

TOASTMASTER®

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JULY 2013

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**SPECIAL
MEDICAL
ISSUE**

REACH OUT TO FELLOW MEMBERS



Welcome to the 2013–2014 Toastmasters year!

A journey of a thousand miles begins with a first step, according to a wise Chinese saying. It is a new year for Toastmasters, and I know you are excited and thrilled, and will find the encouragement to excel in whatever role you will play.

At one of my recent Toastmasters meetings, our club president, Adeline Liong, said it is always good to start a new journey. This is true. But please do not rush, for the slow and steady will reach their destination faster than one

who races through the journey but then takes a long break without returning.

If you are a new member, please seek out a mentor by working with your club's vice president education. Your mentor will guide you through the

Work with your team to achieve success, and celebrate those successes to inspire and encourage additional members to join your club.

basic communication and leadership programs. If you have achieved a Competent Communicator or Competent Leader award, please continue on with the advanced communication and leadership programs.

Club officers, please conduct a membership survey to learn about your members' needs, and design programs to satisfy those needs. Always remember that members are the core of our globally inspired organization.

If you are a district officer, please take time to develop a success plan. Identify the strengths in your area, division and district, as well as which areas need improvement. Work with your team to achieve success, and celebrate those successes to inspire and encourage additional members to join your club.

Reaching out to members is an important element of club meeting success. In 1997–1998, when I was vice president education of the Bukit Batok Toastmasters club in Singapore, I regularly called all 29 members to learn about their educational needs, and I tailored our meetings to meet those needs. Three days before every meeting, I also called each member to ask for their participation in that upcoming meeting. At every one of our club meetings, a minimum of 24 members and 10 guests attended.

Let us encourage each other in this 365-day journey to realize our potential, as we continue to share the benefits and values of our organization with friends, family members and co-workers in Toastmasters, where leaders are made. **T**

JOHN LAU, DTM
International President

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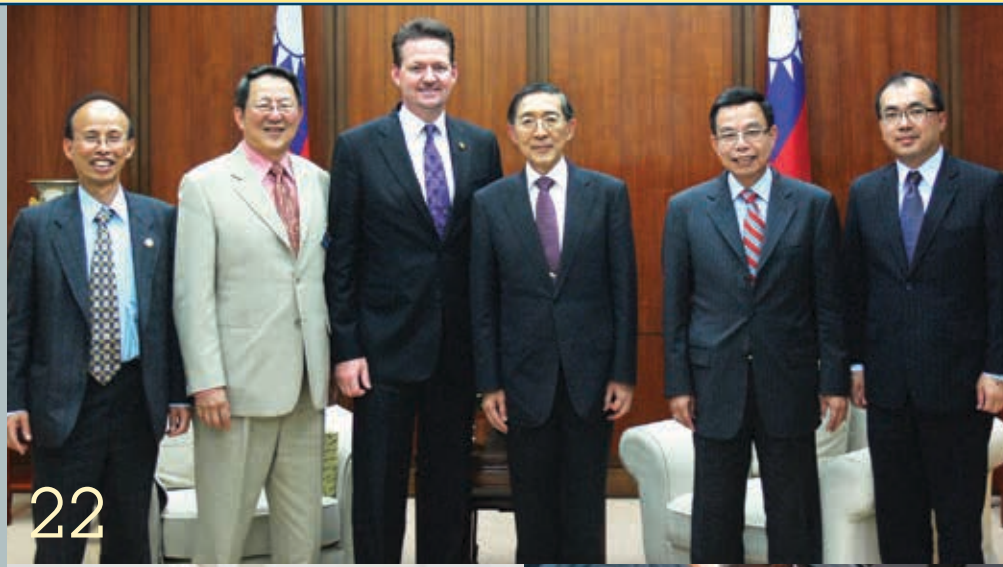
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Since 1924, Toastmasters International has been recognized as the leading organization dedicated to communication and leadership skill development. Through its worldwide network of clubs, each week Toastmasters helps more than a quarter million men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

By regularly giving speeches, gaining feedback, leading teams and guiding others to achieve their goals, leaders emerge. They learn to tell their stories. They listen and answer. They plan and lead. They give feedback—and accept it. They find their path to leadership.

Toastmasters International. Where Leaders Are Made.



"I believe that several of the speeches in the *Competent Communication* manual, or something similar, should be part of the medical school curriculum."

Amit K Ghosh, M.D., ACB

Inspiring Story

The article by Garret Garrels in the March issue moved me—and hit me to the core. I had an inferiority complex and didn't speak until I was 7. My mom entered me into a public speaking class, but it was Toastmasters that boosted my ability to think and convey messages powerfully.

It is not about winning, it's about growth. There are a lot of winners who stay in their "ponds" because winning makes them feel comfortable. However, there are a few brave ones who swim to bigger and untested waters and grow tremendously. We can rise from our circumstances, and we can turn them into victories. Garret's story gives hope to anyone who wishes to move the world with just one story.

Jox Petiza
MII Toastmasters club
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Doctors Speak Up

Caren Neile's article, "28 Surprising Uses for Your Toastmasters Skills" (May), was refreshing. I recently was in Tampa, Florida, along with a group of 62 physicians. Many of us are senior executives who were taking the Certified Physician Executive examination. The test requires physicians to role-play their approach to specific challenges in a hospital setting. These exercises were videotaped, and a group of physicians reviewed them and gave feedback. The final test for us was delivering a five-minute, videotaped presentation describing our skills and achievements, and answering questions posed by two examiners.

I found that my Toastmasters experiences with prepared speeches

and Table Topics more than prepared me for the task of giving these short presentations. In addition, my listening, mentoring and evaluation skills enabled me to guide the other members of our cohort. I was able to help them improve their speeches and feel more confident.

I believe that several of the speeches in the *Competent Communication* manual, or something similar, should be part of the medical school curriculum.

Amit K. Ghosh, M.D., ACB
Mayo Hi-Nooners club
Rochester, Minnesota

Food for Thought

The March *Toastmaster* was simply superb! I liked the article about the benefits of speaking outside your own Toastmasters club ("Beyond the Club Experience" by Patricia Fry). I am in complete agreement. I tried this approach as a speaker at meetings in two different clubs: I delivered a different speech for each club, and my confidence grew exponentially.

This year I reached the division-level speech contests. I have noticed my gradual rise every time—in learning by doing, amending errors and avoiding pitfalls. I avidly await more food for thought through this fantastic publication.

Sultan Patel, ACB
SABIC Stars club
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

Carpentry Reference

I enjoyed, and benefited from the April *Toastmaster*. I was amused by the juxtaposition of John Cadley's "Crazy As a Loon" article—which made fun of the phrase "dead as

a doornail"—with "The Power of Cultural References" article (by John Lente) on the previous page.

The phrase "dead as a doornail" comes from a cultural reference to carpentry. That phrase is fairly unknown to us moderns, who often do not know that some doornails (in sliding doors for barns) were hammered sideways, and thus not reusable later; hence, they are considered "dead."

Tom Hanrahan
Talk of the Town club
Lexington Park, Maryland

Enjoying Diversity

Like the clubs that Pierre-Andre Rheault describes in his article "Embracing Multiculturalism" (April), my club also has members from a variety of countries. Foreign travelers also stop by from time to time. By regularly attending meetings, I am able to enjoy the interesting speeches about places I have never visited.

The list of visitors from other countries is growing longer—I cannot wait to hear more stories. This is one of the advantages of joining a Toastmasters club in a cosmopolitan city.

Shino Oba, ACB, CL
Sunrise Toastmasters club
Tokyo, Japan

Do you have something to say?

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

MEDICALLY SPEAKING

How my club helps me earn patients' trust.

By Kemi Tomobi, ACG, ALB

The happiest day in my life was the day I was accepted to medical school. After an agonizing year of taking exams—including the Medical College Admission Test—second-guessing myself and engaging in sweaty health care debates with interviewers, I was positioned to take the next step. Alongside 100 other students who had donned white coats,

the pediatrics department at Strong Memorial Hospital in Rochester. I practiced my talk in front of three neighbors, and each one gave me valuable feedback. The following day, I gave my presentation and received high marks. But I thought it might be difficult to find people who are always willing to listen to me practice presentations and offer feedback.

pediatrics to do so. I took on several Toastmasters Youth Leadership coordinator opportunities, among other things, to gain experience. I also volunteered to give presentations for the neurology, psychiatry and thoracic surgery services departments at hospitals, and gradually tailored my presentations to better connect with my audiences. This allowed me to build a rapport with people outside of Toastmasters.

We may not have all the answers and all the skills we need to be successful, but we have faith in our ability to learn as we go.

Lifelong learning. With each presentation opportunity, I learn more about my topic. I also have a greater appreciation for the educational process and how people learn. I came to realize I am more effective when I am assigned a defined role. In our club meetings, we ensure everyone has a role to play, including guests.

I entered the clinical world. And I never expected Toastmasters to make such a difference in my education.

Many of us face challenges in our chosen career path. While in medical school—at the University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry in Rochester, New York—I came to doubt myself. I wondered why I was challenged when participating in a simple group discussion in class. Why did I find it so difficult to communicate, given that I knew the material? I felt isolated, and my self-esteem declined as a result.

In medical school I was expected to think on my feet in problem-based learning sessions and spontaneously contribute possible solutions. I needed to develop impeccable interviewing skills and be able to give succinct presentations on short notice.

But I knew if I practiced enough, I would gain confidence. I took this approach when I was scheduled to do a presentation about newborns for

I noticed other students struggling with public speaking and impromptu presentations. One of them heard about Toastmasters from a relative, and a few of us visited clubs. I realized the value of speech evaluations and Table Topics, so I joined Life Learners club in Rochester, New York.

From my time in Toastmasters, I have developed the following values:

The importance of having faith.

