

District Strategies





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The Process

Develop Strategies and Tactics – a Key Skill for a Leader

This guide will help you as you work on the strategy for your District to achieve success over the next year. Developing a strategy, deciding on tactics, making a plan, and following up on it are all very important skills for a leader. This exercise is very important for your **Leadership Journey**. (To know more about a leader’s journey, see **Appendix 1**.)

Building effective leaders and high-performing teams within the District has proven to enhance success in achieving the District mission. As a team, you will create your District Success Plan (DSP). As you develop your DSP, ensure you are spending a good amount of time thinking about and creating strategies.

What are Strategies and Tactics?

What is a strategy? What is a strategy versus a tactic? This document defines both and relates them back to your leadership role.

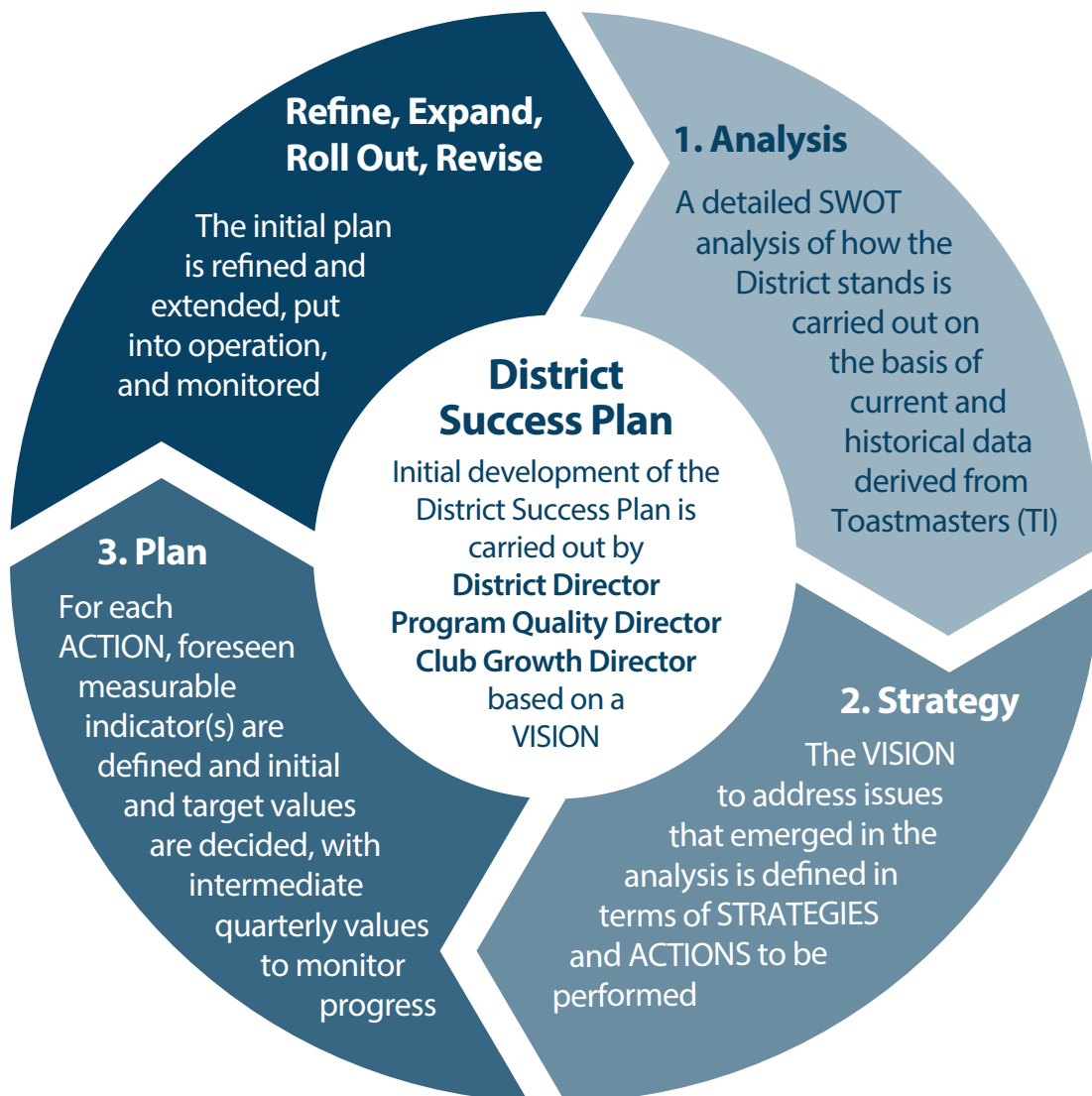
A **goal** is a desired result. Goals are optimal when based on SMART (Specific, Measureable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-Bound) goals. A **strategy** is an *approach* you take to achieve your goal—it is not a checklist of items. A **tactic** is a set of *actions* by which the strategy is carried out in the short term.



Once you have determined your strategies, the tactics will flow from and support them. We have found that as we work with Districts around the world, those who follow these guidelines are successful. We have gathered strategies and tactics that have proven successful in different Districts across the world and have collected them here to help you as you plan the success of your District. (For more details on **why using these valuable strategies and tactics**, please see **Appendix 2**.)

Success Planning Process

You have probably already developed a Success Plan as a Club President, an Area Director, or a Division Director. The process is always the same and can be summarized with the following picture.



Step 1. Analysis

- A. As you begin this process, focus on continuity from past years through future years. Continuity and consistency builds trust with the members. Review the previous years' District Success Plan and assess the results achieved, examine strategies that worked and did not work, and discuss lessons learned. Also review the past years' vision and strategy design with the outgoing team to provide consistency for members year over year.
- B. Carry out a detailed SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis of how the District stands on the basis of your team's perception and current and historical data derived from the **Toastmasters Dashboard** and other sources. To better align with the **Toastmasters International Strategic Plan** and the structure of the District Success Plan, you might want to perform this analysis separately on these main areas:
 - a. Support **Leadership and Team Development** for all District leaders
 - b. **Communication** - how to best **Communicate** with your leaders, members, and potential new members
 - c. **Membership Payments Growth** - focus on **Membership Retention and Growth**
 - d. **Club Growth** - support the creation of **New Clubs**
 - e. **Distinguished Clubs** - support all clubs in reaching **Club Excellence**

In the following pages you will find a list of proven strategies to face challenges in these areas.

Step 2. Strategy

- A. Develop a **VISION** and a set of **GOALS** to address issues that emerged in the analysis of the District's current status. Focus your **VISION** not just on this year, but moving through future years, driving club and member excellence.
- B. Define **STRATEGIES** to be put in place to achieve the **GOALS**.
- C. Create **TACTICS** to implement the **STRATEGIES**.
- D. Make sure to build on successes from previous years and empower teams in coming years to continue creating successful members and clubs. Change those strategies that were unsuccessful, and use a long-term vision to maintain and enhance those programs that bring value to our members.

Step 3. Plan

- A. For each **TACTIC**, define measurable indicators (KPIs) and create initial and final target values with intermediate quarterly values to monitor progress.
- B. Make a list of **ACTIONS** to be taken by team members that will move the District toward the **GOAL**.
- C. Determine **BUDGET** and **TIMELINES** to execute those **ACTIONS**. Define **INCENTIVES** and **RECOGNITIONS** that can help execute the **TACTICS** and implement the **STRATEGIES**.

While the District Success Plan will concentrate on the strategies, tactics and main implementation points, the detailed ACTIONS to be performed will be inserted into a Club Excellence Plan, a Market Analysis Plan, and Internal and External Communication Plans, as shown in this picture.



