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a memorable speech.

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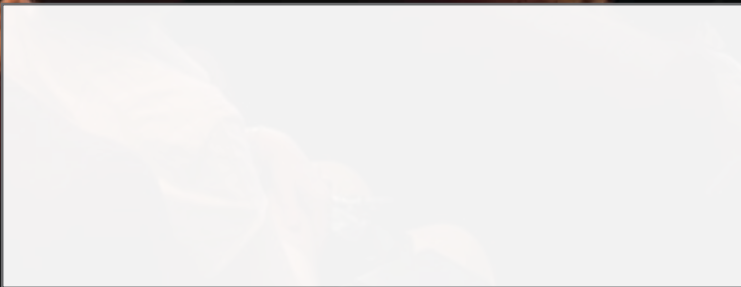
From Lost to Found

Sri Lankan makes history with
victory at World Championship
of Public Speaking.

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Dananjaya Hettiarachchi



The Definition of Success



A businessman was driving through a small village when he came across a fisherman returning from his daily fishing trip. The visitor saw an immense opportunity, and with his own plethora of business experience, he showered the man with ideas of how the daily fishing could make the fisherman millions of dollars and buy him all the luxuries he wanted.

After the fisherman asked a series of questions, the businessman told him that if he created a hugely successful business, the fisherman could achieve his definition of fulfillment: to live in a quiet village, sleep late, fish a little,

take an afternoon siesta, play with his children and take a stroll into the sunset.

The story concludes with the fisherman's final question: "But isn't that what I am doing right now?"

How often do we embark upon a journey of self-reflection to answer the ever-evolving question "Am I successful?" Some need only a few moments, others take a few days, but for many the search for the answer takes a lifetime.

The Toastmasters experience creates the magical ability to uncover one's own inner meaning of success, and ultimately, fulfillment.

Success can mean having money, fame, a prominent position, a mansion, a red Ferrari or a Louis Vuitton handbag. For many, these types of accomplishments or possessions make them feel fulfilled. For others, they don't. Once we understand what fulfillment means to us, success appears within an arm's reach and all we have to do is grab it.

The Toastmasters experience creates the magical ability to uncover one's own inner meaning of success, and ultimately, fulfillment. The more we participate in the Toastmasters experience, especially at the club level, the clearer the definition becomes. I invite you to immerse yourself in the experience.

I'll share a couple of examples. First, let's look at the Toastmasters World Champions of Public Speaking over the years. After becoming successful themselves, some of them viewed success as helping others—mentoring and coaching speakers, for example. Some became more successful in their careers. They discovered what success means to them.

My friend, Valsakumar P. Menon, ACB, ALS, started his journey of success as sergeant at arms in our club, the Dubai Toastmasters. He asked me how he could improve in his role, and he made sure he did a better job of serving in club meetings. He also took a risk and changed his career, and today Menon is a partner at a training institute. He defined success as making things better.

My friends, what does success mean to you? 



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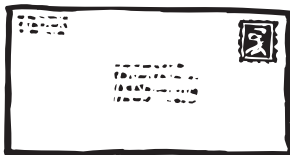
The *Toastmaster* magazine (ISSN 00408263) is published monthly by Toastmasters International, Inc., 23182 Arroyo Vista, Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688, U.S.A. Periodicals postage paid at Mission Viejo, CA and additional mailing office. POSTMASTER: Send address change to the *Toastmaster* magazine, P.O. Box 9052, Mission Viejo, CA 92690, U.S.A.

Published to promote the ideas and goals of Toastmasters International, a nonprofit educational organization of clubs throughout the world dedicated to teaching skills in public speaking and leadership. Members' subscriptions are included in the \$36 semi-annual dues.

The official publication of Toastmasters International carries authorized notices and articles regarding the activities and interests of the organization, but responsibility is not assumed for the opinions of the authors of other articles. The *Toastmaster* magazine does not endorse or guarantee the products it advertises.

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“I love the *Toastmaster* magazine app; it works on my Samsung Galaxy Tab 2 (10.1) tablet.”

—Pamela Arnold, CC

Young Speakers and Leaders

What a wonderful surprise to see an article about the Toastmasters Youth Leadership program in the August issue (“Training Tomorrow’s Leaders”). This would have been a wonderful selling tool last year, when I first presented a Youth Leadership program to the Craigmont Middle School here in Memphis, Tennessee. We had 10 students participate; the program was a lot of fun and a learning experience for us all. English teachers give students the words, and Youth Leadership teaches them how to speak those words to the world!

For our final presentation we had a speech contest. The participants spoke in front of their parents, the school principals and their teachers about topics that challenge their world. Our winners were, in order, eighth-graders Erica Reid and Jalon Rainey, and sixth-graders Jayla Kyle and Markya Barras.

Our club hopes to present the program again this year and possibly expand it to the adjacent high school. I highly recommend the Youth Leadership program to any club.

Deborah D. Douglas, ACG, ALB
Memphis Navy Toastmasters
Millington, Tennessee

Applause for Evaluations

I enjoyed reading the two articles about evaluations in the August issue. Thank you, Carlos David Arzeno and

Toastmasters Chief Executive Officer Daniel Rex, for these articles.

I joined Toastmasters nearly 14 years ago. I talked too quickly. I wasn’t a good listener. Since then, my rate of speech has improved. As for listening, I hardly miss a beat. Why? Because of evaluations—the cornerstone of our organization.

The first evaluation I received was for my Ice Breaker. To quote Mr. Rex from his article “The Importance of Evaluation,” I felt “truly listened to and appreciated.” For him to say that evaluations will carry even more weight in the revitalized education program was wonderful to read.

Christopher Parminter, DTM
Chermside Communicators
Brisbane, Queensland, Australia

Why I’m a Member

I have been a member for about 27 years. Friends ask what it is about Toastmasters that I like so much. After many years of asking that same question to myself, here is my response.

I like Toastmasters most of all because of the high-caliber people it attracts. Members come from so many different walks of life. There are CEOs, nurses, accountants, janitors, pastors, business owners, clerical workers, teachers and retirees. But they all have one major unifying characteristic: They want to improve who they are and how they communicate with others.

In a world filled with whiners and complainers, Toastmasters work to improve their roles in life, whatever they may be, and they make no excuses. They are willing to face their fears and move forward. That, I believe, is the infectious spirit that has attracted so many people from all over the world, and that is why Toastmasters are my kind of people!

Jack C. Mercica, DTM
Power Speakers
Covina, California

Love for Tablet Edition

I love the *Toastmaster* magazine app; it works on my Samsung Galaxy Tab 2

(10.1) tablet. I especially like how you can take *Toastmaster* magazines with you to read offline, on the go. I use the same login information that I use for my toastmasters.org account. At first, I had trouble logging in since the User Name I entered repeated itself three times. Once I figured out that you have to turn off the predictive typing feature on your tablet, it worked just fine.

My second obstacle was the lack of an update option in the Google Play app store. I uninstalled the app and installed it again to update it, and that worked.

One thing I’d like to see is a “favorites” list so that I don’t have to search each magazine to find something I marked. This app is a great way to promote Toastmasters. Keep working on it!

Pamela Arnold, CC
Golden Word club
Corwin Springs, Montana

DO YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY?

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

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CHECKED
OUT THE



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OF THE
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Please tell us about your experience. Send your feedback to letters@toastmasters.org. Your opinion matters!

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Pictured: Second-place winner Kwong Yue Yang (left), first-place winner Dananjaya Hettiarachchi (center) and third-place winner Kelly Sargeant (right).

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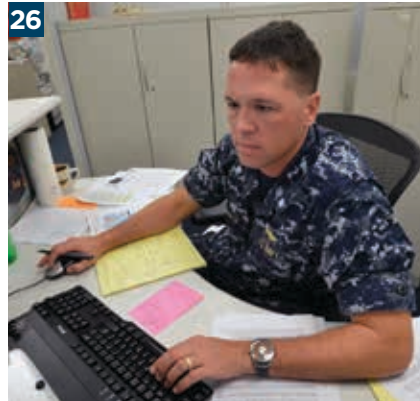
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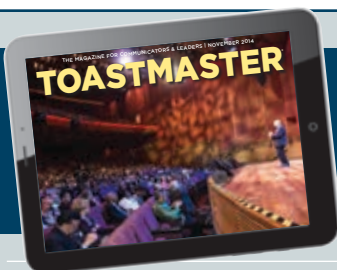
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3 ways to enjoy the *Toastmaster* on the GO!