In Toastmasters, we learn by doing. We may not have all the answers and all the skills we need to be successful, but we have faith in our ability to learn as we go. More importantly, I came to understand that anesthesiology—my career choice—had everything to do with a patient's faith. You must first gain a patient's trust before you put him to sleep, because he must trust that you will wake him after surgery.

A passion for service. My goal is to work with children, but I realize I do not have to specialize in general

My opportunities did not come along all at once. I gradually gained more speaking opportunities, both in Toastmasters and outside the organization. Those experiences led to some of my articles being published. I also am close to publishing a nonfiction book. And while Toastmasters is yet to hold meetings in a hospital operating room, I hope to gain the trust of my future patients there—in that room. **T**

Kemi Tomobi, ACG, ALB, is president of Life Learners club in Rochester, New York. She hopes to one day work as an anesthesiologist.

INTERNATIONAL INTERPRETATIONS

ARE YOU SMARTPHONE SAVVY?

The popularity of smartphones continues to rise, overtaking older-style phones in worldwide sales in the first quarter of 2013. And why not? Since the inception of smartphones in the 1990s, technology has progressed, making available features such as high-resolution touch screens, cameras (including video capabilities) and GPS navigation. Smartphone usage is widespread.



For example, 129.4 million American mobile consumers own smartphones, according to recent data from comScore, an Internet analytics company. An estimated 62 percent of mobile phone owners ages 25–34 own smartphones, and the vast majority of those under the age of 44 have smartphones.

Additionally, European smartphone use grew by 30 percent last year, to 136 million users, according to comScore. In December, smartphone use in Germany, Spain, the United Kingdom, France and Italy passed the 50-percent mark for the first time.

WHAT'S THE BUZZ?

HOW TO OVERCOME THE FEAR OF PUBLIC SPEAKING

Members contributed to the discussion on the LinkedIn Official Toastmasters International Members Group:

“It helps to understand the body’s response to fear is a natural physiological one. The fear response is what the body is supposed to do to get ready to either fight or flee when a threat is perceived. One of the great things about recognizing that fear is a physiological response is that we can do some very specific things to change the response, like practicing simple focused breathing to calm our fears.”

— STEPHEN GRANT, ACS, ALB, TORONTO BUSINESS TOASTMASTERS, TORONTO, CANADA

“One of the reasons people fear public speaking is they do not practice it. As with the development of many other skills, you must work to get comfortable with it. If you only do it once a year it might make you nervous. However if you do it weekly, eventually you will learn to make the butterflies fly in formation. Just pick a speech topic you know something about.”

— CLIFF MILLIGAN, ACG, ALB, BLUES EXPRESSION CLUB, ROCHESTER, NEW YORK

SNAPSHOT



Liam Doherty (left), a member of the Vancouver Mandarin Learners club in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, volunteers to give a Table Topics speech in Mandarin. The club is open to anyone who speaks Mandarin at an intermediate or advanced level; however, most of its members speak English, French, Korean or another non-Chinese language.

BOTTOM LINE

Cultural Protocol Do you have ideas for the International Interpretations section (above)? Email us at magazine@toastmasters.org and share the customs, common gestures or idiomatic phrases of your culture.

Interesting Images Do you have unique photos for “Snapshot” (above)? Send your photo (at least 1 megabyte) to photos@toastmasters.org. There is no need to feature the *Toastmaster*.

Convention Buzz Be sure to follow, join and “like” Toastmasters on social networking sites to be up to date on convention announcements. www.toastmasters.org/socialnetworking

CLUB SURVIVAL TIP

EVALUATING YOUR DUTIES

The role of the speech evaluator comes with many responsibilities. After all, if an evaluation is vague it will not be helpful to the speaker. Consider these points when you are assessing a speech.

- **Preparation.** Approach the speaker before the big day to find out which speech he'll give, the objectives of his speech and any specific things to look for.
- **Positivity.** Evaluations should be encouraging and useful. Don't sugarcoat or ignore faults in the presentation, but do emphasize the positive aspects of the speech.
- **Specifics.** Use examples in your critique, such as, "Your introduction got our attention right away." And give concrete, actionable suggestions, such as, "Provide fewer details so you stay on the main themes."
- **Teamwork.** When in doubt about any part of a speech, ask those around you. Did they get the point when you didn't?



MEMBER MOMENT

Keli Yen, ACB, ALB, daughter of International President-Elect George Yen, is a convener for the Asia Pacific Greens Network (APGN), which supports social and environmental organizations. As a representative of a political organization, Keli often delivers impromptu speeches to congresses and the media. A division governor, Keli is a member and co-founder of Taiwan Toastmasters—a bilingual Chinese and English club in Taipei. She is a Ph.D. candidate in Fielding Graduate University's program for human and organizational systems.



Keli Yen, ACB, ALB, daughter of International President-Elect George Yen

In your job, how do you foster cooperation when political groups disagree?

Keeping communication flowing, recognizing people's emotions and clarifying what each individual really cares about helps achieve cooperation. What makes this possible is having courage to construct a relationship with an adversary, curiosity and compassion to unlock oneself from a defensive or aggressive posture, and the ability to access the creativity that comes from cooperation.

What role does culture play?

I believe culture is basically habitual ways of thinking and behaving in the world; culture is significant but it is not the fundamental part of a human being. I sense a closeness with others when I reflect on our shared opportunity to be living on this planet together, our shared struggle to navigate life's challenges, and our vulnerability to the uncertain present and future. When I associate my own sense of humanity with theirs, differences in culture feel less prominent and the love I feel for myself extends to them.

What is the most useful thing you gained from Toastmasters?

An attitude of saying "yes" to opportunities, and to step into, and rise above, my fears.

Submission Guidelines

Effective January 2013, the *Toastmaster* modified its submissions policy to only accept article queries, completed My Turn articles, Letters to the *Toastmaster* and photo submissions. To view the revised guidelines, please visit www.toastmasters.org/writerguidelines.



Marvelous Mentors

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

ADVICE FROM THE EXPERTS

IN THIS MONTHLY COLUMN, Accredited Speakers and Toastmasters World Champions of Public Speaking share lessons learned.



Accredited Speaker Johnny Campbell, DTM, is known as “The Transition Man.” He lives in Carol Stream, Illinois.

How do you give a speech that gets your audience to take action in some way?

The most important aspects are:

- 1) Be clear on what action the audience is supposed to take after hearing the speech;
- 2) Be clear on what the beliefs and values of audience members are regarding the topic of your speech.

Our beliefs and values drive our emotions and create our perceptions; therefore, in order to get an audience to take action, you must speak to their value system first and then provide them with a clear call to action at the close of the speech.

FACTS WORTH KNOWING

THE COMMON FEAR OF PUBLIC SPEAKING

Glossophobia, the fear of public speaking, is believed to be the most common type of social phobia. Some experts estimate that three out of four people have some anxiety prior to public speaking.

Glossophobia is the most common fear, according to speech-topics-help.com. It lists the top five phobias as:



1 Glossophobia: fear of public speaking



4 Achluophobia, scotophobia and myctophobia: fear of darkness



2 Necrophobia: fear of death



3 Arachnophobia: fear of spiders and other arachnids



5 Acrophobia: fear of heights

If your fear of public speaking interferes with your daily life, you might suffer from glossophobia. MayoClinic.com says that with preparation and persistence, anyone can overcome this fear. The website endorses the Toastmasters program as a means of support for people challenged by public speaking.

Did you know? A video in the Toastmasters Time-tested Communication Tips series titled “Managing Fear” shares methods for managing speaking anxiety. To watch it, visit www.toastmasters.org/videos, and click “View gallery 2.”



FROM THE ARCHIVES

Then-California Governor Ronald Reagan signs a Toastmasters Week proclamation, as International President Earl Potter (1968–69) and District 39 Governor James Hansen look on.

MENTOR MOMENT

No one has the potential to influence a member's experience like a mentor. Carmen Carr, DTM, a real estate agent and member of the Jibboom Street Toastmasters in Truckee, California, shares how she has benefited from her mentor, Earleen Norris, DTM, PID.



Carmen Carr, DTM, (left) with her mentor, Earleen Norris, DTM, PID.

Why did you join Toastmasters?

A friend invited me. As a native German speaker, with English being my second language, I wanted to broaden my vocabulary.

Tell us about your mentor. Earleen retired from a nonprofit organization as executive secretary. She also worked as a teacher, as well as for the Contra Costa County Office of Education in curriculum development. When I attended my first meeting, she welcomed me warmly and invited me to sit next to her. The following week I was the Ah-Counter under her supervision.

How does Earleen give feedback? I receive feedback from Earleen in person, and also through emails and telephone conversations. At first, she helped me write my speeches and listened when I practiced. She always believed in me, and offered encouragement when I was discouraged. She listened to me when I was frustrated. Now she guides me whenever I get stuck. My success and accomplishments within Toastmasters are a direct result of her guidance and mentorship.

What specific goals have you accomplished while under Earleen's guidance? I earned division governor of the year in 2011-12, and my DTM in four years. I could not have achieved that without her continued support.

What is your favorite thing about your mentor? She is honest and direct, and very knowledgeable and supportive. She continues to help me whenever I need it.

LEARNING ABOUT OUR PAST INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENTS



George C. Scott, DTM
Past International President
1975-76
Portland, Oregon

Q: What inspires you?

A: My family and friends are sources of inspiration.

My wife and I have been blessed with eight children and 82 grandchildren, with more to come. It is inspiring to see them face challenges and move forward in a positive way to accomplish their goals.

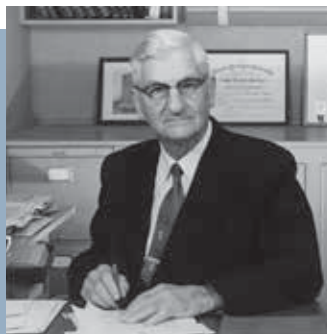
Fellow Toastmasters also inspire me. The effort they put forth to help each other is outstanding. During meetings, expressed thoughts are informative, motivational and enjoyable.