A Club Excellence Plan does not have a formal template, but is an essential part of the Program Quality strategy to support all clubs in achieving excellence. Like the Communication and Market Analysis Plan, it focuses on the tactics and actions to be taken, the timeline for each action, and the team members responsible for executing those actions.

Step 4. Refine and revise

- A. Once you have an initial draft of the District Success Plan, you can further develop it with some additional steps, as is shown in the following picture on the following page.
- B. Review the draft District Success Plan with your RA and DEC, have the plan approved by the DEC and the budget approved by the DC, and then submit both to TI HQ.
- C. Periodically revise the plan and adapt it as needed.



Refine - with the support of the Public Relations Manager, the Administration Manager, the Finance Manager, the Immediate Past District Director, and all your Division Directors, you can REFINE the plan and its underlying VISION, defining major events (Councils, Contests, Conference, COT) and incentives.

Expand - with the support of the Area Directors, their assistants, and the committee chairs, you can make sure the District Success Plan covers all local needs and fully supports the needs and growth opportunities of the membership and the leadership. The District Leaders, Assistants, and Committees must be made fully aware of what is in the District Success Plan and the tactics involved in its execution.

Roll out - based on the timeline in the Communication Plan, the District Success Plan will be rolled out. According to the excellence plan, ongoing training will be carried out for members and leaders. Marketing activities will support growth, External Communication will spread the reach of Toastmasters to new members and Internal Communication will promote all that is happening in the District and the Toastmasters benefits to the membership.

Revise - periodically (at least quarterly) the District Success Plan will be revised by looking at successes and challenges, and the actual value of the foreseen indicators (KPI) checked against the original planning. Where necessary, the plan will be modified and updated. Open lines of communication will be maintained with all leaders and members.

A Case Study

Consider the following scenario. Each year, the day following the elections, the elected officers, AM, FM, and PRM meet with the current District Director and the incoming officers' mentors. Everyone is introduced so the team can start forming. The past years' philosophies are outlined by the current District Director to provide background and the "why" behind current practices. The incoming District Director has already had conversations with the current District Director and presents ideas on the priorities to be addressed for the coming year.

By early June, the incoming DD, PQD, and CGD, with the help of mentors and subject matter experts, review the past year, perform an analysis of the current situation, and develop a new District Success Plan building on previous successes and adjusting for the challenges. The plan is then refined with the input from the AM, FM, PRM, IPDD, and Division Directors. As part of the June Area and Division Director training, the District Success Plan is presented, which helps the Division and Area Directors complete their plans to further support new club building and existing club excellence.

By July 1, the entire DEC team is focused on the District Vision and Mission. Tactics and Actions have been formulated based on the District Success Plan. Milestones are on the calendar to keep track of progress. Regular Division and Area Council meetings are scheduled and Clubs receive the District calendar, which includes monthly education offerings, special events, and incentive programs so they can plan their club events to take full advantage of District resources. All team members from Club Presidents to the District Director are focused on building Distinguished members and Distinguished clubs.

As the year progresses, the teams take accountability for complete and incomplete actions. Adjustments are made to the plan based on feedback and changing environments within the District. Recognition and gratitude are ongoing and public, celebrating each success at every level.

The Resources

Resources to support you

Toastmasters International's website provides a comprehensive list of resources (toastmasters.org/District-management) that are available for the creation and implementation of the DSP. During the creation of your plan, please make sure you add your local resources.

To further support your planning efforts, we have developed a tool that will assist you in your efforts in developing a District Success Plan. The tool is a spreadsheet that includes different sheets. Sheet 1 will assist you in recording the results of your SWOT Analysis. Sheet 2 will help you in selecting relevant items of the SWOT for each area and write down a strategy and connected action(s). It will support you by showing the strategies and related actions that are listed in this document. Finally, Sheet 3 will help you by allowing you to record for each action an indicator, its unit, and the initial and foreseen values at the end of Q1, Q2, Q3, and end of the year, while also offering a way to record actuals when you perform the quarterly reviews.

Recognition

Districts may choose to recognize club and District leaders for Toastmasters accomplishments outside of the recognition programs. District recognition programs must support the programs that are in place and cannot be in conflict with any Toastmasters International recognition programs. But recognition may take a variety of forms, many of which do not have a cost.

Districts have many ways to publicly recognize clubs and members for achievement. The most common ways for public recognition are:

- ▶ District website
- ▶ Social media pages
- ▶ District newsletter
- ▶ District-wide emails
- ▶ Personal emails
- ▶ Personal phone calls
- ▶ Recognition at District events such as COTs, Hall of Fame, contests, and Annual Conference

Incentives

Incentives can be used as a reward to improve performance. The most effective incentives are those that encourage behavior above what is expected in Toastmasters' official recognition programs. It is generally not an effective use of limited District finances to incentivize clubs or members to accomplish the expected standards, such as renewing on time. Rather, consider incentives to encourage exceptional behavior, such as clubs renewing 75% of their members before the deadline or renewing two (2) more members than its base membership. Throughout the strategies, you will find many incentive opportunities listed under the tactics. We encourage you to explore additional incentives that support the club and District missions while rewarding exceptional accomplishments.

Overview of Suggested District Strategies

Following are the District strategies that we have collected to provide you with inspiration, divided into sections by area. For each area you will find:

- ▶ A general introduction, outlining the background for that area, its relation to the Toastmasters Strategic Plan, and the District Officer Accountability for that area.
- ▶ A list of strategies and related tactics which you can use as a source of inspiration for defining your own strategies and tactics (make sure to adapt them to your local needs) – for each tactic a number is shown suggesting at which level the tactic works best: 1=Club, 2=Area, 3=Division, 4=District.
- ▶ A narrative with examples or details related to the tactics listed.

These are the areas and their main strategies:

Leadership and Team Development

- ▶ Deliver training by centralizing COTs and holding Division makeup Club Officer Training (COT)
- ▶ Deliver training based on Division-based locations for COTs and makeup COTs to maximize training
- ▶ Implement supplemental Club Officer Training to ensure quality clubs
- ▶ Provide District Leader Training in a centralized location for a richer learning experience
- ▶ Provide ongoing supplemental DEC officer training
- ▶ Provide leadership opportunities for future District leaders
- ▶ Utilize the Pathways mentoring program for all District leaders
- ▶ Embrace a collaborative, team-based leadership approach

Communication

- ▶ Create a timeline that assists District leaders and teams to be accountable
- ▶ Improve member experience by creating a clear line of communication with District leaders
- ▶ Create a specific Internal Communication Strategy and an External Communication Strategy using widespread, aligned multi-channel communication
- ▶ Use team communication to motivate participation

Membership Retention and Growth

- ▶ Club Actions:
 - Welcome new members - monthly onboarding
 - Evaluate periodically members' interest
 - Monitor club quality
 - Recognize/celebrate achievements
 - Have club ambassadors
- ▶ District Actions:
 - Appoint an Assistant CGD (Club Retention)
 - Introduce a Quality Club Award (for member retention)
 - Encourage clubs to host events to help grow membership

Membership Retention and Growth (continued)

- ▶ Ensure renewals are submitted in a timely manner
- ▶ Conduct a membership drive
- ▶ Recruit from all available sources
- ▶ Publicize your club
- ▶ Conduct a marketing campaign
- ▶ Be visible (Google My Business)
- ▶ Automate answering to TI lead emails
- ▶ Start a #MyWhy campaign
- ▶ Organize "Toastmasters Road Shows"
- ▶ "8-80" – membership building & member retention award. Clubs must have enrolled eight new members to the Club and retain 80% of the base membership of that Club by the end of the year.