See the November issue and past issues on these tablets:

- iPad (second-generation iPad and newer)
- Android (4.03 or newer)
- Kindle Fire HD

Simply download the *Toastmaster* magazine app for your tablet from the Apple, Google Play or Amazon app stores.

November Special Tablet Features

- ▶ Watch master speaker, speechwriter and former New York Governor Mario Cuomo reveal his strategies.
- ▶ Listen as Steven D. Cohen encourages Harvard students to use their skills to lead.
- ▶ Watch exciting highlights of 2014 International Convention events.

For more information, go to toastmasters.org/magazine.

AROUND THE GLOBE

MEMBER MOMENT



50 Years of Leadership and Learning



Robert "Bob" Capestrain

Robert "Bob" Capestrain understands the value of time. And not only because he is an accomplished watchmaker and watch repairman, but because he has 50 years experience as a Toastmaster. He has delivered more than 700 evaluated speeches and has held each club officer role multiple times. When he was 30, he joined a club that is now called the Canton Public Speaking club in Canton, Ohio. Today, he thanks Toastmasters for enhancing his life, which includes a successful 60-year career as a watchmaker, jeweler and gemologist. Capestrain also credits his Toastmasters training for giving him the confidence and skills to enter politics and serve for 23 years as an elected city councilman and county commissioner. Although he is no longer in public service, he still works two days a week at Capestrain Jewelers, the family-owned store he founded in 1956 in downtown Canton. He remains a dedicated Toastmaster, valuing every minute.

Why did you join Toastmasters?

At age 30, I was elected president of my church's men's club. I suddenly realized I didn't know how to conduct a meeting or speak effectively.

In Brief

CELEBRATE TOASTMASTERS' 90TH ANNIVERSARY

Throughout the year, pay tribute to the rich history and legacy of Toastmasters International and celebrate in your club or district. Visit toastmasters.org/90thAnniversary for fun resources, and use the branded anniversary logo on your materials. Send your festive photos (1 MB or larger) to [photos@](mailto:photos@toastmasters.org)

toastmasters.org and they may appear in the *Toastmaster*.

MEHRABIAN MYTH EXPLAINED

Have you ever heard that words account for only 7 percent of the meaning of a spoken message? CreativityWorks explains the intended meaning behind Professor Albert Mehrabian's research in a short video. Watch it at <http://ow.ly/AsLwW>.

HOLIDAY GIFT IDEAS

Show your appreciation to fellow members and leaders with gifts from the Toastmasters Online Store. Visit toastmasters.org/Gifts to see the collection.



What is the most valuable lesson you have learned in your 50 years as a Toastmaster?

I believe, among a dozen things, it's gaining self-confidence. I've never been shy, but Toastmasters gave me the confidence to know I can do anything I put my mind to.

What is a highlight of your Toastmasters experience?

I learned *Robert's Rules of Order* from being a club officer. In our club, members presented a parliamentary challenge to the president to see how he handled a provocative situation. I would read *Robert's Rules of Order* prior to each meeting to try and circumvent any curveballs. This parliamentary sparring helped prepare me for elective office.

What advice do you have for new members?

When you are young, seek out older, experienced members for the best advice; when you are older, seek out young people to help you stay young in spirit and attitude. Also, when you practice a speech, tape-record it, time it and do a self-evaluation so you can give the best possible presentation. Then, if you get an evaluation you don't agree with, you can go back to the recording and ask your evaluator questions to understand how you can improve.

What's something unique about yourself you'd like to share?

I was introduced to jogging by a fellow Toastmaster. I ran five miles three days a week for 38 years and logged more than 26,000 miles, which is more than the distance around the earth. I still exercise three times a week, but I find swimming works better for me now.

SNAPSHOT



Past International President Jana Barnhill, DTM, AS, (front row, second from right) meets new friends at the revitalized education program video booth at the 2014 International Convention in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. More than 60 members were videotaped as they answered questions about Ice Breakers and mentoring.

FACTS WORTH KNOWING

Presidential Firsts



First International President
J. CLARK CHAMBERLAIN (1930-32)

A resident of San Diego, California, Chamberlain

was one of the key figures in channeling the Toastmasters movement into an international organization.



First Female President
HELEN M. BLANCHARD, DTM (1985-86)

Blanchard worked for the U.S. Navy as head of the Technical

Information Division at the Naval Ocean

Systems Center in San Diego, California. She also was the first female International Director and the first woman to earn DTM recognition.



First African American President
THEODORE C. WOOD, DTM (1986-87)

At the time of his presidency, Wood was a Senior

Staff Officer for the U.S. Department of Defense in Washington, D.C. In February 1991, during the opening ceremonies for Toastmasters' new World Headquarters building, he was chosen to represent all of Toastmasters' past international presidents. He gave a speech that paid tribute to the vision of

Ralph Smedley, and the organization's subsequent line of leaders who have stayed true to that vision.



First President from Outside North America
JOHN A. FAUVEL, DTM (1987-88)

A resident of Auckland, New Zealand, and president

of his own textile export company, Fauvel's presidency helped increase the recognition of Toastmasters as an international organization. It also opened a door of opportunity for others from outside of the United States and Canada to bring their leadership skills to the Board at executive and director levels.

WHAT'S THE BUZZ?

What was your all-time favorite speech topic?

"In my speech 'Belt 'Em,' I spoke about how it takes a village to raise children. I went on to say we are all responsible for the children in our families and communities, and that if we really care about them, we need to belt 'em. Upon hearing gasps from audience members, I said I knew what they were thinking. I clarified my statement by saying I actually wanted to speak about the need for child safety seats and seat belts."

Grace MacGregor, DTM

Arifjan Articulators
Camp Arifjan, Kuwait

"I talked about the difference between summer, all-season and winter tires, and why you need winter tires in the environment I was speaking in. I used an actual set of tires to show the comparison between treads. I also demonstrated tire-stopping distances on stage."

Kevin Markl, ACS, ALB

Lamorinda Toastmasters
Lafayette, California

"It's my 'Milligan's Mighty Carp' speech. I won a Tall Tales Contest with that one. The inspiration came from my father's story about the time his father took him and his siblings to the Erie Canal. They caught a couple carp, harnessed the fish, and then let the kids be pulled in the water by them."

Cliff Milligan, ACG, ALB

Blues Expression club
Rochester, New York

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

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"Nothing in life is **more important** than the **ability to COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY.**"

— FORMER U.S. PRESIDENT
GERALD R. FORD

INTERNATIONAL INTERPRETATIONS

How Do You Read?

The ability to read is essential to modern life, whether it's reading roadway signs, receipts, emails or books. But how do our reading techniques and habits differ internationally?

Many language systems read and write from left to right horizontally, including English, Armenian, Yi and Korean. (However, Korean was typically written in vertical columns from right to left until the 1980s. It is only recently popular to write from left to right horizontally.) The opposite—right to left horizontally—is true of languages such as Hebrew and Arabic.

Mongolian is written and read from left to right in vertical lines from top to bottom. Some Asian languages are written both horizontally and vertically, depending on the type of content. For example, in Japanese, traditional novels and humanistic writings are written and read vertically from top to bottom and right to left. By contrast, contemporary writings, business and science documents, and translated works are written and read left to right horizontally.

Reading habits differ across the world. Scribd, an e-book library service with 80 million monthly readers in over 100 countries, analyzed its users' data and activity. Scribd discovered its German readers speed through books the fastest, followed by readers from the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden and Malaysia. Readers from Canada are most likely to finish a book from beginning to end, with readers from Finland and Jamaica following close behind.