Friendships are important to me. I am inspired by friends' achievements, the support they give each other, and the sharing of laughter, tears and joy. When I need help with a project, friends come forward voluntarily to assist me. Their giving of time and effort inspires me to do the same for others.

DR. SMEDLEY SAYS

Toastmasters founder Dr. Ralph C. Smedley shared many insights worth remembering, such as:

"The greater the obstacle, the greater glory we have in overcoming it."



Dr. Ralph C. Smedley
1878-1965

A COLLABORATIVE EFFORT

Husband and wife co-chair the 2013 International Convention host district committee.

By *Toastmaster* magazine staff

Husbands and wives do many things together—take walks, shop for new furniture, dine with friends. However, the list of shared activities doesn't usually include chairing a host district committee for the Toastmasters International Convention.

But that's exactly what Jim and Sandy Vogele are doing. The longtime Toastmasters live in Cincinnati, Ohio, and are members of the Pioneer

23 years as a trial attorney for the Hamilton County (Ohio) Public Defender's Office. Sandy is a pastor at Oregonia-Harveysburg United Methodist Church in Oregonia, Ohio.

Both exhibit a quality that will come in handy during the ultra-busy convention week: a good sense of humor.

Q. Chairing the host district committee is a big job. Tell us a little about what is involved.

vention. Then there is getting a large number of volunteers to help before and during the convention. Jim and I, and every chair, must ensure that we have well-instructed volunteers in place to make this a wonderful experience for everyone attending.

Is it easier to tackle this responsibility as a couple?

Sandy: It is easier. We bounce ideas off each other. We each have our own strengths—we balance each other. Since we both have attended several International Conventions [Jim has attended 19 and Sandy has attended 24, to date], we were able to sit down together and brainstorm ideas.

Being able to share the responsibility has helped keep things in perspective. It also keeps the fun in the process.

Jim: I just follow orders.

Why did you join Toastmasters?

Jim: One of the founders of Pioneer Toastmasters invited me to join Toastmasters when I was 12 years old. I could not join right then, of course, but I have attended meetings regularly since 1965, and have been an official member since July 1966.

Toastmasters club in nearby Covington, Kentucky. When the Duke Energy Convention Center in Cincinnati was selected as the site of the 2013 convention, the couple agreed to co-chair the host district committee. The host district is District 40.

The Vogeles are past international directors. Jim, a DTM, served on the Toastmasters International Board from 1998 to 2000, and Sandy, also a DTM, served from 1990 to 1992. Jim is retiring this year after working for

A. Sandy: Some of the process involves going through the convention's events—day by day—to ensure everything is covered. The staff at Toastmasters International has been a great help with this. We had 14 chair positions on the committee to fill, and we needed to find the right people for each job. There is a big time commitment involved and we wanted to make sure the chairpersons were aware of what their time commitment would be before, during and after the con-

“Being able to share the responsibility has helped keep things in perspective. It also keeps the fun in the process.” — Sandy Vogele

Sandy and Jim Vogele, past directors on the Toastmasters International Board, are serving as host district chairs for the Toastmasters International Convention.



Sandy: I joined Forest City Toastmasters in London, Ontario, Canada, in 1980, at the suggestion of the vice president of the company where I worked. He thought I had good ideas, but I needed to be able to present them with confidence at meetings. I was very shy, and had a hard time even talking to someone on a one-to-one basis.

Jim and I met through Toastmasters. He was in Ohio, in District 40, at the time, and I was in Ontario, in District 60.

Why do you continue as members after all these years?

Jim: I love the ongoing challenge of self-improvement and the rewards of helping others overcome the fear of public speaking and develop acuity in the arts of public speaking and leadership. There have been many times through the years when I have seen people overcome specific problems (such as stuttering) through the Toastmasters program. Helping others has been a constant reward.

Sandy: It's the people. The friends that I have made around the world. It's mentoring new Toastmasters, and watching them blossom. Oh yeah, and you never stop growing. I am still learning to be a more effective communicator and leader.

How do you use communication skills in your marriage?

Jim: I say "Yes, gorgeous" a lot.

Sandy: We communicate about what has happened during our day and how we are feeling about things. I think it is important for a husband and wife to have open communication.

What stands out to you most about the International Conventions?

Jim: Making friends around the world.

Sandy: When I first started attending conventions, I would hit every workshop possible. I soon learned that you can also learn from making new friends from around the world. You may not see them every year, but when you do, it is like a family reunion.

What are the greatest challenges in preparing your district to host the convention?

Sandy: The greatest challenge is getting the word out to as many people as possible. We attend various events and have a website where people can get information about volunteering and register as a volunteer. I even posted it on my Facebook page. The trick is to use a variety of

communication methods, because people respond to different types of communication.


What are some of the things you find rewarding about the process?

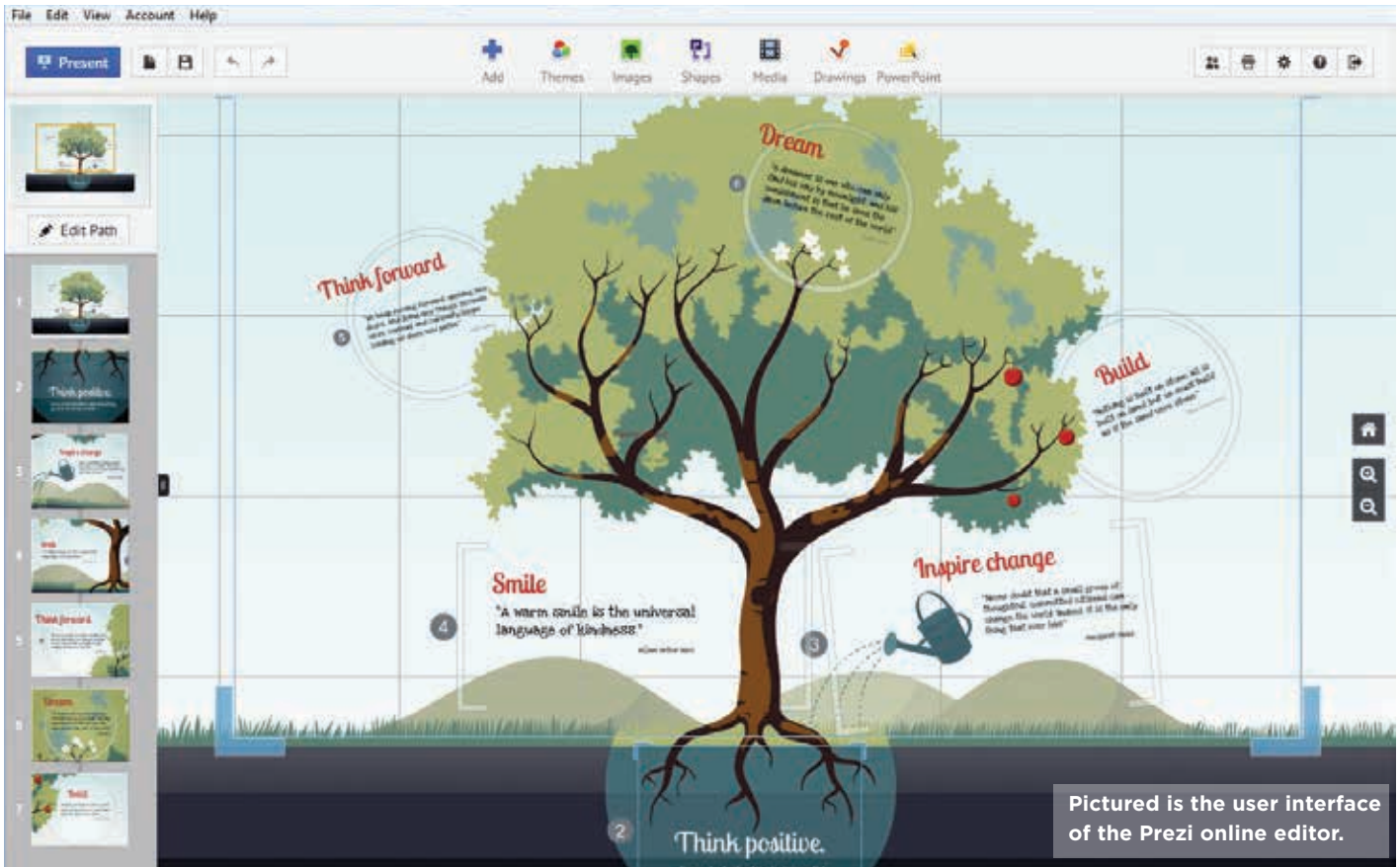
Jim: Working closely with the committee's chairs, and getting people who would not otherwise attend the convention to actively build on their Toastmasters experience and serve the organization and its members.

What other things can visitors do while in Cincinnati?

Sandy: It is a family-friendly city with a variety of things to do. There is something for everyone—the zoo, a museum center, the Aronoff Center for the Arts, a casino. Nearby is Dayton's Air Force museum and the horse park in Lexington, Kentucky. And of course, the Cincinnati Reds, our favorite baseball team, are in town that week.

Why should people attend the 2013 convention?

Jim: Toastmasters from all over the world will be learning together. And you might get lucky, like I was, and meet somebody you can marry. 



CRAVING A CHANGE FROM POWERPOINT?

Prezi offers an alternative.

By Christine Clapp, DTM

Microsoft PowerPoint has been the go-to presentation software since the early 1990s. Some estimate that 500 million people use it. But now there is worthy competition: Prezi (prezi.com).

