

THE MAGAZINE FOR COMMUNICATORS & LEADERS | SEPTEMBER 2017

TOASTMASTER®

A portrait of Balraj Arunasalam, DTM, smiling. He is wearing a dark grey suit jacket, a white shirt, and a red tie. A gold Toastmaster pin is visible on his lapel. A red pocket square is tucked into his jacket. The background is a plain, light grey.

Meet 2017–2018 International President
BALRAJ ARUNASALAM, DTM

A solid white rectangular box located in the bottom left corner of the page.

**Leadership:
It's Not About You**

**Wise Words on
Leading Others**

What's Your Vision?

Toastmasters founder Ralph C. Smedley had a vision: to *"share with others the benefits we have gained for ourselves."* Millions have benefited from Smedley's vision. Imagine the world without his farsightedness and insight. The importance of having a personal vision is often underestimated. It's like setting out on a long-distance journey without a map or a GPS to keep you on the right path. The fruits of your future success depend on a clear view of where you want to go.

I recently met Sridhar Ranganathan, from India, a successful Toastmaster for many years. He has been transformed through the Toastmasters program from a nervous speaker to a confident and accomplished presenter. He is a mentor to many and a sought-after workshop presenter and lecturer. When asked about the secret for his success, he replied, "I am successful because I scripted my personal vision statement a long time ago." His vision: *"I will maximize my gain in Toastmasters to become an empowering communicator and a confident professional in order to reach the top in my organization."*

Ranganathan says every step he took as a Toastmaster, whether inside or outside the organization, moved him closer to his personal vision. Every success motivated him to go to the next level. "Whatever project I took up in Toastmasters, I focused on delivering my message with maximum impact," he says. "That skill helped me rise to the position of managing director of a \$100 million company."

The fruits of your future success depend on a clear view of where you want to go.

As your new president, my vision is *to lead by example, in both my personal and professional life, while continuing to invest in my own development to become an effective leader.* This will help me gain clarity when I am confused, determine if my progress is in line with my vision, and encourage me to make choices that propel me in that direction. And when my time in Toastmasters leadership is over, I will be able to continue helping to improve the lives of others around the world. Having your own personal vision might do the same for you.

History is replete with examples of highly successful individuals: Walt Disney, Steve Jobs, Mahatma Gandhi, Mother Teresa and Albert Einstein, to name a few. All had grand visions—often scoffed at and ridiculed—and all had a massive influence on the world. They each made the world a better place because they had a personal vision and dared to pursue it. Why not you? Maybe your vision won't change the world, but it can change *your* world.

As a new Toastmasters year begins, let us each commit to developing our own personal vision. If we have the conviction that a dream can be achieved, we can inspire others to do the same. Your vision carries the seeds of your future successes. Start planting them today.

Balraj Arunasalam, DTM

International President



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Since 1924, Toastmasters International has been recognized as the leading organization dedicated to communication and leadership skill development. Through its worldwide network of clubs, each week Toastmasters helps more than a quarter million men and women of every ethnicity, education level and profession build their competence in communication so they can gain the confidence to lead others.

Toastmasters International Mission:

We empower individuals to become more effective communicators and leaders.



WHERE LEADERS ARE MADE
www.toastmasters.org

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“The life of a professional speaker is not glamorous, so it is essential that those of us hired to speak ... are passionate about our subject(s).”

—Max Alvarez, ACS, CL

Along for the Ride

I loved the article Maureen Zappala wrote about the Harley-Davidson Toastmasters clubs [May]. I ride a Harley with my boyfriend. I would have never guessed Harley-Davidson supported Toastmasters. What a fantastic company! I always read my *Toastmaster* magazine cover to cover, but when I saw the Harley-Davidson article I had to read it first. Thanks so much!

Jan Nichols
Shining Stars club
Irving, Texas

An Essential Read

Silvana Clark's article, “5 Myths About the Life of a Professional Speaker,” was essential reading in the April issue. I have been a public speaker for nearly two decades (my area of focus is film history) and can relate to all her key points. The life of a professional speaker is not glamorous, so it is essential that those of us hired to speak at conferences, seminars, classes and what-not are passionate about our subject(s). It is important to understand that in

many cases the spreading and sharing of information—not necessarily the speaker's fees—will be the most rewarding aspects of the work.

To the speakers who occasionally receive malicious “evaluations” from some audience members outside of Toastmasters, my advice is to follow the practice of many actors: Don't read your performance reviews. Even if nine out of 10 respondents loved your presentation, there will always be one embittered crank whose task is to complain about *everything* in life. Yes, we should always strive to improve our presentation skills, but there is nothing to be gained by forcing ourselves to read the petty rants of people who have no public speaking training or experience. Well done, Toastmaster Clark!

Max Alvarez, ACS, CL
SEC Roughriders club
New York, New York

Just a Suggestion

I loved Jesse Scinto's advice in the March 2017 article “What is Plagiarism and How Can You Avoid It?” He suggested short-version citations like, “Someone once said ...” It announces to the audience that the words are not our own, without all the time necessary for a complete and accurate citation. Imagine the agony of listening to a speaker who actually verbalizes, “h” “t” “t” “p” “colon” “forward slash”...

But in the engineering and scientific circles I'm familiar with, nothing short of a fully functional and complete citation is acceptable. In written text, it is handled smoothly with a footnote, with a list of citations at the end. What about a speech? The speaker could pass out a printed list of citations, but that would be awkward. Most of the audience is not really interested in the citations anyhow.

Dick Mills, CC
Toasting Ocala and Golden Triangle
Toastmasters clubs
Ocala/Mt. Dora, Florida

A True Treasure

I just finished reading Mike Storkey's Viewpoint [April]. This is one of his best

yet! It is about the best part of Toastmasters ... making everyone feel welcome. We do need good leaders in our world today. One of the best parts of a meeting is when you evaluate another member's speech, you are helping a fellow member improve and grow. Toastmasters is truly a treasure in today's self-centered world.

Jerry Angelstad, ACS, ALB
Carlton Trail club
Humboldt, Saskatchewan, Canada

The Unexpected

“From the Internet to the Inner-Net” by Suzanne Frey (April) impressed me, so much so that I watched Gopi Kallayil's TEDx Talk immediately after reading the article. That Google has a Toastmasters club surprised me. Kallayil's “9 Principles of Innovation at Google” also inspired me. However, it is how Kallayil handled the situation when his computer crashed just before he was about to deliver his keynote at a Wisdom 2.0 conference before 400 people that impressed me most. When we are alone onstage, it takes wisdom to deal with the unexpected, be it a crashed computer, a broken microphone, a suddenly blank mind or a strong reaction from the audience.

Kallayil practices mindfulness through yoga and meditation to become wiser. To become wiser and learn more about myself is part of why I love Toastmasters. I get many opportunities to challenge myself and grow. An unexpected situation onstage is nothing serious to me. What is serious is finding a way out. I keep searching for better ways, and this article offers me a precious key.

Bruce Yang, DTM
Taichung Toastmasters club
Taichung, Taiwan

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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LEADERSHIP

Leadership: It's Not About You




Are you ready to help others succeed?

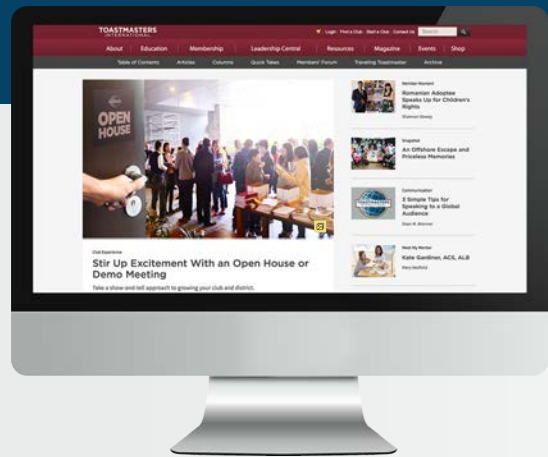
By Dave Zielinski

Toastmaster Magazine Online

See more photos, videos and links online at www.toastmasters.org/Magazine.

September Online Extras:

- **UCLA Mentor Steve Yu**—View additional photos of this passionate volunteer. 
- **Meet the New International President**—Get to know Balraj Arunasalam through more photos and an exclusive video.  
- **Leadership: It's Not About You**—Learn more from top professionals on how to be a successful leader.



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Editor's Note: The name of the member pictured on the August back cover was incorrect. The correct spelling is Samer Faker Kamal.

▶ MEMBER MOMENT 

Sailing to Distinguished

BY GIFTY AMOKWANDOH, CC

Paolo Ciamarone, DTM, is the founding officer of the Amsterdam Toastmasters club, as well as the founding president of the Taste and Toastmasters club, in the Netherlands. In addition to his Toastmasters activities, he has a passion for sailing. He has sailed throughout Italy, Greece, the Netherlands, England and the Caribbean and his team of sailors regularly competes at the Heineken Regatta in Sint Maarten.

What made you want to start Toastmasters clubs?

I was sitting behind my desk across from a colleague at work who knew about Toastmasters and he casually mentioned starting a club. I was up for a challenge and I had spare time, so I decided *Why not?* We immediately took it from there and the first club I helped to found was Amsterdam Toastmasters.

What challenges have you faced as a Toastmaster?

In 2003, when we were the only active club in the Netherlands, it was a challenge to organize the division contest. Although we were just one club, we were part of an international area that included Belgium. Nearly 300 people were expected to attend the program. Without much external support, our young club was able to bid for, organize and run a multinational event. Help was flown in from time to time; we had to learn and we had to learn fast. It showed me how you should dare to ask for help, because someone has always done it before you.

How do you use your communication and leadership skills in sailing?

In sailing, especially in regatta sailing, the importance of team performance is paramount, and that is often the result of the skipper having the ability to lead and inspire a crew to achieve the best result possible. As the skipper of my team, I put many lessons learned at Toastmasters into practice. For instance, serving as club president comes very close to being the skipper onboard. I always find ways to let team members excel in their own tasks while making sure to structure the team to achieve common goals. I frequently explain strategies and tactics that need to be understood, accepted and actionable before leaving the shore.

While racing, I may instruct the crew to execute dangerous maneuvers that require good timing, clarity and decisiveness. Finally, at the end of a race, I collect their precious feedback on



Paolo Ciamarone, DTM

what went well and what can be improved in order to perform better the next day. The Toastmasters experience gave me the tools and the confidence that I need to succeed on the water.

What is the most important lesson you have learned?

As a communicator: Keep the fire burning. Based on your personal schedule, always make time for Toastmasters. If you stop making time, you might not see the impact immediately, but after a while you won't be as sharp as you once were.

As a leader: Toastmasters is a safe and friendly laboratory, so feel free to experiment. You may have to develop skills other than the ones you use in a corporate environment. Personal interaction and motivation are key to re-creating the safety network you find in corporate settings. I learned this when I ran for club president in 2013–2014.

After 17 years, what did it feel like to become a Distinguished Toastmaster?

It was a feeling of fulfillment—like a sobering satisfaction. It was not that I felt like screaming and shouting as I would after winning a regatta when I am sailing. It was more of a quiet inner peace of something rightfully earned. The next step is to start all over again from my Ice Breaker.

How does Toastmasters add value in your life?

Communication is something you cannot avoid in daily life, whether it is outspoken or silent. I work for a technology company that sells solutions for the shopping mall sector of the future. My job involves a lot of persuasion, so I use communication to inspire and motivate. Being a good communicator means having a better life.

Gifty Amokwandoh, CC, is a member of the Taste and Toastmasters club in Amsterdam, the Netherlands.