Sources: *Scribd*, "Reading Around the World: What Your Country Says About Your Reading Habits," *Omni-glot*, "Writing direction index," and *Smashing Magazine*, "Japanese, A Beautifully Complex Writing System"



90TH ANNIVERSARY

Celebrating Our Humor and History

Did you know that a humor column ran in the *Toastmaster* magazine as early as 1953? Although the column's name has varied through the years—"Just in Jest," "A Bit of Wit" and "Laff Lines" are a few examples—it has always featured humor and witticisms of the time. Read a few examples below from the July 1957 issue of the magazine:

Heroine (in melodrama): *Pray tell, is there no succor?*

Disgusted Spectator: *There sure is. I paid six bucks to see this show.*

Children are natural mimics. They act like their parents in spite of every effort to teach them good manners.

The two men had been shipwrecked for years on a small uninhabited island. One day they spotted a bottle floating in the water. One of the men waded out, picked it up and announced discouragingly: "The one we sent out last year came back. There's two cents postage due."



Read more jokes from a previous *Toastmaster* issue on your tablet.

MEET MY MENTOR



Brian Lees, CL

No one has the potential to influence a member's experience like a mentor. Tracey Huaut, CC, an office manager at an environmental consultancy company and a member of the Robina Sunrise Toastmasters club in Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia, shares how her mentor, Brian Lees, CL, a civil engineer, has helped her.

How did you find out about Toastmasters?

My sister and father have both been members, so I've known about the organization for years.

When and why did you join?

I joined in 2012. I was at a university lecture and the speaker was a well-respected CEO of a successful construction company. He spoke about leadership and the advantages of being a Toastmaster, and how it helped him in his career. It was all I needed to make a call and find a club.



FROM LEFT: Tracey Huaut and Brian Lees

What were some challenges you wanted to overcome?

When I joined, I had a fear of public speaking, and a goal to lead a team. Since becoming a member, I have developed the confidence to tackle these challenges.

Tell us about your mentor.

Brian has been my mentor for 18 months. He is the director at his civil engineering company, and although he is semiretired, he remains passionate about what he does. We meet regularly to review my projects and progress. To inspire and encourage me, he gets me thinking about the things I've done in my life—and how I can formulate them into a speech.

What specific goals have you accomplished while under your mentor's guidance?

I'm now an office manager and I serve as president of my Toastmasters club. I even made a speech at my sister's wedding.

What is the best feedback you ever received from your mentor, and how did it help you?

Table Topics is my weakness, but recently Brian gave me feedback about how I'd "nailed it." He said he's proud of what I have achieved, and how much I've grown since I first joined Toastmasters. That feedback made me feel as if I could do anything!

What are your favorite things about your mentor?

He is kind, sincere, a real gentleman and genuinely interested in helping me achieve my goals. For fun, he and his wife have learned ballroom dancing!

NOMINATE YOUR MARVELOUS MENTOR!

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

LOOKING AT LANGUAGE

Using the Right Words



Language is beautiful. But it can be easily abused and misused—and leave many confused. Here are some potentially troublesome areas.

Handle With Care

Use caution and restraint when using certain words. The word *hero*, for example, is tossed around far too casually. Sports-writers call a baseball player a hero when he hits a home run to win a game. A real hero: the firefighter who risks her life to rescue a family from a burning house. Not a hero: the politician who wins an election or the fashion model who gives up fur.

Unique is another word that tends to be abused. It means one of a kind, unequaled. Because it's an absolute, there can't be degrees of uniqueness, like "Your shirt is very unique" or "She had a particularly unique singing style." "The word stands alone, like *dead*, *unanimous* and *pregnant*," says Patricia T. O'Conner in her grammar book *Woe is I*.

Perplexing Pairs

Some pairs of words and phrases are commonly confused. These are two of the most prominent examples:

■ **Chord/Cord.** A chord is a combination of musical notes (e.g., "Many songs feature the same four chords"). A cord is a long, thin material ("The hardware store has a variety of extension cords") or an anatomical structure ("The accident damaged his spinal cord").

■ **Affect/Effect.** You typically use *affect* as a verb and *effect* as a noun. *Affect* means "to influence," as in "The rainy weather affected my mood this morning." *Effect* means "a result" of something, as in "His criticism had the effect of intimidating all his students."

TRAVELING TOASTMASTER



1 | DEBORAH CAMPBELL, CC, FROM DUMFRIES, VIRGINIA, *kneels on the Willis Tower ledge in Chicago, Illinois.*


2 | GOURI SEETHARAM, DTM (FOURTH FROM LEFT), FROM ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA, *visits the Cliffs of Moher in County Clare, Ireland, with seven fellow Toastmasters.*

3 | DAVID BUTTERWORTH, CC, CL, FROM WEST SUSSEX, ENGLAND, *on holiday in Shirley Heights, Antigua.*

4 | HUI DENG, CC, FROM BEIJING, CHINA, *stands near the Temple of Heaven in southern Beijing.*



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My Multicultural Journey

Diplomat's daughter helps create a special speech contest.

BY ELLIOTTE MAO, DTM

My dad would be smiling in diplomat's heaven about District 4's first multilingual speech contest, held in April in the San Francisco Bay Area. Three speech contests took place in an afternoon—one in Mandarin, one in Japanese and one in Vietnamese. The noteworthy event merited a visit and keynote address from Toastmasters International's Chief Executive Officer, Daniel Rex.

The event was a benchmark for me as well, as I finally embraced bicultural communication. When I was 7, my father moved our family from Taiwan to the United States as a result of his accepting a coveted position at the Chinese Embassy in Washington, D.C. I did not bask in his glory, and saw the move as a terrible intrusion on my happy monocultural childhood.

In the nation's capital, my every move was watched carefully and critically. Finding the right words to say and the proper way to behave is challenging for any 7-year-old, but having to navigate that path biculturally, and sometimes even multiculturally, was overwhelming. Washington, D.C., is one

It seems as though multilingualism frees the leadership spirit as well as the tongue.

big social and political arena, with representatives of different countries posturing and pandering for the opportunity to gain power or recognition. Depending on the international climate of the day, even the children of diplomats had to mind their political p's and q's.

Over the years, however, my carefully culled words and development of politically correct body language—shaking hands and making eye contact is expected in the U.S.—thrust me into a global consciousness that jumped from playground to community. It came with hard knocks and misunderstandings, as I survived the tumultuous civil rights years and discrimination at large, due to being “not white enough” or “not black enough.”

Forming a Bilingual Club

After college, I lived in San Francisco. In 1999, I joined the High Spirits of Toastmasters club in Belmont, California, but then aspired to build a bilingual club. When a Mandarin-English



Elliotte Mao celebrates the success of District 4's first multilingual speech contest with Toastmasters Chief Executive Officer Daniel Rex.

Toastmasters club in San Francisco was proposed, I gave a speech in Mandarin at its demo meeting and helped charter the club in 2012.

I worked with new club members until we established a meeting structure. We decided to interweave speaking the two languages throughout our meetings. We have two members—one Mandarin-speaking, the other English-speaking—who serve as co-Toastmasters of the meeting, presenting speakers and evaluators, taking turns between the languages. This flexibility encourages participants to speak in the language of their choice. The format has been effective and engaging. I saw how the role I played as an “embedded mentor” was critical to the club's survival.

Empowerment through Language

The purpose of bilingual clubs is not to provide language lessons, but to extend the valuable tools and benefits of the Toastmasters program to people outside the English-speaking community. When members have the option of using their own language to express their thoughts regarding speeches, meetings, officer roles or speech contests, the rise in enthusiasm is notable. It seems as though multilingualism frees the leadership spirit as well as the tongue. Nelson Mandela once said, “If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his language, that goes to his heart.”

Thus, the multilingual speech contest is a natural spinoff of the empowering aspect of the Toastmasters program. Clubs are eager to showcase their star orators, and leaders are eager to flex their newly formed muscles. The success of the District 4 multilingual speech contest was due to the combined efforts of many hard-working Toastmasters in Vietnamese, Japanese and Mandarin bilingual clubs.

Meanwhile, I have my dad to thank for dragging me decades ago to the United States, where I helped start a Mandarin-English Toastmasters club. **TM**

ELLIOTTE MAO, DTM, belongs to four clubs in the San Francisco Bay area, including the San Francisco Mandarin English club. Visit her website at elliottcreativecommunications.com.



