

THE MAGAZINE FOR COMMUNICATORS & LEADERS | OCTOBER 2019

# TOASTMASTER®



## Can't Decide?

Make smarter decisions by  
choosing the right style for the job

### Tools of the Trade

How rhetorical devices  
transform words into art

### Prep Talk

Tips to maximize  
speech practice sessions

# What Do Members Want? Ask Them.

**W**hen I attended my first Toastmasters meeting 17 years ago, I realized I was a nervous wreck while facing an audience. I wasted no time in joining. My Toastmasters club provided ample opportunities to help me gain confidence and reach my goals. Of course, I did need some handholding and cajoling along the way. The club officers and my mentor offered the required guidance and support.

What happens when members join your club? Do you make time to find out why they joined, and ask about their goals and needs? If you do, is this information documented? Do you use it to support new members as they progress in your club?

It is important to capture this vital information from new members. Understanding why they joined, as well as their specific needs, helps you tailor your club program to create meaningful opportunities for them. This background also equips mentors with specific information to guide and influence their mentees.

## Understanding why members join . . . helps you create meaningful opportunities for them.

Thoroughly assessing members' needs, and fulfilling those needs, enhances engagement, participation, and retention. Additionally, staying in touch with members about their goals and expectations makes them feel wanted and cherished.

Over time, I realized I had gained the confidence I sought from Toastmasters. I began to discover the enormous potential for growth and development the organization offered me. I was eager for the opportunity to learn additional leadership skills. Thus, the purpose of continuing my Toastmasters journey underwent a change. My club supported me to the hilt in ensuring that I could meet my enhanced goals.

This is precisely what happens with our members worldwide. They learn that Toastmasters offers many benefits beyond improving speaking skills (although that's the main reason most members join). If we interact with our members in intervals of at least six months, to check in on their experience, we can become more effective in assisting them.

Satisfied members will achieve their goals and set new ones. They will be our ambassadors, spreading a positive message about their experiences and attracting new individuals to join Toastmasters. This results in gains all around; it is a win-win-win situation.

Act now and make your club the only place that your members want to be!

**Deepak Menon, DTM**  
International President



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Daniel Rex

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Stephanie Darling

## Senior Editor

Paul Sterman

## Associate Editor

Laura Amann

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## Content Strategy

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9127 S. Jamaica St. #400, Englewood, CO, USA 80112  
+1 720-439-5050

[www.toastmasters.org](http://www.toastmasters.org)

## CONTACTING WORLD HEADQUARTERS

For information on joining

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Article submission:

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## Toastmasters International Mission:

We empower individuals to become more effective communicators and leaders.



## WHERE LEADERS ARE MADE

[www.toastmasters.org](http://www.toastmasters.org)

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## An open platform for your tips, tactics, comments, and encouragement.

### Autism Insights Appreciated

After reading Jolene Stockman's My Turn story in the *Toastmaster* magazine [July 2019], I watched her TEDx Talk with my son, who has Asperger syndrome. We were impressed by her ability to explain such a complex disorder with clarity, candor, and humor. Many thanks to Ms. Stockman for sharing her gifts with Toastmasters and the world.

**Lori Sizemore**

Sierra Vista, Arizona  
Cochise Toastmasters

### Turning Strangers into Connections

I am often amazed by the quality of articles in the *Toastmaster* magazine. "Building Meaningful Connections" by Maureen Zappala, DTM [June 2019] was especially valuable for people who attend conferences. These events can be great for learning and building connections; they can also be discouraging if you become isolated in a room full of strangers. I recently attended an annual conference with nearly 2,000 peers and had the opportunity to give a presentation. It was a success, and I was able to demonstrate my public speaking abilities to colleagues and my boss!

The bigger challenge for me was when I was not a speaker. However, all the Power-Point presentations, impromptu questions, moderators, and time restrictions reminded me of our Toastmasters meetings, and I found comfort in taking the same familiar approach. As I engaged speakers, we deepened our shared interests,

"People love feedback, and providing thoughtful questions or praise is a skill we as Toastmasters practice often."

—BLAKE HENDRICKSON

exchanged information, and even built on initial connections after hours.

People love feedback, and providing thoughtful questions or praise is a skill we as Toastmasters practice often. Conferences are presentation marathons, and we can thrive when attending them.

**Blake Hendrickson**

Lincoln, Nebraska  
Capitol Voices

### Toastmaster Treasures

Every issue of the *Toastmaster* makes for great reading. And every month, I think of writing to thank you for this or that article. But I never felt a compelling reason to do so until I reread the April 2019 issue and realized it was a treasure trove of ideas, information, and inspiration. I was especially inspired by Past International President Mohammed Murad's "Is Leadership for Me?" not only because of the "Five H's" (which I love!) but more so because Mohammed himself personifies these five leadership traits.

"In Public Relations, Persistence Pays" by Tess Iandiorio and "Need to Make an Impact? Get Loud" by Joel Schwartzberg were also excellent! I could go on and on but will stop with one final comment. It's good to see a photo of the magazine team (and the finance team a few issues back). Please feature other teams in future issues. Thanks again!

**Michelle Alba-Lim, DTM**

Sutherline, Oregon  
Global Trainers Online

### Compelled by CX Resources

Just wanted to say I greatly appreciated the article written by Craig Harrison, DTM, "Give Members and Guests a Compelling CX" [May 2019]. This article inspired me and provided many useful tips that can be applied not just at a Toastmasters meeting but at other meetings.

Thank you for providing wonderful resources such as this.

**Cheryl Dillon**

St. Catharines, Ontario, Canada  
Garden City Toastmasters of St. Catharines

### Remembering the Basics

Returning to the basics can prove beneficial in any setting. In March, I attended a three-week leadership training that leveraged the leadership and communication skills I have been cultivating in my home club for the last three years.

During the second week of training, I didn't do well on a presentation, but the January 2019 issue of the *Toastmaster* magazine gave me inspiration. After reading "Consider Questions: A Speaker's Best Tool" by Matt Abrahams and "Who Are You Targeting?" by Dan Strum, I realized my failure was caused by not leveraging the skills I'd learned while working through the *Competent Communication* manual.

Mr. Strum reminded me, "If we don't connect with our audience, the other elements of our speech ... all fall by the wayside." Mr. Abrahams offered, "The next time you are preparing and delivering a presentation, consider using the do-it-all communication tool: the question."

For our final group presentation, I used these tips to craft an introduction that connected with the audience! Going back to the basics helped me make our group's Capstone Project a success.

**Rhonda Barnes**

Clinton, North Carolina  
Soaring Eagles Toastmasters

### DO YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY?

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

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How rhetorical and literary devices turn basic communication into soaring words of art.

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## About Toastmasters International

Toastmasters International is a nonprofit educational organization teaching public speaking and leadership skills through a worldwide network of clubs. Membership exceeds 358,000 in more than 16,800 clubs in 143 countries.

Find out more at [www.toastmasters.org](http://www.toastmasters.org).



Improve public speaking skills



Build leadership skills



Maximize your potential

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10 tips for more productive speech practice.

*By Joel Schwartzberg*



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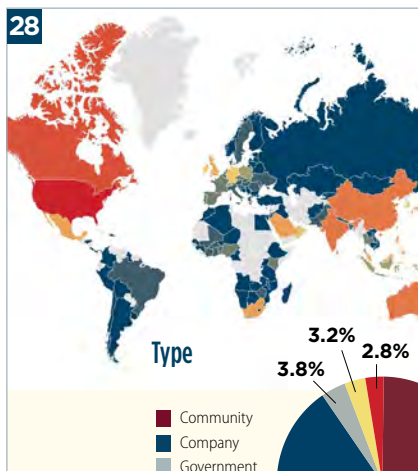
As the world has evolved, so has the magazine.

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### NEWS FROM TI THE FACTS ARE IN!

The past Toastmasters year proved to be one of growth for the organization.



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-  **View** collections of fun and interesting photos.
-  **Access** valuable resources through hyperlinks.
-  **Share** articles with prospective members, friends and colleagues.



**FIND MORE ONLINE THIS MONTH:** You are no longer required to log in to view the current issue, so sharing is easy!



## What Did You Say?

Do you know the qualities of a good speech? Listen to an audio recording by Toastmasters Toolbox author Bill Brown, DTM, for suggestions on where to find well-written speeches from history.

## Speaking Tips and Tricks



Listen to a podcast interview with public speaking coach Lisa Wentz. In it she offers valuable advice, such as how to conquer your inner critic, as well as techniques that can be applied to speeches, pitches, and presentations.

## WEB RESOURCE



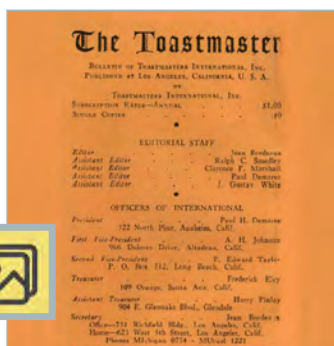
## Did You Know?

The **Media Center** on the Toastmasters International website has resources you can access and share, including news releases, a media kit, featured articles about Toastmasters, and more! Visit the link below and use the power of public relations to promote Toastmasters in your community.

[mediacenter.toastmasters.org](http://mediacenter.toastmasters.org)

## Happy Birthday, *Toastmaster Magazine!*

The print edition of the *Toastmaster* is 86 years old, and the online edition is 3! Celebrate the rich history of Toastmasters' flagship publication by clicking through a photo gallery of momentous occasions through the decades and take a quiz to test your *Toastmaster* knowledge.