MEETING UNDER THE TREE OF LIFE

Members of the KCA Toastmasters club in the Kingdom of Bahrain held a uniquely themed meeting under the famed Tree of Life in the Arabian Desert on World Environment Day. The tree, more than 400 years old, stands alone on a hilltop surrounded by miles of sand with no obvious water source in the arid desert. It is one of Bahrain's major tourist attractions, and for onlookers and visitors that day, the Toastmasters meeting in progress was a curious affair, while for club members it was a special experience.

Show Off Your Photos!

Visit the *Toastmaster* magazine online to view the newly enhanced photo galleries, including **Member Connections**, a gallery meant just for you! Whether your club celebrated an anniversary, conducted an outdoor meeting or threw a holiday party—we want to see your photos. Send your pictures to photos@toastmasters.org and include a description and your club name, number and location.

Also watch for the pop-up photo galleries within magazine articles each month, including club and member photos you won't see in the print edition.

Have you been waiting to see yourself in the magazine's Traveling *Toastmaster* section? The expanded online photo gallery now includes additional photos of members posing with their magazines in exotic locations.

Go to www.toastmasters.org/Magazine and look for Member Connections below the Traveling *Toastmaster* gallery. Your club could be featured next!

QUICK TAKES

▶ MEET MY MENTOR



Julius Howell Jr., CC, CL

BY MARY NESFIELD

Julius Howell Jr., CC, CL, is a senior manager at American Express in Arizona. He is a member of two clubs in Phoenix, where he mentors several members, helping them become mentors themselves.

Veena B Puttalingaiah, CC, ALB, also of Phoenix, met Howell after starting her Toastmasters journey while working as a contractor at American Express. Two months later she was hired as a service delivery manager and now works with Howell.

Tell us about Julius.

Julius is influential and powerfully persuasive. He explains complex ideas clearly and concisely. He shares ideas for manual speeches and mixes honest feedback with words of encouragement. He volunteers at Toastmasters Leadership Institute events. And he tells some funny stories!

From a leadership perspective, he steers his team at work through a maze of change. He listens, addresses the concerns of his staff in a timely manner and drives the right behaviors, even under difficult circumstances.

How has he helped you?

He is a smart observer, patient and persistent in suggesting areas of improvement. Being a non-native English speaker, I faced many challenges and often felt Toastmasters was not for me. But Julius has taught me that it's never too late to learn.

How has your club experience helped you at work?

My job is to make two teams work as one and stay focused on competing against the clock—not against each other. Previously,



Julius Howell Jr. (left), and Veena B Puttalingaiah

I was on one of those teams, and I had to change those team members' perceptions of me. Toastmasters helped me tackle that task with confidence.

And I am more organized and productive now. By being specific and clear in my communications, I have more time for other activities, including working on my master's degree in computer science at Colorado Technical University.

Why do you continue on in Toastmasters?

Because it is my happy place. Members are kind—they motivate me to test my limits. We build good memories as we share our experiences and learn together as a team.

Mary Nesfield is associate editor for the *Toastmaster magazine*.

NOMINATE YOUR MARVELOUS MENTOR!

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

▶ MEMBER CONNECTIONS



Contests and Costumes

Even during contest season, Toastmasters know how to keep things lighthearted and fun. Mei Lin, DTM (fourth from right), living in Texas, U.S., poses with fellow members during Area 35's Tall Tales and International Speech contests, which doubled as a toga party.



▶ ADVICE FROM MEMBERS

6 Rules of Humor

BY GRAHAM HONAKER, ACS



1 Find Humor in Everyday Life
Some of the best speeches are inspired by everyday occurrences. In 2013, my wife and I flew with our two young children to Europe. The ensuing chaos on the airplane provided me with enough material to compose my winning speech that year. Think about your everyday life and things that may have a humorous twist to them.

2 Know Your Audience
In a 2009 speech, I compared the delivery of my first child to a Toastmasters meeting. This would have made little sense to a non-Toastmasters audience, but the humorous comparison (using timing cards to help with my wife's contractions) landed perfectly with my audience. Knowing your audience is important when trying to land a punchline.

3 It's a Humorous Speech Contest: Be Funny!
The best speeches are funny throughout. Some speakers work up to a big laugh at the end, so their speeches are void of humor in the introduction and body. This approach leaves your audience wondering, *When do I get to laugh?* Launch into a joke right off the bat to get the audience warmed up and kick-start your energy level.

4 Use Props
In the 2013 district contest, I brought a suitcase to show how, ideally, one should travel with kids inside a bag. I closed the speech by donning a pilot's cap. Think about effective props that can enhance your humor.

5 Don't Step on Your Laughter
One of the greatest challenges a

humorous speaker faces is to avoid stepping on the audience's response. It takes practice, but you have to allow your audience the time to laugh and soak in the humor. You can kill a joke entirely by rushing to tell your next one. Use effective pauses to enhance those jokes.

6 Consult with Others
Always run your speech by a mentor or trusted advisor. I have seen several contestants essentially eliminate themselves with humor that was deemed offensive. One of the reasons I am a fan of self-deprecating humor is that you only risk offending yourself!

▶ OUTREACH

Helping Young People Succeed

BY PAUL STERMAN

Remember when you were a teenager? If you were like me, you battled your self-esteem during this awkward time—and the idea of public speaking was scarier than telling Dad you crashed the car.

All teens can benefit from what Toastmasters teaches. Young people will need communication skills to deliver classroom presentations, interview for jobs, speak up in the workplace and attentively listen to others. Once they're out in the larger world, they'll need interpersonal skills to navigate sticky situations that will inevitably arise with colleagues or friends.

Toastmasters offers community-based programs aimed at helping teens develop communication and leadership abilities. The **Youth Leadership program (YLP)** is a workshop geared to those under the age of 18. Experienced club members present eight sessions to participants at a school or organization with each session about one

or two hours long. The format is similar to a club meeting.

The young participants learn skills such as:

- ▶ Controlling their voice and gestures
- ▶ Delivering prepared and impromptu speeches
- ▶ Giving constructive feedback
- ▶ Improving their vocabulary

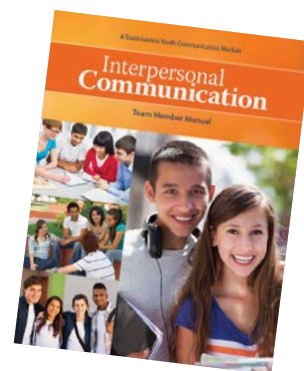
Non-members can also present a program based on Toastmasters principles. The Toastmasters youth communication module, **Interpersonal Communication**, is particularly valuable for teachers and youth workers. The program helps teenagers build strong communication and listening skills, while also enabling them to understand their own communication style. Adults who mentor teens in their community, such as youth program administrators, guidance counselors,

religious leaders and others, can use these materials designed by Toastmasters to present the communication module. Its manuals contain short assignments and content to supplement group activities.

YLP and Interpersonal Communication provide many benefits to teens. High school graduates can continue reaping those benefits at the next level of their education: Many colleges and universities around the world have Toastmasters clubs on campus.

To learn more about Toastmasters' outreach programs, visit bit.ly/2uLfr1.

Paul Sterman is senior editor for *Toastmaster magazine*.





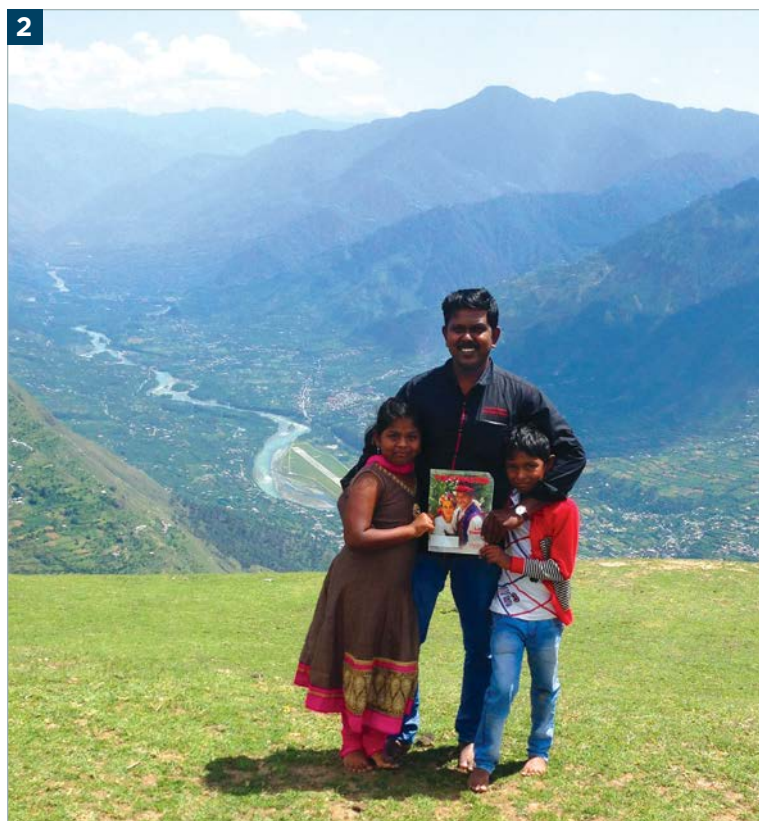
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1 | RIZK MAWASS, from Jounieh, Lebanon, enjoys a camel ride while on vacation in Egypt.

2 | SINGARAVELAN VENKATESAN, ACB, ALB, and his children, from Chennai, India, visit Kullu and Manali in the Himalayas for summer vacation.

3 | LULUS YUNINDIAH, from Kelapa Dua, Indonesia, takes in the beauty of the beaches at Maluku Islands in Indonesia.

4 | ANNA KAUFMAN, DTM, from Auburndale, Massachusetts, visits Easter Island, Chile, where monumental figures called Moai remain from centuries ago.




2




3



4

 **View additional photos** in this month's *Traveling Toastmaster* photo gallery at www.toastmasters.org/Magazine.

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

Speakers: It's Not About You

Your audience doesn't care about your experiences.
They want to know what's in it for them.

BY KAREN FRIEDMAN

I was really excited to hear the speaker. She's a well-known TV network correspondent whom I've watched for years. She's thought-provoking and witty and quickly cuts to the chase. So when I changed my flight to get to the conference in time to hear her speak, imagine my disappointment when she blew it. Actually, I was more disappointed that she had no clue that she blew it.

Here she was—a media celebrity in a ballroom of seasoned communications professionals—but she had not stopped to consider her audience and what they cared about. Yes, she told a few stories about life in the news trenches, but the stories were all about her. How great she was. The obstacles she had to overcome. The tough decisions she makes every day. Me, me, me and more me.

Just because you are a public figure or an expert in your field doesn't mean you can wow an audience.

What she failed to do was help her audience understand how they could use this information. What lessons did she learn that her listeners could apply to their lives? How could her vignettes empower, motivate or inspire others to act? Most importantly, how could they benefit from her expertise and apply it to their business so they could make a difference for others?

Just because you are a public figure or an expert in your field doesn't mean you can wow an audience. Public speaking is an art; for some it is a profession. No matter how many years you've been speaking or how many people tell you how fabulous you are, you're not. Like a star athlete or sought-after entertainer, you can never



The author with her new book, *Ordinary People: Extraordinary Lessons*.

stop practicing your craft if you want to be the best you can be.

LESSON 1

Learn as much as you can about your audience so you can tailor your remarks to them and help them improve. What do they want to learn from you? In this case, was it how to get more coverage, pitch a story or perhaps build relationships with the media?