At left: In Dananjaya Hettiarachchi's winning speech, he uses a flower to demonstrate the uniqueness and fragility of each person. He says sometimes life pulls us apart, but other people can piece us back together. Right, the top three finalists pose with their trophies, including second-place winner Kwong Yue Yang (left) of Guangzhou, China, and third-place winner Kelly Sargeant (right) of Missouri City, Texas.

From Lost to Found

Sri Lankan makes history with victory at World Championship of Public Speaking.

BY JENNIE HARRIS

Dananjaya Hettiarachchi, CTM, had mentors throughout his life who saw “something” in him, though they couldn’t pinpoint exactly what that positive trait was. Perhaps they sensed he had the potential to become the 2014 Toastmasters World Champion of Public Speaking—the title he won in August for his speech titled “I See Something.” The championship-round contest capped off the 2014 International Convention in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

“Toastmasters saved my life 10 years ago. I was a lost kid.”

— Dananjaya Hettiarachchi

After defeating eight other talented finalists from around the world, Hettiarachchi became the first native of Sri Lanka to win first place in the competition.

In front of an audience of more than 2,500 attendees, Hettiarachchi shared a personal story highlighted by humor and a message about mentoring and unconditional love. He mentioned being a high school dropout who once was arrested, but with the support of others—including Toastmasters—he discovered his love for public speaking.

“Toastmasters saved my life 10 years ago,” said the member of the Smedley Toastmasters club in Colombo, Sri Lanka, in his acceptance speech. “I was a lost kid.”

Certainly, he has benefited from the guidance of others: Today he is a human resources consultant who holds an MBA and bachelor’s degrees in both marketing and management.

The 2014 International Speech Contest drew 30,000 participants from 126 countries. The second-place winner, Kwong Yue Yang, ACS, ALB, of Guangzhou, China, gave a speech titled “Four Words.” The third-place winner was Kelly Sargeant, CC, CL, of Missouri City, Texas, with her speech “Good-bye Wi-Fi.”

Grabbing a Lifeline

In his winning speech, Hettiarachchi said that after graduating from college, he didn’t know what to do with his life. His father told him to visit a “strange club, with a strange name, with strange people ... talking.” After he delivered his first Table Topics speech, someone in the back of the room said, “I see something in you, but I don’t know what it is,” and asked him to return to the club regularly.

While Hettiarachchi didn’t mention in his speech who the mentor was, he later confirmed in an interview that it was Balraj Arunasalam, DTM, who was elected to the position of Toastmasters’ 2014–2015 Second Vice President the afternoon following the championship.

“I saw his untapped potential and talent,” says Arunasalam. “I worked with him to make him believe that he can come back in life.”

2014 CONVENTION IN REVIEW



Highlights of this year's convention include the live music at opening ceremonies, the installation of Mohammed Murad, DTM, as the new International President and the announcement of 18 President's Distinguished districts.

More than 2,500 people from 59 countries attended the 83rd annual Toastmasters International Convention to enjoy keynote presentations, learn best practices in communication and leadership, and celebrate a new lineup of leaders. More than 1,400 attendees were first-timers.

At the opening ceremonies, keynote speaker Robin Sieger—a former Head of Development at BBC Television—talked about key principles that lie at the heart of true success. His insightful and humorous anecdotes explained the attitudes and beliefs that enable us to effect meaningful change.

The four-day program at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre, held August 20–23 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, included education sessions and a variety of multicultural programming. Golden Gavel recipient Dato' Rohana Rozhan gave a heartfelt presentation about her leadership journey as a woman and chief executive officer of Astro Malaysia Holdings. She said, “if you want to be a leader one day, you have to lead every day.”

Barbara Khozam, ACS, ALB, of Escondido, California, earned the title of Accredited Speaker, the highest speaking

designation that can be achieved in Toastmasters. It represents mastery of professional speaking techniques.

Mohammed Murad, DTM, of Dubai, United Arab Emirates, was installed as the new International President during the President's Inauguration. An entrepreneur and managing director of three companies, he joined Toastmasters 17 years ago and is a member of the Dubai Toastmasters club.

Jim Kokocki, DTM, of Saint John, New Brunswick, Canada, was selected as the International President-Elect. Rounding out the 2014–2015 Executive Committee is First Vice President Mike Storkey, DTM, of Townsville City, Queensland, Australia, and Second Vice President Balraj Arunasalam, DTM, of Colombo, Sri Lanka. Seven new members of Toastmasters International's Board of Directors were also chosen. For complete election results, visit toastmasters.org/AnnualBusinessMeeting.

During the Hall of Fame ceremony, 18 districts were recognized as President's Distinguished. District 94P (western Africa) had the highest percentage of Distinguished clubs in the world. The other districts receiving President's Distinguished recognition were, in order of performance: 85, 59, 1, 82, 81, 89, 20, 41, 51, 80, 79, 93P, 17, 31, 75, 87 and 67.

Perseverance Pays

In addition to the strong influence of his mentors, Hettiarachchi's ultimate speaking triumph is a testament to his determination to succeed. He has entered the International Speech Contest every year since 2006, and he has represented District 82 in the semi-finals in 2011, 2012 and 2013.

“The only thing noteworthy in my career is that I showed up. When you don't quit, life won't quit on you,” he posted on his Facebook page after winning the championship.

He plans to write a book and to deliver speeches that inspire others, especially youth, just as others inspired and mentored him.

Winners of the 2014 Taped Speech Contest (a category for members of undistricted clubs) were also announced at the convention. They are: first place, Meschelle Kolb, CC, of Wasilla, Alaska; second place, Pascal Umekwe, CC, of Anchorage, Alaska; and third place, Robert John Royce, DTM, of Wasilla, Alaska. **T**

JENNIE HARRIS is an associate editor for the *Toastmaster*. She is a member of the *Spectrum Speakers club* in Irvine, California.



Visit the tablet edition for an exciting overview video of the 2014 International Convention.

Historical Highlights of Past Conventions



In 1981, Toastmasters International began designing convention pins. Do you have all 33?

Did you know?


The first official Toastmasters convention was held in 1930 in Anaheim, California. Initial yearly conventions were held in the month of October, but beginning in 1936, they were scheduled for the third Saturday in August. According to an early issue of the *Toastmaster* magazine, this change allowed the event to “dodge the football season and place our meeting within the vacation period, thus making possible a larger attendance from distant clubs.” The tradition continues today.

Henry Wiens of Reedley, California, is considered our first World Champion of Public Speaking. In 1938 he won the first inter-club speech contest, which was held at the first convention outside California, in Tucson, Arizona. He was awarded “The Dunlap Cup,” a trophy named after Toastmasters’ then-President William A. Dunlap. The inter-club speech contest later evolved into what is known today as the International Speech Contest.

No convention was held during wartime years in 1942, 1943, 1944 and 1945. In its place, an annual business meeting was conducted, and elections for leaders were handled by mail.

The first convention held outside the United States was in 1971 in Calgary, Alberta, Canada.

Events were added to the convention program over the years. In 1959, the first Golden Gavel award was presented to Dr. Frank Baxter, a TV personality and professor emeritus at University of Southern California, “for service in bettering the arts of communication.” In 1981, Hubert Dobson, from Houston, Texas, became the first Accredited Speaker. **T**



Visit the tablet edition to see more photos of convention pins.

The Speech Contest Endgame

How to handle the unexpected and still chair a successful event.

BY JOHN SPAITH, ACG



You're the contest chair and it's time to wrap up your area speech contest. You're happy because the Toastmaster and contestants were great. All that's left to do is invite some dignitaries to talk, hand out awards and dismiss the audience.

But things can go wrong. While on stage, you might learn that the contest

Toastmasters help each other; the contest chair should give dignitaries a little stage time—a *little* time.

results are delayed by at least five minutes. Perhaps the dignitaries you invite on stage are ill-prepared or talk too long.

The problems that Toastmasters frequently run into during the contest endgame don't ruin a contest, but they do distract from celebrating the winning speakers, and they don't make a good impression on guests. Fortunately, these common problems have easy fixes.