In March, Prezi hit 20 million users, and this year it is on pace to add 1.5 million users each month, according to Peter Arvai, CEO and co-founder of Prezi. Its market share may be small, but Prezi's growth shows it is an increasingly popular alternative to PowerPoint.

Launched in 2009, Prezi is favored by many TED-style speakers, who are known for presenting bold ideas with

compelling stories in a dynamic delivery style. Angelie Agarwal, the founder and head trainer at Learn Prezi (learnprezi.com), recommends Prezi for people who are craving a change and want to do presentations in a drastically different way from what is possible with PowerPoint or Keynote, the PowerPoint-like software offered by Apple.

According to the Prezi website, the cloud-based presentation software has a "zoomable canvas [that] makes it fun to explore ideas and the connections between them."

Christina Hoyer, a Copenhagen-based presentation-skills trainer and the co-founder of Imprezzing (imprezzing.com),

points out that zooming makes Prezi special. She explains, "Prezi is fun to work with and you can make beautiful designs with a few simple text elements and basic images," she says. "Prezi encourages you to do things in a simple and elegant way, but not necessarily a linear way."

As with any new technology, there is a debate about the utility of Prezi. Let's explore the advantages and disadvantages of this new presentation software. While no software is right for every speaker and situation, knowing more about Prezi will help you make the best decision the next time you are considering using such presentation tools.

Advantages

1 Showing ideas, connections and the big picture. Among presentation software, Prezi is most conducive to showing the relative importance of ideas and the relationships between them. Unlike PowerPoint and Keynote, where each slide is the same size and advances one after the next, Prezi allows you to change the size of frames on a *canvas*, much like a whiteboard, and nest smaller frames within larger frames.

David Oliveira, a freelance Prezi designer who has designed presentations for TED-level speakers, emphasizes the ability of Prezi to show listeners a hierarchy in content. “In Prezi, you can enlarge a key frame but still can zoom into the less important ideas around it,” he explains. “This shows a relationship: This idea is more important than these others.”

Prezi is unique in the way it enables you to show how details are connected without losing sight of the larger context. “In PowerPoint, they [the listeners] never get the big picture,” says Agarwal, the trainer.

2 Easy integration of images and video. Prezi makes it easy to incorporate images and videos from the Internet or your own files. And because the software is web-based, speakers need not worry about the file size of their presentation. (However, there is a way to export a Portable Prezi that does not require an Internet connection when one is unavailable.)

3 More creativity and flexibility. Each presentation in Prezi has a canvas from which the presenter zooms into smaller frames that are connected by paths. Prezi does have canvas templates—which surely will become overused as more speakers adopt the software—but it also allows presenters to add frames and visuals to a blank canvas, or to edit existing templates.

Savvy users have created impressive visual displays using Prezi, many of which can be viewed at prezi.com/explore. Admittedly, these are a sampling of the most dynamic Prezi presentations, but they show a level of design sophistication and uniqueness that would be difficult to find in PowerPoint presentations.

4 Compatible across computers. Ever pull up slides on a computer you are using to give a presentation, only to find that it runs an older or newer version of the presentation software? If so, you know the incompatibility can cause glitches or formatting inconsistencies within your slides, making them look less polished and professional.

Because Prezi is web-based, you avoid compatibility issues. And you can easily collaborate with colleagues by granting them access to edit a presentation online. This prevents the problem of having multiple versions of a presentation floating around and the confusion that comes with different people working on different versions of the presentation.

Disadvantages

1 Difficult to manipulate initially. It can be frustrating to get the hang of Prezi editing tools. If you struggle with new technology or have to create a presentation in a short time frame, you likely will be better served sticking to PowerPoint.


But after you craft a few Prezi presentations, using the software will become more intuitive. And Hoyer boasts that the sky is the limit for advanced users.

2 Zooming can be disorienting. Prezi’s hallmark zooming function can make some audience members dizzy or feel seasick. This problem is more common with inexperienced users.

Hoyer recommends presenters avoid the sudden and long zoom and

that they use horizontal and lateral movements for the same effect. Also, avoid changing paths frequently. Spend at least 30 seconds explaining an idea before zooming to another point, Hoyer suggests.

3 Not easy to make handouts. If you are doing a technical training session that requires printed handouts, think twice about using Prezi. Unlike PowerPoint and Keynote, where listeners can follow the advance of a slide on the screen with the slides on their handout, Prezi’s visual components are not necessarily linear and, as a result, are more difficult to capture in a printed format. Handouts of Prezi presentations lose the value of zooming into ideas and details from the big-picture perspective of the canvas, which is why Prezi is best suited for audiences who listen as opposed to take notes.

4 Subscription required for private presentations. Prezi has a public license plan that is free for anyone who subscribes to the service. While this is a real advantage over paying for Microsoft Office or Apple iWork, it comes with the drawback that presentations made under this license are searchable and viewable to anyone on the Internet. To create Prezi presentations that are private, subscribers must upgrade to a license with an annual cost. Any new technology has drawbacks. But there certainly are compelling reasons for speakers to consider Prezi before automatically turning to PowerPoint for presentations. Will you be one of the 1.5 million people who are expected to try Prezi this month? 

Christine Clapp, DTM, is a member of The George Washington University Toastmasters in Washington, D.C., and president of Spoken with Authority, which develops the voice of experts who want to broaden their impact. Follow her on Twitter [@christineclapp](https://twitter.com/christineclapp).



ROOTING OUT THE PROBLEM

How to bridge the dentist-patient communication gap.

By Kristin Nickells, ACB, ALB

Have you ever left your dentist's office with a pamphlet, written instructions and an estimate for treatment costs, but still didn't have a clue about your options? You are not alone.

As someone who has worked with dentists for nearly 30 years, I see what happens when a lack of communication gets in the way of a positive patient experience. It has a negative impact on both the patient and the practice. A patient may leave a dental office if treatment is not clearly explained. In other cases, poor treatment outcomes result from a patient's inability to follow postoperative care instructions.

These types of communication breakdowns occur for a multitude

of reasons. Dentists spend a great deal of time in dental school learning the technical and medical aspects of dentistry. Business and leadership skills, and benefits or methods of good communication, are covered minimally. Dentists learn these skills outside of the classroom—often by trial and error.

Dr. Ronh Arndt, an Ohio dentist who became a dental coach (and author of the book *Killing the Practice Before It Kills You*), says dental school provided him little training in the basic communication skills required to run a business.

"I was given my degree, a slap on the back and little or no direction," Arndt says. "How do I hire people? How do I talk to a banker? How

do I negotiate a lease? These were overwhelming unknowns."

Dental patients often contribute to miscommunication. To the untrained ear, dental terminology is confusing, unintelligible jargon; we as patients do not want to appear ignorant, so we don't ask questions. We may not even know what questions to ask. We may be squeamish or fearful about knowing the details of our treatment. Or, as often is the case with older patients, we view what the dentist says as gospel.

I know this because I've spent my fair share of time in dental offices.

Working in the Trenches

Fresh out of business school, I managed a busy, multidental practice.

After many years in the “trenches,” I became a consultant and provided business services to dentists and other medical professionals. Through training programs and workshops, including the Business Bootcamp for Dentists, I teach dentists business and office management skills, as well as effective communication strategies.

Several years ago my goal was to speak and hold workshops at dental conventions, so I joined Toastmasters. As a result, not only did I develop public speaking skills, I also became a better teacher. I am willing to bet the skills you’ve learned through Toastmasters can serve you as well, creating a more satisfying experience through communication with your dentist.

When we communicate, our desire is to understand and be understood. Dentists have the same desire. Poor communication results in misunderstandings about treatment and costs. Miscommunication creates a need for clarification and reassurance. If you do not know what to expect, you are not as likely to take an active part in your treatment and care.

“An informed patient is my ideal patient because treatment becomes a team effort, and better results are nearly always achieved,” says Dr. Francis LaCouvee, a dentist in Qualicum Beach, British Columbia, Canada. “Anything less can result in disappointment, and it can fracture the trust my patient has in me.”

Good chair-side communication benefits everyone. If dentists are willing to communicate with their patients, and empathize with their concerns, patients feel better about the care they receive. My own personal experience is that a medical or dental professional who cares enough to keep me informed produces less fear and more trust.

Dentists retain patients when they inject open, effective communication

into their routine. These effective communicators spend less time hand-holding. They get fewer complaints, and their patients tend to be calmer and more trusting. Dr. Edward Logan, a Missouri dentist and the author of *Dentistry’s Business Secrets*, says, “The most common complaints among disgruntled patients are that their dentist is arrogant, lectures them or criticizes other dentists.”

The British Columbia Dental Association estimates that 70 percent of complaints received by the College of Dental Surgeons can be resolved or avoided through better dentist/patient communication. When communication is effective, your dentist has more time and energy to work on your teeth.


Two-way Communication

Improving communication with your dentist is a two-way street; it requires participation from both parties. Toastmasters teaches the art of speaking, listening, thinking and leadership. Mastering these skills, along with articulating ideas and structuring the delivery of information, forms the basis of what I impart to my clients. See if your dentist is following these basic tenets:

- ▶ **Be present;** your patient is your practice. Everything else can wait.
- ▶ **Be friendly and relaxed,** but always be professional and respectful.
- ▶ **Listen attentively.** Understanding stems from genuine interest.
- ▶ **Use understandable language and don’t over-inform**—impart only information that is relevant to your patient (you are not there to impress them with your dental knowledge).
- ▶ **Use structure to explain treatment plans** (relay processes step-by-step or explain the order of procedures).
- ▶ **Engage patients:** Encourage questions and paraphrasing.