New Clubs

- ▶ Use a team model to create new clubs
- ▶ Start new clubs based on geographic areas of need
- ▶ Utilize the District Executive Committee (DEC) to generate leads for corporate clubs and gain market penetration in dominant industries
- ▶ Evaluate language-based demand in Districts to help create new clubs
- ▶ Utilize specialization to drive new club creation
- ▶ Create listings in Google My Business for prospective clubs
- ▶ Make a video explaining benefits of Toastmasters
- ▶ Have a club startup weekend
- ▶ Start a CEO Forum
- ▶ Develop Institutional Clubs

Club Excellence

- ▶ Create a strong pool of club coaches by utilizing the Club Coach Program
- ▶ Build strong relationships with ALL clubs, assess their needs, and proactively provide customized resources early in the year
- ▶ Increase participation in the DCP by encouraging clubs to track progress throughout the year
- ▶ Actively use available tools like Moments of Truth, the Club Success Plan, and the Distinguished Club Program with all clubs in the District to promote club excellence
- ▶ Strengthen struggling clubs (ones below charter strength) through targeted support based on club needs
- ▶ Do an ABCD Club Analysis

We would be very happy to receive suggestions for additional proven strategies and tactics as a contribution for the next version of this document. Please send them to districts@toastmasters.org.

Leadership and Team Development Strategies

Background

A critical element to creating a successful District is providing effective training for club officers and Division and Area Directors. When club officers are well-trained to perform their duties, club members are better served. Knowledgeable officers make the member experience more positive, which leads to a quality club experience and increased member retention. Without properly trained leaders at every level, Districts and clubs cannot meet members' needs or introduce the benefits of Toastmasters to others.

Training is a vital means to develop leaders and achieve success therefore it's imperative for Districts to promote and market both club and District sponsored trainings to encourage maximum attendance and participation. Training events are included in the District calendar and published in District communications, including the District newsletter, social media, and website.

Strategic Plan Importance

Leadership and Team Development relates to the first two pillars of Toastmasters' Strategic Plan:

- Club Excellence
 - Well-trained leaders are more able to create and sustain excellence within the club experience
- Member Achievement
 - Clubs with well-trained leaders provide better support to their members in achieving their personal goals

District Officer Accountability

The Program Quality Director is directly responsible for District Training and Leadership and Team Development results. The most effective Districts also rely on Training Chairs, District Trainers, Division Directors, and Area Directors to assist in training club officers and leaders. The District Director and Club Growth Director have responsibilities to build and manage District teams and provide leadership opportunities to committee chairs and members.



Toastmasters' Strategic Plan

Club Excellence

Member Achievement

Engagement, Awareness, and Participation

Recommended Strategies for Leadership and Team Development

Strategy	Level ¹	Tactics
<p>In smaller geographic Districts, deliver in-person training by centralizing COTs and holding Division-based makeup Club Officer Trainings</p> <p>In larger geographic Districts, deliver in-person training based on Division-based locations for COTs and makeup Club Officer Trainings to maximize training opportunities in all geographic regions</p>	<p>4, 3</p> <p>4, 3, 2, 1</p> <p>4, 3, 2</p> <p>4, 3, 2</p> <p>4, 3, 2</p> <p>4, 3, 2</p> <p>4, 3, 2</p> <p>4,3,2</p> <p>4</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use quality trainers (Use “train the trainer” or “speaker to trainer” events) • Follow guidelines for COTs • Use TI-provided resources • Provide additional training topics, such as Moments of Truth (MOT), Club Success Plans, Pathways Basics, Pathways Base Camp Manager, speaking skills – focus the additional training on achieving the Club Mission • Consider adding other classes as suggested by members/officers • Offer sessions in multiple languages, as required • Consider using subject matter experts as keynotes. Consult with your Region Advisor if suggestions are needed. Rotate locations so all members feel they belong and have opportunities near to them • Provide focus on club officers as a team – emphasize how the roles work together to provide value and benefits to the club members • Use central physical location(s) for COTs or well-advertised virtual meetings • Provide multiple days/times in both physical locations and virtual meetings to accommodate work and family schedules for makeup trainings • Train as many officers as possible in June and November • Potential incentives for: seven officers trained; seven officers trained both terms
<p>Implement supplemental Club Officer Training to ensure quality clubs</p>	<p>4, 3, 2</p> <p>4, 3, 2</p> <p>4</p> <p>4</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Live in-person events • Web-based training • Distribute work across Divisions • District education summit in first half of year, complying with Protocols 3.D, 4.C, and 7.0
<p>Provide District Leader Training in a centralized location for a richer learning experience</p>	<p>4</p> <p>4</p> <p>4</p> <p>4</p> <p>4</p> <p>4</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use TI-provided resources • Focus on Area Director visits to clubs (how and what to communicate, etc.). Strive to provide a club evaluation that reflects the value received by the members at each meeting. Evaluation is based on the Moments Of Truth • District leadership and Past District Leaders to provide training • Train prior to July 1 • Potential recognition: District leader appointment announcement, District leader press releases

¹ 1=Club, 2=Area, 3=Division, 4=District

Strategy	Level ¹	Tactics
Provide ongoing supplemental DEC officer training	4 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schedule training sessions during DEC meetings • Use supplemental training to reinforce and review the District Leader Training provided at the beginning of the year • Offer webinars/phone conferences for District leaders
Provide leadership opportunities for future District leaders	4, 3, 2 4, 3, 2 4, 3, 2 4 4, 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilize assistant positions at Division and Area (i.e., Assistant Area or Division Directors) • Assign participants to assist with District events, such as COTs and District conference • Assign participants to assist with club launch, mentoring, and coaching • Assign past leaders as mentors • Consider having a Past District Director mentor for each Division Director and higher, including the Administration, Finance, and Public Relations Managers • Encourage assistants
Utilize the Pathways mentoring program for all District leaders	4 4 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarify expectations of mentors and protégés • Provide for open communications between the mentors and the District Director so the mentors can help their protégés focus on the District goals, incentives, and recognition programs • Check in with mentors and protégés as to the success of the program • Reassign mentors and protégés as needed
Embrace a collaborative, team-based leadership approach	4, 3, 2, 1 4, 3 4 4 4, 3, 2 4, 3, 2 4 4, 3 4, 3, 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embrace the core values • Make District leaders available to all members and engage at all levels • Embrace Region Advisor and peer calls • Regularly scheduled District leader calls • Monthly Division and Area Council Meetings. Encourage clubs to attend and ensure content of the meetings is valuable to the club officers. • Stay focused on the District mission • Town Hall meetings as necessary to address specific issues • Regular calls with District Director, Program Quality Director, and Club Growth Director and Division Directors • Division Team calls with Area Directors

¹ 1=Club, 2=Area, 3=Division, 4=District

Leadership and Team Development Tactics Narrative

- ▶ Districts with smaller geographic areas tend to have one or two major COTs with Division-based Club Officer Trainings to maximize training opportunities. Districts with larger geography often break COTs into geographic centers using Division Directors to help coordinate and advertise
- ▶ Many Districts offer ongoing supplemental training throughout the year, either live or via webinar, to cover single topics such as Moments of Truth (MOT), Club Success Plans, Pathways Basics, Pathways Base Camp Manager, speaking skills – focus the additional training on achieving the club mission. Supplemental training can also be offered at Area & Division Council Meetings to encourage participation, although most successful Districts also offer stand-alone “learning labs” at a different day and time, marketing for members, meeting scheduling, Pathways, Base Camp, or running a contest.
- ▶ Most Districts train as many of the incoming DEC officers as possible at a single time and location.
- ▶ Successful Districts provide ongoing training opportunities for District leaders, primarily as a part of their DEC meetings. Regular communications between DEC meetings are essential to success.
- ▶ Many successful Districts have formalized leadership development, designed to create a talented pool of candidates available for future District leadership positions
- ▶ Successful Districts embrace the power of mentoring. They recruit and assign mentors for all District positions. Mentors are selected from those who have performed well in the role and are a good fit for the protégé. The District Director, Program Quality Director, Club Growth Director, Public Relations Manager, Administration Manager, Finance Manager, and all Division Directors have mentors, all of whom are Past District Directors
- ▶ The most successful Districts embrace a collaborative, team-based leadership approach that recognizes individual assignments while not operating in isolation.