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► STAFF MOMENT

## Spotlight on WHQ's Business Research and Analysis Staff

This department transforms data into actions that meet member needs.



FROM LEFT: *Eric Reinhold, Shoua Lee, John Lurquin, Holly Keily, Andrea Palmer.*

Responsible for conducting and documenting 50 to 60 research projects a year, the Business Research and Analysis team helps Toastmasters International identify and meet the needs of members and clubs worldwide.

Business Research Manager John Lurquin describes his staff as “conscientious, critical, and curious.” These traits help the team incorporate language, culture, geography, club size, and other variables to capture the diverse, changing nature of members and clubs. Through data analytics, surveys, interviews, focus groups, predictive analysis, program evaluation, and various scientific tools, the team provides key findings to the Board of Directors, various Board committees, and World Headquarters departments.

For example, the team tracks member participation in the Pathways learning experience—such as the percentage of engagement by clubs worldwide—and member feedback that has led to Pathways improvements. Some of the topics explored in the team’s recent surveys include member satisfaction and readership preferences for the *Toastmaster* magazine.

Lurquin explained that in interacting with members, the research team collects only details specific to the project. The team may query a scientific sample of a certain group, such as all club presidents, but response is voluntary.

He adds that his team members, with their diverse backgrounds and broad skills, may not always agree on methodology or purpose at first, and they aren’t averse to challenging each other in the search for answers. But that means they bring thorough inquiry to projects.

### Meet the Team

Holly Keily, senior research analyst, has a doctorate in linguistics and additional degrees in French and international business/marketing. Given her strong business background, her work is

often market focused. For example, she conducted a parity analysis to demonstrate the real cost of membership in different parts of the world. Fluent in French, Keily has also studied S’gaw Karen, Zarma Songhai, Proto-Indo-European, Hungarian, and Japanese.

Eric Reinhold, research analyst, has a bachelor’s degree in psychology. His interests include statistics, data engineering, and programming. He works across projects, most recently focusing on analyzing club data, and enjoys the team’s lively, productive meetings.

Andrea Palmer, research project coordinator, is pursuing a bachelor’s degree in data analytics. She discovered her fascination with numbers while processing paperwork and chartering new clubs on the Member Engagement and Support team. Palmer enjoys project variety. “We could be answering a question from the Board, analyzing data in a way we haven’t tried before, or improving on a routine project to find new information,” she notes.

Shoua Lee, research analyst, is the newest member of the team. His expertise involves developing study methodologies, meticulously analyzing project data, and creating detailed reports on study findings. He is a former risk analyst and holds a master’s degree in economics/econometrics from the University of Wisconsin.

Lurquin has a doctorate in cognitive psychology. Prior to joining Toastmasters, his research included studying why people persist—or give up—on difficult tasks. His interest in what makes people tick is a perfect fit with Toastmasters International’s commitment to member value and growth. “I appreciate that every research project is aimed at understanding our members and how we might better meet their needs,” he says.

Read some of the research department’s member-related findings under the Statistics and Data Hub at [www.toastmasters.org](http://www.toastmasters.org).

**Editor’s Note:** *This article is one in a recurring series about the various departments at Toastmasters World Headquarters.*

▶ **SNAPSHOT** 



*Members of Excel Oman Toastmasters of Muscat, Oman, participated in a district-wide competition to best represent your club through an interesting photo. For their photo, Excel Oman members chose to visit the Rose Garden at Al Qurum and pose with these letters symbolizing that their club is “larger than life.”*

▶ **SPEECH TIPS**

## Add Some Sizzle to Your Speeches

A speech that entertains is like the sizzle in a steak. It is not substantial within itself, and it’s not meant to be. Its value lies in the enjoyment of the audience.

If you want your audience to have a good time, you must appear to be enjoying yourself. Be good-natured and optimistic. Avoid focusing on anything negative except to poke fun of it. The audience does not want an argument, a rant, or a lecture. They want to be entertained, and they expect you to be their leader. As you construct your speech, keep these points in mind:

**Simplicity.** The audience should not have to work too hard to follow your presentation. Keep your thoughts and speech organization simple.

**Vividness.** Choose your words carefully and make them have impact. For example, instead of saying, “He stood up,” say, “He leaped from his chair, his eyes blazing.” Strive to create images so real, they will linger in listeners’ minds.

**Twists.** The secret of a successful story is the use of unexpected twists and turns. Your audience is ready to be delighted and thrilled by the unexpected, just as if they were in an amusement park. Don’t disappoint them by plodding along in a straight line.

Once you learn and practice the fundamentals, you can more easily project a lighthearted, conversational style to engage and entertain your audience.



## ▶ HUMOR

# The Do's and Don'ts of Being Funny

Learn to draw laughter with the element of surprise.

BY NICK JACK PAPPAS

You don't have to perfect the art of joke writing to be funny. You don't even have to be an off-the-wall character or inherently talented; you simply have to learn how to surprise people. It's something anyone can learn to do. Here are a few ways to keep the audience on their toes and create an environment that gets them laughing.

### DO get to the punchline fast.

The phrase "brevity is the soul of wit" is too long. Brevity is wit. Edit your jokes. The longer your setup, the better your punchline must be.

### DON'T use a joke you've never told.

Test out your jokes before telling them to an audience. Try them on your spouse or a trusted friend. Even a little feedback can go a long way.

### DO draw on your life experiences.

The best way to be original is to speak about your own experiences. No one can claim your stories as their own. Be willing to be vulnerable and share yourself.

### DON'T lead them to the joke.

Always end on a twist. Most jokes aren't bad; they're simply misdirected. Set up a line as if you're going to turn left and then take a sharp right.

### DO paint a picture.

The stage is your canvas, and comedy is in the details. Don't settle for "you had to be there." Bring them there. Make your words specific.

### DON'T just stand there.

Move around. Don't be afraid to use your hands or shake your body. If you're telling a joke about someone, think of ways to physically portray that person.

### DO laugh at yourself.

Humility will endear you to an audience. It's brave to tell a joke about yourself. Talking about your first times and failures will get the audience on your side.

### DON'T start without energy.

If you weren't introduced to applause, ask them to give it up for the last speaker. If there wasn't another speaker, ask them to give it up for themselves!

### DO have fun.

Laughter is contagious, but so is smiling and being happy in general. If you're having a good time, the audience will have a good time, too.

### DON'T worry.

People want to hear what you have to say. They'll laugh because everyone likes to laugh. Once you realize they want you to succeed, the rest is easy.

**Nick Jack Pappas** is a comedy writer, stand-up comedian, and one of the founders of **Comedywire.com** in New York City.



**Engaging Humor** – Ready to develop your funny bone? Learn how in the Pathways Engaging Humor path by visiting [www.toastmasters.org/Pathways](http://www.toastmasters.org/Pathways).

## ▶ NEWS FROM TI

# Keep Wowing the World

Tips about how your clubs "wow" members and guests are being featured on Toastmasters' social media pages. Share your best meeting ideas, mentoring tips, ways to forge strong club bonds, and more.

Submit your #wowfactor tips at [www.toastmasters.org/](http://www.toastmasters.org/) **We-Are-In** to be featured in Toastmasters' social media posts.

### Make It a Banner Year

Beautiful, branded, and easy-to-obtain digital club banners are here! Just order, receive a digital file, and have it printed locally. Visit [www.toastmasters.org/Digital-Banners](http://www.toastmasters.org/Digital-Banners).

**Tip #1** Learn to listen...give opportunities to lead a meeting, a group of people, a discussion.  
— Gwinnett-Tucker Toastmasters Club  
Tucker, Georgia, United States

**Tip #2** Actively welcome prospective members. We enthusiastically share our communication and leadership skills with school groups and community organizations.  
— Hilo Toastmasters Club,  
Hilo, Hawaii, United States

**Tip #3** Provide members with quality leadership and personal growth training.  
— Ingleburn Toastmasters Club  
Ingleburn, New South Wales, Australia

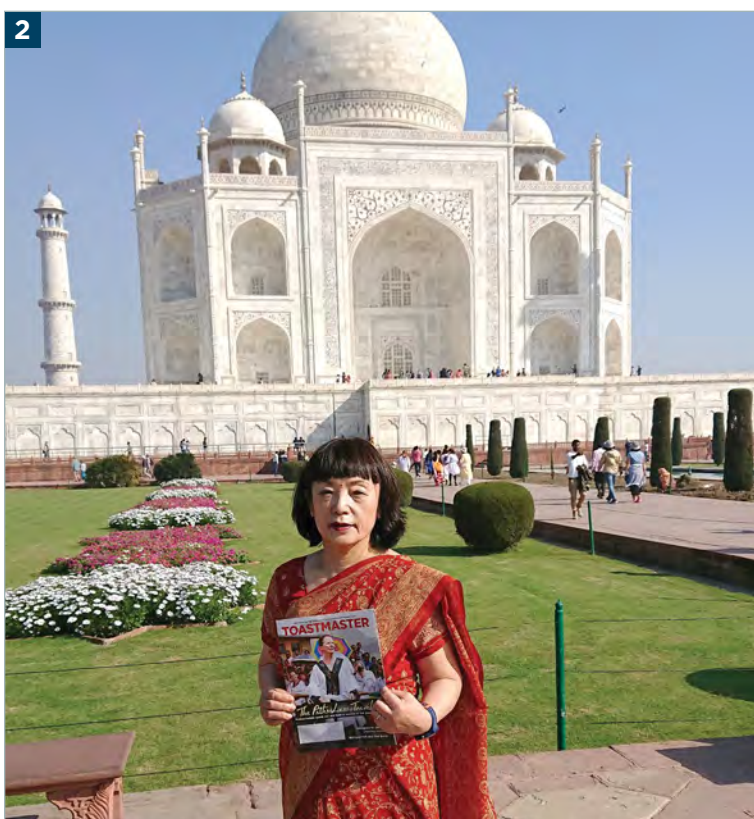



**1 | MEGHASHREE KAR** of Hyderabad, Telangana, India, stands near the edge of the Grand Canyon in Arizona.


**2 | KEIKO MIYAKE, DTM,** of Shimonoseki, Japan, wears a sari to visit the Taj Mahal in Agra, India.

**3 | STEVE VELLA** of Perth, Australia, pauses on Stelvio Pass in the Italian Alps after completing a portion of his motorcycle tour of Italy.