As a patient, you can improve communications with your dentist by:

- ▶ **Listening to understand.** Focus on making the conversation as beneficial and effective as possible.
- ▶ **Asking questions to clarify.** Request visual aids (such as drawings, diagrams, hand-held or computer models) to gain a better understanding of what is being said. Paraphrase your dentist’s words to be sure of his or her meaning.
- ▶ **Being engaged.** Good communication is the start of being an active participant in your treatment. Take ownership of the conversation and the process.
- ▶ **Giving structure to the information to make sure it’s clear.** Organize the information you receive into a logical format (steps, timeline, priorities).
- ▶ **Summarizing.** Rephrase the conversation out loud. I recall one case when a patient understood she was getting a denture but failed to realize her teeth had to be extracted first! You might be surprised by how many misunderstandings are avoided when the patient summarizes the dentist’s words.

Toastmasters teaches you so many valuable and useful communication skills. Use these skills to effectively communicate with your dentist on your next visit. I guarantee it will improve your smile! 

Kristin Nickells, ACB, ALB, is a member of the Arbutus Toastmasters club in Parksville, British Columbia, Canada. She is a business, leadership and communication coach for dentists and speaks internationally for dental groups. For more information, visit nickellsilver.com.

A DOCTOR'S JOURNEY

Surgeon speaks skillfully to patients and audiences alike.

By Dave Zielinski

When Dr. Hassan Tetteh, CC, was a college student, he had a life-changing experience that still informs his work as a physician to this day. Tetteh, now a cardiovascular disease specialist and surgeon with the U.S. Navy, boarded a plane years ago for a job interview at the Johns Hopkins

Tetteh's health continued to deteriorate. The fever and headache intensified and he couldn't keep fluids down. A grave infection landed him in a hospital isolation chamber. Over several tenuous and nerve-racking days, he slowly recovered and was discharged, but with partial deafness and occasional

and perspectives that aid in his work, both as a physician and a leader. (In addition to being a doctor, Tetteh holds advanced business degrees from Harvard and Johns Hopkins University and solves global problems in the areas of medical services management, public policy and social entrepreneurship.) One skill he developed is an ability to connect with people of varied backgrounds who have a range of needs.

"Whether I'm speaking to a medical society or to high school students to try to provide insights into medicine, I can tell if I am connecting or not," Tetteh says. "There needs to be trust, you need to speak from the audience's point of view, and sometimes it has to be the right environment and time of the day."

Adjusting language to fit different audience needs is a lesson Toastmasters has imparted to Tetteh. "Many times in medicine we become comfortable talking in jargon, because that's how we communicate with our colleagues. It's not always readily apparent that we need to change our language and delivery based on the specific audiences we're speaking to," he says.

Among the highest praise Tetteh receives is when a patient tells him, "You explained that in a way that I really understood it."

University School of Medicine in Baltimore, Maryland. On the plane, he sat next to a woman who had what he calls a "very productive" cough.

Tetteh, who will present an education session at the Toastmasters International Convention in August, made it to the interview, and all went well. But upon returning home he began experiencing flu-like symptoms. Within a few days he was bedridden, his body was riddled with excruciating aches, and he was haunted by dreams of his own death.

seizures as reminders of the harrowing ordeal.

"It was my drive to become a doctor—my desire to learn how to take care of the mind, body and spirit—that I believe kept me alive in that hospital room," he writes on his website.

Meeting Audience Needs

A member of Maryland Advanced Toastmasters in Chevy Chase, Maryland, Tetteh says he first heard of Toastmasters when giving a speech in the Middle East. He was intrigued by the concept. He says that over time, Toastmasters gave him skills



Dr. Tetteh moderates a Health Policy Forum on "Achieving Total Health" in April 2009 at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.



“If you truly listen to the patient, they will tell you the diagnosis.”

Patient Interactions

Tetteh also learned in his interactions with patients that many—much like with reticent audience members—don’t ask questions for fear of appearing uneducated or foolish. “So what happens is you communicate with someone, and you believe they’ve understood the message when they nod and say okay, but that may not be the case at all,” says the doctor.

That reluctance to ask questions requires physicians to be both attentive listeners and patient communicators, Tetteh says. To that end, he uses props and detailed, yet simple, explanations to help his patients understand complex medical concepts. Tetteh often uses plastic models of hearts or lungs to explain medical conditions to patients.

“I’ll demonstrate exactly what we’ll do during a bypass, for example, or take the models apart to show them heart chambers or valves,” he says. Among the highest praise he receives, Tetteh says, is when a patient tells him, “You explained that in a way that I really understood it. I now understand what this surgery is going to be about because I can visualize it.”

The Power of Listening

One of the most undervalued traits of effective physicians—and of skilled leaders in general—is the

willingness and ability to listen well, notes Tetteh. Toastmasters helps with this, he says, because it enables members to listen in different and more effective ways, particularly when you are assigned to roles like grammarian or timer.

One of his medical school professors made a statement that sticks with Tetteh to this day. “He said, ‘If you truly listen to the patient, they will tell you the diagnosis.’ As I became more mature in medicine, I realized what he was getting at ... When you really listen attentively, and ask good questions of patients, they give you a very good sense of the diagnosis. Then you do the tests, and other things, to confirm your suspicions.”

Turning the Tables: Patient-to-Doctor Communication

While much of the onus for clear communication falls on doctors, Tetteh believes it’s a two-way street, and there are things patients can do to communicate more effectively with their physicians. One is to come prepared to ask specific questions, whether the questions come from the patient or a relative or friend accompanying him or her for that purpose.

“There is anxiety when a patient is sitting on the hot seat. The doctor might be telling him uncomfortable or bad news, and the patient may not be in the emotional state to ask the right questions,” he says. “I always encourage people to ask questions to clarify what’s being said if they don’t understand.”

It’s common today for patients to conduct Internet searches for medical information before meeting with a doctor, Tetteh says. While he cautions about using only reputable medical

sources, he also doesn’t discourage the practice. “There is a lot of misinformation out there, but if people can find basic information, it can sometimes empower them to ask better questions of their doctors.”

The Need for Clear Communication

Tetteh says his time in Toastmasters, as well as his experiences on the job and around the world, underscore the value of clear and consistent communication. When spending time last year as a trauma surgeon for U.S. military troops in Afghanistan, he came away impressed by something a Marine commander said about his own troops. The commander said a Marine had to do three things well to succeed: Move well, shoot well, and communicate well.

“He said the Marines move and shoot better than anyone in the world, but their communication sometimes isn’t what it could be—and they’re constantly working on improving that,” says Tetteh. “It highlighted for me that communication is the one thing that, if done ineffectively, leads to the most problems in life, be it professionally, personally or otherwise.” **T**

Dr. Tetteh will present an education session on August 23 at the 2013 International Convention. The session is titled “Exceeding Expectations: How to Create an Enduring Personal Legend.” For information about the convention, and the 11 education sessions that will be presented, visit www.toastmasters.org/Convention.

Dave Zielinski is a freelance writer and a frequent contributor to the *Toastmaster*.

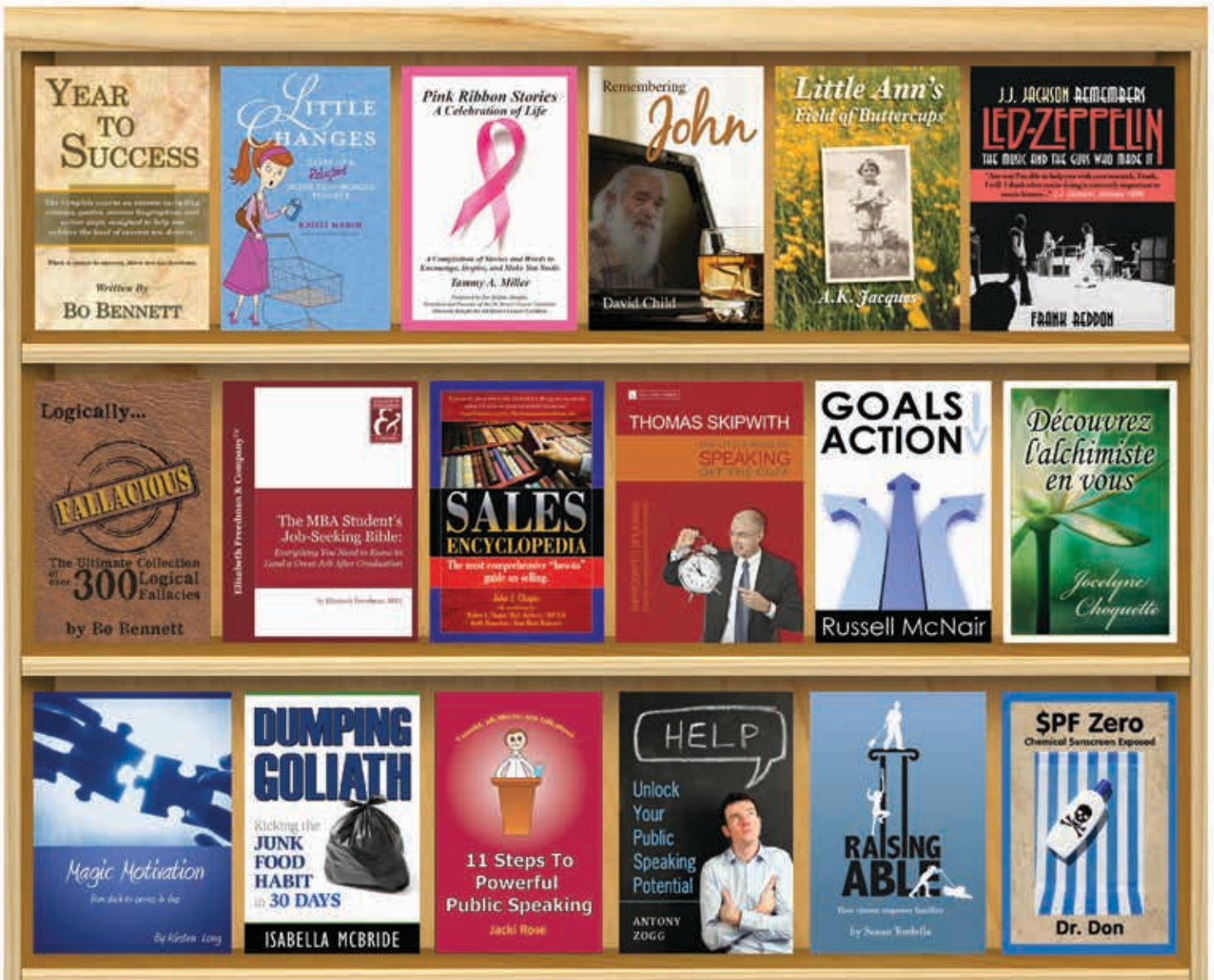
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HEALING METHODS

How nurses communicate to deliver good care.

