories in the present tense** to make them more dynamic. "There I am ..." is more immediate than "There I was"
- 2 **Add laughs by acting out all the characters** in your story, including people and animals. Rather than narrating your story—"And then my mother told me to get my hair out of my eyes"—act out your mother's part by standing like her and pretending she is speaking to you: "Judy, get your hair out of your eyes!" You can even give voice to inanimate objects. For example, get a laugh by giving voice to a chair: "Oh no! Here comes another butt!"
- 3 **Dramatize your story by accentuating emotional moments.** In these spots, slow down time by speaking the character's stream of thoughts in short, staccato sentences: "OMG! What? Really? OMG! OMG!"
- 4 **Manage your movement.** Do not pace when telling a story, because it can have a hypnotic effect on the audience, making them nod off as well as making you appear nervous. Movement is great when it's deliberate, such as when you act out a character, walk to a different part of the stage when you end a story, or walk over to speak to a different part of the audience.
- 5 **End your story with lessons learned** and give your audience a takeaway. Takeaways can be tips on how your listeners can integrate your message into their lives.



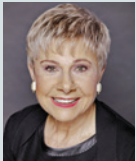
Don't Miss the 2015 International Convention!

If you have ever attended a Toastmasters International Convention, you know why it is such a popular event. The excitement of the 84th annual convention is only a short month away. More than 2,500 members from around the world are expected to attend the festivities August 12–15 in Las Vegas, Nevada. The full registration package is \$575 if purchased before July 19, and \$625 if purchased July 20–August 12.

An extraordinary convergence of diverse cultures and dynamic members, the convention is where attendees vote for international officers and directors, crown the World Champion of Public Speaking, hear speeches and attend education sessions presented by some of today's most stimulating speakers and authors. Information about them and their topics follows.



Golden Gavel recipient Muhammad Yunus is the 2006 Nobel Peace Prize laureate. He founded many cause-driven businesses in Bangladesh, including Grameen Bank which provides microcredit to impoverished people.



Keynote speaker Patricia Fripp, CSP, CPAE—“Under the Magnifying Glass: Good to Great on STEROIDS.” An award-winning speaking coach and presentation skills expert, she is an expert at teaching others how to deliver powerful speeches.



Darren LaCroix, CSP—Prekeynote “SPONGE! What Is Filling You?” and education session with Patricia Fripp “Under the Magnifying Glass: Good to Great on STEROIDS ... in Action!” Darren, the 2001 World Champion of Public Speaking, can prove that anything is possible for those who are passionate about reaching a goal.



Dana LaMon, DTM, AS—“Club Leadership.” Dana is the 1992 World Champion of Public Speaking, and an Accredited Speaker, author and retired administrative law judge.



Judy Carter—“Finding Extraordinary Stories in an Ordinary Day.” A standup comedian and author, Judy coaches speakers on using personal stories and humor as a business tool.



Alex Malley—“Life Is Too Short for Fear and Embarrassment.” Alex is the chief executive of CPA Australia, a LinkedIn Influencer and an author. He shares his message about striving to lead “a big life” without fear.




Marilyn Tam—“Leadership Excellence, How You Can Achieve It.” A former executive at Reebok and Nike, Marilyn speaks about achieving happiness and success. She ranks as one of the top 100 leadership speakers in the world, according to *Inc.* magazine.

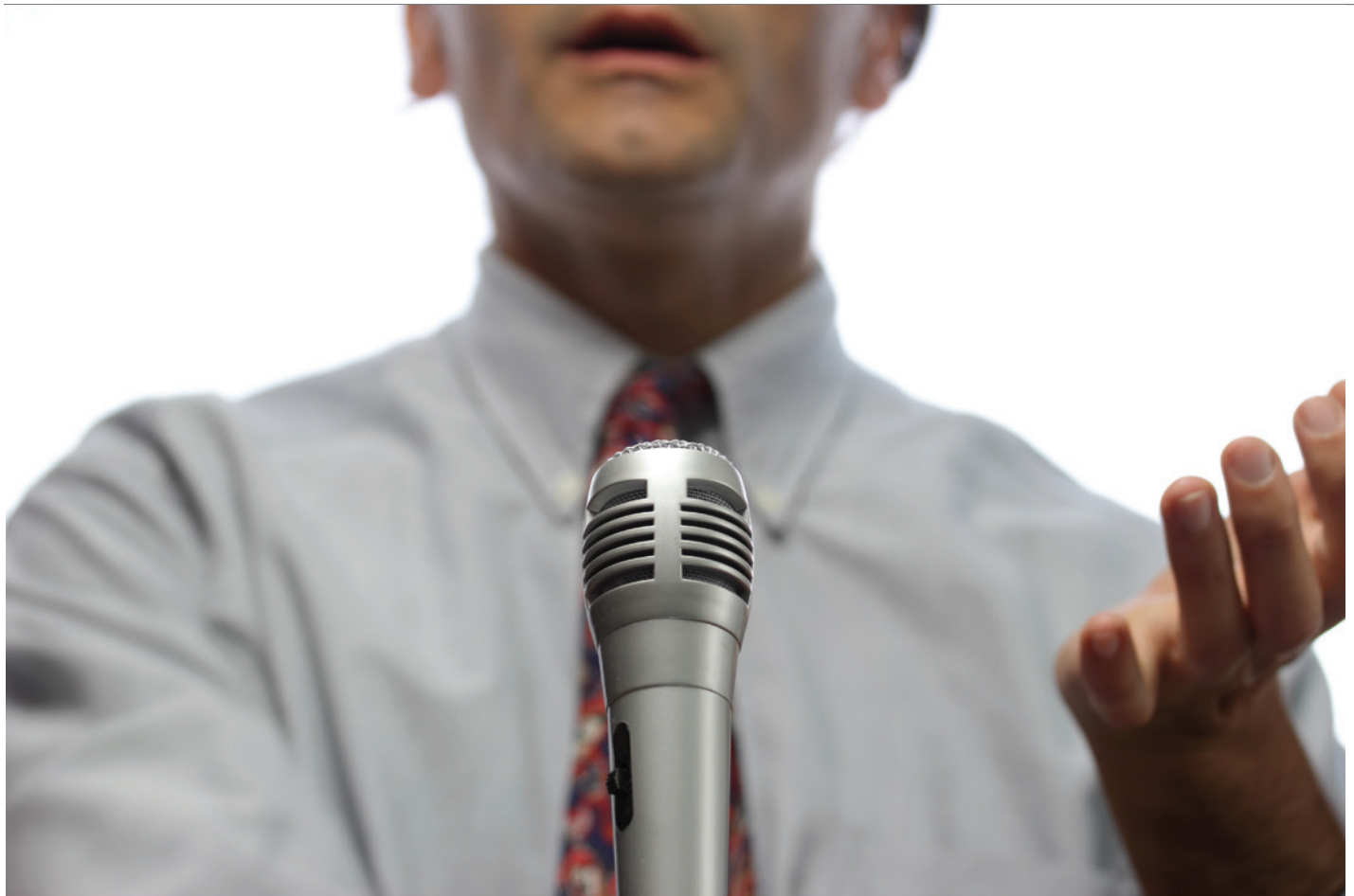


Tim Gard, CSP, CPAE—“Laughter Becomes You.” A humorous speaker and author, Tim coaches businesses on enhancing productivity and employee enthusiasm.

Visit www.toastmasters.org/Convention for the complete schedule of events, education session summaries, speaker profiles and travel information. See page 8 for information about the International Speech Contest, which culminates in the World Championship of Public Speaking.

If you've never attended the convention, it is the global event you do not want to miss. Register today and remind fellow Toastmasters to do the same.

See you there! 



The Power of Sound

How to make the most of audio in your presentations.