**4 | MANUJA RANASINGHE, DTM,** of Roswell, Georgia, poses in front of the Abbey at Mont-Saint-Michel—an island connected to Normandy, France.



 **View additional photos** in this month's *Traveling Toastmaster* photo gallery at [www.toastmasters.org/Magazine](http://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 print or online. Send images 1MB or larger to [photos@toastmasters.org](mailto:photos@toastmasters.org). Bon voyage!

# Navigating Obstacles with New Eyes

How my service dog and I became competent communicators.

BY MARIBEL STEEL

**T**wo years ago, I joined Glen Waverly Toastmasters in Melbourne, Australia, to improve my speaking style. By using the traditional program's *Competent Communication* manual, I quickly learned that if I followed the objectives given for each speech, my presentations would likely have all the elements required to keep the audience engaged. I could step with confidence to each new point in the speech.

I recently took on a new challenge to improve another aspect of my life. I am legally blind and was paired with a guide dog to act as my seeing eyes. Dindi, a two-year-old black Labrador retriever, and I are learning the many skills needed to become an effective guide dog team. Together, we are learning how to work as “competent communicators.”

Through this process, I discovered that Toastmasters and guide dog handlers share similar communication principles. Both endeavors require clear objectives and the application of a tried-and-true system. Like all Toastmasters strive to do, Dindi and I are continually working to improve our mutual understanding.

Toastmasters appreciate organization and structure in speeches. We learn that to capture the audience's attention, it helps to start with a catchy opening. As a guide dog handler, I must be sure Dindi is listening; getting her attention is like giving her a catchy opening. Using vocal variety, I may say her name or give a command in a certain tone so that she stays alert. Like humans, guide dogs listen and respond best when they are engaged and inspired by the task at hand.

A Toastmasters speech includes main points and sub-points to present the speaker's ideas. When the thread of the story is presented in logical order,



Maribel Steel and Dindi

audiences can follow the presentation points to a conclusion.

In a guide dog team, both partners learn specific commands, presented in logical order, to safely navigate through the environment. These commands function

**Like humans, guide dogs listen and respond best when they are engaged and inspired by the task at hand.**

something like the main points in a speech. They keep Dindi's attention and reassure her she's on the right track. She stays alert to my word prompts, moving us smoothly from point A to point B, from a seat to a door, or from a bus stop to a curb. Every step requires clear, logical, and mutually understood directions.

In a Toastmasters speech, we use transitions—a subtle shift of tone or ideas that seamlessly lead to the next point, so we can continue our story with self-assurance. Likewise, Dindi has learned to make subtle physical shifts to gently guide me away from an obstacle and back to the safe path. These small adjustments allow us as a team to shift positions without awkward movements, so we both walk forward with confidence.

When a Toastmaster nears the end of a speech, they incorporate a clear conclusion, reinforcing key points and leaving the audience with a call to action or a memorable ending. The evaluation wraps up the process; feedback is constructive and delivered with care.

The guide dog team works to achieve a similar, satisfying outcome. Dindi guides me where I need to go, laying out my path and ensuring my safety. I offer gentle corrections to help her improve and am constantly reinforcing her good behavior with praise.

When Dindi and I reach a curb, sit at a café table, or find the correct door, our successful navigation signals a triumphant moment. We understood one another perfectly and achieved a shared goal with certainty and trust. Our connection grows even stronger.

The result is a stream of memorable moments on our shared pathway, demonstrating the same clarity, growth, and rewarding outcomes that we strive to reach as Toastmasters. **T**

**MARIBEL STEEL** received the 2018 Toastmaster of the Year award from her club, Glen Waverly, where she is vice president public relations. She is a Melbourne-based author, motivational speaker, educator, and dog lover. Visit her website at [www.maribelsteel.com](http://www.maribelsteel.com).

# Trilingual Club in Spain Revives Ancient Language

English, Spanish, and Euskera are spoken in this club.

BY JENNIFER L. BLANCK, DTM

**M**embers of a Toastmasters club in Basque Country, Spain, are helping to breathe new life into an ancient language and make a contribution to a cultural revival. Toastmasters Bilbao, in Bilbao, Spain, is playing a part in reviving the Basque language Euskera through alternating trilingual meetings (English, Spanish, and Euskera).

Euskera is considered the oldest European language still in use, dating back as far as 200 B.C. Through the years the language has waned, due to migration, the influence of the Spanish and French languages, and being outright banned during General Francisco Franco's reign, from 1939 to 1975. Euskera is now experiencing a revitalization in Spain, and Bilbao club members are part of that effort.

## Breathing Life into Spain's Basque Country

Toastmasters Bilbao chartered in January 2014, as an English language club and the first—and still only—Toastmasters club in Bilbao, a city in the northern part of Spain. After two years, many prospective members expressed interest in developing public speaking and leadership skills in Spanish, as they didn't feel as confident doing so in English. Club leaders recognized the opportunity to serve a community need, and the club became bilingual.

With the success of Spanish language meetings, members were inspired to include Euskera, the official Basque language, in their meetings. "We were

excited about the idea of supporting this language," says club co-founder Fernando Urien, DTM. The members value skill development not just for themselves, but also for the Basque society. "We are trying to give something back to our community," Urien says.

The first Euskera meeting was held in November 2016, making the club trilingual. Toastmasters Bilbao meets weekly, alternating between Spanish and English. Once a month, it holds a separate meeting in Euskera.

## Euskera is considered the oldest European language still in use, dating back as far as 200 B.C.

The club is now recognized as an association of culture by the Basque government. This formal status provides the club free access to public spaces, meeting rooms, and publicity for its activities through official government channels. It also provides the club credibility to apply for government funding and establish formal relationships with organizations. "Bilbao Toastmasters members are very committed to our society," says Amaia Agirre. "We participate in an altruistic way in social and cultural projects."

Leire Moro García del Valle recently joined the club and is inspired by "beautiful talks" from others. She wants to feel confident speaking in front of large

audiences. "I think it's an essential resource for every job and for daily life," she says.

Fluent in Spanish, Euskera, and English, Moro appreciates the benefits of the trilingual club. In addition to honing her skills in all three languages, she learns new expressions. She also appreciates how the meetings motivate speakers who are learning English and Euskera. "It's a good way for everyone to feel part of the group," she says. "Each person's native language may be different, but we all have some sessions where we can feel the most comfortable."

## The Mystery of the Basque Language

The success of the club is even more impressive given the mysterious and isolated origins of Euskera. It predates the time when the Romans conquered Spain, and is neither from the Romance nor Finno-Ugric linguistic families. In fact, it is considered an isolated language, with no relation to any other known languages today and a grammatical structure unique from any other European language.

Euskera survived the Vikings and the Roman invasions largely due to its isolated geography. General Francisco Franco, Spain's dictator during World War II, tried to ban the language, but individuals in small villages and towns worked to preserve it.

After decades of fighting for independence, Basque Country now comprises three historic territories, which have



*Toastmasters Bilbao in Basque Country, Spain, holds monthly meetings in the official Basque language of Euskera.*

*This 43-member club has excelled in the Toastmasters Distinguished Club Program.*

maintained their own government since 1980. Bilbao is the capital of one of the regions and known internationally for its cuisine, culture, and architecture, particularly the modern Guggenheim Museum.

### **Toastmasters Bilbao Today**

Toastmasters Bilbao has received district awards recognizing the club's overall achievements and its individual members' leadership contributions, which range from the club to the international level. Each year for the past six years, the club has earned Select Distinguished Club status or higher, and President's Distinguished the past three years in Toastmasters' Distinguished Club Program.

Currently, Toastmasters Bilbao has 43 members, but only a small portion attend the meetings held in Euskera. To strengthen efforts to revitalize the language, club leaders are reaching out to other Basque communities. The club held a joint online Euskera meeting between Toastmasters Bilbao and people from Barcelona's Basque community. Bilbao club members hope to host a similar meeting with Basque groups in Argentina.

The club has led trainings for local groups ranging from youth to professional organizations. "We've also been invited to participate in TV shows and radio programs as a recognized expert organization in communication and leadership," says Cristina Giménez Elorriaga.

The club's activities don't stop there. In 2017, Toastmasters Bilbao started a monthly Spanish-language advanced meeting for members who have achieved Competent Communicator status or completed a third level in Pathways.

### **Innovation to Meet Community Needs**

The members pride themselves on innovation and experimentation. Over the years, the club has hosted sessions that focus on special topics, like nonviolent communication and storytelling, or unique training methods, like neurocoaching using horses. A podcast series is in development. "We are thinking of sharing what we have learned," says Agirre. "We want to learn, to investigate, to innovate—to go the extra mile."