By Lynn MacKaben Brown

If work could be classified by the amount of time spent performing a certain duty, nursing would be considered a career in communication. Nurses must continually use oral and written communication. They must also have excellent listening skills and be good interpreters of body language, often simultaneously. Their communications must be clear, concise, current, correct, complete and confidential.

Within one work shift, a nurse may communicate with patients, families, doctors, diagnostic services teams, therapists, government workers and other nurses. Nursing teachers communicate with students, faculty and parents. Nursing administrators write evaluations and communicate with non-nursing administrators.

I learned the importance of all these components while working in Indiana as a nurse in the fields of emergency nursing and gerontology, as well as a nursing instructor and a director of nursing.

Classroom Communication

While working as an instructor, I planned a class lesson to make a point about written medical communication. During class one afternoon, I handed a subpoena to a nursing student. For a moment, I thought he would faint.

The students were buzzing about the incident. I called the class to order and announced, “The subpoena is not real—it is to make a point. Several of you have protested my policy of making proper use of English

account for 10 percent of your grade. I selected one of you to serve as an example of why this is important. We will set up a mock trial.”

A judge, jury, bailiff, recorder and opposing lawyers were selected. The setting was 10 years from now. The case depended primarily upon the defendant’s verbal testimony as compared to the notes he previously wrote while employed as a nurse. During the trial, the prosecutor repeatedly slammed the defendant on inconsistencies in his memory as compared to the entries he wrote on the chart that were recorded at the time of the incident.

The point was: Writing down accurate, clear notes is crucial for a nurse. The stakes are too high to do anything less than record accurate information.

The trial verdict was unanimous: The defendant was guilty. Students learned the lesson; their written communications improved as a result of the mock trial I conducted to illustrate my point.

Reassuring Patients

In reality, it is crucial in a medical setting to restrict access to written medical communications. However, some years ago, the fashion was to hang a nurse's notes at the foot of a patient's bed, because patients were claiming their right to read them.

One day I was called to the room of a patient who had suffered a heart attack earlier that day. I found him crawling over the side rails of the bed, determined to go home. He

It was not until I translated the information that [the patient] grudgingly agreed to stay in the hospital.

had read his chart and, unable to interpret the combination of English and Latin words and abbreviations, he misread the message as an insult expressed about him. He was so upset that he wanted to leave. It was not until I translated the information that he grudgingly agreed to stay in the hospital.

Nurses also teach patients about their conditions and talk them through procedures. "We must be compassionate, reassuring and diplomatic, but truthful," says Pam Mills, an RN (registered nurse) in Winona Lake, Indiana. "Sometimes we deal with heart-wrenching decisions, such as when a resident's declining health requires him to move to a skilled nursing care unit. If our communication is poor, it colors the reputation of the entire facility."

Critical Exchanges of Information

Communication with a patient is vital to the success of his or her treatment,

and so is communication with a patient's family. For example, families need to be instructed on how to properly fill out certain paperwork—if they don't do it correctly, it can take longer for a medical facility to get the information or records they need regarding the patient.

The increasing role of technology often helps produce a faster flow of information, which results in better service for the patient. "The computer is great. It allows me to batch things," says Mills. "But I love the fax machine most. If a doctor's order is illegible, I just fax it over to his nurse. Neither of us wastes time on the telephone."

Directing the nursing staff also requires complete and crystal-clear

communication. A patient's life could depend upon it. As director of nursing, you must catch and hold the staff's attention to be an effective leader.

In that role, I once devised a new evaluation form. When I introduced it, I could simply have said, "This is the new evaluation form." But I would have lost the attention of my staff. Instead, I said, "You each have a copy of the new fact-based evaluation form. The amount of your next raise is tied directly to your score. The higher the overall score, the higher your raise. You now control the score. You control your raise. Let me show you how it works."

I held their undivided attention for more than an hour.

Nonverbal Communication Speaks Volumes

Actively interpreting the nonverbal communication of patients is a major way to gather data to provide better


service to patients. For instance, patients who use the call button in excess are usually exhibiting anxiety, fear, loneliness or boredom.

One way that nurses themselves use nonverbal communication is by providing comfort through a back rub. It can reassure a patient, decrease stress, allay pain and encourage bonding between the nurse and patient.

When nurses are not writing, listening or providing comfort, they are speaking. As one work shift transitions into another, nurses must relay important information to a new team of medical professionals. They update other nurses on the condition of every patient and inform doctors of changes in patients' conditions. The way they relay information indicates whether or not action is required.

Another crucial task that nurses take on is ensuring clear communication between a doctor and a patient. Often, patients do not understand what the doctor has told them, possibly because the information being relayed is complex or the physician speaks with a strong accent.

An excellent surgeon I worked with tried to use humor to reassure his patients. Typically, his efforts made the patients laugh and relax. However, if his attempt at levity had failed, I could step in to smooth over the situation.

That's what nurses do. We are the guardians of health care communications. 

Lynn MacKaben Brown, a freelance writer, is a member of the Warsaw Noon Club in Warsaw, Indiana. In her first career, as a nurse, she worked as a clinician, a nursing instructor and a director of nursing. Her novel, *Furs and Fevers*, is represented by the Marianne Strong Literary Agency in New York. For more information, visit lynnbrownwriter.com.

POISE IN POLITICS

Diplomats hone their language skills in Taipei club.

By Wei-ling Chen

In 2003, a group of diplomats established a Toastmasters club in Taiwan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA). The group included Jing-yen Liu, Alex Fan and Charles Teng, who all worked in the government agency. Liu, the only one of the group who had previously been

in Japan, I had never given a speech in English before I joined Toastmasters, not to mention before being stationed in the U.S.," he says. "Joining Toastmasters has helped me realize my 'American dream' and given a new meaning to my diplomatic career." He is now deputy director-general of the

Republic of China (ROC) diplomats. The club is open to anyone interested in improving his or her communication and leadership skills. Ted Way, CC, joined the club when he was an alternative military serviceman working in MOFA's department of protocol from 2011 to 2012. (Men in the ROC are required to serve in the military for one year, but they can also apply for alternative military service by working in different government branches based on their professions.)

"Prior to Toastmasters, I had had some public speaking experience at conferences and workshops during graduate school," says Way. "However, Toastmasters helped me improve greatly through its focus on specific aspects of the speech. When I went back to [work at] Microsoft after my military service, I continued to speak at various functions, and I noticed that the Toastmasters experience really improved my speaking."

The majority of diplomats follow a cyclical career pattern—three years at home, and six years abroad. For a while, the club went into hibernation after the founders were posted abroad. Pierre Chen, ACG, a key club leader in those early years, says the club's membership once went from more than 20 to less than five. "Alex Fan and the others would take turns saying jokes to keep the meetings going," he recalls.

Our goal is to have all the new diplomats whom MOFA recruits join the club so they can be equipped with communication and leadership skills.

a Toastmaster, believed the various diplomats in MOFA would benefit from Toastmasters training.

He was right. As a member of the MOFA Toastmasters club myself, I see so many members improve themselves professionally with the help of Toastmasters. Communication skills are vital to diplomats; they often speak in public, representing their country at different functions. In addition, MOFA Toastmasters members boost their foreign-language proficiency.

Diplomats who master English have a great advantage, because it is the primary language used in the profession. Bruce Chen improved his English skills by practicing the language over and over in club meetings. "Being a diplomat long stationed

Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Boston, Massachusetts.

A couple of years after the club's first president, Alex Fan, ACB, helped to establish MOFA Toastmasters, his career took him to the U.S., and he is now deputy director-general of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in New York City.

"Toastmasters helps me learn English more attentively," says Fan. "Even for native English speakers, Toastmasters is useful in helping people express themselves clearly."

MOFA Open to All

MOFA Toastmasters, located in Taipei—the capital of Taiwan—regularly draws about 25 people to club meetings. Membership is not exclusive to



(Clockwise from left:) Taiwan Minister of Foreign Affairs David Lin; Gordon Brooks (left) and diplomat Elsa Chen regularly attend meetings of the MOFA (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) Toastmasters club in Taipei; (from left to right): Michelle Fan, Wei-ling Chen and Chin Feng at a recent MOFA club meeting; (from left to right): Y.S. Liao, 2012-2013 District 67 Governor; George Yen, Toastmasters International President-Elect; Daniel Rex, Toastmasters Executive Director; Taiwan Minister of Foreign Affairs David Lin; Rong-chuan Wu, Director General of the NTO International Affairs Department at MOFA; Louis K.H. Liou, Section Chief of the NGO International Affairs Department at MOFA.



TAIWAN MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS PRAISES TOASTMASTERS

By Paul Sterman



Toastmasters Executive Director Daniel Rex (left) speaks with Taiwan Minister of Foreign Affairs David Lin in April.

In 1992, David Y.L. Lin was appointed to a prestigious position in the Republic of China (Taiwan) government: deputy director-general of the Department of European Affairs in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He knew he would be speaking in public often, and he wanted to hone his skills. So he joined the Taipei Toastmasters club.