BY BRIAN YOUNG

The microphone is an essential tool for many public speakers, and dynamic, high-quality sound can add dimension, emotion and excitement to a speech or an event. If not used correctly, however, microphones can cause problems that

The position of a microphone has a huge influence on sound quality.

distract speakers, irritate audiences and ruin presentations. Fortunately, there are simple ways to ensure proper microphone use, whether it is at your next business meeting, Toastmasters speech contest or wedding toast.

Mastering the Mic

Every voice, microphone, sound system and speaking environment is different, so similar mic choices and techniques will not necessarily produce similar results in all situations. It is important, however, for all speakers to remember a few basic tips when using microphones. Test the sound before presenting. When preparing to use a mic in a club meeting or elsewhere, get there well before your audience arrives.

If you are speaking in a venue that does not have a professional technician, ask someone to check the sound quality, in the area where the audience will be seated, as you recite some of your speech through the microphone; then make any adjustments that you can to maximize clarity and eliminate feedback (those screeching,

hooting or howling sounds that often disrupt presentations). If you are speaking on a professional stage, ask for a “sound check.”

You won’t always be able to choose your microphone but, when given the opportunity, selecting the right type of mic for your voice, your presenting style and your surroundings can help ensure your sonic success.

Wireless Lavalier Microphones

Many speakers prefer wireless lavalier (“clip-on”) microphones because they allow the presenter to roam the stage with both hands free. However, lavaliers can sometimes be more problematic than other



types of mics, especially when a speaker has a very soft voice, and/or when the room is large, reverberant, prone to feedback or all of those things.

A lavalier microphone cannot be positioned close to the mouth, where the sound is strongest, so it's not always a good choice for a speaker with a soft voice. The microphone may struggle to pick up and amplify a soft voice, thereby making it difficult for the speaker to be heard clearly in a large room. Although turning up the microphone volume might seem like the obvious solution, this often causes feedback rather than solving the problem.

The position of a microphone has a huge influence on sound quality. The best place to clip a lavalier mic depends on a number of variables but, in general, the center of the chest—roughly three to eight inches below the chin—is usually the preferred area. You might see lavalier mics positioned differently on TV, but using such a microphone on a stage with a public address system and a moving presenter can be a different matter. Testing your microphone with a sound check in the area where you will be speaking helps determine the best mic position for your voice and the situation.

Also consider the “fashion factor.” Never let clothing or accessories cover or brush against a lavalier mic, as this can mask the sound and create noise. Loose necklaces or other jewelry can bang against the mic or make rattling or jangling sounds that will be amplified. And when using a lavalier, plan to wear clothing that allows you to easily and firmly clip the mic to the correct area of your body.

An excellent hands-free alternative to the lavalier is the headset or “earset” type of microphone often seen in TED Talks and other high-profile settings. This type of microphone is positioned on the cheek or next to the mouth. It can pick up the voice more effectively because it is much closer to the mouth and it always maintains that exact distance, regardless of which way the speaker's head is turned. Unfortunately, such mics are not available in many nonprofessional or average speaking environments.

Hand-Held Microphones

Except for the fact that it will occupy one of your hands, a hand-held microphone is usually a good choice for most speakers



and will often provide the best sound quality.

These microphones are normally capable of amplifying even very soft voices with less risk of feedback than lavaliers—mainly

because they can be held very close to the mouth. If you have a loud voice and/or if the volume of the sound system is too high and cannot be adjusted, you can usually compensate by simply holding the mic farther away.

The best distance at which to hold a microphone depends on a number of factors, but most work well when held somewhere in the range of one to four inches from the mouth (farther away when yelling).

If there is too much bass (when your voice sounds too deep, muddy or boomy), you can usually minimize this effect by increasing your distance from the mic—but you may have to speak louder. If you hear popping or wind-like sounds when you speak, try keeping the top of the vertically held mic beneath your lower lip, allowing your breath to travel over and above the top of the mic at a right angle rather than directly into it.

Lectern Microphones

You will usually find one of two common types of microphones attached to a



lectern. The first type is a long, slender, black mic with a slender, black, metal or foam top (often seen on televised awards shows and at high-level corporate events). The other type has a thicker, bulkier design (often a hand-held mic mounted to the lectern) with a larger, metal ball/screen or foam top.

The more slender type is generally not used as close to the mouth as a hand-held mic and often distorts or “pops” when a

speaker is too close. The optimal distance depends on the speaker and the situation but approximately six to twelve inches is normally an acceptable range.

The bulkier type of mic is usually attached to a heavier type of moveable arm. It is often better to speak closer to this type of mic. Before your speech, check the mic position for sound quality and practicality. Make sure that it does not interfere with the reading of your notes or the audience's ability to see your face.

When using either type of microphone, try to remain in the same general location at the lectern while speaking, unless you're in a small room where minimal amplification is needed and your voice is not being recorded or broadcast. Be careful not to wander away from the mic or turn too far to one side or the other, especially when using a more closely positioned mic.

Enhance Your Presentations

Even if none of your presentations or events involve huge budgets, high-profile audiences or the world's finest equipment, you should still make every effort to maximize audio quality and minimize the risk of sound problems. Awful audio and malfunctioning microphones frustrate the audience and make bad impressions; but clear, intelligible speech amplification and high-fidelity music and effects can contribute immeasurably to the overall impact of a presentation or event.

Just like the eloquent, passionate delivery of a well-crafted speech, or the high-quality projection of visually dynamic graphics, the amplification of sound should always enhance—not undermine—your professional image and the quality and impact of your work. ■

BRIAN YOUNG is an audio engineer, event producer and member of HDR Lawrenceville Toastmasters in Lawrenceville, New Jersey. He is the founder of “Sonic Survival for Speakers,” an instructional program and help desk that provides microphone/audio advice to public speakers, meeting planners and organizations. For more information, visit www.sonicsurvival.com.

Fascinate Your Audience

Want to be more charismatic?
Sally Hogshead tells you how.

BY DAVE ZIELINSKI

It's a question as old as the great Greek orators: Is charisma inborn or can it be learned? Sally Hogshead would tell Toastmasters that you don't have to change who you are to become more charismatic or fascinating, only become more of who you are—and that starts by developing a better understanding of how the world sees you.

Hogshead is an accomplished keynote speaker and author of the book *How the World Sees You: Discover Your Highest Value Through The Science of Fascination* (2014). The book's premise: We already know how we see the world, but most of us don't fully understand how we're perceived by others. By learning more about the aspects of our personalities that make us different and most appealing to audiences, we can become more authentic and confident as speakers and leaders.

"If Toastmasters understand how the world sees them at their best, they can hone their content, delivery style and even how they market themselves around those unique qualities," says Hogshead.

The goal is to create what Hogshead calls a "fascination advantage" when speaking. Toastmasters first have to understand the distinct way their personal advantages engage audiences—or the club members that they lead. Fascination isn't the same as interest,

Hogshead stresses; rather, it's a neurological state of intense focus and engagement, a force that rules our thinking and emotions.

"Fascination means audiences are focused only on you and not thinking about their to-do lists or what just landed in their email," she says.

Are You a Change Agent or an Anchor?

Creating fascination begins with knowing your distinct personality archetype. You might be the *Change Agent*, entrepreneurial and creative with strong goals; the *Beloved*, nurturing, supporting and comforting; the *Anchor*, pragmatic, analytical and intelligent; or another archetype. (To learn more about your personality strengths, read the accompanying article *Know Thyself* on page 19.)