Communication Strategies

Background

Communication is a key component of the Toastmasters experience. Districts create communication strategies which positively reinforce the benefits of membership and provide members with motivation and encouragement to achieve individual, club, and District goals. Districts benefit from considering communication strategies from an internal perspective—communicating with existing members—and from an external perspective—attracting prospective members and others outside of the Toastmasters community.

The most effective communication strategies are designed to encourage and reinforce positive behavior while informing people of Toastmasters programs and services.

Strategic Plan Importance

Communication Strategies relate to all three pillars of Toastmasters' Strategic Plan:

- ▶ Club Excellence
 - Communication strategies around club excellence raise awareness regarding programs and encourage clubs to achieve goals early or to exceed the previous year's accomplishments
- ▶ Member Achievement
 - Districts can create communication strategies to encourage member achievement
- ▶ Awareness, Engagement, and Participation
 - Districts can establish communication strategies to assist clubs in creating consistent messaging through the District so that clubs have consistent and cohesive marketing and public relations efforts

District Officer Accountability

The District Director, Program Quality Director, and Club Growth Director work collectively to create the communication strategies. They work closely with the Public Relations Manager and Administration Manager to ensure that these strategies are delivered in a consistent manner.



Toastmasters' Strategic Plan
Club Excellence
Member Achievement
Awareness, Engagement, and Participation

Recommended Strategies for Communication

Strategy	Level ²	Tactics
Create a timeline that assists District leaders and teams to be accountable	4 4 4 4 4 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin the Timeline and Success Plan with the DD's, PQD's, and CGD's input. Then use a consultative approach with the three managers and Division Directors to validate and improve the strategies. Finally, bring this before the entire DEC for final buy-in and implementation • Consider using SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound) goal principles to create the plan • Articulate the benefits to our members and the community of achieving those goals • Meet regularly to monitor and report on progress towards goals • Consider using Division and Area Council Meetings for these regular updates and celebrations • Use tracking sheets, surveys, or third-party platforms to provide updates and to track progress • Validate and celebrate progress towards goals • Change tactics as necessary
Improve member experience by creating a clear line of communication with District leaders	4 4, 3, 2 4 4, 3, 2 4, 3, 2 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a variety of access methods to District leadership • Have leaders monitor member and club achievements, calling with congratulations. During the conversation, inquire about the member's experience and goals. Use these insights to inform course corrections that will improve the benefits that clubs are providing members • Have at least one representative of the Top Three at Division Council Meetings to make announcements, answer questions from members, and quell rumors • Consider Division Council Meetings with Area Breakout meetings • Develop meeting content valuable to both District leaders and club members to encourage club officer participation in Division and Area Council Meetings • Conduct virtual or in-person town hall meetings to address special concerns brought forward by members
Create a specific Internal Communication Strategy and an External Communication Strategy using widespread, aligned multi-channel communication	4 4 4 4 4 4, 3, 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No matter the platform, the District message should be the same to minimize confusion • Use variation in the message to avoid social media "astroturfing." That is, copy and paste the exact same format on all platforms • Utilize a variety of methods to communicate (web, social media, press releases, etc.), with the messaging clear and consistent • Use targeted messaging. For example, only send a message concerning new member orientation to those who have joined Toastmasters in the past 90 days, not to the entire District • Judiciously use targeted text messages to specific groups to encourage immediate engagement • Consider geography, language, and any other potential obstacles to ensure the communication reaches the member or officer • Promote annual renewals through the PR team—remind members why they joined Toastmasters and why they stayed

² 1=Club, 2=Area, 3=Division, 4=District

Strategy	Level ²	Tactics
Use team communication to motivate participation and action towards achieving the District mission	4, 3, 2 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When writing District, Division, and Area Success Plans, agree upon communication methods and frequency • Tools such as Slack, WeChat, and WhatsApp provide for immediate communication and response to individuals, specific groups, and all leaders at large. Using such tools over email filters communications to essential knowledge transfer
	4, 3, 2 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phone calls, Zoom calls, and in-person visits are vital to building and maintaining relationships. Do not rely on emails
	4, 3, 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to the District mission regularly when communicating with the District Executive Committee
	4, 3, 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to the club mission regularly when communicating with clubs and members
	4, 3, 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide regular updates on progress towards achieving District goals
	4, 3, 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize individuals, clubs, and leadership teams as progress towards achieving District goals is achieved. Even small steps can be recognized and will motivate future progress
	4, 3, 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote team spirit
	4, 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan with Area Directors to contact clubs regularly via personal visits, phone calls, and emails • Use social media and the District website to share success stories and to validate members

² 1=Club, 2=Area, 3=Division, 4=District

Communication Tactics Narrative

- ▶ A timeline is important to keep District leaders and club members engaged and on track. Successful teams have a clear vision, specific goals, and mechanisms to track their progress towards their goals. It is essential that club and District leaders set clear goals in their Club/Area/Division/District Success Plans. By regularly tracking progress, leaders can motivate their team members to stay engaged and to participate actively.
- ▶ A great relationship between District leadership and the members is a club excellence multiplier. Ensure membership has several methods to contact their leadership so that all members can use the one most comfortable to them. Offer regular Division and Area Council Meetings that allow members and club leaders to get answers to their questions from the source instead of allowing rumors and hearsay to permeate. As necessary, offer virtual and in-person town hall meetings to address specific concerns. Open communications with congratulations for accomplishments. Area Directors can contact clubs when a DCP goal is achieved or members when a Pathways level is accomplished. Division Directors can contact clubs when they achieve enough points or members to become Distinguished or members when a path is completed. The District Director can call newly minted Distinguished Toastmasters or 10 out of 10 President's Distinguished clubs. Use these congratulatory calls to foster conversation and open communication at all levels while recognizing and encouraging excellence. When communication is open and transparent, the team works best.
- ▶ Successful Districts communicate regularly with Division and Area Directors, plus the District leadership team. Leaders regularly attend calls/meetings. The District mission, goals, and progress towards achieving those goals are regularly communicated to leaders, clubs, and members. Trio communicates well—no one is left out. Team communication is multi-faceted: Calls, social media chat platforms, emails, and in-person meetings are used regularly. Leaders continually engage members using every opportunity to promote goals and progress towards achieving
- ▶ District messages and TI messages align with each other and are consistent in branding and content regardless of platform, while also considering geographic and language factors. This will minimize confusion and reinforce why this organization is important to an individual's and club's success.
- ▶ Recognize the club mission. Celebrate every step. Promote team spirit. Successful Districts often have a leader who is inspirational and who regularly communicates with the clubs. This communication includes personal visits, phone calls, and emails.