Lin went on to become Taiwan's Minister of Foreign Affairs last September. He says his experience in Toastmasters has been very helpful in his career.

"In my diplomatic career of more than 30 years, I have had countless opportunities to introduce my country and our foreign policy to a wide variety of audiences," Minister Lin writes in an email interview. "Since I assumed the [Minister of Foreign Affairs] position, speech delivery has become a part of my daily routine.

"The experiences and skills I acquired in the Taipei Toastmasters club enabled me to quickly structure a speech in an organized and persuasive way, making my work more efficient."

Lin says the most important qualities to possess in his type of work are "honesty, sincerity and good communication skills."

"The first two are held as the highest guiding principles in my work, and the third one is instrumental in creating a positive working environment."

Taipei Toastmasters is the oldest club in Taiwan—it was founded in 1958. Lin says many things impressed him about the club's meetings, including the speech evaluations.

"I personally benefited very much from my evaluators' insights and suggestions," he says. "The Table Topics session in meetings was also extremely helpful, due to the fact that it trained us to organize our thoughts in a very short period of time."

Before becoming the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lin served in many other high-ranking positions, including as secretary of the Republic of China Embassy in South Africa; director-general of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Houston, Texas; and director-general of the Department of International Organizations in Taiwan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Lin says he is pleased that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) has its own Toastmasters club—MOFA Toastmasters.

"I am sure that, just as I benefited from the Taipei Toastmasters club, the other diplomats will improve their public speaking skills through the MOFA Toastmasters club."

In April, Lin met with Toastmasters Executive Director Daniel Rex and Toastmasters International President-Elect George Yen, DTM, in Taipei. The Toastmasters community in Taiwan had eagerly anticipated the meeting. Yen, a Taipei resident, says it was a positive discussion, noting that Minister Lin talked about how much Toastmasters had contributed to his career.

Because of the connection to Toastmasters that all three men share, Yen adds, there was "an automatic bond between us."

Paul Sterman is senior editor of the *Toastmaster* magazine.

Fortunately, with the help of a few sponsors, such as Y. S. Liao, DTM, and L.J. Lamb, DTM, the club came to life again.


Receiving Assistance

Toastmasters from other clubs have always come to our aid when many

and to make sure we had enough evaluators. Gordon Brooks, ATMB, CL, a freelance photographer, has to my memory not missed any of our meetings and is always ready to help.

L.J. Lamb served as the language evaluator at my first Toastmasters meeting, helping members with their

communication and leadership skills, which are vital to diplomacy. Bruce Chen, Alex Fan, Pierre Chen and Anthony Chao, all of them senior diplomats and Toastmasters, already kicked off the process last year by holding meetings for newly recruited diplomats, six of whom signed up for Toastmasters membership.

So our goal this year is “membership for all the newly recruited diplomats.” With the support of Taiwan Minister of Foreign Affairs David Y.L. Lin, himself once a Toastmaster, the goal might not sound so far-fetched. 

“Joining Toastmasters has helped me realize my ‘American dream’ and given a new meaning to my diplomatic career.”

— Bruce Chen, deputy director-general of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Boston, Massachusetts

of the diplomats are abroad and club membership is low. For example, Michelle Fan, CC, ALB, an interpreter at MOFA who belongs to another club in Taipei, is always happy to take on a meeting role in a pinch. Rosa Teng, a retired English teacher who attends five Toastmasters meetings a week, called me every week to let me know how many guests were coming

English skills. He was one of the reasons I joined the club, because he was so thorough. Without the help of many dedicated Toastmasters our club would not have been able to go as far as we have.

Our long-term goal is to have all the new diplomats whom MOFA recruits every year join the club so they can be equipped with

Wei-ling Chen is a member of MOFA Toastmasters in Taipei, Taiwan, and served as its 2012–2013 club president. She works at the Public Diplomacy Coordination Council in Taiwan’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

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THE 5 HABITS OF EFFECTIVE ONLINE LEADERS

How to influence your virtual audience.

By Lewis Howes, CC

A very successful mentor once gave me a simple test to determine if I was a leader. He said, “If you want to know if you’re a leader, just look and see if you have any followers.”

Sounds pretty simple right? Look to see if *you* have anyone following in your footsteps.

As a former professional athlete I’ve seen the power of leadership. I’ve seen coaches and athletes inspire others by standing up and taking risks despite overwhelming odds. And I’ve learned that the same principles that lead teams to victory on the field also work in the marketplace.

While playing in the Arena Football League, I suffered a career-ending injury. I was left with two options: to spend my days wondering what my career could have been if I didn’t get injured, or to create a new life.

I chose to create a new life. Not only did I find a new passion in entrepreneurship, but I also created a seven-figure business in teaching entrepreneurs how to use platforms, such as LinkedIn and webinars, to become leaders in their own industries.

The principles of leadership will never change. Vision, discipline, courage and commitment are as relevant

today as they were when people used swords to fight wars. Leadership is still leadership.

Here are five habits to practice if you want to be an online leader.

1 Do great things. Leaders do not focus on maintaining the status quo. They focus on using their vision and courage to do great things.

It takes big plays to win a football game, and it takes bold moves to advance a business in a competitive marketplace. I don’t know anyone who achieves worthwhile success by playing it safe.

So take risks—even if that means you’ll make some mistakes along the way. Each mistake brings with it a valuable lesson that will make you stronger. Stop waiting for someone to give you permission to be bold, and act on that idea that’s been on your “I’ll do this one day” list.

Remember, the digital world is hungry for “share-worthy” stories, and not everyone is willing to do something worth talking about. Develop a reputation for taking action in untested waters. That’s how you pull ahead of your competition and build a strong online following.

Stop waiting for someone to give you permission to be bold, and act on that idea that’s been on your “I’ll do this one day” list.

2 Develop a reputation for over-delivery. Besides having followers, the most important online currency for any leader is his or her reputation. When you have a reputation for over-delivery, it means your online visitors, subscribers or clients constantly feel they’re the ones getting the better end of the deal.

Therefore, you must be committed to producing quality content and be willing to give away more than what you get in return. And in order to produce quality content, you must first understand your target market and identify what it is that your audience finds valuable. How else can you over-deliver value if you don’t know what it is in the first place? Too many entrepreneurs fail to understand their audience and look to their own opinions to create “value.”

Give people more of what they want and expect. Once you do this, you will get a much larger return on your investment in marketing since people will want to spend more money on your offerings. They will also refer their friends to your site.

3 Connect offline. So you may be thinking, Lewis, I thought this article is about online leadership—how can offline connections help me grow an online reputation as a leader?

Here’s the deal: Nothing will replace the power of live interaction.

Not Facebook, not Twitter, not even video chat, which I love. That’s right, the most powerful connections are made through good old-fashioned hand-shaking, sharing coffee and meeting for lunch. Connections made in these ways produce the most opportunities.

My decision to connect with as many people as possible is how I was able to build a profitable business so quickly. I knew I needed to connect with other industry leaders—not just through emails, but also through face-to-face meetings—if I wanted to be an industry leader.

4 Promote others. Leaders understand there’s more than enough success and praise to go around. So if you see someone doing something great, let other people know about it. Not only will your words make a big impact on the person you’re praising, but

such actions boost your own image as someone who supports the endeavors of others.

But there’s a catch: Be specific and unique in your support. Don’t just retweet an article link or write “Check this out” on your Facebook wall. Tell your followers why they should pay attention to someone you recommend. It shows that you are paying attention to the person you are promoting, and it demonstrates how you respect the time of your followers.

5 Share your vision. One of the primary responsibilities of a leader is to share your vision. I’m sure there are things you’re noticing today that will affect your way of doing business tomorrow. But they won’t just affect you—they’ll affect others too. As a leader it’s your job to either warn your followers of any danger or highlight the opportunities.

And finally, I will leave you with one last piece of advice: *Surround yourself with quality people.*

As previously mentioned, there are some principles that never change. This is one of them: Who you choose to spend your time with (even in private) has a huge effect on who you are and how effective you are as a leader. Leaders can’t afford to rub shoulders with people who aren’t growing.

Follow these practical steps, and you’ll soon be an online leader. **T**

Lewis Howes, CC, is an entrepreneur and a member of the U.S. Men’s National Team for handball. Learn more about him at lewishowes.com.

REVITALIZING THE EDUCATION PROGRAM

Members step up to be part of the historic project.

By Paul Sterman

In May, Toastmasters International announced the news that the organization's education program will be revitalized. The response from members was immediate and enthusiastic. Within a week of the announcement, World Headquarters received about 2,500 applications from members wanting to participate as volunteers.

Members also expressed excitement on the organization's social media pages.

"What I like about this initiative is that the Board of Directors and

real-world skills in a globally evolving marketplace.

▶ Enhanced use of technology and online learning tools. "The enhancements to the existing program are in line with the Toastmasters mission: We empower individuals to become more effective communicators and leaders," says Toastmasters International President John Lau.

The intent of modernizing the program is to enable members to develop relevant communication and

either as a Learning Master or an Ambassador. The former group will be led by Past International President Pat Johnson. Representing the membership at large, Learning Masters will provide their perspective and experience as the program is shaped and developed. These members will work hand-in-hand with the development team, and they will be the first to try out the program as beta testers.

(The last day for Learning Master applications to be submitted was May 31.)

Ambassadors will visit other clubs and educate fellow members about the revitalized program. They will provide updates on the project and explain the program's benefits. There will be one Chief Ambassador from each district and one Ambassador for every 10 clubs within a district.

Chief Ambassadors will be selected through a nomination process. Applications for Ambassadors will open in July 2013.

There is a great deal of work to be done, but the effort will all be worthwhile when the enhanced program is unveiled next year, notes International President Lau.

"We are progressing on exciting paths into the future!" he says. 

For more information about the program, visit www.toastmasters.org/RevitalizedEducationProgram. For specific information about Ambassadors, visit the Ambassador page.