Hogshead writes in her book that the ability to fascinate often is confused with charisma; she views charisma as only one "flavor" of





Sally Hogshead is a keynote speaker, branding expert and best-selling author. She teaches people how to hone in on their personal advantages to become more persuasive and influential. Above, she speaks at a corporate training event at Disney's Contemporary Resort in Orlando, Florida, in January 2015.

fascination. While some archetypes, like the *Ringleader*, have the personal magnetism or “it” factor associated with charisma, others such as *Wise Owls* are more observant or reflective. In one person charisma might be a powerful confidence, in another it might be a sense of mystery. “Each of these personalities can be equally fascinating,” Hogshead writes.

When Anchor archetypes communicate at their best, for example, they are perceived as protective, purposeful and analytical, Hogshead says. If Anchors tap those natural strengths when speaking or leading, rather than trying to be some archetype they’re not, they’ll be seen as more confident and focused.

If Anchors communicate those same strengths when leading a crucial meeting, she says, “They’ll be more likely to get people to listen, remember and take action.”

Conversely, if your archetype is Catalyst, you’ll be most influential and impressive when thinking out of the box and bringing naturally high energy and passion to the stage. Hogshead herself is that archetype. “Before I go on stage, I think to myself, if I can engage and fascinate by using my archetype I will be more authentic and in the flow when speaking,” she says.

It’s important for Toastmasters to focus on those qualities that come most naturally to them, Hogshead says. “It helps us relax, be more engaging and focus on our messages,” she says. “Too many speakers try to water down their dominant traits in efforts to be something they’re not, but they lose the qualities that make them most compelling to their audiences.”



Sally Hogshead's fascination assessment identifies 49 personality archetypes. Each one is a combination of two of the fascination advantages that each person possesses.

THE 7 FASCINATION ADVANTAGES

As part of her extensive research into the concept of fascination, Sally Hogshead created the “7 Fascination Advantages,” or distinct ways for speakers and leaders to add value and fascinate others for different reasons. While Hogshead says no one advantage is better than the others, one or two will be most effective and authentic for you. You can help determine what those are by taking her online fascination assessment (page 19).

The seven advantages:

- 1 If your primary advantage is **Power**, you communicate with authority and confidence.
- 2 If your primary advantage is **Passion**, you build connections with your warmth and enthusiasm.
- 3 If your primary advantage is **Mystique**, you impress with your analytical skills and thoughtful communication.
- 4 If your primary advantage is **Prestige**, you earn respect by setting high standards.
- 5 If your primary advantage is **Alert**, you keep people and projects on track by managing the details.
- 6 If your primary advantage is **Innovation**, you push a company to innovate with your creative ideas.
- 7 If your primary advantage is **Trust**, you earn loyalty as a consistent and familiar presence.

Reprinted from the book *How the World Sees You: Discover Your Highest Value Through the Science of Fascination*.

A Tale of Two Colleagues

In her book, *How the World Sees You*, Hogshead tells a story that illustrates how we all fascinate or engage others in distinct ways. In Hogshead's first job, as a copywriter at an ad agency in the Midwestern United States, she worked with two stand-out colleagues: one an account executive who was quiet and unassuming, yet brilliant. The other was the charismatic agency president, who showed up on his first day wearing daring red glasses and a bold attitude. He was a “rainmaker,” a creative force who could woo new clients.

There was some natural tension between the two colleagues.

“The president and the account executive offered different competitive advantages,” Hogshead writes. “Both of these men were exceptional in their jobs. One competed by leveraging his personal magnetism, the other by quietly and systematically solving problems.”

So which Archetype triumphed? The answer is both—in different ways.

“Individually they maximized their own advantages to fascinate clients, and together their differences complemented the team's ability to win,” Hogshead writes. “*There is no one right way to fascinate people.*” Sometimes the president would dramatically read a TV commercial script to wow a client with a big idea. Yet when high-level thinking was in order, the account executive captured everyone's attention with his strategic approach.”

How to Develop Charisma

Nick Morgan is among those who believes speakers can learn their own brand of charisma—it's not bestowed upon them out of the womb. Morgan, founder and CEO of presentation-skills coaching firm Public Words, Inc in Boston, says charisma isn't just a clichéd concept that attracts us to speakers through their commanding presence or resonant voices.

“What charisma is is *emotional focus*,” Morgan says. “We are charismatic effortlessly as children, and that's something we have to learn to summon as adults.” The child who wins a prize

in grade school and arrives home bursting with excitement to breathlessly recount the tale for mom is showing charisma. “As children we let our whole being be consumed with that emotion,” Morgan says. “And we are hard-wired as human beings, as audience members, to be drawn to strong emotions.”

What does that charisma look like in leaders? Morgan chronicled one example in a blog post about Australian Army Chief Lieutenant General David Morrison. Morrison was forced to deal with a scandal in his nation’s armed forces regarding inappropriate behavior toward women soldiers. His response to the situation in a public service announcement (PSA) caught Morgan’s eye.

“General Morrison is angry, and it shows—in the clenched jaw, the lowered eyebrows and narrowed eyes, the fierce eye contact and the stillness of his head,” Morgan writes. “As a result you can’t take your eyes off of him. You don’t have to get angry to be charismatic, but you do have to focus on strong emotion. Don’t fake it; feel it.”

The PSA also is a model of clarity and straight talk, according to Morgan, which is another hallmark of charisma. “There is no weasel wording or bureaucratic double-talk. He lets both the public and the armed services know what they should expect and do.”

Too often what happens to speakers is that, instead of applying such emotional focus, they let themselves become distracted by all the things that could go wrong with a speech, Morgan says. “And when they walk on stage, their body language betrays them, leaking that scattered sense of presence and low-level feeling of danger,” he says. “That is not particularly charismatic.”

Charisma also is connected to physical presence. “At first walking all over the stage seems high energy and cool,” Morgan says, “but very quickly the audience gets tired of trying to track the speaker.”

Whether it’s creating a sense of fascination or charisma, developing a deeper understanding of our personal strengths and having the courage to show focused emotion can go a long way toward making us all more impactful communicators and leaders. ■

DAVE ZIELINSKI is the editor of *PresentationXpert* newsletter, which provides tips for designing and delivering high-impact presentations (www.presentationxpert.com). He also is editor of the book *Master Presenter: Lessons from the World’s Top Experts on Becoming a More Influential Speaker*.

📱 **WATCH AND LEARN ABOUT** more ways to be fascinating by downloading the tablet app.

KNOW THYSELF

To help people better understand and capitalize on their core strengths, speaker and author Sally Hogshead created the *Fascination Advantage Assessment*, a series of questions designed to help participants develop greater insight into how the world sees them. More than 600,000 people have taken the assessment. This tool is based on two decades of quantitative and qualitative research on how others become fascinated by certain people.

Hogshead and her team measured hundreds of thousands of participants, and worked with teams inside companies like General Electric, AT&T and Cisco, to isolate the different types of communication that trigger fascination responses in listeners’ brains. That research went into creating the assessment.

Interested Toastmasters can take the assessment at no cost by visiting the website <https://portal.howtofascinate.com/you> and entering this assessment code: **Toastmasters**. You’ll learn the “highest and best value” of your own archetype and the two fascination advantages you possess that can help you communicate in your most compelling manner.

Results can help you improve as a speaker and leader, but they will have other benefits as well.

“When you take the assessment and see your custom report, pay attention to the words that stand out for you,” says Hogshead. “You can use it to improve your speaking approach, but also to become more effective in your business or personal life and to market yourself more successfully.”

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Communication Challenges of a Techie

An engineer learns to leave his comfort zone — and thrive.

BY CARL RENTSCHLER, ATM

A colleague once told me that you can identify an extroverted engineer from the way he looks at your shoes when talking to you, rather than looking at his own. This may be a joke but there's truth in the observation that people in highly technical fields are often less extroverted than their non-technical counterparts.