**"I joined because of the public speaking, and I discovered the leadership."**

—FERNANDO URIEN, DTM

The club places a strong emphasis on teamwork. Urien describes the club's culture as one of learning, having fun, and getting to know people. "I joined because of the public speaking, and I discovered the leadership," he says. "I think the best lesson I learned was about motivation. You cannot use the same strategy because people are motivated by different drivers."

The club offers more than the educational programming to ensure it meets members' needs. "We connect members through extra education and leisure activities to share knowledge and abilities, enlarge the club, and practice leadership and communication skills," says M'Angel Manovell. Examples include a "Toast-Mountains" group for hiking, "Toast-Cooking" for sharing meals and cooking sessions, "ToastEscaping" for participating in escape rooms and developing teamwork skills, and a running group for exercising and competing. The club also participates in district-wide extracurricular activities, including the establishment of a band that has performed at division conferences.

Members join Toastmasters Bilbao to develop skills in multiple languages and quickly learn there's more to the club than expected. They stay for the personal and professional development, the opportunity to strengthen Basque society, and the satisfaction of working with each other.

"As often happens in life," says Elorriaga, "I found something much better than what I was looking for. I found a group of intelligent and fun people and a platform with a well-thought-out and studied method that develops speaking and leadership skills." **T**

**Jennifer L. Blanck, DTM**, is a member of AAMC Toastmasters in Washington, D.C., and a regular contributor to the *Toastmaster* magazine.



# How to Release Your Fear and Feel at Home on the Stage

Trauma survivor knows how to overcome public speaking distress.

BY MARY NESFIELD

**L**isa Wentz was drawn to the stage at age 7 when she watched her brother perform in The Who's hit rock opera *Tommy*. "It felt like home," she says. "The character Tommy was traumatized by his family. And I was born into a traumatic environment."

Wentz says she endured neglect and abuse as a child, and that her mother suffered from mental illness. The dire situation forced her to leave home at 13 and live on her own, she explains, adding that she had no choice but to develop strong communication skills. They sprang from her survival instinct.

"Being homeless at 13 meant that I had to learn to assert myself to get basic necessities: a home, job, and schooling," says Wentz, the youngest of 10 children. "I forced myself to talk to people in a way that made them take me seriously. That meant I made good eye contact, listened, and asked questions ... those are the easiest ways to capture someone's attention."

Her harsh childhood helped Wentz develop a deep compassion for other people's pain—a quality she says has benefited her both as a performer and a speech coach. In her 20s, she worked as an actress and earned a master's degree in voice and speech pedagogy at the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama in London. Wanting to help people in a meaningful way, she founded the San Francisco Voice Center in 2009, where she uses myriad voice and speech techniques to help executives, entertainers, and nonprofit speakers, among others,



express themselves more clearly, and with more confidence.

The author of *Grace Under Pressure: A Masterclass in Public Speaking*, she shares tips that can be especially meaningful to those plagued by punishing self-talk that interferes with their efforts to master public speaking.

## How was your career affected by your childhood?

My mother suffered from Histrionic Personality Disorder (HPD), which is a severe mental illness. She was unable to feel emotions such as empathy, guilt, shame, or love. Quite literally she was a deficient human being without the skills or desire to be a parent. She did not believe her role as a mother included providing consistent food, clothing, or protection in any way.

It affected me in positive and negative ways. The positive was that I ended up with a great deal of empathy and a desire to learn and express various aspects of the human condition through the lens of a playwright. The negative effect was a deep shyness that held me back from making the important connections needed to build a career.

## What helps the speaker who has experienced some kind of trauma?

I put them through an exercise similar to exposure therapy. For example, I had a client who saw people in two ways—some as intelligent, and others who are not but who work hard to achieve goals. He saw himself as the latter. I knew he was wrong, because he could not have been accepted into the university he attended without having intelligence. He needed to realize how illogical his thinking was.

His poor self-image stemmed from his experience with a teacher at age 19. He stood up to answer her question, and she replied, "Sit down. You are stupid, and you always will be." He carried that teacher's words through to adulthood. Although he landed a very good job at a tech company, he had problems giving presentations. Each time he spoke to an audience, the experience triggered his muscle memory, and he lost confidence. He was traumatized by his former teacher's abusive words.

To help him release the power his trauma had over him, I asked him to



deliver a speech. I encouraged him to interrupt his presentation and give voice to any self-doubt right at the moment when it came to mind, and say aloud, *sit down; you are stupid, and you always will be*, immediately followed by having him tell that critic to leave—out loud. The exercise is empowering for anyone who is stifled by a traumatic event.

### **What can help people who are scared they will forget their speech while onstage?**

I find what helps is to create a “roadmap” for a speech. I have clients name each part of their speech—one or two easy keywords to remember about the introduction, their two or three talking points, and the conclusion. For example, for a business talk they could give names like “welcome” for the intro. Their talking points can have names like “current” for the status of a company, “past” for a company’s previous activities, and “future” for a new business plan. Their conclusion may be a word or two for a call to action, or any point they choose to make. When those words are easy to remember, they will help a speaker always know where they are going, whatever their objective.

**“Distractions, like your harsh inner critic, take away your ability to connect with your audience.”**

— LISA WENTZ

### **What causes fear to emerge time after time in some people?**

When you listen to negative criticism over and over again—whether it’s from a critical parent, teacher, coach, or from deep down inside of you—you start to believe it. You can learn all kinds of different techniques for delivering good speeches, but your public speaking will fall to pieces if you don’t learn to deal with the negativity you carry inside. Whatever the source of that negativity, do not allow it to have power over you. Distractions like your harsh inner critic take away your ability to connect with your audience.

### **Why do people seek help at a voice center?**

They go to get training in several aspects of voice and speech, including public speaking, accent reduction or accent acquisition, or interpersonal skills, such

as job interview prep or team meeting communication.

### **What can speakers do physically to care for their voices?**

Learn to protect that voice through relaxation! Sir Paul McCartney and the late Aretha Franklin are great examples. They cultivated their voices to last a lifetime. I use the Alexander Technique to identify a client’s bad habits and replace those habits with something to relax their tension, thereby reducing the chance of overusing their voice.

### **What do you advise speakers to do immediately before going onstage?**

About 15 minutes before speaking, they can practice the “paused breath” technique. Start by breathing in through the nose to deliver air to the lower ribcage and belly. Pause, and then exhale for about five seconds while making the “s” sound. Repeat that until you are ready to go onstage. It will slow your mind and body and counteract an adrenalin rush. It supports your voice and gives it more power. **T**

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**Mary Nesfield** is a freelance writer and editor. She lives in Columbia, South Carolina.



# CAN'T DECIDE?



Make smarter decisions by choosing the right style for the job.

BY LAURA AMANN

**D**o you tend to make decisions quickly and decisively, rarely second-guessing yourself? Or do you prefer doing research, talking over options, and analyzing data for even the smallest of decisions?

Is one technique better than the other?

A frequently cited—yet unsubstantiated—study claims the average person makes a staggering 35,000 decisions a day. And indeed when considering the many mundane decisions we make without even registering that we’re making a choice (scratching

our head, taking a sip of coffee), they do balance the more dramatic examples we tend to think of in the context of decision-making (changing jobs, making a large purchase).

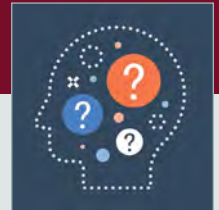
The amount of time spent on a decision isn’t necessarily linked to its importance. You may decide on a whim to move to another part of the country and yet go back and forth deciding what to eat for dinner. There is no right technique for making a decision.

But no matter how big or small the ramification, all decision-making basically boils down to three distinct aspects: gathering information, evaluating options, and making a choice. When put that way, it almost seems easy; but of course, some decisions can be agonizing, with no perfect answer—where to go to college, whether or not to take a job, when to take a financial risk with a potentially big payoff—and some have few repercussions—what to eat for breakfast.





## HOW TO HELP YOUR BRAIN MAKE A DECISION



Sometimes your brain gets stuck and no decision seems best. The following tried-and-true tips can help you move forward.

- ▶ **Take a walk in nature.** Go outside and notice the scenery around you. Let your mind ponder the issue while you relax in the outdoors.
- ▶ **Sleep on it.** Before you go to bed, think of the problem and tell your brain to go to work. Trust that your subconscious can work behind the scenes and sort through the issues. You may find a clear answer when you wake up.
- ▶ **Zone out.** Immerse yourself in something that gets you in the “zone”—that headspace where you are in sync with what you are doing. It could be a meditative hobby (woodworking, knitting, cooking) or exercise or a good book or movie. Again, let your subconscious work while you are otherwise occupied.
- ▶ **Write it down.** Pick up a pen and write continuously for 10–15 minutes to help clarify an issue. Try a pros and cons list, or make a word cloud where you put the problem in the middle of the page and draw various solutions spoking out.
- ▶ **Meditate.** Quiet your mind for 10–15 minutes and tune into your breathing. Count your breaths and let your mind focus on something other than the problem. Afterward, run through each option and notice how your body responds when you explore different scenarios.

How you make a decision depends on a balance of how time sensitive it is, how high the consequences are, and how much information you already have.

Mel Robbins, a popular American motivational speaker, hit upon a decision-making strategy that she dubbed “the 5-second rule.” After growing frustrated with ruminating for long periods of time and then not acting, she devised a motivational strategy, which essentially boils down to this: If you have an impulse to act on a goal, you must physically move within five seconds. Otherwise, the decision gets delayed and delayed—and dies. Thus, the rule: Act within five seconds.