Membership Retention and Growth Strategies

Background

Attracting new members to Toastmasters and retaining existing members means that more people are learning the vital skills of communication and leadership. Your District promotes and influences both membership and retention.

Membership building and retention are club functions. People join clubs—they don't join Areas, Divisions, or Districts. Districts support clubs by providing the motivation, training, resources, and public-relations assistance necessary to help attract and retain members.

District success is tied directly to membership payments. When membership renewal dues are submitted on time, everyone benefits. Most importantly, members continue to enjoy the benefits that Toastmasters offers. Clubs receive credit toward one of the goals in the Distinguished Club Program. Additionally, the District receives a portion of each membership payment to support the District mission.

The District may appoint a Club Coach to support a club as it rebuilds membership and restores quality to the club environment.

Strategic Plan Importance

Membership Growth relates to two pillars of Toastmasters' Strategic Plan:

- ▶ Club Excellence
 - Clubs with a strong and growing membership provide a vibrant and positive environment that generates a culture of excellence
- ▶ Awareness, Engagement, and Participation
 - Marketing activities to support membership growth help to raise the brand awareness and increase the level of participation

District Officer Accountability

The Club Growth Director is directly accountable for membership growth results. The Program Quality Director is accountable for member retention. Neither of these goals can be met without high-quality clubs which are supported by excellent Club Officer Training offered by the District and organized by the Program Quality Director. Together, with the District Public Relations Manager, the PQD and CGD develop a District Market Analysis Plan. The most effective Districts also rely on a Club Extension Chair, Club Quality Chair, and Club Retention Chair. These positions form the District marketing team to assist in meeting the District's membership growth goals.



Toastmasters' Strategic Plan

Club Excellence

Member Achievement

Awareness, Engagement, and Participation

Recommended Strategies for Membership Retention and Growth

Strategy	Level ³	Tactics
Welcome new members -monthly onboarding	4, 3, 2, 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly meeting open to all new members with orientation, tips on starting, Pathways training, and Q&A
Evaluate periodically members' interest	4, 3, 2, 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate member interest • Analyze reasons for missed meetings • Nurture potential non-renewals
Monitor club quality	3, 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moments of Truth • Club quality checklist • Member surveys
Recognize/celebrate achievements	4, 3, 2, 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celebrate reaching completion of levels, path or DTM <p>See Communication Strategies</p>
Appoint a Club Retention Chair	4, 3, 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze A,B,C,D clubs of the District or of each Division. Identify the reasons for underperforming clubs. Reasons could include member loss, missed meetings, member interests are not met, or lack of quality meetings. After analysis, appoint teams to implement corrective measures with the help of relevant Area and Division Directors
Have Club Ambassadors	4, 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List the clubs which are less than 20 and more than 12 in membership. Pick an Ambassador who has the passion and ability to support the club. Appoint them with a specific task list bounded by a time frame. Recognize all Ambassadors during the "Hall of Fame" at the annual conference of the District
Introduce a Quality Club Award for member retention	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Districts can introduce a special award scheme to recognize and promote the Quality Club concept. It can have two evaluation criteria. One will be Club Engagement Avenue and the other is Club Quality Avenue. There will be marks assigned for the listed activities of each Avenue. Then reward the achieving clubs at the annual conference.
Encourage clubs to host events to help grow	4, 3, 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educate and train club officers on Open Houses and Speechcraft
	4, 3, 2, 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share success stories

³ 1=Club, 2=Area, 3=Division, 4=District

Strategy	Level ³	Tactics
Membership	4, 3, 2	• Coordinate timing of Open Houses within an Area or Division for maximum impact
	4	• Reimburse clubs for Open Houses, up to a predetermined amount
	4, 3, 2, 1	• Collect data from Open Houses to evaluate the program
	4, 3, 2, 1	• Get quotes from renewing Toastmasters in your District and post them to social media. Follow the guidelines of the #MyWhy Campaign
	4, 3, 2, 1	• Potential incentives for: Top performers in membership drives, recruitment incentives, base + 2 at renewal, club Open Houses
	4, 3, 2, 1	• Potential recognition: Membership drive participation, member recruitment
Club Ambassadors	4, 3, 2	• Contact clubs early to understand their timetable for the approval of payments
	4, 3, 2, 1	• Generate club invoices two months before the deadline (or earlier based on timetable). This is especially important for Corporate Clubs
	4, 3, 2, 1	• Meet with organization's club leadership and corporate Human Resources or training department to measure progress, celebrate success, and outline the benefits to the company
	4, 3, 2, 1	• Get quotes from renewing Toastmasters in your District and post them to social media during renewal time. Follow the guidelines of the #MyWhy campaign
	4	• Potential incentives for: Renewing 75% of members by an early deadline, renewing base+2 members
	4	• Potential recognition: Recognize top-performing clubs in retention in District newsletter

³ 1=Club, 2=Area, 3=Division, 4=District

Strategy	Level ³	Tactics
Conduct a membership drive	4, 3, 2, 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in Toastmasters' annual programs outline on the Membership building page • Create your own membership campaign • Conduct a Speechcraft to attract new potential members, while giving them an opportunity to learn basic public-speaking skills
Recruit from all available sources	4, 3, 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hand out promotional materials at community organizations • Give short talks about Toastmasters at company seminars or related programs
Publicize your club	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribute fliers with your club information to local businesses and display in strategic locations • Send news releases announcing your club's time and meeting location to local newspapers
Conduct a marketing campaign	4, 3, 2, 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define TARGET and MEDIA to use • Use MOONLIT project materials (target analysis, messages, pictures, hashtags) see toastmasterseurope.org/moonlit-project/ • CANVA project
Be visible (Google My Business)	4, 3, 2, 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add your club in Google My Business – see guidelines here: toastmasterseurope.org/BeVisible
Automate answering to TI lead emails	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setup a ZAPIER automation to answer to TI lead emails – see instructions here: zapier.com • Ensure humans follow up the automated answer in a timely manner
My Why Campaign	4, 3, 2, 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short videos from members explaining why the joined and why they stayed in Toastmasters

³ 1=Club, 2=Area, 3=Division, 4=District

Strategy	Level ³	Tactics
Organize "Toastmasters Road Shows"	4, 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify tier-2 or tier-3 cities where no Toastmasters club exists currently to discover opportunities to open new clubs • This same type of analysis can be used to identify clubs that need to increase membership in particular cities • Area Directors could drive the initiative with club leadership to fix a date and time for the Road Show that would benefit the maximum number of clubs • Select a venue for the meeting and publicize the Road Show within that city/town. Use a combination of social media, handing out leaflets at key businesses, fliers as newspaper insertions or ads, etc • Organize a Registration Table at the entrance to the venue to collect contact details of individuals who attended the Road Show. Club Growth team will recruit a team to handle the agenda and conduct the quality Road Show demonstrating the benefits of Toastmasters to businesses and communities • Immediately following the Road Show event, send thank you notes to attendees inviting them to the club meetings or, for new clubs, a launch meeting
"8-80" - Membership building & member retention award	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch the award within the District and upload award criteria to the District website. Get all Division Directors and Area Directors to encourage their clubs to launch this award. Appoint a person in charge of the award scheme to monitor progress and to prompt different ways to achieve those club requirements to receive the new award