LESSON 2

Don't talk about yourself. Share successes, failures and experiences to help others apply lessons learned to their own lives. For example, I recently heard a speaker talk about her 11-year-old daughter being diagnosed with cancer a week after her father died. As sad as her story was, she wanted to share it to help others cope when life happens and the world as they know it seems to crumble around them.

LESSON 3

Get over yourself. They already like you, which is why they came to hear you. In this case, the speaker told everyone that if they wanted their story told on *her* program, the only decision-maker at the network who really mattered was her. Seriously? Arrogance is not becoming on anyone.

At this point, I know you are wondering who I'm talking about. I won't tell you but will offer a clue. I turned on CNN the other day and she happened to pop up. As I was about to change the channel, the interview caught my attention. It was a meaty conversation and admirably, she didn't let her subject off the hook. As a former reporter, I was impressed. Then, bam! She blew it. In the middle of an intense conversation about presidential politics, she started talking about herself, her family and her personal beliefs. Who cares? Your job as a communicator is to provoke thought and facilitate understanding.

There's nothing wrong with sharing your experiences as long as your audience can apply lessons learned to their own lives.

However, if you simply want people to tell you you're wonderful, or you're delivering lines in hopes of applause, you're there for you and not for them. If that's the case, you'll blow it every time and likely have no clue that you did. ■

KAREN FRIEDMAN is an executive communication coach, professional speaker and author. This is an excerpt from her new book *Ordinary People: Extraordinary Lessons/Leadership Insights from Everyday Encounters*. She is an award-winning former television news reporter and a syndicated columnist for the Philadelphia Business Journal. She teaches leadership communications for executive women at Smith College.

UCLA Mentor **Steve Yu**

Law school dean cultivates campus community.

BY MITCH MIRKIN, CTM

As a youngster, after school each day Steve Yu would work on the family farm in the small central California town of Earlimart. He and five siblings helped their Korean-immigrant parents tend neat rows of exotic Asian edibles: sweet, juicy melons; crinkly-leaved Napa cabbage; creamy-skinned Daikon radishes.

Today, in his mid-40s, Yu still drives a couple of hours north a few times a year to visit his aging parents, reunite with others in his close-knit family and pitch in on the farm. “We have big get-togethers probably four times a year, and on occasion I will swing home to say hi to Mom and Dad,” says Yu. “It was just cherry harvest season and I went to help out.”

In recent years, he has developed a taste for a different kind of cultivation—one that involves people rather than fruits and vegetables. Yu, ACS, CL, the chief financial officer and assistant dean of

operations for the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) School of Law, has become known on the UCLA campus—home to more than 40,000 students—for his passionate, high-energy mentoring, as well as other volunteer efforts. A member of the True Blue Toastmasters club at UCLA, Yu was one of two winners of the 2017 Volunteer of the Year award from the UCLA Alumni Association. Yu has been serving as president of the UCLA Los Angeles Westside Network, the school’s largest regional alumni network, for three years.

Yu’s volunteering takes many forms. Aside from efforts to engage alumni on behalf of the school, he delivers lively workshops on campus teaching public speaking skills to staff and students, including law and medical students, and doctors at Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center. He also talks on leadership,

communication and networking. Woven throughout all these activities is a strong thread of mentoring. It’s what he does naturally, even when neither he nor his mentees formally recognize it as such.

“Some of these relationships are very unofficial,” says Yu. “It’s only later that I’ll hear someone say, *Oh, he’s my mentor*. And I’ll think to myself, *OK, I guess I am*. Sometimes I don’t realize it because I just like to be helpful when I talk to people.” Samantha Luu, CC, CL, can attest to that. Luu graduated UCLA in 2008 and started working at the university’s law school. That’s where she met Yu, who was the school’s controller at the time. Yu, who had been involved in Toastmasters on the UCLA campus since 2005, helped Luu get involved with a club to nurture her budding interest in public speaking. She recalls one episode, in particular, that she says sums up Yu’s knack for helping others

YU’S FORMULA FOR SUCCESS

Steve Yu has two pithy prescriptions for success. One is intended to help public speakers control their anxiety. The other helps ensure lively and uplifting meetings in Toastmasters or other settings:

▶ **“Steve’s Three S’s”**—Smile, stand tall and slow down. “I try to incorporate this into most workshops I give,” says Yu. “What I have found is that a week later, or even several years later, what people tell me more than anything else is that they remember my three S’s. I think that’s the real test of a speaker—what will someone recall years down the road?”

▶ **“Steve’s Three E’s”**—Yu says an effective meeting has to be educational, energetic and entertaining. He forged this approach as he was thrust into leadership roles early in his Toastmasters career. “Within about three months of my joining there was this huge leadership vacuum in the club. I became president immediately. It was very stressful. What do I say? How do I lead a meeting? How do I inspire everyone? I found that when you open with energy—get everyone clapping, pumped up—that carries through and drives the meeting.”

along the path of growth and success. It happened when she was serving as vice president education (VPE) for the True Blue club. A UCLA group that holds professional development events for university staff asked the club to provide a speaker.

“He asked a lot of thoughtful questions that made me think about what I’d be good at, and where my strengths lie.”

— KIM TRUONG,
speaking of mentor Steve Yu

“As VPE, I volunteered to give this presentation,” recalls Luu. “I did a speech titled ‘How to Make Yourself More Marketable,’ along with a PowerPoint presentation on the benefits of joining Toastmasters. This was in front of about 150 UCLA staff attendees.” She explains:

“As my mentor, Steve took time out of his busy schedule to listen to me run through it beforehand and gave me valuable advice on how to improve my volume and body language. Not only that, he also gave up his lunch hour to attend the event to watch me. It ended up being one of the best speeches I’ve ever given. Steve also evaluated me in my advanced manual, although he didn’t have to. I very much appreciated that he did that for me. And it wasn’t just me—he would do all this for other members of the club as well. You get the feeling that Steve cares about you and wants you to succeed.”

Mentoring is also integral to Yu’s approach in the workplace. “My management and leadership style is to mentor and coach the people on my team, not just through the work stuff we need to get done every day, but also in other areas: What’s your career trajectory? What do you want to learn here? How can we grow you and create a foundation for you to succeed not only at UCLA law school but when you move on one day?”


One of Yu’s mentees who moved on from UCLA was Kim Truong of the university’s Bruin Toastmasters club.



Steve Yu, assistant dean of operations at the UCLA School of Law (in the background), mentors UCLA students and staff in public speaking.

She was an administrative assistant at the law school when she met Yu in 2008. Having earned an undergraduate degree in science, she was unsure of her next career steps. Yu helped her identify a new path: human resources. Today, with an MBA, she’s savoring a satisfying career in human resources at Starbucks headquarters in Seattle.

She recalls the days when she chatted with Yu about the career options and difficult choices ahead of her. Should she stay at UCLA where she would soon be vested? Or move on to new adventures, and perhaps a more fulfilling career? Yu had been to business school himself, and Truong found his perspective helpful. “He asked a lot of thoughtful questions that made me think about what I’d be good at, and where my strengths lie.”

Yu ultimately encouraged her to move on, even though this would affect his staff. “As controller at the time, he was also the head of HR [human resources] at the law school,” Truong says. “But at the end of the day, he’s all about developing others, making sure they get to where they need to be. And he uses that to measure his success, both as a mentor and as a person. And that’s one thing I’ve always admired about him.” 

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*.



ONLINE EXTRAS: View additional photos of Steve Yu.

Tips for a Positive Pathways Launch

Strong planning and a proactive approach will help make the rollout a success.

BY PAUL STERMAN

At some point in the coming months, the Pathways learning experience will launch in your district. How can you be as ready as possible?

Plan, prepare and participate. These elements are key, say members in districts where Pathways is already available.

- ▶ Help your club plan ahead for sessions where members can learn about and prepare for Pathways. (More on that later.)
- ▶ Get ready for the program by familiarizing yourself with existing resources and information about Pathways, and logging in to the Toastmasters website as soon as possible.
- ▶ When Pathways debuts in your district, dive in. “Pathways engages you once you are in it, so taking that first step is important,” says Paul White, DTM, a member of several clubs in Virginia.

White is the Chief Ambassador for District 27, which, along with districts 57 and 51, participated in the Pathways pilot. More than 100 Chief Ambassadors around the world lead teams of Ambassadors who help members learn about the new program and what it means for them.

In addition to planning, preparation and participation, add another “p” word: patience. Starting any new program of substance requires a period of adjustment.

Pathways is designed to be convenient and user-friendly; however, new users still need time to get comfortable, especially



BE SURE TO LOG IN

One of the first things to do to prepare for Pathways is log in to the Toastmasters website. You can’t begin your Pathways journey without doing that, and it’s important you know your login information now so you can enroll in Pathways without delay once it becomes available to you.

To log in, you need your username and password.

Pathways leaders recommend that clubs conduct an early in-club session to help members establish their username and password if they haven’t already, and to learn to log in.

if they’re not as experienced with working online. (Base Camp, the program’s learning management system, is online, and you have the option of working in Pathways online or in print.)

Also remember that Base Camp provides tutorials and videos that offer step-by-step instructions.

Dennis Neary, DTM, the District 57 Chief Ambassador, says some members in his district initially expressed resistance to Pathways but then were happy with the program once they started working in it. He cites an example. After one member enrolled in Pathways, he told Neary he was frustrated with some technical challenges he was encountering. The Chief Ambassador, a member of several clubs in Northern California, gave him a few tips for dealing with the situation. He ran into the man a while later, and the member said Pathways was now working well for him.

Club Visits

Pathways is being rolled out region by region. It launched in Region 14 at the end of July, and Region 2 is scheduled to start in Pathways this month. Before a region launches Pathways, each of its clubs should be visited by a Pathways Guide and a Pathways Ambassador. These two member volunteers deliver a presentation about the learning experience, helping

“Pathways engages you once you are in it, so taking that first step is important.”

— PAUL WHITE, DISTRICT 27 CHIEF AMBASSADOR

club members prepare to work in the new program. The visits are crucial—they help set up members for early success in the program. Pathways leaders stress that clubs need to plan ahead for the visits and set aside an adequate amount of time.

“We have encountered clubs that would like the presentation to be a five- to seven-minute speech,” White says. “That is not enough time.”

Clubs should decide early on if they want to schedule the visit for a regular club meeting or set up a special session so it doesn’t displace a regular meeting, he adds.

District 51 Director Johnson Tang, ACS, ALS, says Pathways leaders in his district are making a concerted effort to communicate with each other often—even using social media tools, like WhatsApp Group Chat—to ensure Guides and Ambassadors are fully prepared to share the Pathways training information with their assigned clubs.

Once club visits begin, Pathways Guides follow up with virtual support sessions for clubs’ vice presidents education (VPEs). This is where they can answer many questions that Pathways users have. It’s vital that the VPEs attend these virtual sessions, say Pathways leaders.

Other examples of rollout tips and successes:

▶ Jenny Genser, DTM, is a District 27 Pathways Guide and the 2016–2017 VPE for the Park Center Toastmasters in Alexandria, Virginia. After Pathways launched in her district, she helped her club present a Speechcraft that served as a “Pathways workshop for new members.” Several members presented Pathways Ice Breakers.

- ▶ Genser says she also made sure to assign mentors to new club members.
- ▶ Tang, the District 51 director, says his district set up a booth at their spring conference to boost awareness of the Pathways learning experience.
- ▶ Jaeda Teoh, CC, ALB, a member of the SP Elite Mandarin Toastmasters in Malaysia (District 51), says participants should be sure to offer feedback about their Pathways experience. Typically, club members should provide questions or feedback to their VPE, who then communicates with the Pathways Guide.
- ▶ Hooi Chui Heng, ACB, also a member of the SP Elite Mandarin club, says Toastmasters who are more comfortable and involved in Pathways should assist those who have questions and

need help. Doing that, he says, “will definitely speed up the learning process of others.”