I can remember being a young engineer and dreading going to meetings and business lunches. I was always a hard worker, but I feared meeting with my boss because he might give me responsibilities that required

I have heard atrocious speeches by technical people, and, frankly, they seem oblivious to the fact that they are not getting through.

me to speak in public. I knew I needed help in that area, but I was too nervous to get it.

I finally heard about Toastmasters and mustered up the nerve to call someone in a local club. Fortunately for me, I reached Jim, and he was persistent. Jim called me a few times before that first meeting to make sure I would not back down, and for this I will always be grateful.

I remember how I struggled with those early speeches and how many times I



reworked what I was going to say. My club was very supportive and led me through the days when I was ready to give up. Jim was a relentless mentor and even had me serve as an area contest chairman during my first year. I was shaking, but it all worked out and Jim was always there when I stumbled. Slowly, each speech became easier to deliver and my preparation time was reduced. I could feel it all coming together.

Reflecting on Lessons Learned

Fast forward a few years. My confidence improved at work and instead of keeping a low profile, I volunteered for assignments. The promotions came and I led teams that included more than 50 people. I stayed with Toastmasters through my years of career growth because it always gave me the boost I needed. I was fortunate to ultimately become a vice president in a major corporation.

Now, 33 years later, I have a better perspective on why technical people like me might struggle with verbal communication.

- **We often don't know we have issues.** Because we are good on the technical side, "technocrats" feel they are equally



good at soft skills such as communication. I have heard atrocious speeches by technical people, and, frankly, they seem oblivious to the fact that they are not getting through. Worse yet, when they make it to a high level in an organization, the situation worsens because they have to communicate with more people, many of whom are outside the organization. This can lead to a negative perception of the organization.

- **We don't see communication skills as essential.** Many technical people believe effective communication is something that has to be endured to get to the technical "meat."

- **We are not expected to be strong communicators.** Some technical people may feel they are counted on for their knowledge and that everyone will understand if their communication is less than perfect. Exacerbating the problem is that many companies do not offer them the chance to improve their communication skills.

- **It's not part of our makeup.** Some techies like me give up on effective communication because we feel it is not in our personality, or because we are intimidated by the extroverted and gregarious people around us. It is wrong to assume that introverts are poor communicators. Actually, introverts tend to be good listeners and therefore have the capability to be strong communicators if they are motivated.

My personal journey toward improved communication was a struggle, mainly because I was a fearful speaker. Fortunately, I always had a do-not-give-up attitude, and this taught me to push hard to overcome obstacles. What finally motivated me to improve was seeing that less qualified people in my company were advancing over me because they presented themselves much more confidently and had better communication skills.

These steps were crucial to my journey:

- 1 **Admit that help is needed.** Once I told myself I needed help in communication, an important step was taken. I was glad I made my decision to join Toastmasters, and often wish I had done it sooner.

- 2 **Choose the right training venue.** I had heard of Toastmasters through colleagues but knew little about it. I finally heard about a club in my neighborhood that fit my schedule, and Jim gave me the encouragement I needed to attend my first meeting.

- 3 **Get totally engaged.** I quickly learned that going full bore was the best way to get the most out of Toastmasters training. I actively gave speeches and within a year became a club officer. Over the years I encountered many new members who were spotty attendees or who were not actively completing manual projects. This is not conducive to learning.

- 4 **Stay with it.** I have now been with the same club for 33 years, and the learning continues. When I miss meetings because of business travel, I soon slide back into ruts and need fine-tuning. I always get my flaws corrected when I return to the club. Plus, because of our group's diverse membership, I am constantly learning about new topics.

Technical people can face communication gaps that colleagues from other fields may not face. Some of this is due to the public perception that techies are "geeks" who are best kept in a room to do what they do best. Based on my own journey, it is possible for techies to bust away from this stereotype and become accomplished speakers.

Toastmasters is the ideal organization to guide a techie through communication difficulties. The opportunities for professional advancement are then unlimited, because the best candidates for the executive suite are sound analytical people who have good communication and leadership skills. ■

CARL RENTSCHLER, ATM, is a member of the Ephrata "Cloister" club in Ephrata, Pennsylvania. He is an engineer with over 40 years of experience in the power and petrochemical fields.



Learning from **Influential Bloggers**

Tap into the power behind the posts of nine leading web writers.

BY RACHELLE SPARKS

The following nine bloggers were chosen for their influence in the fields of public speaking, communication and leadership. Based upon data obtained in March 2015, they are listed to reflect their Twitter following, in the order of the most followed. With varying backgrounds and philosophies, they offer ideas, suggestions and tips you may find interesting and useful in your Toastmasters journey.



JESSE LYN STONER

www.jessestoner.com

“My intention is to be helpful to those who want to make a positive contribution as a leader at work, in their community and in their personal lives.”

Jesse Lyn Stoner’s blog was listed as one of the 100 most socially shared leadership blogs in 2014 by the Center for Management and Organization Effectiveness. Her blog focuses on all aspects of leadership. “I don’t just tell leaders they should be collaborative or create a shared vision—I explain *how* to do that. When I provide theory, I try to also include practical tips for implementation.”

She has much to offer in terms of experience: Stoner is a business consultant, coach, former executive and bestselling author. She has worked in a wide range of industries, including Fortune 500s, small startups, government agencies and nonprofits.

In addition, she founded the Seapoint Center as a way to work with leaders “to help them create collaborative, engaged organizations that make a powerful and positive impact on the world.”

“I’m a conquistador who liberates the undiscovered, sets boundaries for safe play, and builds fortresses where dreams can be realized.”

www.duarte.com/blog

NANCY DUARTE



Nancy Duarte is indeed a powerful woman. An author and presentation designer, she is the CEO of Duarte, a company that creates presentations and offers training based on its unique VisualStory methodology, which, as she describes it, “applies storytelling and visual thinking to craft persuasive communications designed to shift audience beliefs and behaviors.”

Her blog features commentary on current events, funny musings and serious insights into communication. She writes about how presentations “can take on a life of their own when the ideas within them are worthy of discussion and debate.” She posts articles on familiar topics such as how to overcome presentation anxiety, and uses videos of cartoon characters in articles to illustrate concepts like “Color Theory” and “Be Transparent”[with your audience].

Garr Reynolds uses the lessons and principles from the Zen arts in Japan to reveal simple, concrete advice about communication.

“The one thing that all successful people have in common is persistence.”

www.presentationzen.com

GARR REYNOLDS



Garr Reynolds’ blog Presentation Zen is fresh, current and full of useful presentation tips. A professor of management and design at Kansai Gaidai University in Hirakata, Osaka, Japan, Reynolds is an acclaimed communications consultant and author of the bestselling books *Presentation Zen* and *The Naked Presenter*.

A former executive with Apple, Inc., Reynolds takes a unique approach to communication, using the lessons and principles from the Zen arts in Japan to reveal simple, concrete advice. On his blog, he covers the full gamut of presentation-design tools—from which remote control devices to use to what sites to peruse for quality PowerPoint images. He also populates his site with instructional videos, and writes about how the best leaders and communicators relay their messages.

Named one of the “100 most influential people on the Internet” by New York City’s SAY Media, Reynolds has inspired millions worldwide to communicate more clearly, creatively and visually.



PATRICIA FRIPP

www.fripp.com/blog

“It is not your customer’s job to remember you, but your obligation and responsibility to make sure they don’t forget you.”

Customer service is something Fripp knows well: She started out as a popular hairstylist in San Francisco. Eventually she became a Toastmaster, a National Speakers Association Hall of Fame speaker, an executive speech coach, an author and a sales-presentation trainer. Fripp is the keynote speaker for Toastmasters’ 2015 International Convention in Las Vegas this August.

She advises speakers to “Get your content together, and focus on your premise or big idea, central theme, or dominant thought. Then structure your presentation to prove your premise, or sell the big idea. Your structure is the skeleton under the flesh of your words.”