³ 1=Club, 2=Area, 3=Division, 4=District

Membership Retention and Growth Tactics Narrative

- ▶ Build the Club Retention Team under the guidance of the CGD, having a capable individual to head the Club Retention Team. It's very important to identify a respectable individual who lives Toastmaster's core values. The Club Retention Chair must work closely with the PQD Team that is responsible for member retention and club quality, both of which are required to retain clubs.
- ▶ Find Ambassadors to clubs having more than 12 members but less than 20 members (Charter Strength). Success of this strategy lies in finding a key individual who is recognized by the membership to be a true servant leader.
- ▶ If any club provides a quality club environment for the membership development, member retention in clubs can be easily achieved.
- ▶ Districts encourage net membership growth using focused club events, such as Open Houses, Lunch & Learns (corporate clubs), and Speechcraft.
- ▶ Clubs sponsored by other organizations: Begin work early with organization/accounts payable department so that payment is made on time for renewals. Consider including a one-sheet outlining the club and member successes since the last renewal both within Toastmasters and within the organization itself.
- ▶ Community clubs: Fellowship, friendship, and fun are drivers for these club members as much as the educational benefits. Encourage members to talk about their clubs, the benefits they've gained, and the enjoyment shared among the members.
- ▶ Ensure fresh content across social media platforms. This will lead to greater visibility across a multitude of outlets. As today's prospective member is more digitally savvy and accounting for a post-pandemic world, encourage participation in the #MyWhy campaign and use these videos and "Toastamonials" to draw in new members.
- ▶ City-or town-based awareness program targeted at non-Toastmasters living in that particular city. It will be a one- to two-hour program, publicized well in advance within that community/town/city. The program agenda will be an introduction to the Toastmasters program followed by a sample session covering each segment of the normal Toastmasters club meeting; namely, prepared speech, Table Topics session and Evaluation session. At the end, an Open House Q&A session.
- ▶ Districts with the help of Divisions, Areas and Clubs could launch the "8-80" membership building and membership retention award for all clubs right across the District. The meaning of this award is that with every payment cycle, clubs should have enrolled eight new members to the club and retain 80% of the base membership of that club by the end of the year.

New Club Strategies

Background

One of the most stimulating and rewarding ways to introduce the benefits of Toastmasters membership to others is by organizing new clubs in your District. This offers more people the opportunity to benefit from the Toastmasters education program. Organizing new clubs also provides District leaders with an opportunity to develop and extend their own leadership skills.

The District's mission is to build new clubs and support all clubs in achieving excellence. Successful Districts strive to have a net increase of clubs and membership payments each year to become Distinguished or better. The Club Growth Director (CGD) and the chair of the Club Extension Committee coordinate club-building efforts within the District, and any member can participate in the club growth process.

Strategic Plan Importance

Building new clubs relates to two pillars of Toastmasters' Strategic Plan:

- ▶ Member Achievement
 - Building new clubs increases member understanding of available opportunities and fosters accomplishment of members' personal goals
- ▶ Awareness, Engagement, and Participation
 - Heightened awareness of external target markets results in prospective member engagement and participation

District Officer Accountability

The Club Growth Director is directly accountable for new club charters. Together with the District Public Relations Manager, they develop a District Market Analysis Plan and external Communication Plan. The most effective Districts also rely on a Club Extension Chair and Club Charter Teams. The Division and Area Directors are engaged in the process of searching for new club opportunities.



Toastmasters' Strategic Plan

Club Excellence

Member Achievement

Awareness, Engagement, and Participation

Recommended Strategies for New Clubs

Strategy	Level ⁴	Tactics
Use a team model to create new clubs	4, 3, 2, 1	• CGD leads effort to develop and train New Clubs Committee/Team; can involve every District leader, including a marketing expert to develop a new-club marketing plan and marketing campaigns. Use social media. Involve club sponsors and mentors
	4	• CGD provides budget and incentives to create new sustainable clubs and to identify club sponsors and mentors
	4	• CGD leads teams to provide extensive training and guidance to cover all stages of club formation
	4, 3	• Division Directors lead new-club efforts
	4, 3, 2	• Division Directors/Area Directors organize teams to conduct demo meetings
	4, 3	• Divisions complete a “mapping” exercise to identify places where new clubs could be launched. These exercises can include a “Google Search” involving Internet exploration of community and businesses within specific geographic areas. What hidden opportunities exist for corporate or community clubs targeting underserved populations?
	4, 3	• CGD communicates with Division teams to get updates and maintain information within the Toastmasters Lead Management System
	4, 3	• Divisions conduct Club Officer Training for new club officers prior to a club launch
Start new clubs based on geographic areas of need	4, 3, 2	• Visit and explore new areas where Toastmasters does not exist, is unknown, or does not have a strong presence
	4, 3, 2, 1	• Build a team of people who can support new clubs in those areas
	4, 3	• Provide additional resources using technology
	4, 3, 2	• Have a sustained intervention/assistance plan in place over a few years to ensure success
		• Effort may be made to expand the borders of a newly forming District through the creation of clubs
	4, 3, 2	• Public Relations (PR) Team proactively works to reach remote cities and organize larger PR events

⁴ 1=Club, 2=Area, 3=Division, 4=District

Strategy	Level ⁴	Tactics
Start new clubs based on geographic areas of need (continued)	4, 3, 2	• Look for opportunities to build areas in geographies where we have one/two existing clubs
	4, 3, 2, 1	• Develop leaders and teams in new areas
	4, 3	• Conduct "Toastmasters Road Shows" in selected cities
Utilize the District Executive Committee (DEC) to generate leads for corporate clubs and gain market penetration in dominant industries	4, 3	• Generate leads from where DEC members work
	4, 3	• Hold corporate gatherings where you can share the benefits of Toastmasters
		• Focus on Toastmasters core competencies
	4, 3, 2, 1	• Attend job fairs alongside other corporations and advertise how the skills learned in Toastmasters make better employees
	4	• Start clubs in a corporation representing a dominant industry in your District. Leverage it to start clubs in other similar organizations
	4, 3, 2	• Utilize the sponsor list available at toastmasters.org
Evaluate language-based demand in Districts to help create new clubs	4, 3, 2, 1	• Identify commonly spoken and supported languages in the District. Consider forming clubs around these specific language specialties
	4, 3, 2	• Identify opportunities to create single-language and bilingual clubs in the District
	4, 3, 2	• Assign responsibility to team members to market and charter the new-club opportunities
Utilize specialization to drive new club creation	4, 3	• Identify unfulfilled specialty-club needs in the District
	4, 3	• Identify opportunities to create advanced clubs in the District
	4, 3	• Assign responsibility to team members to market and charter the new-club opportunities

⁴ 1=Club, 2=Area, 3=Division, 4=District

Strategy	Level ⁴	Tactics
Create listings in Google My Business for prospective clubs	4, 3, 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create Google My Business listings for prospective clubs listing their provisional meeting place
Video explaining benefits of Toastmasters	4, 3, 2, 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short video testimonials of TI members about the benefit they got from Toastmasters
Club startup weekend	4, 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A weekend-long event of tips and training on how to start a club, modeled on the Startup Weekend format • Forming groups that want to start a club • Objective: a new club started by the end of the weekend
CEO Forum	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List the corporations that have a sufficient number of employees to form a Toastmasters club. Then pick two to three CEOs of the corporations that already have Toastmasters clubs, especially those who are ardent supporters and believe that Toastmasters members have helped their corporations. Invite CEOs or HR heads of the companies that have no Toastmasters clubs to a hotel for a breakfast meeting. Thereafter, get those hand-picked CEOs to share their positive experiences of having a Toastmasters club within their corporations. No Toastmaster should speak, but the Top Three can be present to conduct the meeting according to an agenda. Introduce the CEOs to speak and moderate a Q&A session after the CEO presentations. This is the opportunity for the Top Three or their representatives to follow up with the CEOs who attended and continue to work with them to form clubs. Work with those HR or Training divisions to conduct launch meetings and take those valuable leads to form new clubs.
Institutional Clubs	4, 3, 2, 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet the governing councils of those institutions. Most of those institutes have a requirement for Continuous Professional Development (CPD) for their members. Therefore, introduce the Toastmasters program to them as a CPD program. Then conduct a Speechcraft program or two for them. Conduct launch meetings and get the concurrence of the Boards of those institutions and it will certainly lead to forming a club within those institutions.
Host lead generation events on social platforms	4, 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Ask Me Anything (AMA) or similar conclaves of subject importance can be hosted so members of the community at large know about TI and register • Leads could then be segmented and formed into new clubs where the opportunity exists