- ▶ White says that when experienced members share their positive feelings about Pathways, it carries a lot of weight. “The one comment I have heard expressed a number of times is that ‘hearing from a veteran member who feels new excitement and challenge in Pathways’ has been a factor in members deciding to enroll in Pathways.”

Plunge In

When Pathways becomes available in your district, be sure to enroll. Plunge in and explore. Begin a project and start learning. If you still want to finish some work in the traditional education program, that’s fine—you do not have to stop working in the traditional program once you start Pathways.

Current members can work in both education programs, if they want, for two years from the time Pathways rolls out in the last region. This is the transition period. However, new members who join clubs where Pathways has already rolled out will only be able to work in Pathways. After the transition period ends, every member will work in the new program.

But don’t wait to start your Pathways journey. That’s a key message for leaders to share, says White.

“Encourage members to enroll in Pathways early rather than taking a ‘wait-and-see’ attitude,” he stresses. “Of course, if club officers enroll, they lead by example. It makes it easier to convince members to join if the club’s officers are enrolled and active in Pathways.” 

Paul Sterman is senior editor for *Toastmaster magazine*.



FOR MORE
INFORMATION

You can learn more about the Pathways learning experience by visiting www.toastmasters.org/Pathways. The webpage includes detailed information about how Pathways works, the program’s history, Base Camp and the role of member volunteers. It also features an FAQ section and a series of helpful videos.



MEET BALRAJ

Toastmasters'
2017–2018
International
President is
a businessman
and philanthropist
from Sri Lanka.

In the speech that won him the 2014 World Championship of Public Speaking, Dananjaya Hettiarachchi paid tribute to a Toastmasters mentor—a man who first saw the potential in him, who helped change his life. That man was Balraj Arunasalam, DTM, the organization's 2017–2018 International President.

The mentoring of his fellow Sri Lankan embodies the “people-first” philosophy that Arunasalam believes in. It is something he says he learned from his own Toastmasters mentors: the idea that, as a leader, you put the interests of fellow members and the organization above your own.

“I have personally benefited from such leaders, who held the weight of my dreams sometimes above their own,” he says.

Arunasalam joined Toastmasters 28 years ago. He suffered from “extreme stage fright” then, but with the help of fellow

members in Colombo Toastmasters—then the only club in Sri Lanka—he steadily gained confidence and took on many leadership positions.

He also played a major role in the growth of Toastmasters in Sri Lanka. When Arunasalam became president of the Colombo club 15 years ago, there were only three clubs in the small island nation. Now, because of the work done by him and other Toastmasters leaders, Sri Lanka has 120 clubs.

Arunasalam, who belongs to four clubs, is the chairman/managing director of Gemtrans Engineering Company in Colombo. He has also been deeply involved in philanthropic efforts in his homeland.

The new International President has been married to his wife, Saru, for 29 years, and the couple has two daughters: Avisha and Mahishaa.

Tell us about your business and your responsibilities as a leader.

As the chairman/managing director of Gemtrans Engineering Company, I run a 68-year-old organization founded by my father in 1949. I decided to diversify into industrial belt and power-transmission products in 1992 and started building that busi-

ARUNASALAM, DTM

BY TOASTMASTER MAGAZINE STAFF



ABOVE: Balraj Arunasalam and his family—daughter Mahishaa (far left), wife Saru (left) and daughter Avisha (right)—are honored at his home club, Colombo Toastmasters in Sri Lanka.

ness from scratch. I'm pleased that currently we are the market leader in our field. As the chairman/managing director, I formulate the company policies and help build the strategic direction of the organization.

When and why did you join Toastmasters?

I joined Toastmasters in 1989. As a young businessman, I was looking for a social group to join in order to expand my network and meet interesting people. I went “club hopping and shopping” to the local Rotary, Lions and Kiwanis clubs.

I ended up joining two local sports clubs and realized that I was looking for something more. I finally found my place at Toastmasters, because the constructive speech evaluations made me realize the huge potential for personal development.

Tell us about your family, and any hobbies and interests outside of Toastmasters.

I was born into a business family, and my father was an entrepreneur. My parents always staunchly supported my passion for service activities, which began while I was still in school.

In 1988, I married Saru, who is now a homemaker as well as a director of our company. My older daughter, Avisha, is a dentist,

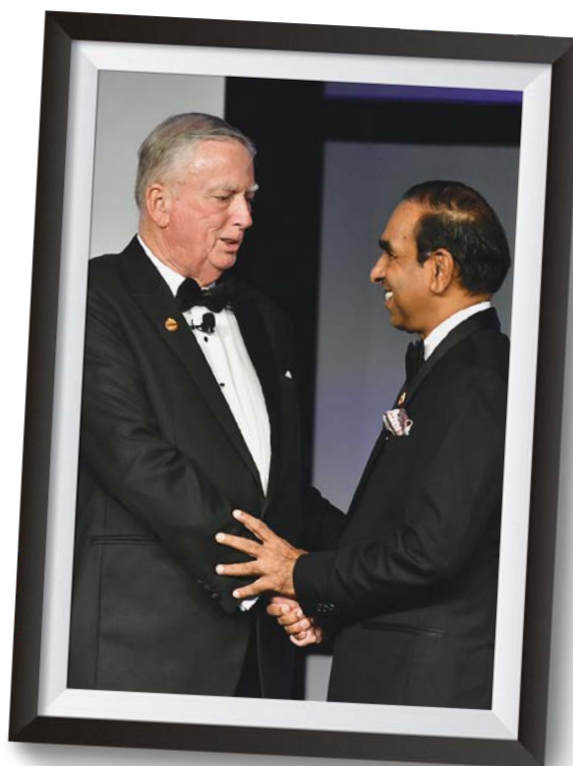
while the youngest, Mahishaa, is an engineer-cum-lawyer. As you might imagine, having three strong women at home is not easy for a man! I lost my voice at home ... and found it at Toastmasters!

Outside of Toastmasters, I enjoy reading biographies and books on leadership, management and health. I love traveling and have been fortunate to visit more than 40 countries so far. Health is important to me. I have a goal of walking at least 10,000 steps daily. I begin my day with yoga and pranayama.

How has Toastmasters helped you personally?

I attribute my career success to the valuable Toastmasters training I have received. As a business owner, I am proud that we have not lost a single staff member in the last eight years. Toastmasters has taught me how to build effective teams. I treat my employees as part of my own family.

BELOW: The leadership torch has now been passed from 2016–2017 International President Mike Storkey to 2017–2018 International President Balraj Arunasalam.





Balraj and his wife, Saru, at the 2016 Toastmasters International Convention in Washington, D.C.



A member for 28 years, the new International President played a major role in the growth of Toastmasters in Sri Lanka.

“My parents always staunchly supported my passion for service activities, which began while I was still in school.”

In my personal life, I have realized that the transformative power of Toastmasters is so strong that even if one family member is a Toastmaster, the entire family is positively impacted.

My two daughters are testimony to this fact. Even though they are non-Toastmasters, their close association to Toastmasters activities has helped them flourish in their lives. Avisha is an excellent event organizer while Mahishaa represented Sri Lanka as the official youth delegate at the United Nations General Assembly, where she delivered the 29th national statement on youth.

What motivated you to seek leadership positions in Toastmasters and run for International President?

Since my term as club president in 2002, I have grown in my journey as a leader, serving in a leadership role every year. After my year as club president, I was passionately involved with leading a team of Toastmasters who were united by a vision to spread the movement and create a district in Sri Lanka and India.

In 2005, as the Territorial Council Chair for Sri Lanka, I visited the International Convention for the first time, when it was held in Toronto. The convention connected me to the worldwide fraternity of Toastmasters, and exposed me to the larger picture of what the organization was all about.

In 2011, I was elected as an international director on the Toastmasters International Board. It fascinated me to work with a diverse and dynamic set of volunteer leaders. Their passion and

commitment to achieve a common goal fueled my interest to keep learning and growing as a leader at the international level.

As President, you will travel to many countries. Any part of the world in particular that interests you?

I look forward to visiting parts of the globe where there is immense potential for growth for Toastmasters. Fresh and developing markets like Europe, South America and Africa appeal to me. It is also fascinating to visit many clubs and districts in the United States—the birthplace of Toastmasters International—to realize that the need for what we offer is universal.

I have had the experience of helping build a district from 11 clubs in India and Sri Lanka to what is now more than 750 clubs in four strong districts across India and Sri Lanka. I will be most happy to meet with leaders in developing markets to share my insights with new districts on how their clubs can expand and flourish.

Tell us about your Toastmasters mentors.

My first Toastmasters mentor was not a Toastmaster: Mr. Kumar Nadesan. During my term as club president, his guidance was instrumental to my successful tenure. He advised me to expand Toastmasters beyond the three clubs we had in Sri Lanka at the time.

Past International President Dilip R. Abayasekara has been very influential to my growth as a leader. He believed in me more than I did, ever since my days as club president. In 2005 he envisioned my potential to one day be able to serve as Toastmasters International President—at a time when we in Sri Lanka and India were not even a provisional district! I thought he was crazy, but he has constantly kept this vision at the forefront of my attention.

Other Toastmasters I count as my leadership mentors are Past International President Ted Corcoran, Frank Storey, Floy Westemeier, Dick Poirier and Yusuf Jeevunjee. Each of them has dedicated precious time and energy to guide, mentor and assist me, and I will always be deeply appreciative of their invaluable support.

You talk about the importance of leaders having a “people-first” attitude. What do you mean by that?

When all is said and done about communication and leadership, Toastmasters is ultimately about people. As Mahatma Gandhi stated in 1948, “I suppose leadership at one time meant muscles, but today it means getting along with people.” It means putting other people’s interests first, before our own.

Can you tell us about your philanthropic work in Sri Lanka? And why it’s important to you?

I believe that charity begins at home. Since 1987, I have been actively involved in my community’s association, Aarunadu Velalar Society. It is extremely fulfilling for me to be able to help the underprivileged—hence I created a Community Education Trust Fund, through which around 2,500 children so far have received scholarships to complete their secondary education. I am happy to note that most of them go on to complete their graduate studies as well.

I’m also a permanent volunteer and president of the management board of my local temple. Spiritual development and religious service is essential to my well-being and brings meaning to my life.

I have been a Rotarian for nearly 10 years. I enjoy merging the Toastmasters and Rotary programs by encouraging Rotary clubs to sponsor Youth Leadership programs for the community.

What is your advice to someone seeking a leadership position for the first time?

They should, first and foremost, ask themselves, Why do I want to lead? What do I want to accomplish on behalf of the group?

I would advise any new leader to understand the people they need to lead and the organization they represent, along with their roles and responsibilities. It is important that leaders undertake their responsibilities with a genuine spirit to service.

Remain a student of leadership and commit to learning as a lifelong pursuit.