Follow Fripp’s blog to gather additional tips from her and her expert friends. You can also find her at www.FrippVT.com, a site about her interactive, self-paced, web-based training. “My presentation skills-training is available 24/7,” she says. “Perfect for Toastmasters the world over.”

“When you are successful, you have done more than deliver a good speech—you have built bridges across cultures.”

— John Zimmer, ACB, ALB

Nick Morgan’s blog Public Words focuses on three main areas: “The techniques of public speaking—both content and delivery—the business of professional speaking (how you get ahead, get gigs and manage your business), and the neuroscience behind communicating, especially in presentations.”

Morgan has given speeches around the world on his methods for effective communication, which involve taking his audience on a “decision-making journey.” He recommends connecting with the audience and changing their ways of thinking through steps that answer the question, “What is the problem the audience has for which my information is the solution?”

Morgan has written speeches for CEOs and presidents, and has coached people to deliver TED Talks. He says connecting with audiences involves universal principles. “Much of what we’re learning these days about communication is applicable worldwide. Cultural differences are important, but the neuroscience is human-centric, not culture-centric, so it applies just about everywhere.”

“Six Minutes is founded on the principle that anyone can be a confident and effective speaker with dedication, effort and time.”

<http://sixminutes.dlugan.com>



ANDREW DLUGAN, ACG, CL

Andrew Dlugan jam-packs a great deal of public-speaking topics into his blog. With 20 years of related experience (teaching courses, delivering keynotes and seminars, coaching speakers and emceeding events), Dlugan has a strong foundation of knowledge in leadership and communication.

“I am passionate about the power of effective communication,” he writes, and his website reflects that passion. Tabs lining the top of his site range from “Speech Writing” and “Speaker Habits” to “PowerPoint and Visuals.” He has something there for communicators of any experience level.

Dlugan, a member of the Macdonald Dettwiler & Associates Toastmasters club in Richmond, British Columbia, Canada, who has won a district-level Evaluation Speech Contest, not only writes informative articles from his own perspective, but includes articles from guest authors as well. He also features a number of articles specifically tailored to Toastmasters.



NICK MORGAN

www.publicwords.com

“The only reason to give a speech is to change the world.”



IAN GRIFFIN, ACS

www.exec-comms.com/blog/

“You only have one chance to make a first impression.”

When giving a speech, freelance speechwriter Ian Griffin engages his audience with compelling content—and he teaches his blog followers to do the same.

“Apart from my own quirky postings—e.g., the musings of an Englishman in America and the varieties of cross-cultural communications I observe—I’d say the intent of my blog is to be a focus and forum for professional speaking,” Griffin says.

He has more than 20 years of speechwriting experience in the high-tech industry and is the owner of Executive Communications. Griffin has worked in the corporate communications department at Cisco, Hewlett-Packard and Sun Microsystems.

With posts like “Changing the Corporate Conversation” and “Podcasting Comes of Age,” Griffin’s blog is authentic and timely. He also invites other experts in his field to be guest bloggers. “I cast a wide net in terms of my content,” he says.

Prezi (known for its cloud-based presentation software) recently named John Zimmer’s blog Manner of Speaking one of the top 100 presentation resources on the Internet, and one of its top 10 favorites. Zimmer, a member of the International Geneva Toastmasters in Geneva, Switzerland, has 25 years of public speaking experience as well as a background in international relations and law. He has placed first at the district level in seven Toastmasters speech contests.

Zimmer uses personal stories, current events and humor to inform his readers. “I want them to have fun when they visit my blog,” he says. “I try to inform readers by drawing on personal experiences, actual speeches and analogies with everyday things.” And Zimmer, Canadian-born but living in Switzerland for the past 18 years, recognizes the importance of connecting with international audiences—both verbally and with the written word.

“When you are successful, you have done more than deliver a good speech; you have built bridges across cultures,” he says. “And that is something we need more of these days.” ■

RACHELLE SPARKS is a journalist and author. Her book, *Once Upon A Wish: True Inspirational Stories of Make-A-Wish Children*, was released in March 2012.

“If you’re prepared, knowledgeable, trained and ready, you won’t get caught by surprise.”

www.eloquentwoman.blogspot.com

DENISE GRAVELINE



Denise Graveline has coached and trained thousands of people—from CEOs, public officials and scientists to novice public speakers—to give smarter presentations, translate technical topics to reach public audiences effectively, and deliver speeches with impact. As a speaker coach and trainer, she has prepared speakers to testify before the U.S. Congress, appear on national television and deliver industry keynotes and talks featured on the TEDMED stage and TED.com.

On her blog, she draws on her vast professional experience to educate and inform her readers. There is no hidden meaning behind the title of her blog, “The Eloquent Woman.” As her website states, she provides “inspiration, ideas and information to help women build public speaking content, confidence and credibility.” But her blog is not only for women. While its intent is to “reach that seemingly elusive target women speakers are aiming for,” the blog is intended for women and men.

“All great speeches have one thing in common: They captivate their audiences, for whom time momentarily stands still.”

mannerofspeaking.org

JOHN ZIMMER, ACB, ALB



PHOTO COURTESY SUSANNE KISCHNICK

Don't Deluge with Data

Show, don't tell, when using statistics to sway your audience.

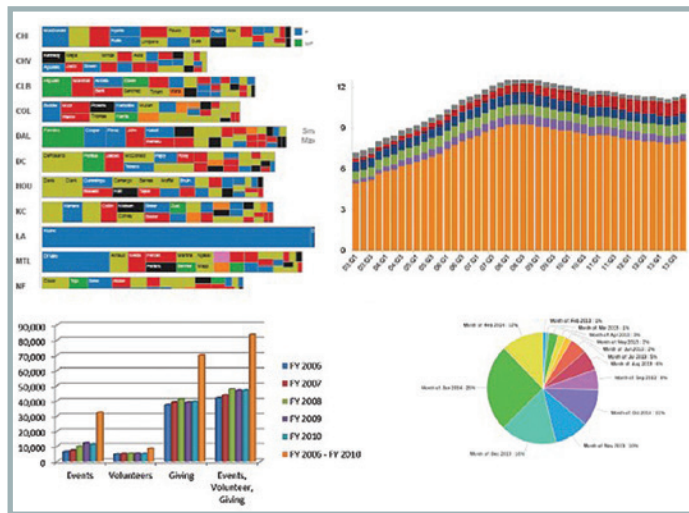
BY JENNIFER CUNNINGHAM

Rewind five years. I had just become the senior director of metrics in the Office of Alumni Affairs at Cornell University, a privately endowed research university in Ithaca, New York. In this newly created position, I was charged with finding relevant information about the school's alumni to share with my colleagues, so they could make better business decisions within their program areas.

These decisions, in turn, could produce more meaningful events, make volunteers more motivated and increase financial support for the institution.

I found lots of fabulous data about Cornell's quarter-million alumni. Lots and lots! And I was eager to share it in presentations to my colleagues. Goals were defined, charts were designed and PowerPoint slides were crafted.

Here are the kinds of charts that I used:



And for all this work, here's the reaction I was getting:



What Happened?!

It's what *didn't* happen that is the Big Data lesson learned. My peers were not inspired. In fact, the task of interpreting this fabulous data exhausted and sort of repelled them. After all, the very definition of "alumni relations" is about the art of leveraging people's nostalgia for their alma maters to create lifelong relationships and connections. It's about people, not statistics. A datapalooza is not going to spark that kind of emotion.

Data can be highly valuable, but you need to frame it in ways that engage and inspire your audience, whether they are work colleagues, volunteers or fellow Toastmasters.