⁴ 1=Club, 2=Area, 3=Division, 4=District

New Clubs Tactics Narrative

- ▶ The CGD works with the Club Extension Team and Division Directors to start new clubs. While most initial contacts will come into the CGD, the CGD trains, mentors, and supports Club Extension Team and Division Directors in starting new clubs in the Divisions.
- ▶ Districts identify geographic areas that are unserved or underserved by Toastmasters clubs. Efforts are made to create both corporate and community clubs within those geographies.
- ▶ Generate leads for corporate clubs by using contacts already in the DEC. Ask DEC members where they work and encourage them to start a club there. Create a specific team to work exclusively with corporate clubs. Create corporate events, invite corporate leaders, and share how Toastmasters fills the unique needs of a corporation's leadership and communication skills development. Attend job fairs and promote Toastmasters to garner the skills needed to speak, lead, and advance corporate goals. Survey your District and look for prominent industries (technology, pharmaceutical, banking, to name a few) and start a club in each industry. Leverage that club for other corporations in the same industry (or the same corporation) to set the example and start similar clubs.
- ▶ Have all DEC members participate in a 15 minute "Google Challenge" at the top of the year. Use internet search engines to explore each DEC Member's local area. What untapped businesses or community organizations exist that might benefit from a Toastmasters club? Once these are submitted, the Club Growth Team can analyze the ideas and divide the viable ideas to the team.
- ▶ Districts identify commonly spoken, and supported, languages within their geography and create either single-language or bi/multi-lingual clubs to meet the needs of those populations. These are typically community clubs, or a club sponsored by a community association.
- ▶ Districts identify specializations that are not present within their existing Divisions, such as professional speakers, advanced clubs, humor clubs, debate clubs, and other advanced clubs. These are then used to try to create new clubs, often from existing members who would like to specialize beyond what is offered at their club.
- ▶ Trio can list reputed corporate entities within the districts that have no Toastmasters Clubs and Invite CEOs or Heads of HRs of those corporations for a breakfast meeting. This will be the forum to introduce Toastmasters and discuss the benefits of having Toastmasters members for any corporate entity.
- ▶ Look for opportunities available to form Toastmasters clubs within different professional entities and educational institutions such as the Institute of Engineers, Institute of Architects, Institutes of Chartered Accountants, Chartered Institute of Marketing, private universities or even state-owned universities.

Club Excellence Strategies

Background

Members join Toastmasters to become more effective communicators and leaders. They stay in Toastmasters because the club provides a valuable service and meets their individual needs. As Ralph Smedley said, “The Toastmasters club which has the right sort of program does not lose its members.” A quality club environment is the single most important factor in membership retention.

The Distinguished Club Program monitors and measures a club’s achievements. The Club Success Plan is the road map to club success and meeting members’ needs. *Moments of Truth* is the club’s guide to delivering quality service and outstanding member experiences. Each of these tools supports the development of a rich club environment.

Districts are responsible for promoting, training, and supporting District and club leaders in their efforts to achieve club excellence. The District Success Plan shows how the District leadership team plans to support a healthy and growing network of clubs that create positive learning experiences for members. Districts set goals and develop plans, as well as establish and employ strategies to assure accomplishment of their goals.

Strategic Plan Importance

Club Excellence relates to the first two pillars of Toastmasters’ Strategic Plan:

- ▶ Club Excellence
 - Districts can promote and influence clubs to ensure that they consistently deliver on the brand promise
- ▶ Member Achievement
 - An excellent club experience is vital to create an environment where members are empowered to achieve their goals

District Officer Accountability

The Program Quality Director is directly responsible for supporting quality club programming efforts and promoting the Distinguished Club Program. The most effective Districts also rely on Division and Area Directors, Distinguished Club Program tracking, supplemental education events, and Division and Area Council meetings to assist in meeting the Club Excellence goals.



Toastmasters’ Strategic Plan **Club Excellence** **Member Achievement**

Awareness, Engagement, and Participation

Recommended Strategies for Club Excellence

Strategy	Level ⁵	Tactics
Create a strong pool of Club Coaches by utilizing the Club Coach Program	4, 3, 2 4, 3 4 4 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train and guide all associated support members of the club (sponsors, mentors, coaches, etc.) • Recruit past successful coaches, members familiar with Toastmasters documentation, and past leaders to provide training for incoming coaches, sharing past experiences, failures, and successes. These members should be encouraged to have protegés to learn and carry on the roles in the future • Incentivize Club Coaches with recognition or rewards beyond Toastmasters leadership credit • Train remote members on effective ways to remotely coach a club • Advertise opportunities and benefits, and share club coach success stories
Increase participation in the Distinguished Club Program (DCP) by encouraging clubs to track progress throughout the year	4, 3 4 4 4 4 4, 3, 2 4, 3, 2 3, 2 4 4, 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a position to track DCP for District and/or Division • Share the value of the DCP in evaluating the quality of the club experience with the club officers and members • Identify milestones for DCP achievement • Incentivize early achievement of DCP goals • Incentivize clubs to complete the Club Success Plan • Incentivize clubs to conduct Moments of Truth • Review DCP progress with PQD and Division and Area Directors regularly • Publicly recognize clubs that are achieving DCP via social media, District websites, and/or District newsletters • Recognize clubs at Area and Division Council meetings • Offer incentives for: five DCP points by a specific date, achieving Distinguished by April 1, completing paths in Pathways • Potential recognition: DCP accomplishments, educational achievements
Actively use available tools like Moments of Truth, the Club Success Plan, and the Distinguished Club Program with all clubs in the District to promote club excellence	4, 3, 2 2 2, 1 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote, train, and implement <i>Moments of Truth</i> to all the clubs for self-assessment • Area Director to obtain copies of club assessments • Club officers review and use the Club Success Plan and adjust on a monthly basis • Club officers review the Distinguished Club Program on a monthly basis and adjust strategies and tactics to ensure goals are met
Build strong relationships with ALL clubs, assess their needs, and proactively provide customized resources early in the year	2 4 4 4, 3, 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide suitable Club Success Plan examples • Offer specific help to clubs with 3 to 12 members • Identify and assign a Club Quality Chair who ensures Club Coaches are assigned early • Encourage and implement membership drives to have more members for a richer experience; participate in