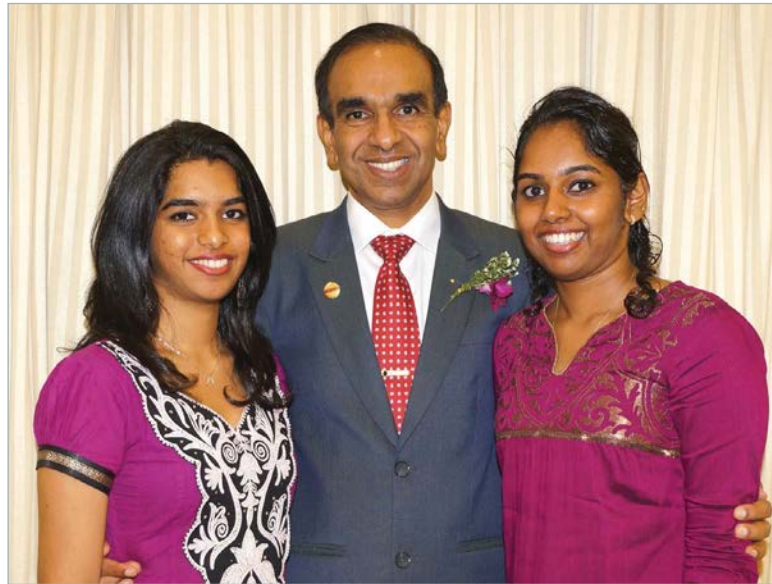
The Pathways program will roll out in most regions during your term. How will it affect the organization?

I am thrilled that the Pathways launch will be completed in my year as President. I am certain that this program will gain a reputation for excellence! Where else can you find an experiential learning program that can help you gain 300 different competencies at your own pace?

Due to the priceless development this program offers, I expect exponential growth in clubs and members worldwide—both in the corporate and community segments. If a member commits to the learning path the Pathways journey has to offer, the future most certainly looks brilliant and bright!

What are your goals for your year in office?

During my term, I look forward to working closely with our CEO, Daniel Rex, to ensure a smooth transition of the Toastmasters International headquarters from California to Denver, Colorado,



The proud father stands with daughters Mahishaa (left) and Avisha (right).

“As you might imagine, having three strong women at home is not easy for a man! I lost my voice at home ... and found it at Toastmasters!”

while at the same time preserving the quality of services delivered to our members.

Another area of focus will be working with the team to ensure that all districts smoothly execute the Pathways rollout and avail themselves of the plethora of benefits this program has to offer. I would also like to see an increase in the depth of training provided to our district officers who deliver the Toastmasters program to clubs and members. During my year in office, I will diligently work to make every district in the world realize the importance of being Distinguished, so that the value of our program reaches every member.

It is also my desire to expand our network of clubs to countries that do not have a Toastmasters presence yet.

If you had one piece of advice for every Toastmaster, what would it be?

Be patient and committed enough to put in the required time and effort to get the best out of Toastmasters.

Your growth as a communicator and leader is limitless, if you have the persistence to stick with the program long enough to be able to reap the rich benefits of Toastmasters. **T**



ONLINE EXTRAS: Get to know the new President through additional photos and a video.



The Truth About Your Advice: It's Not as Good as You Think.

BY RAVI RAMAN

Do you love to dish out advice? In my experience, people love to throw their unsolicited opinions around. Family members will tell you about the type of career you should have. Partners will tell you what clothes to wear. Friends will tell you where you should go on vacation or who you should date. Co-workers will give you career guidance.

Some people even go so far as to hire coaches to tell them what to do. The bigger the decision we face, the more we tend to turn to others for advice on how to solve the problem. I'm a career coach myself, but I'm not in the advice-giving business. I prefer to help clients discover answers on their own.

Seeking the advice of others seems like a smart thing to do when dealing with a critical situation. The problem is nobody knows our lives as well as we do. No one else has as much at stake. How, then, can anyone possibly know what we should do? The truth is, they can't.

At best, giving and receiving advice is a way to gather knowledge. As the giver, it is

a surefire way to stroke the ego. At worst, however, seeking the advice of others can shut off the flow of your inner wisdom and lead you down the wrong path. When we tell others what to do, it constricts their innate intelligence and creativity. The same happens to us when we turn to others for the answers to our problems.

What, then, do we do when others come to us for guidance? Should we expect them to figure out solutions on their own? Of course not! But instead of doling out advice, try this:

1. Listen intensely, and sincerely.
2. Clarify the issue.
3. Ask powerful questions.
4. Share your personal experiences.

1 Listen intensely, and sincerely

In 2006, Ralph Nichols, a professor at the University of Minnesota, quantified that we spend 40 percent of our day listening to others, but we retain just 25 percent of what we hear. As demonstrated through research at Princeton University by Charles Gross, we have a tendency to

listen to ourselves and not to the other person when engaging in a conversation. As a result, our comprehension plummets. The cause of this is the lag time between what we hear and the time it takes for us to comprehend things.

Given this, what should we do?

1. To start, we can slow down the conversation and allow for deeper understanding to happen, as opposed to actively trying to formulate an immediate response.
2. Next, we can listen from the perspective of empathy and caring.

Perhaps the best description on how to listen in this manner is demonstrated by Brené Brown's brilliant lesson on empathy as shared in a well-known animated video (bit.ly/1btB5XC). She says empathy is "feeling with people."

To listen intently, you must care deeply about the other person and the meaning (and feelings) behind what they are saying. Your presence and feeling with the other

person are more important than any advice or solution you can provide.

The next time you engage in a conversation with someone, adopt the mindset of being immensely curious and caring. Show empathy. Remind yourself to be curious, caring and empathetic, as opposed to trying to give brilliant advice. You'll be surprised by how this raises the level of listening and awareness you hold in the conversation. In the process, you might find that the issue at hand resolves itself without your advice.

2 Clarify the issue

Part of listening is observing what is actually going on in the conversation. If someone is confused or otherwise muddled in their thinking, they may not be able to notice the subtleties of the problem they face. In these circumstances try to comment on what you are observing in the conversation—what you directly see or hear—not your opinion of it. Base your comment on what you directly experience in the conversation. Let's take the example of someone asking you for career advice. In listening, you may notice that there is more to the story than what that person is saying. You may feel a sense of frustration or confusion adrift in their words. This may prompt you to state, "It seems like there is more to your story; what else is going on?"

Similarly, it is helpful to restate what you observe. In coaching parlance, we call this "backtracking." The goal of backtracking is to ensure that everyone is clear on what is being discussed. Someone who is caught in a difficult situation might not even realize what they are saying, or their statements might not be easy for you to understand.

For instance, if someone comes to you for advice about working for a terrible boss and is considering quitting their job, you might simply reflect back what you heard them say as a way to drive for a better understanding of the issue at hand: "Here's what I hear you saying ... [restate what they said] ... did I get that right? Am I missing anything?"

Your restatement of their words serves as a mirror, helping the other person see things from an objective point of view. Sometimes this reflection is all that is needed to create a shift in awareness that helps your friend solve the problem on their own. You might also find that your understanding of the issue is far from complete (or is flat-out wrong!).

3 Ask powerful questions

As a coach, I've learned that the initial question or topic of conversation a client brings to the table is rarely the real issue that needs to be resolved. There is always something deeper under the surface.

When someone asks you for advice, don't assume that your answer to their initial question will help solve a problem. Respond with curiosity and interest. How would someone who is extremely curious engage in a conversation? They would ask questions! So should you.

Seeking the advice of others can shut off the flow of your inner wisdom and lead you down the wrong path.

A simple question to ask that can help you get to the heart of the matter is formed by three short words, "Tell me more." Asking such a question isn't for you to gain more information, it is for your friend to further illuminate for themselves the issue at hand. It is not uncommon for the entire topic of discussion to shift as the real problem is brought to the surface through a few probing questions.

Once the genuine matter is clarified, is it then appropriate to offer advice? Rather than giving advice, how about asking other questions, such as, "What do you think you should do about this?" or "What do you think is the best next step?" You will be surprised by how many people realize that they already know the solutions to their biggest problems; sometimes it just

takes someone else to help them access that knowledge.

4 Share personal experiences

Finally, you might hit the point in a discussion where you feel compelled to offer advice. Perhaps your friend seems really stuck and is unable to articulate any potential solutions or even see their situation with much clarity. Even in these situations, it's best to avoid giving advice. Instead, share your direct personal experience. Advice is what you think someone else should do. This is impossible to get perfectly right since you have no way of knowing what their life situation is really like.

Sharing your experiences is different. It relays what you have done in your life during similar circumstances. It's a way of demonstrating empathy. If you don't have a personal experience to share, you can share a story about what someone else did in a similar situation.

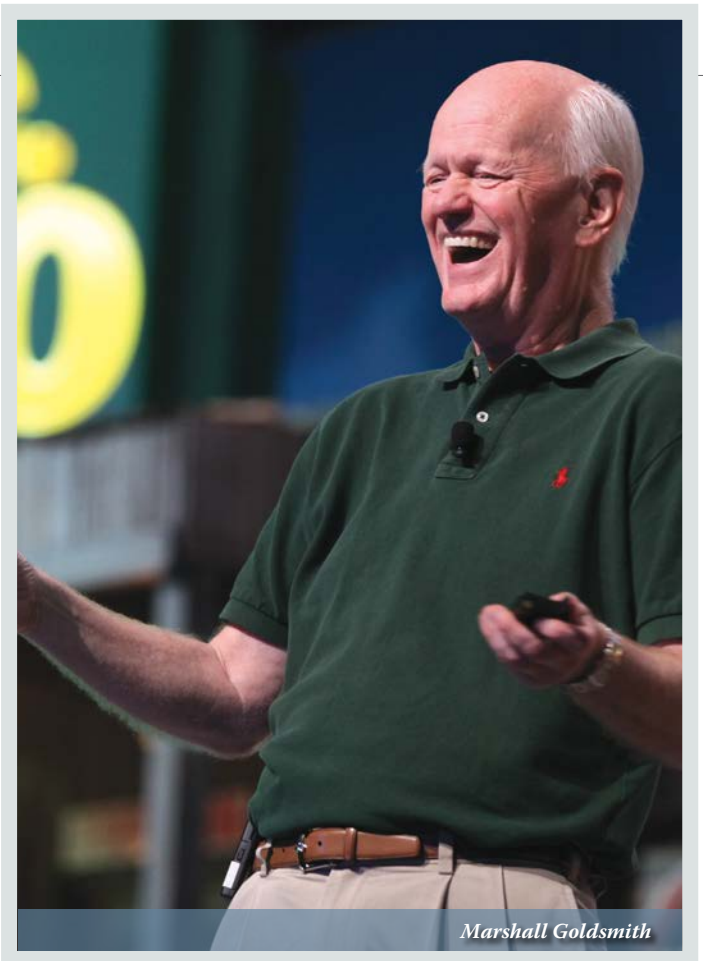
Sharing in this manner is powerful. It shows that similar problems, even if they aren't identical, can be solved. It promotes creative problem-solving and broadens awareness.

After sharing a personal story, ask your friend a question like, "What does that mean for you?" to help them process the story and apply it to their personal situation.

These techniques are based on a fundamental belief that all human beings are whole, complete and capable of meeting challenges and solving their biggest problems. Sometimes, the art of conversation is a vital tool to support this problem-solving. It can be hard to see our blind spots on our own. Giving advice, however, is not the answer. Instead, apply the strategies I've outlined to listen, reflect, inquire and share. Then, notice what happens. No advice necessary!

This article was originally published on raviraman.com.

Ravi Raman is an executive career coach and longtime veteran of Microsoft, where he led product management and marketing teams for several global software products and services.



Leadership:

It's

Not

About

Are you ready to help others succeed?