Out of Control Announcements

"Does anyone have any announcements?" These are the five most dangerous words to ask a room full of Toastmasters. In your audience will be other contest chairs desperate for volunteers for upcoming events, founders of new clubs who need help, or, most loquacious of all, district confer-

ence representatives who seek to drum up attendance. All of these dignitaries have a right to speak. Toastmasters help each other; the contest chair should give dignitaries a little stage time—a *little* time.

The mood of the audience, the number of announcements to be made, and how soon the janitor will show up will deter-

mine the length of the announcements. Communicate that time limit upfront and hold people to it. In a pinch, 15 seconds is enough time to make announcements.

There are exceptions, however, such as announcements about big events like district conferences. Representatives won't settle for limiting their time to 15 seconds, so don't even try to hold them to that! They do need to adhere to some time limit, though. I've seen district conference pitches take 15 *minutes*. Taking that much time is unfair not only to the audience, but to the contestants who are nervously awaiting contest results and to your hosts who are waiting to take the room back. No one should get more than a few minutes to speak. Timing lights can help keep everyone in check.

Delayed Contest Results

When I served as chair for my area contest, complications in the ballot counting occurred that delayed results. During the delay, the audience saw me look like a deer in the headlights. I had no plan to engage the crowd that waited to hear the winners announced.

You need to have a plan as to what you'll do in case of an unexpected delay. You can buy time asking Toastmasters trivia questions—such as "What country has the highest per capita of Toastmasters?"—and letting the audience call out answers. Asking questions is fun and interactive, and the conversation can be shut down quickly when the chief judge arrives with the contest results. Asking for quick, clean jokes from the audience also works. Even if the jokes are corny, they too will buy time in the event of a delay.

Just be sure to take control, and don't bring up open-ended topics, like: "Tell us how you joined Toastmasters." Those kinds of topics will get you 20-minute responses.

Juggling Award Handouts

Handing out certificates of appreciation and awards often goes like this: You take the voting results and trophies from the chief judge and then realize you have too many items to hand out by yourself. The lieutenant governor education and training and division governor are both in the audience. Which one should join you on stage? Does the lieutenant outrank the division governor?

The answer is: Toastmasters don't do rank. Let them both come up. Who stands where? Just authoritatively tell them where you want them to be and pretend like you're not making it up on the fly. They'll take your lead since we don't do rank.

Before the contest, debrief judges, timers, dignitaries and helpers who will be on stage when it's time to hand out awards. You can either spend a few minutes before the contest doing this in private, or you can do it at the end of the contest very publically and very awkwardly. Snafus aren't ruinous. With just a little planning and communication, you can have the endgame come to a strong conclusion. **T**

JOHN SPAITH, ACG, is a member of Redmond 2828 Toastmasters in Redmond, Washington.

Deliver An **EPIC** Keynote

How to give a speech that listeners remember for years.

BY JANE ATKINSON

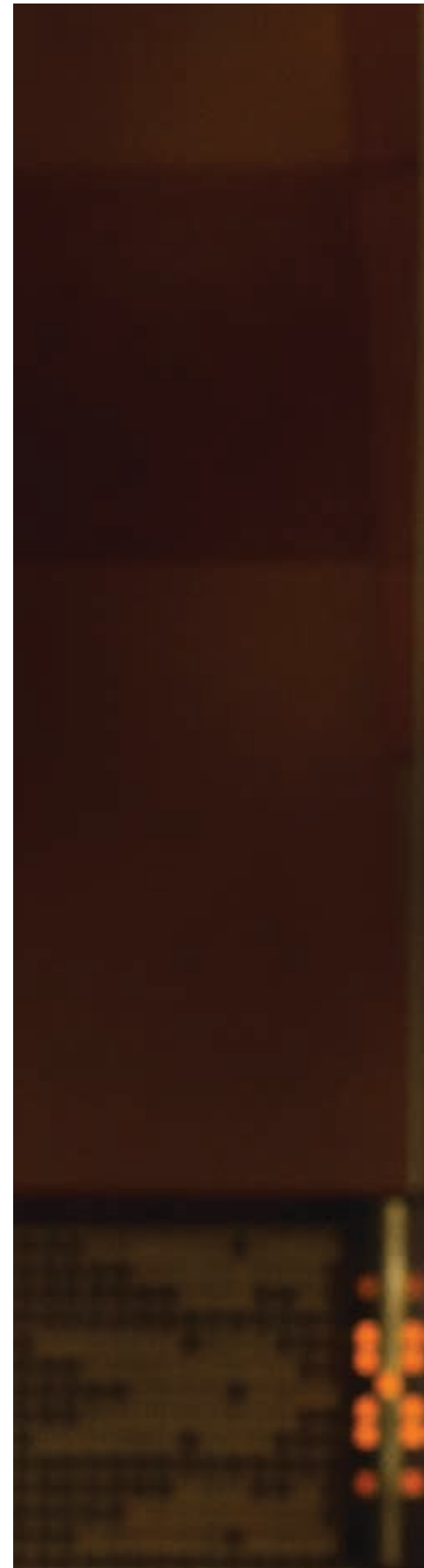
Imagine you are standing in front of your ideal audience. You have them at “hello” and you rock your talk all the way through to closing. Your stories are eloquent and your style conversational. You stand with confidence, yet allow your audience to see your humility. From the beginning, the audience is with you, rooting for you. They relate to you, and you to them.

You provide the audience with ideas that provoke thought. You make them laugh and make them want to take action—to do better. You give them tools that will allow them to grow and evolve.

When you exit the stage, the event organizers pump your hand and say that was exactly what they were hoping to hear from you. People line up for an hour just to shake your hand, take your photo and get your autograph. They tell you how much you have impacted their lives, and what your talk has meant to them. They use your language when talking to you and will continue to use it months, possibly years, later. Not only did you make an impact on *this* day, but the speech will last in people’s minds for years to come. Audience members will hear the sound of your voice as they go through life, and they will recall details of your talk and its pertinent stories.

Does this sound good to you? It should, because you have just delivered an *epic* keynote.

I love this visualization exercise because it puts us right in the room. We can imagine all the details accompanying such a successful speech. It gives us something to strive for. And when it actually happens, *woo-hoo!* We recognize it as epic.

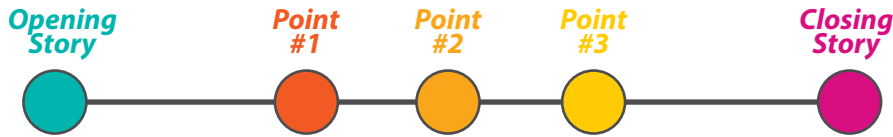




Robin Sieger delivers the keynote presentation at the 2014 Toastmasters International Convention in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

KEYNOTE SPEECHES

KEY THEME + PHRASE THAT PAYS



Once you have a theme and a “phrase that pays,” follow the simple formula above to craft an epic keynote speech.

Memories of a Masterful Speech

How often can you recall someone’s speech 20 years later? I remember hearing such a speech at the 1994 National Speakers Association (NSA) conference. In fact, I remember this keynote—delivered by former United States Navy Captain Gerald Coffee—as clearly as if I had heard it yesterday.

Coffee told of being captured and held for seven years as a prisoner of war in a Vietnamese prison. He talked about how he and his fellow prisoners developed a system to communicate among themselves. They

step of picking a lane, or a topic, is essential. Ask yourself: *What do I want to be known for five years from now?*

Once you are focused on your lane, you are ready to develop the key theme of your speech. What is a key theme? It’s your unique approach to the topic you are writing about.

Have a Phrase that Pays

I first heard the term “phrase that pays” from Doug Stevenson, a speaking coach based in Colorado Springs, Colorado. It refers to an idea—usually expressed in a three-

Without a focus on a topic and key theme, your speech may be just a mish-mash of ideas. A phrase that pays can be the thread that ties your entire presentation together. Laying out the components of your speech ahead of time will put you on the path toward an epic keynote.

Phase 2: Craft the Speech

A comedian might spend hours working on one line, or even one word, trying to get it just right. What’s interesting is that some professional speakers, or executives needing to get a message across to their staff, often decide to wing it—craft their message while onstage.