Robbins says neuroscientists have found that people have about a five-second gap between a stimulus and the way they typically respond to it. “It’s within this gap that you have the power to change your life,” Robbins said in an interview for the March 2019 *Toastmaster*. “When you decide to do something, count back 5-4-3-2-1, and immediately take action. The more you do that, the more your brain gets wired for action and the less you’ll fall victim to your mental resistance.”

The act of counting focuses you on the goal or commitment and distracts you from worries, thoughts, and excuses in your mind, she says.

Experts have uncovered four common decision-making styles, each with its own benefits and downsides. Having these techniques in your tool kit and understanding how to use them in different situations, as well as during certain times in your life and career, will help you make better, more well-informed choices.

### Autocratic

Autocratic decisions are made by one person whose word is final. This style doesn’t necessarily involve gathering information or talking to other people; it relies on one person’s experience and confidence. These decisions tend to be made quickly and decisively.

Some people consider this a dictatorial style, and at first glance, it’s tempting to agree. But it’s quite useful in a crisis or when time is of the essence. On a less dramatic level, not all decisions need to be vetted by others, and making autocratic decisions can keep things running at a brisk pace. For example,



parents often employ this method with young children since they are fully responsible for their child's health and well-being. In sports, coaches often make the tough calls on their own when deciding who plays in a game or which plays to make.

If used too frequently, however, autocratic decision-making can lead to low morale and lack of camaraderie and loyalty, as it doesn't give others a chance to learn and grow.

### Team-Based

Consensus is the goal in a team-based decision-making process. Everyone on the team discusses the problem, concept, or idea, and then decides on a solution. Someone may be a facilitator,

but there is no set leader, and everyone agrees to support the team's final decision, even if they don't agree with it.

Also called the democratic process, this style allows everyone to have input, and everyone's voice is heard. Team-based decisions can build unity and a sense of cohesiveness, and people appreciate when their opinions are heard and considered. This style works great when something will affect an entire group but doesn't have large implications, such as finding a new office vendor or picking out a pet's name.

However, team-based decision-making is not always the most time-effective method. Using this process can require numerous meetings to listen to and explore ideas. And despite everyone's voice

being heard, someone is bound to be disappointed that things didn't go their way.

### Collaborative

Collaborative decisions happen when someone reaches out for information and feedback from others, but the ultimate decision rests with that one person. People and teams have a chance to offer their perspective, insight, and opinions, but they do not have any authority in resolving the issue. Parents may employ this method when deciding on a family vacation or whether to get a pet. It's also helpful when making a large personal decision, such as buying a house or picking a college.

## TOASTMASTER TEAM DECISION-MAKING TECHNIQUES

If you're a club leader, decision-making is part of the job. Limited time, conflicting personalities, and ambiguous information can turn discussions into an endless loop.

Pathways offers six steps in the Standard Agenda decision-making model:

- 1 Analyze the problem.** What is the cause? Who or what is affected? How long has it been going on?
- 2 Establish criteria for the solution.** Are there budgetary constraints? Space requirements? Vendor contractors' needs?

- 3 Rank the criteria.** Rank the criteria in order of priority then decide how important and impactful each element is.

- 4 Generate solutions.** Brainstorm some creative ideas and solutions using the ranked criteria. Don't filter or dismiss any idea.

- 5 Evaluate solutions.** Consider each solution individually. Discuss the pros and cons of each.

- 6 Select and implement the best solution.** If no solution meets all the criteria, return to the priority list (#3) and see if anything can be adjusted, then work through the process again.

## WHAT TO DO AFTER A BAD DECISION

Bad decisions are inevitable. Don't let them define you, but don't gloss over them either. After a bad decision, people are tempted to quickly move along and focus on the future. Most people avoid searching for a root cause, says decision-making expert Pawel Motyl. It's easier and quicker to sweep something under the rug, and people often prefer framing the positive. "Analyzing bad decisions not only takes time, but also demands that we face up to something we'd much rather forget about," Motyl says. In addition, there is a natural tendency to blame people rather than processes. We prefer to find a scapegoat rather than consider the factors that led to the bad decision being made. That might end the discussion, but as Motyl warns, we then focus more on punishing than on drawing conclusions and learning lessons.

After a challenging decision, whether you're glad or full of regrets, take a moment and think about



why you feel the way you do. Consider how subsequent decisions might play out most effectively. And don't be afraid of bad decisions. Sometimes we learn the most by doing the wrong thing.

This style works best when a big decision needs to be made. The person in charge gathers the necessary information and perspectives (and hopefully possesses the experience and insight) to make the call and accepts the responsibility for any repercussions.

Leaders must be careful, however, not to surround themselves only with people who think the same as they do. "Diversity itself is not enough," says Pawel Motyl, author of *Labyrinth: The Art of Decision-Making*. "The most important aspect is true inclusion; you have to make team members aware that they can express a dissenting opinion without fear of negative consequences." He points out that truly diversified teams typically need to discuss issues longer, but their decisions are much closer to the optimum. "The more points of view we take into account, the greater the chance that we will fully understand the problem we are facing, which directly translates into the quality of the choice being made." In other words, good decisions are made when leaders gather from a wide perspective and truly listen to people with opposing viewpoints before coming to a conclusion. And, as Motyl adds, an invaluable side effect is the feeling of empowerment you give to the people you involved.

### Delegatory

For delegatory decisions, a leader literally delegates the decision-making to another person or team. After a decision has been delegated, the person in charge is informed of the final decision but doesn't change it. "Delegating is a powerful way to ensure people in any type of organization understand the vision and values, gain experience, grow competencies, and feel supported," says Motyl, who consults and leads seminars throughout the world on leadership and decision-making topics and is based in Poland. Far from "passing the buck," this style not only helps develop the leadership skills of others

but alleviates decision-making fatigue of the group leader. It also builds a stronger team. Delegating a problem can bring fresh ideas and approaches while allowing people to expand their experience. You can delegate the task of finding a new club meeting place, or ask your partner to take ownership of vacation planning.

**"Analyzing bad decisions not only takes time, but also demands that we face up to something we'd much rather forget about."**

—PAWEL MOTYL

The downside, of course, is that the leader relinquishes control of any outcome. And some individuals and teams may not have the experience to fall back on to make an informed decision, so additional research might be necessary, potentially slowing down a resolution.

Given the thousands of decisions we all make in a day, it's helpful to be aware of your decision-making tools and how to use them. The next time you need to make a big decision, weigh the problem in terms of what style might work best to make it. Are you the only one who can make the decision? Should you gather some more information or advice? Do you have people you trust who might be able to make the decision instead of you? Letting someone else take the reins for a while may open you up to new possibilities. ■

**Laura Amann** is associate editor of the *Toastmaster* magazine.

# Prep Talk

10 tips for more productive speech practice.

BY JOEL SCHWARTZBERG

**Y**ou picked a topic. You put together a speech. You prepared some notes. And if you're wise, you also built in at least one full day (optimally several) to prepare and practice. But how can you be sure you're filling that prep time productively?

I've seen practice advice that ranges from purposeful to pointless, but based on my experience as both a public speaker and a speech coach, I believe these 10 Do's and Don'ts will make the biggest difference in the days, hours, and even minutes before your spotlight moment.

**1 DO: Practice out loud.** Effective public speaking practice is all about training your mind and your mouth to collaborate on conveying a point. Practicing the speech in your head may help you memorize it, but it won't improve your ability to convey your points out loud, especially during critical transitions.

Because your mind and mouth need to get used to working as partners, effective practice means delivering your speech *out loud*. You don't need to practice in front of a person, a mirror, or a camera, but you do need to speak clearly and not mumble your way through your message. The more you practice the interaction between your mind and mouth, the easier it will be to activate those mechanics when it's your turn to speak.

**2 DON'T: Practice in front of mirrors.** How often do public speakers practice in front of mirrors and think,

"I wonder if I'm making my point effectively?" The answer is never. We are more likely checking our hair, teeth, dress, or tie. We've all been trained since childhood to use mirrors exclusively to assess our appearance, which has little impact on our goal as presenters. Are you speaking with clarity and confidence? Your reflection has no clue.

**3 DO: Tell friends and colleagues what to look for when you rehearse.** When you practice your speech in front of a colleague, the feedback is often a useless compliment like "That was great!" or focused on something so inconsequential that the advice has no value. Even professional public speakers don't always know how to assess other speakers.

## Dress how you want to be perceived, not how you perceive yourself.

The goal of a presentation is to make a point effectively, so help your colleagues—and yourself—by directly asking them "What do you think my biggest point was?" If they answer correctly, you're doing well. If they don't, first tell them your point and ask if they heard it, then ask what they believe made it difficult to detect or understand. This feedback should arm you with several ways to emphasize and reinforce your message.

**4 DO: Fuel up on food and sleep.** Strong presentations require energy, and energy requires fuel in the form of food and sleep. You know this already, so don't let your body down. Get eight hours of sleep. Have a satisfying breakfast. Caffeine up, but not too much. And put all that power behind your presentation so that you're energized from first word to last.

**5 DO: Scrutinize your speech.** When you give a speech, the speech's credibility is your credibility. If a fact is wrong, your reputation pays the price. Be sure to fact-check your speech not only when you finish it but every time you revise or add to it.

Correct grammar and syntax are also crucial in establishing your reputation. Some tips for copyediting a speech include changing the font or size of your text so it looks new when you review it, using spell-check and grammar-check programs, and using the "read aloud" feature of your word processing program or another text-to-speech program. You'll be surprised how many improvements you can make when you hear your work read back to you.