BY DAVE ZIELINSKI

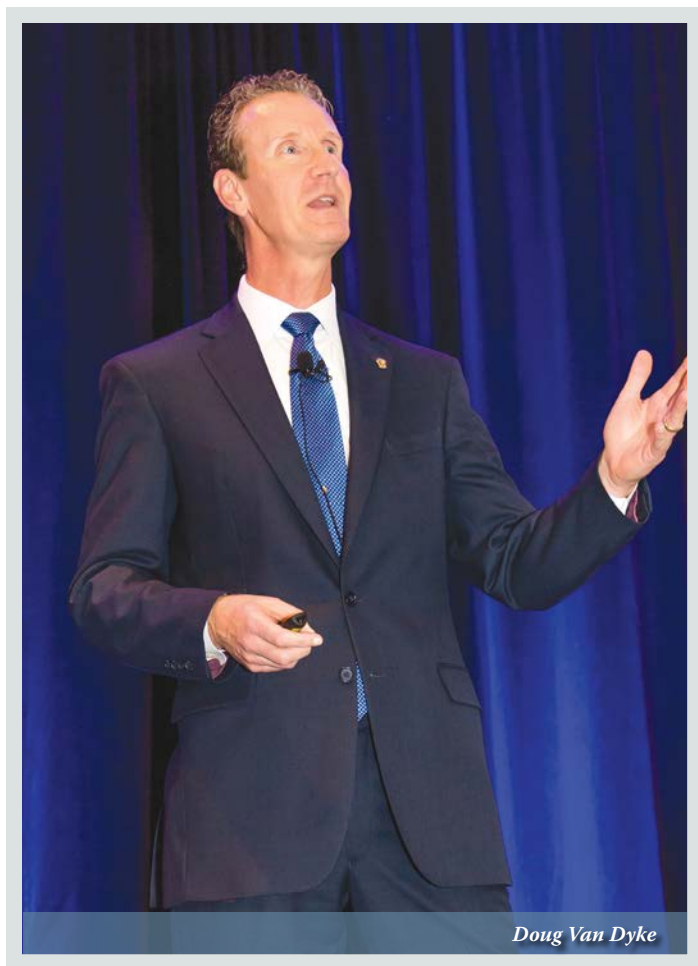
Shar McBee, CC, had just turned 26 when she was placed in charge of managing a group of 500 volunteers, a daunting prospect for someone with little leadership experience or training. The initial months in that role tested McBee to her limits.

"I was discouraged because there were times volunteers wouldn't show up, it was hard to get people to say 'yes' to certain tasks and I was receiving criticism," says McBee, a member of the Fox Talkz Toastmasters club in Los Angeles. "I would lie awake at night thinking, I am just trying to do good here, why is it so difficult?"

That's when a mentor passed along a secret to McBee that transformed her life as a leader. "She said that you have to change your mindset from getting to giving," says McBee. "The

reason I was suffering is I was focused on getting things from my volunteers, getting them to do any number of tasks or to assume certain roles. Get, get, get. But how do you feel when someone is constantly trying to *get* something from you? It's a turnoff."

That shift in thinking set McBee's leadership experience on a new course and laid the foundation for her future career as a motivational speaker, management consultant to nonprofit organizations and author of a best-selling book, *To Lead is to Serve: How to Attract Volunteers and Keep Them*.



YOU

“The more you can think of your job as making it possible for others to succeed, the more successful you’ll be as a leader of volunteers,” says McBee.

Leader as Facilitator

While a spirit of giving is crucial to being a successful leader, anyone who has led a Toastmasters club also knows a broader skill set is needed to master the role. Leading those who aren’t being paid for their time or services—regardless of their level of motivation or commitment—can present unique challenges. Creating a climate of accountability, setting clear expectations and managing team conflict takes on a different hue in volunteer-based settings than it does in for-profit environments.

The more leaders can view themselves as “facilitators” of knowledge and team success, the more effective they become, says Marshall Goldsmith, an executive coach and business educator who has been named one of the world’s most influential leadership thinkers. *Facilitating* is different than *servicing*, Goldsmith stresses, although both actions can have positive outcomes. Facilitators help those they lead *find* and apply knowledge, while servant leaders are more likely to *give* knowledge.

“Sometimes a leader doesn’t possess the right knowledge to help others, and the best aren’t afraid to say so,” says Goldsmith, author of the best-selling book *What Got You Here Won’t Get You There* and a consultant to some of the world’s top CEOs. “But the best excel at helping others find the knowledge or skills they need to succeed. While servant leaders may know enough to help others, there is some danger inherent in the term. The title sounds humble, but the reality is it could become egotistical if leaders start to believe they have all of the answers.”

Cultivating an “other-directed” mindset is essential to leadership success, Goldsmith says. “One of my clients is fond of saying that for the great individual achiever it is ‘all about me,’ and for the great leader it is ‘all about them,’” he says. “Leaders of volunteers need to make the transition from *me* to *them* and identify what drives members of their teams, because the source of that motivation can differ from person to person.”

FLIP YOUR SCRIPT: HOW TO SUCCEED AS A FIRST-TIME LEADER

There are few things in life more daunting than assuming a leadership role for the first time, whether that's leading a Toastmasters club or a work team for your employer. A key to success as a newly minted leader is to "flip your script," says William Gentry, Ph.D., author of the acclaimed book *Be the Boss Everyone Wants to Work For: A Guide for New Leaders*.

New leaders increase their odds of success if they can flip the script in some key performance areas, Gentry says. The phrase refers to shifting a mindset from being an individual contributor who is rewarded for personal accomplishments to a leader focused on the success of others.

Gentry says that leaders must change their thinking that everything is about them. "I use the old relationship break-up line of 'it's not you, it's me' to describe the shift needed," he says. "New leaders have to change that mindset or they can easily derail."

Here are some of the areas where new leaders need to flip their thinking, with findings based on research Gentry conducted on 300 first-time leaders:

Mindset flip. Successful first-time leaders have a thirst for learning and continual improvement, Gentry says, but not for the purpose of making themselves look good or to stand out from the pack. "The most successful new leaders don't seek perfection but accept that they'll make mistakes and grow from them," he says. "That's a hard flip to make from a high-performing individual contributor who may not be accustomed to failing."

Skill-set flip. The technical skills that have made new leaders successful in past roles don't carry

the same weight in leadership positions. "When I ask people in my research about the best leader or manager they've ever had, I never hear anyone say those leaders had great technical skills," Gentry says. "It's usually about their communication skills, their mentoring skills, their integrity or how they supported their teams through thick and thin." The best leaders deflect credit and have their teams' backs, Gentry says.

Relationship flip. A top challenge for new leaders is transitioning from peer or friend to boss. "Moving from being alongside your team to above them is a

unique and often jarring challenge for first-time leaders," Gentry says. "No other leadership level has that obstacle."

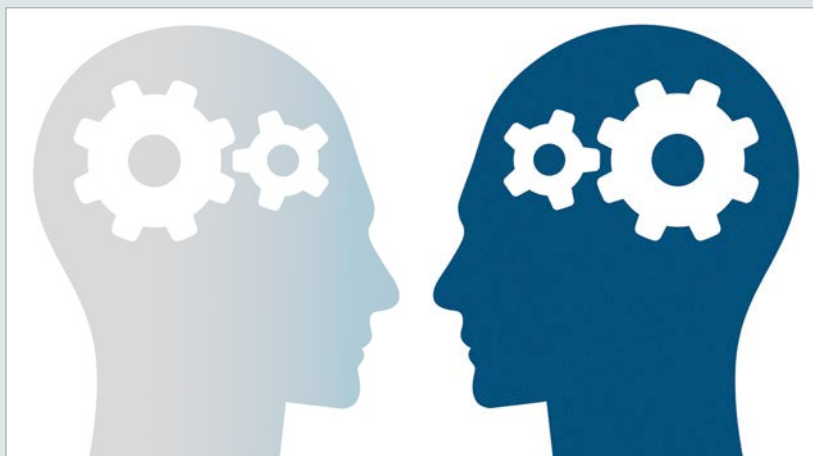
Do-it-all attitude flip.

New leaders often struggle with delegating and trusting their teams to perform. "If someone

on their team is underperforming they often take it upon themselves to do their work for them," Gentry says. "But it's crucial that they learn early to coach, develop and mentor others rather than simply taking over their work."

Perspective flip. This requires adopting a win-win attitude rather than looking to triumph over others. "It means believing 'I can understand your goals, you can understand mine, and we can find a way where both of us win,'" Gentry says. "It's about shifting from a narrow perspective to a broader one that understands how all of the pieces of a team or of an organization fit together."

Dave Zielinski is a freelance journalist in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and a frequent contributor to the *Toastmaster magazine*.



While some volunteers might be driven by the overarching mission of an organization, for example, others might be motivated by a sense of belonging to a like-minded group. Only by spending time with club members at the outset of a relationship can Toastmasters leaders divine what each member's passion is and work to accommodate it through different roles, challenges or speech topic suggestions.

"To lead is to listen," McBee says. "We know this logically as leaders but it's still a very hard thing to master. The only way to find out what motivates your team members is to ask questions and take time to truly listen to them."

In the rush to get things done it's easy for leaders to assign volunteers to jobs or tasks without first ascertaining their interests or skills, McBee says. While every team member must take his or her turn in different roles to serve the greater good, it's also important they have time to do things that stir their passion.

"People join Toastmasters to grow and to stretch their skills, so leaders need to make sure they have the right opportunities to do that," McBee says. "A volunteer leader might assign someone to handle the food without thinking much of it, for example, but maybe the person they've assigned doesn't like to cook. We're often consumed with trying to fill roles, but if we truly listen to volunteers we might find out they're willing to take on something different or even something bigger than we thought. Or maybe there's a chance for people to switch duties or roles so both [parties] end up happy."

Sometimes volunteers want to give more than leaders expect, McBee says, and sometimes they want to give less. "Giving them some say in their roles is a key to recruiting and keeping volunteers happy," she says.

Balancing Gratitude with Accountability

Leaders also have to balance gratitude with creating a culture of accountability, ensuring that team members receive praise for their hard work and accomplishments but also requiring that everyone honor their commitment to the team and to their individual duties.

Leaders will face situations where they have to referee interpersonal squabbles, address missed deadlines or manage a "problem" club member, says Doug Van Dyke, a leadership development expert, professional speaker and CEO of Leadership Simplified in Bradenton, Florida.

Van Dyke says a key to creating a culture of accountability is setting crystal-clear expectations and ensuring role clarity. He created a "working agreement" document for volunteer-driven organizations that helps leaders and team members reach consensus on expectations for their respective roles. "Clarifying expectations is not always an easy conversation to have, but if done right it's almost always productive and valuable for both sides," Van Dyke says.

Leaders invariably will have club members who test their patience or prove challenging to lead. In some cases, Van Dyke

says, these members will be smart, dedicated and resourceful, but they can develop a sense of entitlement or grow intransigent. Van Dyke calls these volunteers "baby tigers" and says they require one of three leadership approaches:

- ▶ Assign a baby-tiger *whisperer* to them. "In this case you've deemed the volunteer to be so valuable that you assign another volunteer or club member to shepherd them, to rein them in and to do damage control if necessary," Van Dyke says.
- ▶ Attempt to keep the baby tiger siloed. "Let them work or interact on their own as much as possible when teamwork or collaboration isn't required," he says.
- ▶ End the relationship. "In some cases you may need to sever the relationship with the baby tiger if the value they are bringing to the group is not commensurate with the chaos they are creating," Van Dyke says.

McBee says creating a strong sense of inclusion and connection is essential to building a productive and harmonious Toastmasters club.

"I will sometimes put up two signs for audiences during my speeches—one sign on the right side of the room titled 'us' and one on the left titled 'them'—and then ask people to stand under the sign they prefer," McBee says. "Which do you think most people stand under? People need to feel a sense of connection. If you can make volunteers feel included they will support you as a leader, but when they feel excluded they may try to undermine you."