I’m all for being in the moment. So how do we craft a solid message beforehand, but also remain in the moment and natural onstage? The Coaches Training Institute (CTI) uses a term called “in the bones.” It means you know something so well that you don’t have to think about it. Coaches encourage keynoters to know their material so well that when they show up to speak, they seemly have a conversation with the audience.

By having 60 percent of your speech “in your bones,” you can customize the other 40 percent and be authentic, or in the moment, rather than rehearsed.

used Morse code to tap out messages to each other while in their tiny three-by-seven-foot cells. I can still hear him using his knuckle to knock on wood, and how that sound echoed through the microphone. Tap tap—tap—tap tap tap. You could have heard a pin drop in that room of 1,500 people, and not a dry eye could be seen.

The fact that I still remember this so clearly tells me something. It was the first time I had witnessed an epic speech.

So what can we do to ensure that our own presentations move toward that level? Since “the rule of three” works well with speeches, consider these three phases of preparation:

Phase 1: Focus on Your Message

As a coach and consultant, many professional speakers ask me for help in “picking their lane,” or the topic they want to be known for. If you want to use speaking as a career booster, it’s difficult to put together an epic keynote without knowing where you want your career to go. And that first

seven-word phrase—that you introduce at the beginning of the speech and then sprinkle throughout the rest of it. In my new book *The Epic Keyote*, Stevenson elaborates on this, describing the phrase as a “short and sweet, musical and rhythmic summarization of your point as a ‘call to action.’ It is also a way to brand yourself and the point you are making.”

Your catchy phrase can be replicated on a tent card or poster that the audience can take home, notes Stevenson.

Imagine giving a presentation to a company of 150 people. You leave them with your phrase that pays, which in this case is “I’m Empowered to Serve.” It’s a customer-service phrase that lets all employees know that the company will support their efforts to resolve a customer’s problem, no matter what it takes.

Several months after your presentation, you walk through the host company and see posters and coffee mugs with the “I’m Empowered to Serve” phrase scattered throughout the building. And the people who meet in the boardroom use your phrase to solve problems. How cool is that?

Customization

Joe Calloway is an amazing speaker and author—he’d better be, because he commands \$20,000 per speech. The funny thing is, Calloway is rarely the hero in any of his stories. He does massive amounts of research on the client who hires him to speak in an effort to learn about the people at every level of the organization. He then presents his findings in a conversational speech to a segment of the client’s leadership or front-line staff. He calls himself “a reporter” and delivers results.

Calloway, the author of *Becoming a Category of One: How Extraordinary Companies Transcend Commodity and Defy Comparison*, may not deliver an identical speech two times in a row; however, some

of his stories and other components of his speech will be tried and true. His research and customization fill in the rest.

By having 60 percent of your speech “in your bones,” you can customize the other 40 percent and be authentic, or in the moment, rather than rehearsed.

Crafting a speech involves fleshing out stories, creating solid points (typically three) and developing a powerful opening and closing. But the most important part in delivering an epic keynote is to show up ready to engage the audience in a conversation.

Phase 3: Create your Own Style

One of the great ironies in the professional speaking industry occurs when people enter the field and look around to see what everybody else is doing, and then copy what others do. Although copying might be a form of flattery, being original is what makes you stand out from the crowd. Find your own style.

Whether it is how you use your body, your voice, your stories or your teaching materials, develop everything with uniqueness in mind.

Teaching vs. Story

Epic keynoters of yesteryear might have told a lot of stories without a lot of take-away for the audience—or delivered mostly sizzle without a lot of steak. But today’s successful keynoters (many of whom speak 50-80 times a year at substantial fees) are being asked to provide a greater proportion of return on investment, and their presentations end up being mostly steak.

In my opinion, a ratio of 60 percent steak to 40 percent sizzle—lots of stories with rich content presented in an original manner—is a nice combination. As New York City-based speaking coach Victoria Labalme says, “People rarely come up to a speaker three years after a given presentation and say, ‘I’ve been thinking about your fourth point on leadership.’ However, what they do say is, ‘You know, I still think about that story you told about raking leaves with your son.’”

Be Original

Have you heard the term “let your freak flag fly”? A part of developing your own style

is tapping into the quirky things that make you real *and* original. When I speak (mostly to groups of professional speakers and Toastmasters), I recite a mantra beforehand that reminds me to be the best version of myself. It also reminds me to go out and have fun, because if I’m not having fun, nobody is! By reminding myself to relax, funny little things (often unplanned) crop up and make the session more entertaining.

The bottom line is: When you show up as your authentic self, with original, solid content and a message you feel in your bones that allows you to have a conversation with the audience, good things are going to happen. And that will put you on the path to delivering the epic keynote. ■

JANE ATKINSON is the author of *The Epic Keynote: Presentation Skills and Styles of Wealthy Speakers*, a follow-up to her book *The Wealthy Speaker 2.0*. Her company, *Speaker Launcher*, provides coaching and consulting to professional speakers. Visit speakerlauncher.com to learn more.

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It's All About the Audience

Earn your listeners' appreciation by making your speech about them.

BY STEVEN D. COHEN, PH.D., ATMB

The key to delivering a successful speech is showing your audience members that you care about them. You don't want listeners to view you as a salesperson pitching a product. You want them to see you as a leader who has their best interests at heart.

The good news is that you don't need to be a mind reader to build a strong connection with listeners. Instead, you can focus on knowing your audience, using inclusive pronouns, referencing the present and highlighting the benefits of your idea.

Analyze the Audience

Before you can lead, you must know your audience. What do people in your audi-

ence really care about? Why should they listen to you? The best way to learn the answers to these questions is to conduct an audience analysis.

analysis to make their speeches resonate with their peers. One student described his audience as composed of students from around the world, including young and old, female and male, undergraduates and graduates.

"To say we are united by public speaking is too broad; the class includes both those who fear it [public speaking] and those who relish it," wrote the student. "We are united specifically by our belief that it is important."

This analysis is effective because the student is now able to give a speech connecting his or her own beliefs with the beliefs of the audience. The student acknowledges the diversity of the audience,

and doesn't dwell on it, but instead focuses on what unites everyone in the room—the belief that public speaking is important.

Remember to conduct a thorough audience analysis—even when you're pressed for time. The information you gather will help determine how to get, and keep, your audience's attention.

Use Inclusive Pronouns

To begin the process, consult the event organizer where you will speak, to learn about the people attending the event. You can also search the Web for recent news stories or social media posts to learn about the group, which can help identify its interests and priorities. What is it that they hope to learn? What can they do with the information you will provide? Once you understand what your audience cares about, tailor your message to its specific needs.

Every semester I challenge students in my Harvard Extension and University of Baltimore classes to conduct an audience

One of the easiest ways to bond with your audience is to use inclusive pronouns like *we*, *our* and *us* instead of *you* and *your*. As Shel Leanne points out in the book *Say It Like Obama: The Power of Speaking with Purpose and Vision*, inclusive pronouns help to "send the message that the speaker and those listening are on the same team,



in the same boat, facing the same fate."

I often use inclusive language when telling my students about upcoming speech assignments. When students express concern about an assignment, I say, "I know speaking in public can be nerve-racking, but we're all in this together. We've prepared for this moment for the past few weeks, so I know we have what it takes to deliver amazing speeches."

Although I may not deliver a speech in class, I want my students to know I am on their side. Using inclusive language indicates that I care about my students, and I am committed to helping them succeed.

There is a big difference between saying "You must solve this problem" and "We must solve this problem." The first



Audience members enjoy listening to a speaker at the 2014 International Convention in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

the problem; the second implies that the speaker will work with the audience to solve it. Don't tell your audience what it should do. Instead, use inclusive language to talk about what you can all accomplish together.

Reference the Present

Another way to connect with your audience is to reference the present. Although listeners may think about the past and future while you speak, they will spend most of their "thinking time" trying to link your ideas to their current needs and challenges. Think about the issues your audience currently faces and find ways to address those

issues during your speech. Show people you understand what they are facing.