Paul Sterman is senior editor of the *Toastmaster* magazine.

"The enhancements to the existing program are in line with the Toastmasters mission: We empower individuals to become more effective communicators and leaders."

— International President John Lau

Toastmasters International staff have included representatives from all districts and clubs into the design and implementation plan," John Lesko, DTM, wrote on the LinkedIn Official Toastmasters International Members Group page. Lesko is a member of the Traveling TasteMasters club in Safford, Virginia.

This is one of the most significant Toastmasters projects in recent memory. The education program is being enhanced and updated to meet the goals mapped out in the Board of Directors' 2010 Strategic Plan. In that blueprint for the future, the Board called for a renewed focus on leadership and a modernized communication program.

While the traditional core of the education program will remain intact, the updated program will offer improvements in key areas:

- ▶ A clearer path for achieving educational awards.
- ▶ A greater emphasis on developing

leadership skills in a changing world. Members will be able to demonstrate core competencies to help them meet personal and professional goals.

Another aim is to give members online access to education materials, videos and other content. Such opportunities will help members improve their skills and their club experience. More information about the program will be forthcoming.

Sandi Richards Forman, a member of the Bethel Toastmasters club in Bethel, Connecticut, says she looks forward to the benefits technology can provide.

"I think more technology options will be a great supplement for folks who want to learn more, faster," she wrote on the LinkedIn page. "In addition, it will serve those who learn best in a variety of learning styles as well as reinforce learning that goes on at meetings."

Members are able to contribute to the revitalization process in two ways:

REACH HIGHER

Get an edge as an Accredited Speaker.

By Mary Nesfield

Are you a professional speaker? Perhaps you are enjoying some early successes but are looking for ways to advance your career. Consider applying to be an Accredited Speaker.

Toastmasters' updated, elite Accredited Speaker (AS) Program is geared toward a special breed of members who possess expert knowledge in a particular subject, combined with mastery of the spoken word. Accredited Speakers are regularly hired and paid to speak professionally by organizations and companies that value them as subject matter experts. These speakers are in demand because of their finely tuned skills and expertise.

Accredited Speaker Tammy Miller, DTM, PID, says, "Many companies are looking for speakers for conferences and training purposes. The need is for everything from soft skills (such as goal setting or motivation) to specific technical-skills training, and a lot in between. Look at your own life and identify those areas of expertise. Go with your passions and reach out to the organizations or businesses that are looking to increase or enhance their knowledge of the subject."

With the AS designation comes elevated status and potential speaking opportunities. Applicants who earn the designation will be acknowledged at a ceremonial presentation at the International Convention, and awarded an official Accredited Speaker badge and plaque. A letter of commendation from the Executive Director of Toastmasters International

will be issued, and a news release will be sent to select publications.

In addition, a Hall of Fame acknowledgement will be published in the *Toastmaster* magazine, and a photo and biography of the Accredited Speaker will be featured on the official Toastmasters Accredited Speaker webpage.

Rules and Eligibility

An applicant must:

- ▶ Be a current Toastmaster in good standing.
- ▶ Have earned one of the following education awards (or a higher designation): Able Toastmaster, Advanced Toastmaster Bronze or Advanced Communicator Bronze.

New rules require applicants to:

- ▶ Have given a minimum of 25 speaking engagements at least 20 minutes long to non-Toastmasters audiences. In addition, those audiences must consist of at least 20 people, the speeches have to be given within the past three years, and 15 of the 25 speaking engagements must be paid presentations.
- ▶ Have had five different clients of paid speaking engagements submit recommendations on the official Accredited Speaker Program Recommendation Form.
- ▶ Have a video of one presentation filmed before a live audience.

Evaluation Process

Candidates are then evaluated in two levels. In Level 1, applications are reviewed for completeness, and video submissions from applicants

are reviewed by a panel of judges. An applicant who a majority of judges agree demonstrates high-caliber presentation skills is advanced to the next level.

Applicants who pass Level 1 progress to Level 2, where they are invited to present before a live audience, including a panel of judges, at the International Convention. Applicants whose live presentations meet the required level of professionalism (as agreed upon by a majority of judges) are awarded the prestigious Accredited Speaker designation.

Toastmasters' Accredited Speakers are truly an elite group. Since the program's inception in 1981, less than 20 percent of all applicants have achieved this level of accreditation. While the Accredited Speaker process is a demanding one, it will enable you to grow and to improve your skills.

"The advice I would give to people who are trying to pass this would be to know your strengths, relax, and have fun with it," Miller says. "You have to be doing this for yourself and understand that it is the process and experience that will make you stronger, and a better speaker." **T**

Level 1 applications are accepted January 1 through February 1. For more information about the newly revised AS Program, please visit www.toastmasters.org/AccreditedSpeakerProgram.

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



ME AND MY DOCTOR

God and man coexist in the examining room.

By John Cadley

Ah yes, the doctor-patient relationship. In my day it was, “I’m God and you’re not so shut up and do what I tell you.” I liked that. There was a certain reassurance in being treated by God. In fact, I miss it. Who wants to ask a supposed expert about one’s health and hear, “I don’t know.” Sure it’s honest. I don’t want honesty. I want to know I’m not going to die, and

Yeats. With a name like that, how bad could it be? Heart attack, on the other hand, slaps you in the face with three, rock-hard syllables that scream, *Get this guy to the hospital before he flatlines!* No, thank you.

And I don’t want a chatty, cheery doctor wanting to be my best friend. When I’m gasping for air on a treadmill with wires hooked to my chest and a large plastic breathing

Then there’s the doctor’s perspective. These days, physicians are trained to look for “emotional cues” that might help them to see beyond what the patient is actually saying. For instance, if the patient introduces himself as Napoleon Bonaparte, the provider might assume that the problem goes beyond an upper respiratory infection. Doctors are also taught that if they sit down upon entering the room, the patient feels he or she has more time for them. Unfortunately, this requires the doctor to sit down—and get up—about 1,200 times a day, resulting in the doctor needing a doctor.

Sitting or standing, the doctor’s first question is always, “What seems to be the problem?” Notice that word *seems*. It’s another way of saying, “What do you think is wrong with you, untrained and inexperienced as you are?” If something really is wrong, the doctor is also trained to be mindful of nonverbal communications that may alarm the patient further. Fainting, screaming and slowly backing out of the room are some of the more obvious gestures to be avoided.

In the end, I know my doc isn’t God—not when I see him at the hardware store asking how to change the bag on his lawn mower. But for the good of my health I’m still going to believe he is. Call it the placebo effect. **T**

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

Just the thought of going to the doctor transforms me into a limpid pool of indecision.

“I don’t know” isn’t the answer I’m looking for. It reminds me that I’m dealing with an imperfect, fallible human being—i.e., someone not unlike myself. And I’m the last person I’d want treating me. Give me an All-Knowing, All-Powerful Being any day—even if I have to pay extra for going “out of network.”

I realize I’m in the minority. We are in the age of second opinions, patients’ rights and informed health care consumers. People want to understand what the doctor is telling them. And doctors oblige by giving them the unvarnished truth, which, if it’s bad enough, causes the patient to freak out, creating even more medical problems, like anxiety, high blood pressure, insomnia and chronic nail-biting. Who needs that?

If I’m having a heart attack I would much prefer to hear the esoteric phrase “myocardial infarction.” It’s rhythmic, mellifluous, lyrical—like it could have come from a poem by

apparatus jammed into my mouth for my annual stress test, that’s not the time for my doctor to ask, “So how do you writers come up with all those ideas, anyway?”

Neither do I intend to spend two hours on the WebMD website so I can match wits with my general practitioner on the finer points of a hiatal hernia. He’s standing there in his white coat with his stethoscope, surrounded by diplomas and certifications representing years of training, and I’m sitting on a sheet of crinkly paper in my underwear. How seriously do you think he’s going to take me?

Just the thought of going to the doctor transforms me into a limpid pool of indecision. Is it really necessary? If I don’t call and it is serious, I could die. On the other hand, if I do go I could actually be told I’m going to die. Which is worse, worrying or knowing? Even if I go and it’s nothing, I’m still going to die—of embarrassment from being a pathetic hypochondriac.

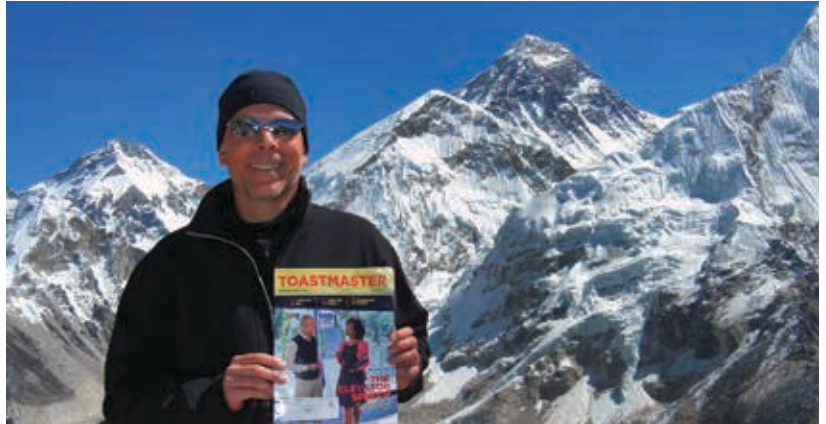
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Donald Herrera from Anaheim, California, takes in the sights of Essaouira, Morocco.



Carl Bergeron from Quebec City, Quebec, Canada, stands on top of Mount Kala Patthar in the Himalayan region of Nepal. Behind him is Mount Everest.



Mandy Ong from Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, spends time in Venice, Italy.



Michele Lewis from Columbia, South Carolina, enjoys the rushing water and spectacular views of Niagara Falls in Canada.



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