We're all taught that before you can convince someone to support you, you need to get to their hearts before their heads. As best-selling author Seth Godin wrote in a blog post, "The problem is this: No spreadsheet, no bibliography and no list of resources is sufficient proof to someone who chooses not to believe. The skeptic will always find a reason, even if it's one the rest of us don't think is a good one. Relying too much on proof distracts you from the real mission—which is emotional connection."

Former U.S. Vice President Al Gore proved this in *An Inconvenient Truth*, the film adaption of his slide-show lecture about climate change, which won the 2007 Academy Award for best documentary feature. Gore's accomplishment was how he took the data on this issue from the scientists' heads and got it into people's hearts. While he did use charts and graphs in addition to his pictures, he kept them simple and took the time to explain what the audience was looking at.

Real-life Example

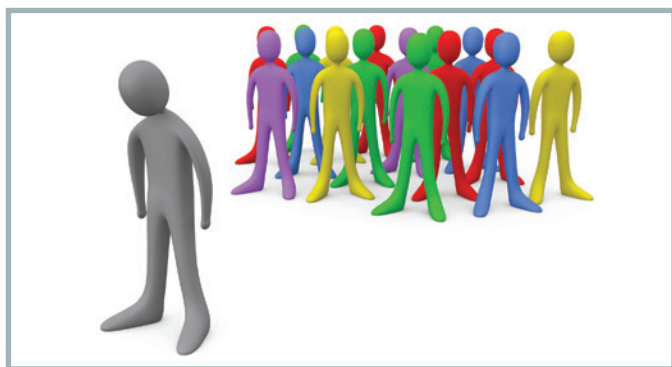
I figured if that principle worked for Al Gore, it might work for me too, so I tried it when I presented class-reunion data to a group of volunteers. Data has shown that when alumni return to campus to connect with classmates and visit their old haunts, they're more likely to show support for the university.

When I dug into the data, it showed that factors like food, weather and dorm conditions aren't the primary drivers of a good or bad overall experience. Rather, the big driver is whether attendees recapture that sense of being reunited with their fellow alumni and their campus.

So how could I represent this in a compelling way in my presentations to reunion volunteers?

Instead of showing them categories and graphs from the text analysis I did, or the cross-tab charts of event promoters versus detractors, I showed pictures representing the criticisms we always get: nasty chicken dinners, dreadful dorm rooms and a word cloud representing "too many" events. Then I showed pictures of the wonderful things: friends hugging, classmates laughing and scenes of the gorgeous campus.

Then the kicker. I talked about how the data showed the impact on the overall guest experience when people didn't feel connected. I used this slide:



There was a gasp in the room. Everyone knew exactly what this felt like. Everyone knew they wanted to prevent this feeling for their classmates.

I can't say that from that moment on the volunteers stopped talking about menu choices and focused exclusively on how to better include and welcome their classmates; after all, their role is to plan the event. However, the staff did report that throughout the kickoff weekend, people were thinking much more about this element of connectedness than they ever had.

Beware the Smarty Pants

Remember that kid in high school who was always trying to show off by tripping up the teacher? That kid *will* be in your audience and he will try to find the flaws in your data and demand that you defend it in front of the audience. No matter how solid your methodology and how well you answer, the exchange has the potential to throw you off your game and undermine your credibility. This is why you never want to show raw data to a big audience.

You also don't want to talk about data you're not 100 percent comfortable with. I once presented findings about Cornell's alumni engagement to a group of peers from other schools, and all was going well. I'd followed my own "show pictures not charts" rules, and then I decided to throw one last concept into the mix.

The problem was, I wasn't really ready to make those results public. The simple chart I used looked pretty, but I hadn't practiced how to present it—I didn't really have a compelling story yet. The more I tried to explain, the more I got confused and I could sense my credibility slipping away.

Memorize a Few Zingers

Whatever your topic, there are usually a few data points that support why it's important. Those points can be: the total number or percentage of people affected by the topic, related growth over the last few years, the impact it has on the world and the amount of money spent on it. Memorize a few of these points and be sure to communicate them during the Q&A session.

Why during Q&A? Effortlessly throwing out data boosts your credibility. The audience knows that you spent time preparing and memorizing your speech—especially if you actually put the data on a slide. When you cite stats off the cuff (seemingly), it shows that you really know your topic. It's unlikely anyone will ask you the specific question to prompt the exact data you've memorized, so don't wait for it. Instead, weave in the stats where it makes sense.

Politicians are masters of this technique: Their strategists and speechmakers have found that a few well-placed statistics improve their credibility.

Hand it Out

A percentage of your audience will want to get their hands into the precise data, so offer them handouts after your presentation. Electronic versions are always preferable for the obvious tree-saving reasons. And if you're hoping to connect with the audience after your talk, get their email addresses so you can send the note and continue the dialogue. This is also a great sales tactic.

Words are Worth a Thousand Charts

If you're not using PowerPoint in your speech, how might you convey the power of data? You can still show, not tell, a data story using descriptive words. A good technique is to start with a compelling story about an individual protagonist, whether it's an individual, animal, company, town, service, team—whatever. Then cite a few statistics to show how this one story applies to the bigger picture.

Presenting data isn't all that different from any other speech. Where we get into trouble with it is when we expect people in the audience to make the leap themselves from chart to heart. They won't. Using stories supported by photos and descriptive words to present your data will evoke an emotional connection. **T**

JENNIFER CUNNINGHAM is a member of the Big Red Toastmasters club at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York. She is senior director of metrics and marketing at Cornell's Office of Alumni Affairs.



READ MORE ON how to keep your audience's attention by downloading the tablet issue.

What's the Word?

The Word of the Day can be exotic, practical or just plain fun.

BY MITCH MIRKIN, CTM

If you are a word nerd like I am—a person who loves words, and actually gets excited about them—then you probably share my enthusiasm for the “Word of the Day” feature that is part of every Toastmasters meeting.

I admit that I am one of those odd people who actually *read* the dictionary from time to time. Not the same way I read a book or magazine, but for 10 minutes or so at a time, thumbing through the pages or perhaps focusing on a particular letter of the alphabet. I always note with

Did you know that “osculate” is another word for kiss?

amazement all the words that I, as a native speaker of English—and, I would like to think, an intelligent and literate one at that—still do not know.

Let me do a little experiment to prove my point. I've just grabbed my dictionary and opened it randomly to a page. It's under the C's, with “cow” and “crab” at the top. I scroll down a bit and come to ... “cozen.” That's right—cozen. Have you ever cozened anyone? I hope not. It means, basically, to trick or deceive.

In all fairness, it should be noted that the English language now has more than a million words, according to the *Global Language Monitor*. Nearly 15 new ones come into existence each day. Who can stay up to date on all that?! (Granted, cozen is not one of those newer ones—the dictionary says it was coined in 1573.)

In any case, the Word of the Day is a chance for all of us to expand our working vocabularies. According to a 2013 article in *The Economist*, the average

native speaker of English has about 20,000 to 35,000 words in his or her vocabulary. Surely, regular attendance in Toastmasters—listening to people's speeches, and paying attention to the Word of the Day—can add many new words to your working vocabulary over time.

But what should club grammarians aim for when choosing a Word of the Day? Should they look for some exotic, obscure word that no one in the club has ever heard of? Or, should they choose a word that perhaps people are familiar with but tend to use or pronounce incorrectly? Even in everyday business writing, there are probably hundreds of such words—and many of us could use a reminder on when and how to use them appropriately.