To Lead Is to Appreciate

There's one thing most leadership experts agree upon: Thanking your fellow Toastmasters for the roles they play and the work they do is a gift that keeps on giving. "I once heard the CEO of an organization say, 'A human being's greatest support system is gratitude,'" McBee says. "People need appreciation and they don't forget it when you thank them."

Goldsmith says the act of appreciation has a power many leaders tend to undervalue. "Recognition doesn't cost money; it's something anyone can do and it makes a huge difference in people's lives," he says.

Gratitude is especially important for longtime club members, McBee says, since their contributions and efforts can sometimes be taken for granted.

"Those long-tenured members represent the 'steel' or foundation of your Toastmasters club, and without the steel a building will crumble," McBee says. "You don't want to overlook thanking your tenured volunteers. When the going gets tough as a leader, they often will be the first ones to support you." ■

Dave Zielinski is a freelance journalist in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and a frequent contributor to the *Toastmaster* magazine.



ONLINE EXTRAS: Learn more from top leaders on how to help others succeed.

Wise Words on Leading Others

A collection of clever quotations that highlight timeless lessons.

Large manuals are great for gaining knowledge and building skills, but sometimes the biggest lessons come in the smallest packages. These succinct quotes from celebrated thinkers and well-known leaders from around the globe and throughout history provide powerful insights that can benefit both seasoned leaders and individuals tackling the challenge for the first time.

“True leadership stems from individuality that is honestly and sometimes imperfectly expressed.... Leaders should strive for authenticity over perfection.”

— SHERYL SANDBERG, COO, FACEBOOK

“The key to successful leadership today is influence, not authority.”

— KEN BLANCHARD, MANAGEMENT EXPERT AND AUTHOR

“The art of communication is the language of leadership.”

— JAMES HUMES, FORMER PRESIDENTIAL SPEECHWRITER

“I’ve learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.”

— MAYA ANGELOU, POET, PERFORMER AND ACTIVIST

“You gain strength, courage and confidence by every experience in which you really stop to look fear in the face. You must do the thing you think you cannot do.”

— ELEANOR ROOSEVELT, FORMER FIRST LADY OF THE UNITED STATES

“I start with the premise that the function of leadership is to produce more leaders, not more followers.”

— RALPH NADER, POLITICAL ACTIVIST

“A leader is best when people barely know he exists; when his work is done, his aim fulfilled, they will say, We did it ourselves.”

— LAO TZU, ANCIENT CHINESE PHILOSOPHER AND WRITER

“Leadership is not about being in charge. It’s about caring for those you are in charge of.”

— SIMON SINEK, LEADERSHIP EXPERT, SPEAKER AND AUTHOR

“A leader takes people where they would never go on their own.”

— HANS FINZEL, AUTHOR, SPEAKER AND LEADERSHIP MENTOR

“If you want to build a ship, don’t drum up the men to gather wood, divide the work and give orders. Instead, teach them to yearn for the vast and endless sea.”

— ANTOINE DE SAINT-EXUPÉRY, FRENCH WRITER

“If you can’t communicate, it’s like winking to a girl in the dark.”

— WARREN BUFFET, BUSINESS MAGNATE AND INVESTOR

“If I have seen further [than others], it is by standing on the shoulders of giants.”

— ISAAC NEWTON, MATHEMATICIAN, ASTRONOMER AND PHYSICIST



Should You Enter Speech Contests?

By all means, YES!

BY BILL BROWN, DTM

As you've no doubt noticed, Toastmasters offers many ways for you to learn. My favorite—and the one where I have grown the most—is the speech contest.

Every year, districts conduct a number of contests, typically four. It's an opportunity to test your skills against other Toastmasters in a multi-round, single elimination tournament. What's so great about that? You get to push yourself to become better in speaking and speech writing because you know that you will be competing with some really good speakers.

Toastmasters offers five different types of contests. Each district chooses which ones they wish to conduct, although one of them must be the Toastmasters International Speech Contest. Let's look at each one.

The Toastmasters **International Speech Contest** is so called because, unlike the other contests, each district winner goes on to the Toastmasters International Convention to compete for the title of World Champion of Public Speaking. There is no requirement for the type or topic of the speech but, at the higher levels, inspirational speeches often win.

The **Humorous Speech Contest** is the most fun for the spectator. After all, we all like to laugh. This is not stand-up comedy. Contestants present speeches on topics of their own choosing and make them as humorous as they can. If you think you are funny, this is the contest for you.

My favorite is the **Tall Tales Contest**. This one involves telling a far-fetched story. I achieved a major breakthrough in my speaking ability by competing in this contest. I soon learned that you need to

be very expressive to deliver an effective tall tale. By pushing myself, I stretched to the point where I became a much better speaker in general. You see, telling a tall tale, by its very nature, encourages us to be more expressive than we normally are. And it's not just me. I have seen others take their speaking to a whole new level by participating in this contest. That is why I personally believe that it should be a part of each district's contest menu.

What is the advantage of participating in a contest? In a word: growth.

Many districts conduct the **Table Topics Contest**. If you really enjoy Table Topics, or you would rather not have to write and practice a planned speech, this contest is for you. The speech is just like the Table Topics you are familiar with in your club meeting.

The final contest is the **Speech Evaluation Contest**. In this one, all contestants listen to a test speaker. They then are escorted to a separate room where they have five minutes to prepare a complete evaluation. One by one, they are brought back to the main room to evaluate the speaker. I encourage you to enter this contest, but if you don't feel up to it yet, by all means, consider being the test speaker. The feedback that you will receive is invaluable.

I believe the Speech Evaluation Contest has the potential for having the greatest impact on the clubs themselves. If a contestant becomes a better evaluator by participating,

he or she is not likely to forget those skills when the contest is over. Instead, they take that new skill level back to their club and then serve as an example for other members, raising the quality of the evaluations in the entire club. This, in turn, raises the value of the Toastmasters experience.

What, then, is the advantage of participating in a contest? In a word: growth. On two occasions, I have seen someone who was not a strong speaker win a club's International Speech Contest. To their credit, they embraced the task of preparing for the next contest at the area level. I attended both contests and was amazed at how well they did. Although neither of them won, the growth in their speaking was stunning. They made a quantum leap in their speaking ability and they never looked back.

When you ask, *should I enter a speech contest*, I would strongly urge you to answer *yes*. Even if you only compete at the club level, it will challenge you in ways that you won't find in a standard manual speech. If you want to grow ... If you want to be stretched ... If you want to become a better speaker, by all means enter your next club contest.

And whether or not you win, I suggest that you attend the area, division and district contests. See what the best speakers in your district are doing, and then reach for that level yourself. ■

Bill Brown, DTM, is a speech delivery coach from Las Vegas and a member of *Jackpot Speakers*, which specializes in speech evaluation. Learn more at www.billbrownspeechcoach.com.



Like, Um, How Do I Stop, Ya Know, Using *Um* and *Ah*?

Use the science of disfluencies and techniques to clean up your speech. BY LISA B. MARSHALL

Recently I was interviewed by a *New York Times* reporter and at times it was difficult for me to focus on the content of my responses. Frankly, I was worried I'd let a stray “um,” “ah,” or “so” slip from my mouth. Why was I so concerned? The reporter was asking my advice on how to keep our language filler-free.

He wanted to know more about disfluencies. Never heard that term before? *Sooooo, um*, disfluency is, *like*, an academic term, *ah*, that is used to describe speaker *he-he*-hesitations, repeats, repeats, or expressions such as *um*, *ah* or *ya know*. As you know, in Toastmasters this is the primary purview of the Ah-Counter (which is a much catchier title than disfluency-counter, don't you think?).

If you've ever been singled out by the Ah-Counter, it might help to know that our spontaneous speech is naturally disfluent—as natural as peas in a pod. In fact, a conservative estimate for the rate of vocalized disfluencies is six words per 100. That means if you speak at a typical rate of 150 words per minute, you should expect to say nine filler words in just one minute of speech! And it often gets worse when we are nervous or the subject is difficult or demands effort (in speaking and listening).

Why Isn't Our Speech Fluent?

Early studies suggested we verbalize hesitations because our parents and teachers condition us to respond immediately, and when we don't have something to say, we

feel compelled to fill the uncomfortable silence. However, today most researchers agree that disfluencies aren't just fillers; instead, these expressions communicate meaningful information. For example, we use *um* and *ah* to hold onto the “conversational floor” as we are planning what we are going to say next, with *ah* signaling a short delay and *um* signaling a longer delay.

Other research suggests that certain groups use disfluency as an expression of solidarity. For example, when a group of twenty-somethings talk among themselves and, *like*, *totally infect their conversation with verbal viruses—it's, like, totally cool!* At least to them. (For outsiders, not so much—but we'll get to that).

In addition, disfluencies are used to signal emphasis: *She reads, like, TEN books*. Or correction: *Open the gree-,ah, blue book*. We now know that not only do disfluencies improve attention, they also improve later remembering. This finding led a researcher to suggest that public speakers, policy makers and teachers would be better off including the occasional disfluency rather than giving perfectly scripted, error-free presentations.

So then why, as Toastmasters, should we be concerned with our expressions of hesitation? Notice the expert said *occasional* disfluency. When disfluency becomes repetitive and excessive, especially to the point of distraction, that's when it becomes a problem. In addition, in high-stakes situations we have a higher expectation of fluency, and when the speaker is hesitant, it often leads to negative perceptions. In fact, disfluent speakers can be perceived as nervous, unprepared, lacking competence, lacking confidence or even as deceitful. In short, these verbal viruses become credibility killers. That's why it's important to learn how to reduce them but perhaps not entirely eliminate them.

So, Um, Can I, Like, Get Rid of Them?

Most experts suggest a seemingly simple solution: Replace verbalized pauses with silence. But that's easier said than done. In my experience, most people are not fully aware of how much they hesitate or which particular situations transform their speech from acceptable to problematic.

So the first step to replacing ahs and ums with silence is to identify them in yourself and others. Try recording your speech patterns in a variety of settings: during meetings, work presentations, speeches, casual conversations and more. It is important to listen to and review at least five minutes of recorded speech daily for at least 14 days. Simply listen and actively acknowledge each hesitation in an effort to become painfully aware of your particular pattern. Ultimately, the goal is to recognize when you are *just about to*

utter an expression of hesitation—but that takes time and work.

It's also important to begin noticing which particular situations are troublesome for you. For example, during a recent Toastmasters meeting I was assigned the role of Ah-Counter. One of the prepared speakers delivered her speech and I dutifully counted the disfluencies.

Ultimately, the goal is to recognize when you are *just about to* utter an expression of hesitation—but that takes time and work.

She didn't have that many. But after her speech, someone asked her a few questions. During that time her *ahs, ums* and *ya knows* almost tripled. It turned out the conversation was politically sensitive and she had been carefully choosing her words (which jibes with the research about talking in difficult situations). Now she knows that when she talks about this topic and other sensitive ones, she needs to monitor and regulate her speech more carefully.

What Else Can I Do Besides Pause?

Here are two simple tactics when delivering speeches. First, remind yourself that during a speech no one is going to interrupt you—so you don't need to signal that you've got more to say! Believe it or not, that simple reminder can really make a difference. Next, use more gestures (even when no one else is physically with you). Although researchers have not identified exactly why, fewer gestures equates to more disfluency.