**6 DO: Pre-check the venue, podium, and microphone.** When giving your presentation, the last thing you want to experience is a surprise. Days before the event, ask questions about the use of microphones and the presence of a podium or lectern. Just before you speak,



success as a presenter hinges not only on what you know but how effectively your mind and mouth work in concert to present your points. That requires practice.

## If a fact is wrong, your reputation pays the price.

You can practice by yourself or with a colleague to whom you've supplied questions but remember to practice out loud. Practicing in your head is a mental exercise, which would only make sense if you were delivering your presentation telepathically.

**10 DO: Know your first and last sentences.** For most speakers, knowing your speech means knowing it from about 15 seconds after you stand up to about 15 seconds before you sit down—perhaps from your first slide to your last—but much can go wrong during those initial and closing bookends, especially if either is sloppy.

The key to starting and ending strong is simple: Plan what you're going to say, down to the word.

Examples:

**OPEN:** "Good morning, my name is Joel, and I'm going to show you how changing your community can help change the world."

**CLOSE:** "If we all work as one, we can indeed make the world a safer and more compassionate place."

These lines are so brief that you can easily memorize them, so why not? Leaving them to chance can create a poor impression that can injure your entire presentation. **T**

**Joel Schwartzberg** is the senior director of strategic and executive communications for a major national nonprofit in New York City. He is also a presentations coach and author of *Get to the Point! Sharpen Your Message and Make Your Words Matter*.

check out the room and see where the audience is sitting—note if you can see them all from your speaking position, how close you are to them, and if you'll have a stage or a platform. Often you need to make on-the-spot decisions about your surroundings; be ready to make them.

**7 DON'T: Trust the person introducing you to do it right.** Excellent presenters can be hampered by poor introductions, including ones that run too long, contain irrelevant or inaccurate information, or omit details that establish your qualification. The burden of avoiding those traps is as much on you as it is on the person introducing you.

Find your introducer before the event and make sure they know at least three facts, credits, or accomplishments that illustrate your competency. Those items don't have to be entertaining or personal,

but they do have to answer the question, *Why is this presenter the best person to make this point?*

**8 DO: Dress for the occasion.** You may have heard the phrase, *Dress for the job you want, not the one you have*. That's good advice. The public speaking version goes, *Dress how you want to be perceived, not how you perceive yourself*. Typically, that means business casual or even more spiffy. You can never go wrong dressing up for the occasion because it underscores your commitment to making a professional—not to mention tasteful—impression.

**9 DON'T: Improvise the Q&A.** Many experts work hard on their presentations and practice repeatedly, only to cobble together responses during the Q&A that follows. Bad idea. Remember,

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# THE CRAFTING OF ELOQUENCE

How rhetorical and literary devices turn basic communication into soaring words of art.

BY BETH BLACK

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*“Words—so innocent and powerless as they are, as standing in a dictionary, how potent for good and evil they become in the hands of one who knows how to combine them.”*

—Nathaniel Hawthorne

**M**ore than 500 years ago, Michelangelo stood before a slab of marble. In his mind, he saw the image of what was sleeping inside the stone. It was his job to select the tools he needed to set free the figure he envisioned.

Renaissance-era measuring sticks, plumb bobs, and calipers followed by mallets, chisels, files, and rasps—all took their turn in his hands. Using these devices, he carved the marble into a graceful statue, “Kneeling Angel,” that has enthralled audiences for centuries.

To build something that will stand, an artist must know his tools. The same is true for speakers and writers.

If you don’t know your way around the assortment of language devices that will wake up your voice, it’s time to discover your substantial, significant, and seriously awesome tools of the trade.

## **You Have Two Sets of Tools.**

Let’s begin by exploring the differences between *rhetorical* and *literary* devices. Rhetoric has historically leaned toward the realm of public speaking. Literary devices, as the name suggests, have been used mostly by writers. It’s not a perfect split; several devices fall into both categories. For example, *metaphor* is used by both speakers and writers. But here’s what you should know about the general difference:

*Rhetorical devices help a speaker express feelings about a subject using articulate persuasion, while literary devices help a writer to tell a story with eloquence.*

Rhetoric helps a speaker shape ideas so they appeal to audiences’ sense of logic, emotions, ethics, or passing of time. These four methods, called *logos*, *pathos*, *ethos*, and *kairos*, were long ago determined to be the best way to influence the listeners’ decision-making process, which usually involves the brain, heart, morals, or feeling that the person is running out of time.

Writers commonly use literary devices to add artistry—color and flair—to their works. While they may be tasked with convincing someone to do something (perhaps read to the next page), the overall effectiveness of a literary device is not measured by its ability to advance an argument. Rather, it’s in how beautiful and graceful it makes the writer’s expression.



## A FUN WAY OF TALKING, YODA HAS

One of the most famous film characters of all time is memorable, in large part, because of the way he speaks. Yoda, the Jedi Master in *Star Wars*, is recognizable for the order of his



words. This device (both literary and rhetorical) is called *hyperbaton* [hī-pur-buh-ton]. It's not really all that complicated, but it sure makes a message memorable. Simply take a sentence and mix up the order of the words while keeping the same essential meaning. Often, you just reverse whole parts of the sentence.

Some people say his speeches are *anastrophe* [uh-nas-truh-fee], which is a kind of hyperbaton. That's because they occasionally use both names for the same device. But if you want to nitpick, here's the distinction:

**Hyperbaton:** Reverses the order of words.

**Anastrophe:** Reverses the order of a single word.

Yoda's famous lines include:

*“Powerful you have become. The dark side I sense in you.”*

In his first sentence, you can see that the word “powerful” was the only one moved (to the front of the sentence), so that qualifies as anastrophe. But his second sentence moves more than one word, so it's hyperbaton.

*“When nine hundred years old you reach, look as good you will not.”*

This is an example of hyperbaton. Yoda's so wise, he's able to reverse the order in the sentence and also within each of the phrases! Wow! Truly awesome that is!

You can sound like Yoda too. Simply reverse the usual order of words in a phrase. Of course, Yoda's not the only one who uses hyperbaton. Winston Churchill said, “Sure I am of this, that you have only to endure to conquer.”

Use hyperbaton, you can. A heroic speaker you will become.

Of course, if you've given a club speech, no doubt you've already worked hard to catch your listeners' attention with elegant use of spoken language. What's more, you've probably tried, at least once, to convince someone to do something by writing an email or sending a letter. With social media marketing being an absolute must for most businesses and organizations, today's speakers spend a lot of time writing. By the same token, writers must be able to verbally present and discuss their written works. So yes, definitely some of the tools are useful for both kinds of communication. Still, it helps to understand why the two sets of devices were originally conceived, because the more you understand their original purposes, the more you can use them effectively in today's world of mass communication.

### Peculiar Words. Simple Ideas. Powerful Effects.

Because of their Greek or Latin origins, a lot of the devices have strange-looking names like *aposisopsis*, *epizeuxis*, *onomatopoeia*, *synecdoche*—words that could make the most brilliant professor's head spin. But don't give up. In many cases, learning to use a rhetorical device is not as hard as pronouncing its name. In fact, playing with these cool tools can be fun. Let's try one here:

#### **tnesis** [tuh-mee-sis]

You've probably done this many times without knowing what it's called. When you split open a word or phrase and insert another word or phrase inside for emphasis, that's tmesis! It's a great technique to add a quick laugh while emphasizing a point.

Example from *Pygmalion* by George Bernard Shaw:  
Eliza Doolittle says, “abso-**blooming**-lutely.”

Example from Toastmasters:  
Today's speeches were **wait for it** SO AWESOME!

Example from my author bio:  
Written by Beth **that magnificent writer** Black.

Example from *Romeo and Juliet* by William Shakespeare:  
Juliet says, “This is not Romeo; he is some **other** where.”

**TIP:** When concocting your own *tnesis*, be sure to pick the right spot to split the outside word. Try to create a nice rhythm with the inserted word. If Shaw, for example, had given Eliza the word, “ab-**blooming**-solutely” or “absolute-**blooming**-ly,” it would not have worked. Think of this as an opportunity to play with words until you get the sound you truly **woo-hoo** love.



Let's try another one, this time with a really odd name:

#### **hendiadys** [hen-dī-uh-dis]

If you've ever heard a couple pronounced “husband and wife,” then you know *hendiadys*. In traditional rhetoric, this tool links





two nouns with “and” to express a single idea. In today’s modern usage, we don’t limit ourselves to nouns. You could say “listen and learn,” combining two verbs. This form is usually slower to say than a noun plus its modifier, such as “nice and warm” instead of “nicely warm.” As with many such tools, it adds emphasis when you slow down slightly to say the longer version.

Example (nouns): hearth and home

Example (verbs): rest and recuperate

Example (adjectives): sweet and sour

**TIP:** Use this when you want to equalize two parts of a message. Telling someone to *try and sleep* is more balanced than simply ordering them to go to sleep. This polite form may make the speaker appear more kindhearted by bringing the word “try” to an equal level with “sleep.” Hendiadys balances the two words, making it a little gentler than saying, “Go to sleep,” or even, “Try sleeping.”

### How It’s Done.

An example of hendiadys adds humor in the 1980 film *The Blues Brothers*. Here, actors Dan Aykroyd (as Elwood) and Sheilah Wells (as Claire) make a play on the locally favored music:

*Elwood:* What kind of music do you usually have here?

*Claire:* Oh, we got both kinds. We got **country and western**.

The joke works, because “country western” is one type of musical style, and Claire is emphasizing that they have both halves of the whole.