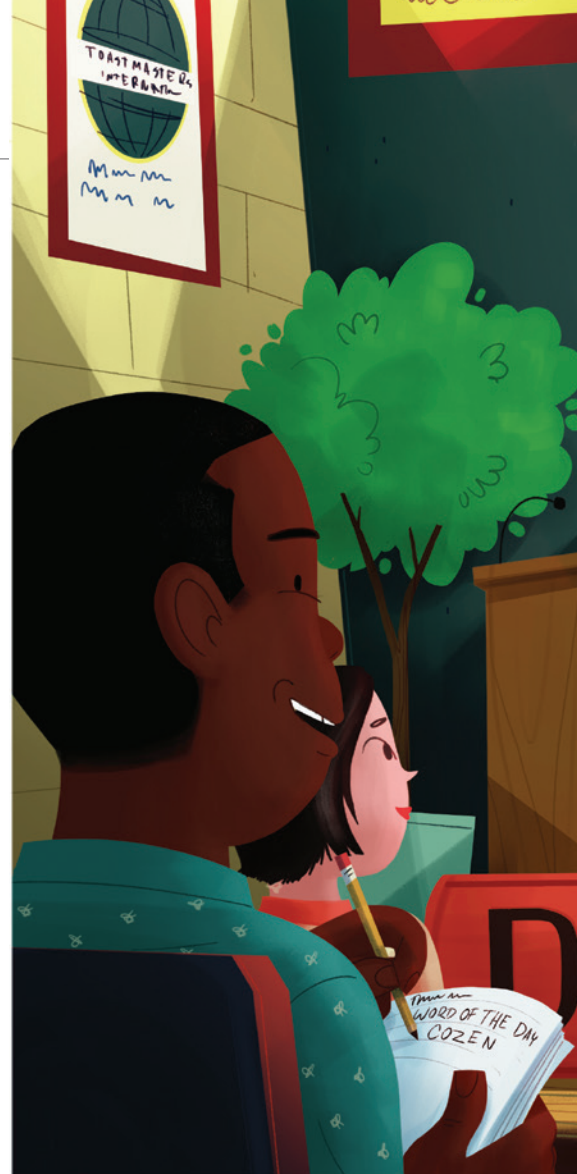
My opinion? Both approaches are valid, and most clubs would do well to weave each one into the mix.

Add a Touch of the Exotic

Here are two advantages to the exotic or esoteric approach:

- **Some of these words are just fun to use or say.** For example, did you know that “osculate” is another word for kiss? What Toastmaster wouldn't get a kick out of learning that and going home to his or her loved one and asking, “Hey, do you want to osculate?” At a recent meeting of my club, the Toastmaster of the Day chose “jollification” (merrymaking). Most of us had fun uttering this mellifluous five-syllable word. One member gave a speech about appreciating beer, and I evaluated it, so for both of us it was a no-brainer to incorporate the Word of the Day!

- **Working these words into speeches can be a creative challenge.** Obscure words are more difficult to incorporate into speeches, but therein lies an enjoyable challenge. If

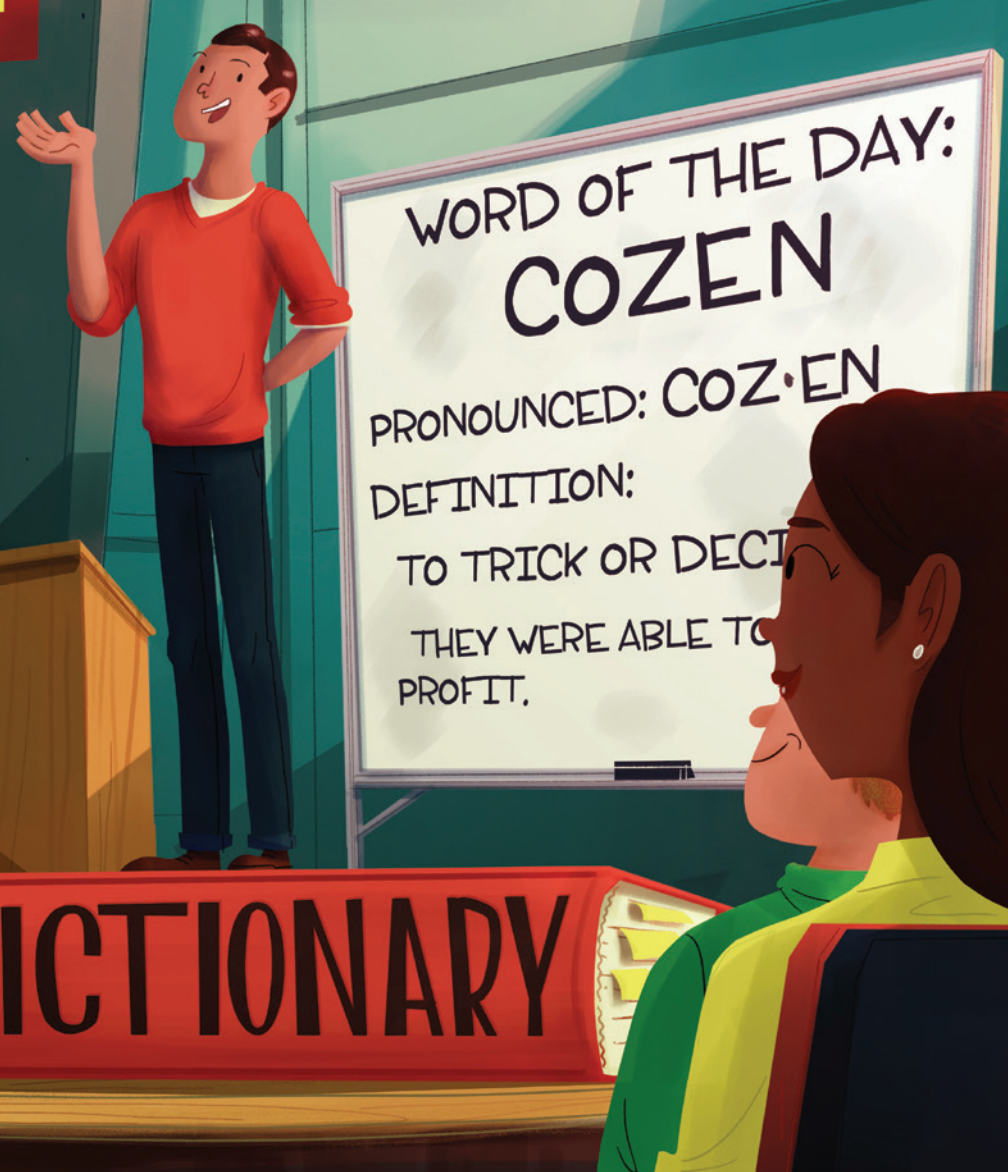


your club's Word of the Day is “defenestrate” (to throw someone or something out of a window) and your speech is on how to deal with frustrating computer problems—well, you know where I'm going with this one.

When using this approach, try to pick words that are more general, that lend themselves to a wide range of topics and themes. The English dictionary is chockfull of jargon—zoological, botanical, medical, and other scientific and technical terms, for example. But it is unfair to expect your fellow Toastmasters to work these types of words into their speeches in any kind of meaningful way.

The Benefit of Using Simpler Words

Truth be told, I am partial to the second approach—choosing a word that is more common and familiar, and that has a more practical, everyday application. There is one major advantage to this approach: A prime goal of Toastmasters is to make us better communicators, and we usually communicate best by using simpler words.



make sure you present the word correctly on the meeting agenda. If the pronunciation is tricky, use an accent mark or bolded type to show which syllable should be stressed. Indicate what part of speech the word is—noun, adjective, verb or adverb. If there’s an interesting story behind the word, such as where it comes from, give some of that detail to help the word stick in people’s minds. And offer one or two sentences that demonstrate how the word should be used.

Unfortunately, I’ve been at meetings when the Toastmaster of the Day mispronounced his or her own Word of the Day, or provided an example in which it was used incorrectly. When this happens, not surprisingly, other speakers may follow suit and botch the word as well.