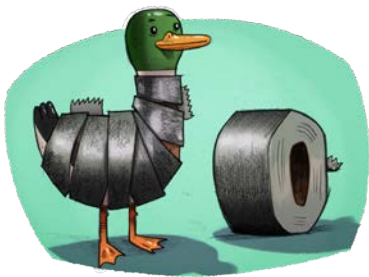
Another helpful technique is to use shorter sentences. Research has shown that when you reduce your mental processing load, you're more likely to increase your fluency. After eight years of record-

ing a weekly podcast, I noticed that simple sentences are *much* easier to say without tripping up. If you're a person who likes to write out what you plan to say, be sure to eliminate compound sentences, never start with a prepositional phrase, put most of your sentences in subject/predicate order and eliminate any vocabulary that you have difficulty saying without hesitating. The basic idea is to write for the ear, not the eye! Or better yet, if you feel compelled to write your speeches, then start from your spoken words and transcribe them.

If you want to see a big difference, slow down. Try using diaphragmatic breathing, which for most people takes effort to learn and practice. Not only will it help to slow your speech, it will also slow your heart rate and help to reduce any anxiety. More importantly, it allows you to replace disfluencies with a specific physical behavior—a long five- to six-second breath—between the end of one thought and the start of the next one. If executed properly, it will force you to create a silent pause. It may feel awkward, especially with such a long silent pause; however, it's worth it because disfluencies that come just before a new idea is expressed are judged more harshly than others. Of course, another way to slow down is to deliver fewer messages so you know you have plenty of time to deliver your material with passion and expression.

Remember, hesitations in our speech are not just fillers—they have meaning and serve a purpose. In some cases they can improve attention and retention. But if used excessively, they can create negative perceptions. Your goal should be reduction, not elimination. I hope you'll use these tips for your next speech. ■

Lisa B. Marshall is a communications expert who delivers consulting and workshops. She is the author of *Smart Talk and Red Duck Interviewing*, and host of the *Public Speaker and Smart Talk* podcasts. Learn more by visiting www.lisabmarshall.com.



Malapropisms

These examples come free with your conscription to this magazine.

BY JOHN CADLEY

I used to live across the street from a woman named Helen, who had a wonderful way with words. Noticing the ground cover surrounding my home, she complimented me on my beautiful patch of “pachydandruff.” Another time she asked if I had any “duck tape” she could borrow. I briefly thought to correct her—the image of a duck wrapped in tape being slightly disconcerting—but I didn’t because I realized that here before me stood a source of entertainment far more creative than anything on television. And free!

Mistaking pachydandruff for pachysandra and duck for duct are linguistic mash-ups known as malapropisms. Grammarians call it the “use of an incorrect word in place of a word with a similar sound.” I call it fall-down-funny and I can’t get enough. I wish I had collected all of Helen’s malaprops, but there is no shortage to draw from. Look no further than the world champion of twisted syntax, Yogi Berra, to hear that, when it comes to American presidential elections, “the state of Texas has a lot of electrical votes.” Or the former prime minister of Australia, Tony Abbott, who expressed, with all the gravitas of a respected head of state, that “no one, however smart, however well-educated, however experienced, is the suppository of all wisdom.” Suppositories have their use, of course—and a valuable one it is—but they are a far cry from the intended “repository,” which holds things rather than loosens them.

The word malapropism comes from Mrs. Malaprop, a character in *The Rivals*, a play written by Richard Brinsley Sheridan in 1775. Mrs. Malaprop was wont to say “illiterate” for “obliterate,” and “allego-

ry” for “alligator.” If the sentence got longer the mental malfunctions multiplied. At one point she tries to say: “If I apprehend anything in this world, it is the use of my vernacular tongue and a nice arrangement of epithets.” However, as she tripped and stumbled through the culverts, ravines and potholes of her cerebral cortex, this elegant thought emerged as: “If I reprehend anything in this world it is the use of my oracular tongue, and a nice derangement of epitaphs.” God bless her.

The Irish politician Bertie Ahern warned his country against upsetting the apple tart.

The comic gold inherent in malaprops is not lost on the professionals. Stan Laurel of the famous American comedy team Laurel and Hardy worried that his partner was having a “nervous shakedown” because he kept referring to the Exalted Leader of a group they belonged to as their “exhausted” leader (which may have been true; just not what was intended).

In the political arena we have Welsh Conservative leader Andrew RT Davies encouraging his colleagues to make breakfast a success (he meant Brexit). Not to be outdone by the British, the Irish politician Bertie Ahern warned his country against upsetting the apple tart. He meant cart, of course, but turning an apple tart upside down has its consequences, too, especially if it ends up in your lap.

Back in the good old USA, Richard J. Daley, the infamous late mayor of Chicago, was not one to mince words, except when he turned them into mincemeat. To Mayor Daley, a tandem bicycle was a “tantrum bicycle” and no one could tell him otherwise. As for those with a weakness for strong drink, Alcoholics Unanimous was the mayor’s sage recommendation.

During the last American presidential campaign we got to know a little more about Rick Perry, the then-governor of the state with all the “electrical” votes—Texas. In his passion to maintain America’s competitive edge on the global stage, Perry urged all the states to become lavatories of innovation. And be sure to wash your hands afterward.

Malapropisms are so funny that one has to wonder if some of them aren’t intended. For instance, there’s the man who said, “Having one wife is called monotony.” He meant monogamy. Or did he? And the woman who remarked, “I have a very photogenic memory.” Photographic is the correct word, of course, but perhaps she was looking for a modeling job.

I’m sure you all have your favorites as well. With our natural tendency for the mind to so often out-race the tongue, verbal slip-ups are inevitable. My all-time winner came when I took my then-6-year-old son to Starbucks for breakfast. As he drank his chocolate milk he asked me if I was drinking decapitated coffee. Beat that. I dare you. **T**

John Cadley, a former advertising copywriter, is a freelance writer and musician living in Fayetteville, New York. Learn more at www.cadleys.com.

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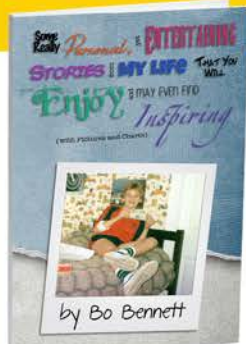
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CLIENT SPOTLIGHT - BO BENNETT, DTM

You might know Bo as the creator of FreeToastHost, the host of the Toastmasters Podcast, or the Founder of eBookIt.com. Or perhaps you never heard of the guy. Either way, you will enjoy his latest book, *Some Really Personal, Yet Entertaining Stories From My Life That You Will Enjoy and May Even Find Inspiring*.

What is a "normal childhood?" Does it include almost being murdered by your sister with an ax? Speeding around town in the back of a station wagon because your mom is chasing an "alien spaceship"? Being busted by the police for intent to light a pond on fire? Tackling your mom to the ground and wrestling a knife out of her hand because she was trying to kill your dad? While my stories may be unique, readers will be able to relate to the broader themes are part of a normal childhood such as sibling rivalry, eccentric parents, doing stupid things, and frequently preventing one's parents from literally murdering each other.

Although some of the subject matter is not something one would generally laugh at, you have my permission to laugh. Social rules don't apply here; my rules do. It works for me, and who knows, after reading the stories from my past, you might be inspired to see your own screwed up past in a more humorous light.

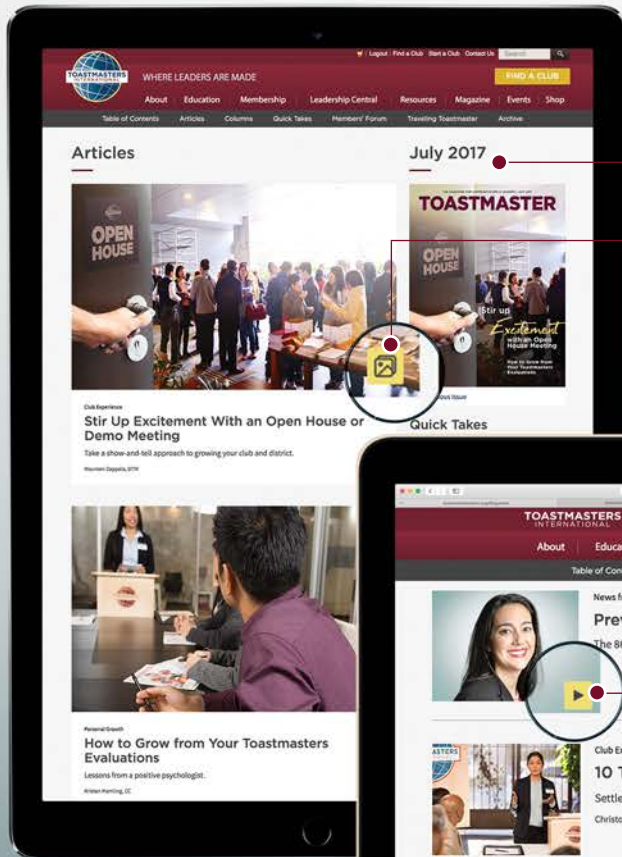
Some Really Personal, Yet Entertaining Stories From My Life That You Will Enjoy and May Even Find Inspiring by Bo Bennett is available in ebook, paperback, and audio, at 

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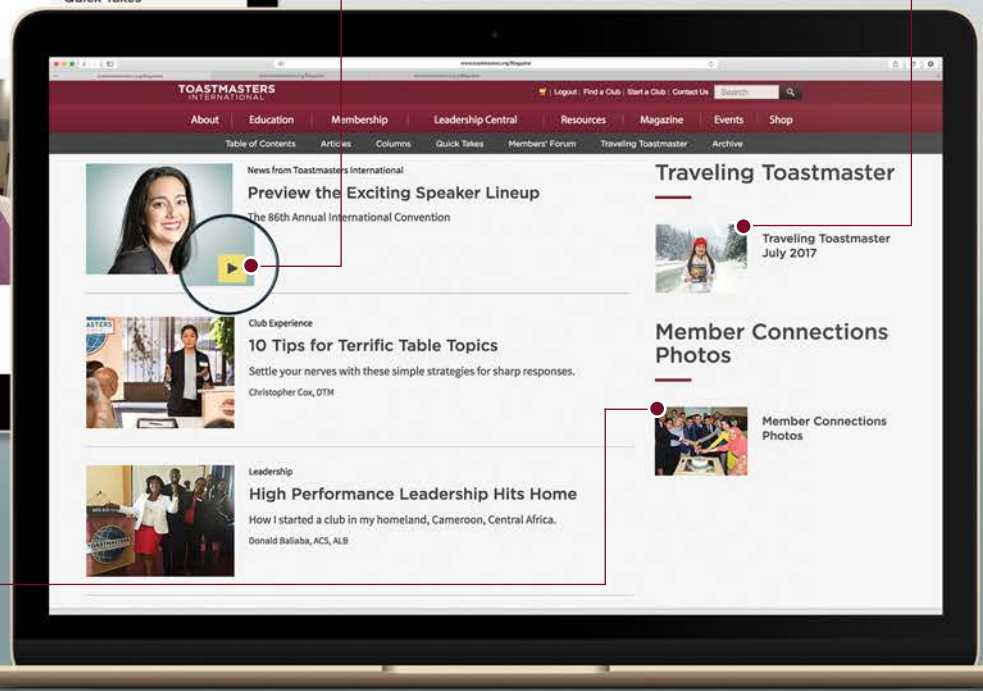


Online edition is available on the first day of the month

Pop-up photo galleries within magazine articles

Videos within magazine articles

See yourself in the expanded *Traveling Toastmaster* photo gallery



Member Connections, a gallery meant for your club and member photos

Go to www.toastmasters.org/Magazine

Look for Member Connections below the *Traveling Toastmaster* gallery. Your club could be featured next! Send your pictures to photos@toastmasters.org and include a description, your club name, number and location.