Let's say you are invited to give career advice to a group of college seniors preparing for end-of-semester exams. What can you say to make them listen to you? Here is one possibility:

I know you're looking forward to finishing your finals so you can hang out with your friends and enjoy the summer. I was a college student not too long ago. I know how it is. But I hope we can talk for just a few minutes about one simple question: "What's next?" Today, I want to offer some suggestions to help you use what you're studying to land a great job.

This introduction is compelling because it connects the topic of your speech to the current, primary concern of the students—studying for finals. Initially, the students may not want to think about their post-college plans, but they will be more apt to listen to you once you demonstrate that you "know how it is," and you're willing to help.

Highlight the Benefits

A final technique is to highlight the benefits of supporting a particular idea. According to Nick Morgan in his article "Before You Open Your Mouth: The Keys to Great Public Speaking," speakers must keep their audience members' needs top of mind: "Audiences begin speeches asking 'why'—why should I

care, why is this important ... If the speaker is successful—and it's a million to one shot against—the audience will end up asking 'how'—how do I implement this idea, how do I make this my own ... That's the speaker's job: take the audience from 'why' to 'how.'"

Let's say you are speaking to a group of colleagues about volunteering at a local homeless shelter. Everyone knows that helping the homeless is important. You are more likely to make your message resonate if you emphasize the specific benefits of volunteering. You could say:

I want to invite all of you to join me at the homeless shelter tomorrow at 11 a.m. to prepare lunch for some of the homeless people in our community. This is a perfect opportunity for us to get to know one another better and spend a few hours doing something that will make us feel really good about ourselves. I'm pretty sure we'll laugh a lot as we figure out how to run the kitchen!

In this example, the speaker highlights the benefits of participating, rather than emphasizing that volunteering is the "right thing to do." Who wouldn't want to have a great time while serving the community?

Your listeners will pay attention if you make your speech about them—so be sure to keep your audience at the forefront of your mind. When you maintain an audience-centered approach, your listeners will reward you with appreciation and applause. **T**

STEVEN D. COHEN, PH.D., ATMB, is a member of the Redwood Toastmasters club in Baltimore, Maryland. He is a faculty member at the Harvard Division of Continuing Education, and an assistant professor of communication at University of Baltimore's Klein Family School of Communications Design. For more information, visit stevendcohen.net.

Develop an *Extraordinary* Team

Strong leaders build on trust and a shared sense of purpose.

BY DAVE ZIELINSKI

Anyone who has participated in multiple Toastmasters clubs knows that some groups rise above others. The mix of good leadership, team cooperation and constructive feedback in superior clubs makes the experience particularly valuable or memorable. On the other hand, we've all been in clubs—or business or academic work teams—where there isn't that same sense of purpose, group cohesion or feeling of accomplishment.

What sets the best teams apart? It's more than happenstance or good fortune that creates high-performing work groups. Applying a set of research-based principles can help, say experts, and you can follow those principles to help your Toastmasters club achieve its highest potential.

Work Groups That Shine

Geoffrey Bellman and Kathleen Ryan, co-authors of the influential book *Extraordinary Groups: How Ordinary Teams Achieve Amazing Results*, say an “extraordinary” team can be defined this way: “An extraordinary team creates opportunities for personal transformation while delivering outstanding results.” Examples of personal transformation might include an increased sense of personal confidence, building new skills or knowledge, and developing new or deepening relationships and shifts in perspective about one's self, others, the team or an organization.

In a three-year study of 60 work teams across disciplines, Bellman and Ryan identified eight performance indicators that define extraordinary groups: compelling purpose, shared leadership, just enough structure, full engagement, embracing differences, unexpected learning, strengthened relationships and great results.

Leaders of high-performing teams share certain traits, says James Kouzes, co-author of the best-selling book *The Leadership Challenge: How to Make Extraordinary Things Happen in Organizations*. These leaders understand they can't lead on their own, and work hard to model behaviors they ask of their team members.

“Of all the lessons I've learned studying leadership over 30 years,” says Kouzes, “one that continues to ring true is that no one can do it alone, and leaders have to create a climate of ‘We're all in this together.’ In other words, just because there is a hole at your end of the boat doesn't mean my end isn't sinking too.”

Top work groups, like the best Toastmasters clubs, create a sense of shared leadership, where team members slip in and out





Team Triumph: Teambuilding is key to helping districts and clubs thrive. Here, District 74 Governor Aletta Rochat from South Africa blows the vuvuzela as her district is named Distinguished at the 2014 International Convention.

of leadership roles based on their expertise and team needs—and where a leader-by-title sets aside his or her ego to allow it to happen.

“If you were a fly on the wall observing the workings of a high-performance team, one of the things that would strike you is how difficult it is to determine who the team leader is,” says Howard Guttman, a management consultant who builds high-performance teams and is author of the book *Great Business Teams: Cracking the Code for Standout Performance*. “Everyone has a fairly powerful share of voice on such teams.”

These same principles hold true for virtual teams, an increasingly prevalent structure where team members don’t work under the same roof but regularly communicate and collaborate via technology like email, texting and videoconferencing. According to a study by market intelligence firm International Data Corporation, 1.3 billion people around the world—or 37 percent of the global workforce—will work remotely by 2015 using mobile technology.

But while the rise of virtual work teams has created many advantages, it also means new challenges for team members and those who lead them. The biggest issue for virtual team leaders remains learning to trust those they can’t see performing their work, says Kevin Sheridan, a human resources consultant and author of the books *The Virtual Manager* and *Building a Magnetic Culture*. He himself was an archetypal “old school” manager who believed people should work from 9 to 5 in an office before he became convinced of the power of virtual work by his millennial-generation employees.

“If you are getting the performance outcomes you want from a team, where and how people work becomes irrelevant,” says Sheridan.

Russ Martinelli, senior program manager at Intel Corporation and co-author of the book *Leading Global Project Teams*, says virtual teams lack much of the informal communication that traditional teams get in the hallways or through impromptu meetings. “Leaders



From left: District 56 Lieutenant Governor Education and Training Carol Caraway, District 56 Governor Sheryl Smith, District 55 Governor Crystal Dyer, and District 56 Lieutenant Governor Marketing Martha Elias, attend District Leader Training this past August in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

have to help make up for that,” he says. “You almost have to force more formal communication in terms of meetings or forums where you focus on technical aspects of work, change aspects of projects, generate ideas or report on progress.”

“A leader’s responsibility is to always keep his or her eye on what kind of culture they want their work group or company to have.”

— David Stanislaw, founder and principal of Stanislaw Consulting

Management consultant Guttman says it’s important for all teams to step aside from their agendas on occasion to evaluate how they’re functioning as a group. “You have to periodically call a timeout and assess how the game is working,” he says, and ask, “How are we doing regarding accountabilities, relative protocols and a willingness to be honest with each other?”

Peers holding peers accountable is a counterintuitive concept for many, Guttman says, given that we’re conditioned to the idea of designated leaders functioning in the “parental” role. But he says it’s also a key attribute of teams working at peak levels.

Top Teams Handle Conflict Differently

High-performing teams also share the ability to manage conflict well. David Stanislaw, founder and principal of Stanislaw Consulting, LLC, a Birmingham, Michigan-based company specializing in conflict resolution, says healthy teams are more open to addressing conflict. That’s important, he says, because the average leader spends 30 to 40 percent of his or her time dealing with conflict.

Problems arise when team members miss critical deadlines, don’t pull their own weight or have other performance or behavioral issues. Good leaders don’t avoid uncomfortable discussions about these types of problems, Stanislaw says, since they know the behaviors will only resurface down the road. While most of these issues should be addressed privately, good leaders also address them publicly when warranted.

For example, if someone has a history of being late to meetings, Stanislaw says it’s not inappropriate for a leader to address the issue in front of the team. “A leader’s responsibility,” he says, “is to always keep his or her eye on what kind of culture they want their work group or company to have. You don’t want others to think it’s OK to regularly show up late.”

Stanislaw says a skilled leader might address the chronically late employee and say, politely and quietly, “I’m sorry you’re late today.” The goal is to avoid anger as well as humiliation, but also to send a message to the team. “The team leader,” he says, “can then meet

privately with the individual afterward, and say, 'I notice this has been happening from time to time; is there anything I can do to help you be on time in the future?'"