This device relies on repetition of the first part of a sentence to build substance and significance. A recent speech at the United Nations used this technique effectively:

*“When women participate in peace processes, they are more likely to last. When women work, the economy grows faster. When girls are educated, their families are healthier. And yet, women still face huge hurdles that prevent them from harnessing their potential, and their communities from reaping the benefits.”*

María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés, president of the 73rd session of the U.N. General Assembly, addressing the Women’s International Forum in 2019

By building up to her main point, Ms. Espinosa amplified the significance of what happens when women are empowered. Without the anaphora poetically building her case for women, the description of hurdles that followed would have been less meaningful.

Look around and listen. Rhetorical and literary devices are everywhere. They add rhythm and poetry that amplify the ideas shared by speakers and writers.

You may have noticed several examples of *alliteration*—repeating the first letters in a string of words—throughout this article. I hope this device made the article more memorable and quotable. When you practice using these tools, you’ll develop eloquence, fluency, and poise while unleashing your passion and wit through better delivery than ever before. Like Michelangelo standing before his marble, you will stand before your audience and prove that you are a master of your art. **T**

Here’s one more device:

**anaphora** [uh-naf-er-uh]

**Beth Black** is a freelance writer and editor who lives in Orange County, California. Learn more about her at [PracticalPoet.com](http://PracticalPoet.com).



# The *Toastmaster* Turns 86!

As the world has evolved, so has the magazine.

BY SHANNON DEWEY

It's the year 1933. Construction of San Francisco's Golden Gate Bridge in California has just begun, Wiley Post becomes the first person to fly solo around the world, and hundreds of thousands of people are feeling the effects of the Great Depression.

In the midst of all this, an 18-page publication printed on orange paper circulates among members in each of the 20 Toastmasters clubs in the United States and Canada. The *Toastmaster* magazine was in its humble beginnings, being issued on a quarterly basis to those who paid the \$1 USD annual membership fee.

The *Toastmaster* has come a long way over the last 86 years. In terms of content, even in the 20th century, the magazine did not go untouched by current events. Issues published during the Great Depression, for example, featured many articles and commentaries stressing the importance of Toastmasters training to members disenfranchised by a stricken economy. During the years of World War II, many Toastmasters were called to serve their countries, and the magazine covered the value of bringing public speaking training to the enlisted men. Then, in 1973, when women were officially admitted into Toastmasters,

articles began to reflect this powerful transformation in membership and brought a new kind of voice to the *Toastmaster*.

*The Toastmaster* magazine was in its humble beginnings, being issued on a quarterly basis to those who paid the \$1 USD annual membership fee.

The *Toastmaster* today publishes content to meet the needs of members in the 21st century. Popular recent subjects include presentation technology and apps, how to practice mindfulness, developing cultural and emotional intelligence, and using transferrable skills in the workplace.

The magazine has also taken different shapes over time to keep up with digital demands, including an online flipbook, tablet app, and a web-based edition that debuted three years ago on the Toastmasters website, at [www.toastmasters.org/Magazine](http://www.toastmasters.org/Magazine). A member login is no longer required to view the current issue, so articles can be read and shared by anyone, at any time, from any device. The online

edition features interactive content such as videos, audio tips, podcasts, photo galleries, and hyperlinked resources, with articles promoted across Toastmasters' social media channels weekly.

Are you ready to step back into time with your *Toastmaster*? Check out some of the significant occasions over the decades on the next page, then go online to take a quiz and test your magazine knowledge.

## Visit the *Toastmaster* Archives

Did you know that every issue of the *Toastmaster* is available for download by PDF? Issues from 2012–present are located under the Archive tab at [www.toastmasters.org/Magazine](http://www.toastmasters.org/Magazine), or visit the public Toastmasters Gallery at [bit.ly/TI\\_MagArchive](http://bit.ly/TI_MagArchive) for issues from 1933–2011. Article indexes are also available for your convenience to help you search for a specific article by topic or author.

## Toastmasters International Turns 95!

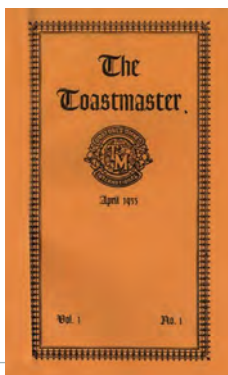
It's the perfect time to honor our visionary and founder. See details on the back cover of this issue. **T**

Shannon Dewey is the digital content editor for *Toastmaster* magazine.



### 1930s

- ▶ *Toastmaster* magazine debuts in April 1933.
- ▶ Prior to that, a bulletin called “The Gavel” was published monthly for 5 cents an issue.
- ▶ Members surprised Ralph and Frances Smedley with a celebration for their 30th wedding anniversary at the 1934 convention.



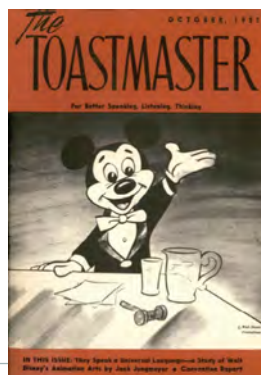
### 1940s

- ▶ By 1941, the magazine size had changed, and the yearly issues increased from four to six.
- ▶ New World Headquarters in Santa Ana, California, was announced in a February 1947 cover story.
- ▶ Convention was held in San Francisco, California, in 1948.



### 1950s

- ▶ An Australian club welcomed Toastmasters from all over the world who were attending the 1956 Olympic Games in Melbourne.
- ▶ Mickey Mouse was specially drawn by the Disney Studios for the October 1957 cover.
- ▶ Montreal, Quebec, Canada, graced the cover in July 1959.



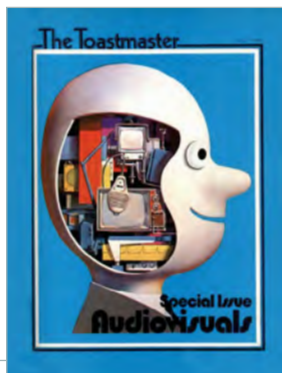
### 1960s

- ▶ A club in Maracaibo, Venezuela, was featured for its diverse membership in the October 1962 issue.
- ▶ Founder Ralph C. Smedley passed away on September 11, 1965.
- ▶ Toastmasters International celebrated its 45th anniversary in 1969.



### 1970s

- ▶ Women were officially admitted to Toastmasters in 1973.
- ▶ U.S. President Richard Nixon wrote a letter to Toastmasters for its 50th anniversary in 1974.
- ▶ Articles included tips on audiovisuals, such as a slide projector, filmstrips, or videotapes.



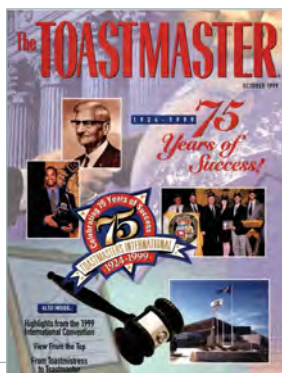
### 1980s

- ▶ A special all-humor issue came out in March 1983.
- ▶ Membership reached 100,000, and Helen Blanchard became the first female International President in 1985.
- ▶ Color print and photographs began being used on two or three main articles in each issue.



### 1990s

- ▶ More than 2,200 people attended the 1992 Toastmasters International Annual Convention in Las Vegas, Nevada.
- ▶ The Toastmasters website launched in 1995.
- ▶ The October 1999 issue celebrated the organization’s 75th anniversary.



### 2000s

- ▶ An online PDF flipbook became available in 2011, the *Toastmaster* magazine app was released in 2013 for tablets and iPads, and the first web-based edition made its debut in October 2016.



# The Facts Are In!

The past Toastmasters year (July 1, 2018–June 30, 2019) proved to be one of growth for the organization.

## CLUBS

**143**  
COUNTRIES

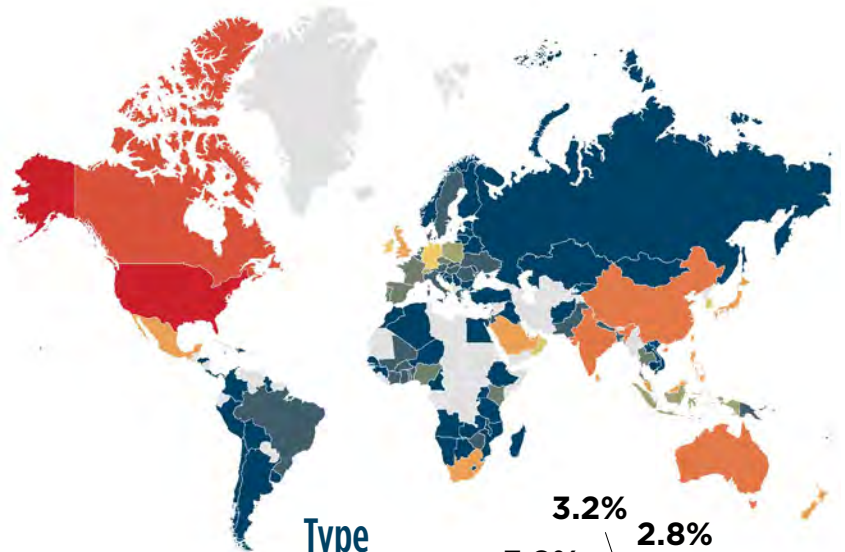
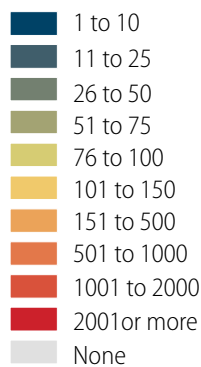
**+1.1%**  
CLUB GROWTH