⁵ 1=Club, 2=Area, 3=Division, 4=District

Strategy	Level ⁵	Tactics
Build strong relationships with ALL clubs, assess their needs, and proactively provide customized resources early in the year (continued)	4 4, 3, 2 4, 3, 2 4, 3, 2 4, 3, 2 4, 3, 2 4, 3, 2 4, 3, 2 4, 3, 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smedley Award, Talk Up Toastmasters, and Beat the Clock membership-building programs • Enlist a retention team to focus on non-renewing members to understand why members leave, and work to renew at least 20% • Adopt a Club Program (Members/strong clubs adopt a struggling club) • Reinvigorate struggling clubs by having a new demo/sample meeting • Train DEC in how to look for struggling clubs and how to support them • Provide specialized marketing plan for struggling clubs with information relevant to their local area • Train the officers of struggling clubs at Club Officer Training, specifically on membership building • Clubs below charter strength or below 13 members will be offered specific help • Offer incentives for: five DCP points by a specific date, renewing 75% of members, top performers in membership drives, recruitment incentives, base + two at renewal, Club Open Houses • Recognize achievements: DCP accomplishments, educational achievements, membership-drive participation, member recruitment
Strengthen struggling clubs (below charter strength) through targeted support based on club needs	4, 3, 2 4 4, 3, 2 4, 3, 2 4 4, 3, 2 4, 3, 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clubs below charter strength and below 13 members will be offered specific help • Identify and assign a Club Quality Chair for the District who ensures Club Coaches are assigned at the beginning of the year or as early as possible • “Adopt a Club Program” (Experienced members/strong clubs adopt a struggling club) • Reinvigorate struggling clubs by having a quality demo/sample meeting • Train DEC on how to look for struggling clubs and how to react • Provide specialized marketing plans for struggling clubs with information relevant to their local area • Train the officers of struggling clubs at Club Officer Training, specifically on membership building
ABCD Club Analysis (see below)	4 4 4 4, 3, 2 3, 2 4, 3, 2 4, 3, 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Categorize clubs as ABCD at the beginning of the year and revisit after renewals • Trio meets with Area and Division Directors to review “C” clubs to create a plan to move them to “B”, support them, and create accountability • Assign Club Coaches to “D” clubs which are below 13 members; set up a support system to “D” clubs that are not eligible for Club Coaches. Create specialized efforts designed to meet their specific challenges to achieve Distinguished status • Provide training to help the club leaders meet those challenges. Maintain communication with coaches, Division and Area Directors, club officers • Area and Division Directors analyze “B” clubs and support them accordingly to help them move to “A” • Recognize A clubs at Division and District events, in newsletters, and on social media • Find ways to recognize success in all clubs at public events

ABCD Club Analysis comes from analyzing five-year trends of the club performance:

- A = Always President’s Distinguished
- B = Distinguished or Select
- C = Distinguished or not (going up and down)
- D = Never Distinguished

⁵ 1=Club, 2=Area, 3=Division, 4=District

Club Excellence Tactics Narrative

- ▶ Clubs will be more successful by having strong Club Coaches who are integrated with the process of the club early. Create a cohesive unit between the club officers and all the support members to build strong rapport and trust.
- ▶ Successful Districts track DCP throughout the year and not just towards the end of the program year. They publicly recognize clubs that are achieving Distinguished status as an inspiration and motivation for other clubs. They often create incentives for early achievement of DCP goals, for submitting their Club Success Plan to the District, and for completing Moments of Truth—all with the focus of increasing club excellence and member engagement.
- ▶ Moments of Truth, the Club Success Plan, and the Distinguished Club Program are essential for all clubs to utilize and reference when creating a road map for success. Measurable guidelines within these three tools provide a holistic, focused approach. Clubs that adhere to and utilize these three tools have healthier and more vibrant and sustainable clubs.
- ▶ By identifying areas for club improvement in the first quarter of the year, a customized improvement plan can be created to meet that specific club's needs. Struggling clubs, especially, benefit from assigning resources early in the year. By providing resources to help clubs build membership and encouraging clubs to have more members for a richer experience, new and existing members will benefit from diverse perspectives. It will be easier to fill meeting roles, leading to an engaging experience.
- ▶ The strengthening of struggling clubs requires time and efforts. Districts must assign resources early in the year to assist them in achieving charter strength.

THE LEADER

Appendix 1 – The Leader Journey

The following picture shows how we develop as leaders. Always keep in mind that Toastmasters is an educational organization, and that we want all our members and all our leaders to keep on learning and developing across all that we do. The development of the District Success Plan and its enactment is another opportunity for us to learn and grow.



Appendix 2 – Motivation

Why use these strategies and tactics?

Learn proven success strategies	These strategies and tactics will result in increased effectiveness for you and your team. The combined experience of successful Districts worldwide is made easily available to you. These strategies allow you to focus on leading without having to lose time finding solutions to known challenges.
Make successful choices	These strategies and tactics have been successful globally. You have them at your fingertips. Choose those that best suit your District. Implementation of these strategies will increase the number and quality of your clubs.
Simplify planning – move to action	These strategies and tactics will help streamline the planning phase for your teams. You'll be able to get them focused on taking action. As you make progress toward your goals, member satisfaction will increase. As membership grows, so do District resources, which can be used to inspire and motivate members.
Boost confidence and results	These proven strategies and tactics help remove any fear or uncertainty about trying something new. Successful District leaders around the globe have achieved and even exceeded their goals using these strategies and tactics.

Why are we doing this?

Each District can fulfill the District mission and achieve excellence. Leaders achieve results for their Districts by prioritizing the needs of their members and fellow District leaders. However, there is considerable variation in the results achieved by Districts. It is important to understand why, and to provide support to all District leaders to be successful. We want to provide you with some practical tools that will enhance your performance.

There are many examples of successful strategies across Districts that can provide District leaders with proven tactics to help them be successful. Rather than each District leader having to seek out those best practices, we have undertaken research to identify and collate successful strategies and tactics that provide a range of options that District leaders can apply to their circumstances and member needs.

District strategies will:

- ▶ Help you to plan the future and attain your goals for District success
- ▶ Enable you to reach mutual understanding among the District leaders so they remain focused on the action plans to reach the overall goals
- ▶ Assist you in your efforts to develop passion, enthusiasm, and confidence among your District team members

How does it help me as a District leader?

- ▶ Serving as a District leader provides you a great opportunity to serve the members of your District while developing your own leadership skills through new insights and experiences. To serve the needs of members, successful District leaders adapt and are willing to adjust their direction when needed.
- ▶ Operating in an international organization environment, that is constantly changing, presents numerous challenges in your role while developing those around you. We have provided 26 strategies for your consideration. Selecting a limited number of strategies to focus on has proven to be most successful.
- ▶ Working with your team members and leaders from other Districts, can be effective, easy, and fun.
- ▶ Learning to apply strategic thinking will help you professionally and personally and will enable you to become more confident and successful in reaching your goals.

How will the strategies and tactics benefit the members and the District?

- ▶ Enhanced long-term development and sustainability:
 - Successful Districts build on a clear vision and long-term strategies. Recognizing that District leaders serve in each role for 12 months, we are encouraging a strategic approach and having shared goals to promote greater teamwork and continuity without constraining innovation.
- ▶ Increased mutual understanding and critical thinking:
 - District leaders will encounter several common issues to various degrees. What may be a problem for one District is not a problem for others. By grouping the strategies by topic, we sought to help District leaders quickly identify the areas where support and creativity is needed to address specific opportunities and to provide practical solutions that have been successful elsewhere.
- ▶ Creating practical solutions and greater focus:
 - Proven strategies and tactics, that are adapted to local circumstances, can improve the Districts' efficiency. This enables District leaders to focus their efforts on the actions required to deliver the District mission, ensuring that each club effectively fulfills its responsibilities to its individual members.



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