It’s all in good fun, though. That’s the great thing about Toastmasters. Even when we make a gaffe—sorry, make that *gaffe*; a gaffe is a hook that fishermen use—our fellow club members laugh *with* us, not at us, as we all work together to build our vocabularies, speaking skills, confidence, leadership and character. **T**

MITCH MIRKIN, CTM, is a member of *Randallstown Network Toastmasters*, based in Baltimore, Maryland. He works as a writer and editor for the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

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RESOURCES

Valuable resources for language and grammar use include:

- *The Elements of Style* by William Strunk Jr. and E.B. White
- *The Dictionary of Disagreeable English* by Robert Hartwell Fiske, also known as the Grumbling Grammarian
- *Anguished English: An Anthology of Accidental Assaults Upon our Language* by Richard Lederer (2002 recipient of the Toastmasters International Golden Gavel award)

Lots of folks think using big words makes them sound smarter, but I’m here to tell you it isn’t so. Some of the best writing in the world—*The New York Times*, for example—is written at a high-school reading level. Plain language is where it’s at.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s famous “I Have a Dream” speech—one of the most memorable in modern history—was written at a 9th-grade level. Dr. King knew that the key to reaching his listeners was using not fancy words, but the right words.

Why not use the Word of the Day to help increase your fellow members’ proficiency with common, everyday words they can use in their daily communication. To that end, here is an important category of words to focus on: those that are often confused with similar words and thus used incorrectly.

Perplexing Word Pairs

How about helping your club members sort out the multiple meanings and pronunciations of “effect” (this can be a noun

or a verb) and “affect” (which can also be a noun or a verb)? Or understanding when to use “lay” versus “lie”? This gets into some grammar issues, but hey, isn’t that part of Toastmasters as well?

Even experienced speakers sometimes confuse such pesky words. A few weeks ago, I heard a U.S. senator mistakenly use “regime” when he meant “regimen.” Other problematic pairs: “loath” versus “loathe,” “capital” versus “capitol” and “flaunt” versus “flout.”

Think about how your writing and public speaking will improve if you master some of these challenges. You’ll save yourself from the embarrassment of writing “Our organization will be hosting an imminent scholar” when you really mean “eminent.” No longer will you talk about what someone “inferred” when you really mean “implied.”

How to Present your Word

Whichever approach you use for the Word of the Day—the exotic or the everyday—



Toastmasters for President!

Why, in my not-so-humble opinion,
Toastmasters should rule the world.

BY JOHN CADLEY

After all these years of writing for the *Toastmaster* magazine I thought it was time to attend a Toastmasters meeting. That's right—I am not a Toastmaster. I would like to be, but it's too late. At my age I tell people the unvarnished truth, which I have found is not at all what they want to hear. Consequently, improving my speaking ability would be pointless since nobody speaks to me. I could give orations to the ocean like Demosthenes did, but I have a morbid fear of seaweed.

However, after sitting through just one Toastmasters meeting I am ready to let members rule the world. These people are smart, dedicated—and *punctual*. They said the meeting would

The meeting ran like a Formula One race car.

start at 7 p.m. and by gosh it did, with a crack of the gavel that's still ringing in my ears. Then the sergeant at arms got up to lead off the proceedings. I didn't know Toastmasters were armed. I assume it is a metaphor for how well equipped Toastmasters are—with their deft speaking skills—to do battle in the public arena. I hope so, anyway.

The club president followed by welcoming everyone—and to announce that the area governor ["area director," as of this month] was present. This person was there to observe the proceedings and, if necessary, suggest any course corrections. She didn't need to. The meeting ran like a Formula One race car. If government and business conducted meetings like this, nobody would have time to text friends and eat Bavarian cream doughnuts.

The president next introduced the WAG Master. I had never heard that term. A master of wags? Certainly, no one here fit that description. I learned this was the person who introduced the word of the day and counted all the times "um" and "ah" were used. (Thank God I don't have a WAG Master at my house. He'd need an adding machine.)

The word of the day was "obstinate." As a guest I was asked to introduce myself. I stood up and said, "My name is John Cadley. I would tell you more about myself but I'm obstinate. Ha, ha."

Nobody laughed. Tough room.

The first speaker gave a talk that had a time limit of five to seven minutes. That's quite a challenge—to be interesting and brief at the same time. If politicians had to meet this requirement they'd fail on both counts—and be proud of it. This guy didn't fail. He came in at 6 minutes, 35 seconds. Impressive. I couldn't help wondering, though—what happens if he *didn't* come in on time? Is there a punishment? I had visions of the poor man running a gauntlet and being beaten with rolled-up Toastmasters manuals.

Speaker No. 2 gave a longer presentation. Deep into the talk a woman waved a folder in the air but the presenter kept talking. Thinking he didn't see the woman, I said, "This lady has a question." The attendees all turned toward me with bemused expressions. The man next to me whispered, "She's the timer."

Oh.

Table Topics was next. One Toastmaster—we'll call him Ray to protect the innocent—was designated as a real estate mogul. Another—"Helen"—was asked to assume the role of a paint supplier who was stuck with an overstock of pink fluorescent paint. (Boy, they don't make it easy.) Helen's assignment was to persuade Ray to buy her excess inventory for his housing projects. She had two minutes. I couldn't convince someone to buy pink fluorescent paint in two days, but Helen went at it hammer and tongs. When time expired, the question was put to the room: Did she convince Ray? The consensus was yes and I had to agree, even as I envisioned the horror of an entire neighborhood glowing in pink fluorescence.

Finally, it was time for the evaluations. I thought they were fair and constructive, but then the evaluator got evaluated—and it seems he could have done better. Wow. You people don't fool around.

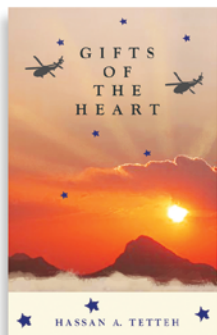
The proceedings closed with the evening's Toastmaster asking how I enjoyed my first meeting. I loved it! Would I consider joining? Only if I decide to rule the world. Hey, you never know. **T**

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

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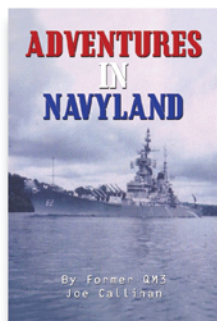
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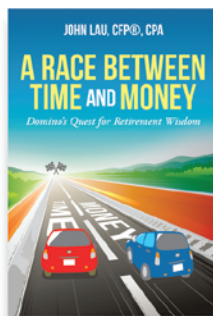
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When Domino starts talking about retiring, his wife of thirty years gets nervous. After all, they've never come up with a plan for retirement, and so they seek advice from Jack Lane, a Certified Financial Planner® and CPA. He gets them thinking about key issues he needs to consider before retiring, such as health care costs, lifestyle changes, and tax implications. As he digs deeper, he learns that he'll need to make the right moves to enjoy retirement while leaving a lasting legacy for his heirs and loved ones. That's the only way to win *A Race between Time and Money*.

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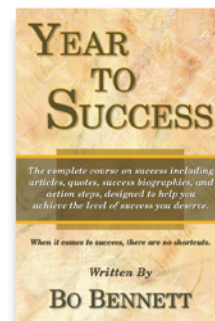
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Little Ann's Field of Buttercups takes the reader on a journey that begins in the late 1800s, with a glimpse into the privileged lives of her English Ancestors. Ann then takes us through the traumas and joys of her underprivileged, fatherless childhood; her first day of school with her 'Mickey Mouse gas mask' in hand, the destruction of the family home by German bombs, and the fond memories of life with her grandparents. One can't help but be touched by the innocence and simplicity of young Ann's life and how she manages to find joy despite the scars of her childhood. Known as 'Little Ann' to her family and friends, Ann grew to learn that life isn't all a 'field of buttercups'.

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