**>16,800**  
CLUBS

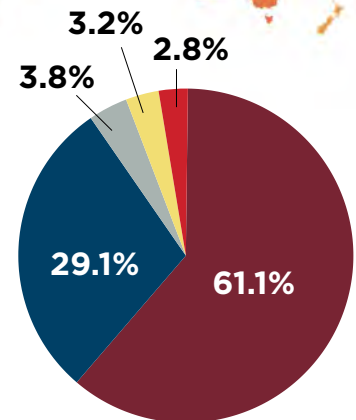
**>1,400**  
NEW CLUBS

**51.3%**  
ACHIEVED  
DISTINGUISHED

### Total Clubs



### Type



## MEMBERS

### Pathways

**212,995**  
TOTAL PATHS

**90,850**  
TOTAL LEVELS COMPLETED

### Most completed paths:



**PRESENTATION MASTERY**

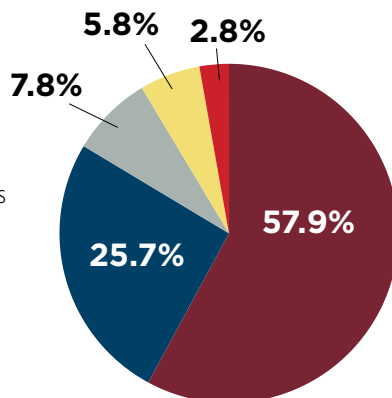


**DYNAMIC LEADERSHIP**

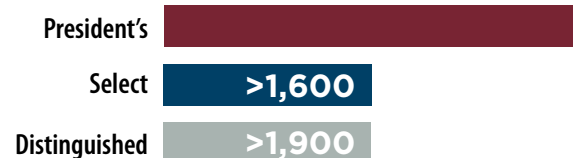
### Membership

**>358,000**  
MEMBERS\*

**+0.1%**  
GROWTH



### Recognition



\*Total membership for the October 2018 renewal period (includes dual memberships).

Source: World Headquarters Business Analysis and Research staff



# What to Look for in a Good Speech

Does it have a singular, unified point or challenge?

BY BILL BROWN, DTM

**F**rom time to time, I am asked, “What do you look for in a speech?”

We hear speeches and presentations all the time, don't we? It might be at Toastmasters, a business presentation, a sermon at church, or a political speech.

But it doesn't stop there. My wife and I frequently watch made-for-TV movies. They are, in effect, presentations in a different genre. When one is over, my wife asks me what I thought. And she knows that she will get a critique. As I started writing this article, I realized that the three key criteria I use in evaluating a presentation are the same I use in evaluating a TV story.

First of all, I look for a clear message or theme. Is there a singular, unified point or challenge?

All too often, a speech is nothing more than a data dump. The speaker has done a lot of research and feels compelled to give us the benefit of all that they have discovered. Rather than a central point, the presentation is nothing more than a lot of partially connected details. When you get right down to it, a phone book is also a collection of details. And reading it is about as interesting as those data-dump presentations. We are left with the question, “Why are you telling me this?”

The second quality that I look for in a presentation is the ability to hold my attention. This is related to my previous point. If the speaker presents a central, well-supported idea, he or she will hold my attention. The aforementioned data dump will not achieve that. But a poorly organized central idea will also lose my interest—quickly. It isn't enough to have

a central theme. In order to hold the audience's attention, you must effectively support and develop it.

Let's come back to those made-for-TV movies. There are principles of storytelling that are important to follow. Michael Hauge and Craig Valentine have both cataloged them well. Some TV movies do a good job, and I enjoy watching them multiple times. Others are just a series of minor events, minor problems, with no overarching problem to solve. The scriptwriters may have written down a theme idea, but they didn't develop it. Boring.

## Ask yourself, “Do all of my key points support and develop my main point?”

This pattern is unfortunately also present in many standard presentations. That is why I am not a big fan of PowerPoint presentations. They tend to drive presentations away from that central theme and toward the details. Especially when the speaker reads every ... single ... bullet. Boring.

Ask yourself, “Do all of my key points support and develop my main point?” If not, your listeners might opt to check their email or just plain check out.

Another source of lost attention is when a speaker has too much time on their hands.

All too often, I hear a speaker with 20 minutes of material try to fill a 40-minute time slot. One disadvantage of having too much time for your material is that you do not feel the need to edit. Editing is

not just removing words. It also involves tightening up your message so that it is more succinct, more on-point, and, hence, more powerful. If the speech wanders, so will the listener's mind.

The third quality that I look for is good delivery. I have learned from my work with voice-over narration that good delivery enhances your message. Effective delivery not only includes emphasizing the right words and phrases, it also includes the effective use of rhetorical devices and cadence. I enjoy a speech where the words roll nicely off the tongue. I also enjoy reading well-written speeches. My favorites include Abraham Lincoln's “Gettysburg Address,” Douglas MacArthur's “Duty, Honor, Country,” and Patrick Henry's “Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death.” Try reading them out loud. As you do, imagine that you are standing in front of a large audience. How would you deliver them? This is great practice for your own speeches. Push yourself to fully express the thoughts and emotions of the speech.

What I specifically look for in a good speech may be different than what you prefer. I would submit, however, that these three criteria (a clear message, organized flow, and good delivery) need to be there in some form. These are foundations that you build upon and include in your speech writing and in your evaluations. **T**

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**Bill Brown, DTM**, is a speech delivery coach from Las Vegas and a member of Pro Toastmasters and Ahead of the Curve Toastmasters. Learn more at [www.billbrownspeechcoach.com](http://www.billbrownspeechcoach.com).

# Out of the Office?

Don't leave an auto reply that sounds like you're out of your mind.

BY JOHN CADLEY



**T**ethered as we are to our computers, there are times when we must be away from them (taking a shower, having an emergency appendectomy). Even then, however, we are expected (one could almost say required) to explain *why* we're away. Seeing as we can't do this ourselves, either because we have shampoo in our eyes or we're under general anesthesia, we have the so-called OOO (out-of-office response). This is a reply you compose ahead of time that your computer automatically sends to all incoming emails explaining why you cannot respond immediately to the sender's ever-so-urgent matter.

The type of OOO you compose will depend on (1) the length of time you'll be gone and (2) the type of person you are. It might only be for an hour while you take lunch, or a day or two at a business seminar, or two weeks while you're on vacation. If you just got fired, it will be forever, which opens up a whole different set of possible OOOs. This is when Human Resources might want to review the file marked **Vindictive Ex-Employees Sending Rude—Not to Mention Potentially Embarrassing—Company-Wide Nastygrams.**

On the other hand, if you are leaving voluntarily to take another job, you can make a grand display of magnanimity: *I will be leaving the company as of (date) for an exciting new career opportunity. It's been a great ride at a GREAT company and, while I might not miss the work (ha, ha, just kidding), I will truly miss my wonderful colleagues who have become like family. Let's stay in touch! While they find*

*my replacement, you can contact (name of the poor underling now doing their job and yours) for any further assistance. Goodbye, sayonara, and arrivederci!*

I used to get emails like this during my office days. They made me laugh. Not only were they completely disingenuous, they were also a nauseating example of somebody obsequiously covering their you-know-what in case that exciting career opportunity crumbled like a stale cookie and they had to come crawling back.

**This standard reply would seem to suffice nicely—if you consider yourself a standard person. Alas, most do not.**

These examples aside, however, the standard OOO would be something like: *I will be out of the office from (date) to (date) and will have limited access to email. If this is urgent, please contact (name of someone who has reluctantly agreed to clean up your messes while you're away). Otherwise, I will respond to your email upon my return.*

This standard reply would seem to suffice nicely—if you consider yourself a standard person. Alas, most do not. Extremely conscientious people who have to use the bathroom will leave an OOO stating: *I will be unable to access email from 11:12 a.m., October 29, 2019, to 11:26 a.m., October 29, 2019, after which time I will respond by 11:27 a.m., October 29, 2019.* And that's

only if they don't actually take the computer into the bathroom with them.

Some people try to be funny—"try" being the operative word. There are dozens of websites listing hilarious examples of OOO messages, including this ditty: *I'm in Nashville / It may seem quite rash / Did I really think I'd meet Johnny Cash (who happens to be dead) / Don't bat an eyelash / I'll be back in a flash.* DO NOT leave an OOO like this. If you do, you won't just be telling people you're away; you'll be making them wish you'd stay away.

Writing this, I couldn't help but wonder what OOOs might have been like if they had email in, say, George Washington's day: *I will be out of the office from April 19, 1775, until September 3, 1783, to fight the American Revolutionary War. Hence, I will be virtually inaccessible by email. If the matter is urgent, and—excuse me while I dodge another musket ball—I do mean urgent, you can try to reach me at fatherofourcountry@gmail.com. If that doesn't work, please contact Paul Revere and tell him to get back on his horse and deliver the message. And let me repeat—be sure it's urgent. A brigadier general in the 6th Connecticut Regiment sent me a supposedly humorous poem recently to say he was taking a vacation in Nashville. He is now a private, gathering firewood at Valley Forge.*

Guess hilarious OOOs weren't so funny then, either. **T**

**John Cadley** is a former advertising copywriter, freelance writer, and musician living in Fayetteville, New York. Learn more at [www.cadleys.com](http://www.cadleys.com).



# Toastmasters Turns 95!

It's the perfect time to honor our visionary and founder.

95<sup>th</sup>  
ANNIVERSARY



Contribute to the Ralph C. Smedley Memorial Fund® today and receive exclusive recognition.

[www.toastmasters.org/Smedley](http://www.toastmasters.org/Smedley)