Cinnie Noble, founder of CINERGY Coaching, a conflict management-coaching company in Toronto, Ontario, says conflict often emerges on teams because people have differing views of their work roles and responsibilities, and that's usually because those factors haven't been clarified by a team leader or they've been misinterpreted by team members.

Noble also believes conflict management isn't a skill that's emphasized or developed in most companies. "Companies talk instead about having good communication skills," Noble says, "but they don't specify what effective conflict management looks like in practice, and often don't offer specific training in how to manage conflict well."

TIPS FOR TEAM LEADERS

One of the best things about Toastmasters is that you not only learn how to give speeches, but also how to improve your interpersonal communication. That includes dealing effectively with conflict, one of the most valuable—and difficult—skills to master.

It's inevitable that interpersonal conflicts will arise when Toastmasters work together on teams—planning various events, for example—or interact in club meetings. When problems emerge, we often avoid dealing with them head-on, because it can be uncomfortable. But it's crucial to speak up in such situations, says Region 3 Advisor Linda Williams, DTM.

"Conflict is either going to be buried or you're going to find a way to make it productive and use it positively," she says.

Williams, a member of three clubs in Texas, helped facilitate a session about conflict resolution that was presented by World Headquarters' Education and Training department. It was part of District Leader Training this past August in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Although the session was for district leaders, its principles are applicable to all Toastmasters leaders.

To establish healthy conflict, said session presenters, create ground rules for dealing with difficult situations. Explore with your team the parameters for acceptable and unacceptable behavior—for example, consider what type of language should be used.

It's important that everyone in the group feel they can express their opinions without fear of being criticized or insulted. What helps, says Williams, is to limit discussions to the issues themselves, rather than talking about the personalities involved, which heightens the potential for hurt feelings. It's also important that leaders remain open to everyone's input, she adds.

If, in the midst of a candid group discussion, someone feels uncomfortable or overwhelmed, they can ask the team to stop and come back to the problem later, Williams says. "People need to feel there's a safety valve. If somebody feels pressured, they can say, 'Hey, this is getting too intense, I need a break here.'"

—Paul Sterman

Leadership expert Kouzes says leaders must create a team culture where there is reciprocal behavior: "Sometimes I give and you take, and other times you give and I take."

Martinelli says leaders, whether in Toastmasters clubs or companies, can't lose sight of the fact that they're constantly under a spotlight, and that trust is a fragile concept. "You have to create a culture where feedback is encouraged, and follow up on your commitments, because your team is always watching," he says. "You also have to be concerned about the well-being of your team as human beings, because people will sense that. I've seen over and over again where a team leader will break the trust bonds within a team, which starts it down a dysfunctional path."

Whether it's your Toastmasters club or a work team, the research-backed principles of creating a compelling purpose, sharing leadership and embracing individual differences go a long way toward creating the kind of exceptional team all members are proud to call their own. **T**

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

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Writing for the Commander

Jason Garrett pens speeches for the head of the Pacific Fleet.

BY AMANDA DUNFORD

Anonymity cloaks the tall aviator sitting in the back of the audience as all eyes focus on the front stage where Admiral Harry Harris Jr., commander of the U.S. Navy’s Pacific Fleet, is delivering a noteworthy speech. Harris is speaking outside, in front of the Pacific Fleet’s headquarters building in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, in a ceremony commemorating the Battle of Midway, one of the most significant naval battles of World War II.

As the admiral talks, a hint of amusement flickers on the aviator’s face as he remembers the words of a commanding officer that inspired him to start writing years ago: “If you are not published, you are not a player.” No one knows who the man is, but looking at him you can see his pilot “wings of gold” gleaming in the sunlight. He is dressed sharply in the Navy’s signature, summer white uniform, pen and notebook in hand, jostling notes like a madman desperate to get his thoughts on paper.

This organized disorder is common for Jason Garrett, a Navy commander who is the speechwriter for Admiral Harris.

At top: U.S. Navy commander Jason Garrett (left) talks things over with Admiral Harry Harris Jr., commander of the U.S. Pacific Fleet. As the speechwriter for Harris, Garrett’s words are heard around the world. Above, Garrett works on the rough draft of a speech.

“I am always extremely proud every time I hear my speeches being delivered,” says Garrett, a Toastmaster in Honolulu. “But more important are the reactions and emotions of the people who are the key audience for that speech. When you see that it truly touches them—they feel it, they hear it, they love it—that’s what makes it so wonderful.”

Words Heard Far and Wide

Garrett, a helicopter pilot, has served in the Navy for more than 18 years. He has led flight crews and helicopter detachments on deployments globally. Now, as the speechwriter for Harris, his words are heard around the world, including the Pacific Fleet’s area of responsibility—more than 30 countries, including Australia, Japan, the Philippines and Sri Lanka.

Garrett crafts speeches relating to the United States' focus on the Asia-Pacific region. His words are heard at significant events such as the 72nd Pearl Harbor Commemoration Ceremony, and international conferences and symposia throughout Asia and the United States.

Harris says he truly values Garrett's work. It is high praise, because not only is Harris the Pacific Fleet commander, but he was once the chief speechwriter for the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (the highest-ranking military officer in the U.S. armed forces).

"I understand how important speeches are to getting the message out to diverse audiences, and I really appreciate what Jason does," Harris says.

"Without Toastmasters I don't think I would have gotten this speechwriting job."

— Jason Garrett

Garrett, a past area governor for District 49, says Toastmasters has been a great place to practice and improve, noting how much he's learned from writing speeches, delivering them to a supportive audience and receiving constructive feedback from club members.

"Without Toastmasters I don't think I would have gotten this speechwriting job," he says.

"Toastmasters gave me the confidence to strive for what I wanted."

He was first appointed to the job in March 2012, when he began writing speeches for Admiral Cecil Haney, the Pacific Fleet commander before Harris. Garrett says that being a Toastmaster gave him credibility with Haney, who was familiar with the organization.

"I owe Toastmasters a lot," says Garrett.

Common Ground

He recognizes similarities between his Toastmasters training and his work as an aviator, most notably in the efforts to learn and improve. Garrett describes the process that occurs when Navy pilots fly a mission. "We brief a mission, we make the mission, we come back and debrief the mission, and tear it up and find out everything that went well and everything that didn't go well, and then we find a way to make it better.

"Toastmasters is very much the same way. You have your curriculum and guidelines, you create the speech, you practice it, you deliver it and then you get critiqued."

Garrett warns that speechwriting is not a business for the faint of heart; you must have a passion for it and possess a thick skin. Public praise and recognition aren't assumed.

"Anyone can do this, as long as they have the desire to do so—but that's a big piece of it," he says. "This job requires a lot of work, a tremendous amount of research, attention to detail and constant, diligent studying. Not everyone is cut out for it."

His fortitude and passion for his job helped him overcome beginner's hurdles early in his career. "It's been quite the growing experience for me. I worked on my first speech extremely hard for about a week and a half solid for Admiral Haney. Every waking moment I was thinking about that speech, just trying to make a good impression with my first one.

"Now I can write a dozen speeches in a week and a half with very little effort. I've gotten much better at it. ... No one is a perfect speechwriter, and it's fun to hone my skills and see improvement."

A good speechwriter can customize a speech to reflect the mannerisms and individual characteristics of the speaker, says Garrett. The writer must be able to create something that sounds natural, as if the speaker wrote it himself.

"Thankfully I've had a great relationship with both commanders I've written for," Garrett says. "With Admiral Haney, I followed him to the places where he spoke. I was there to listen and absorb the way he thought, spoke and communicated.

"Admiral Harris delivered something else. He gave me an archive of speeches he had written when he was the chief speechwriter for the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and all the speeches he's delivered since. I read through them all, studied them, trying to understand exactly how he's comfortable with saying things. And in doing so, I've learned a lot about him and his family; it allowed me to pull those personal stories into his speeches to make them impactful."

Smiles and Success

As Harris wraps up his speech on this day, he closes with a joke, timing the punchline perfectly, as only a veteran of the trade could. Garrett looks around at the audience, his eyes focused on their faces as he tries to gauge their reaction. Relief soon smoothes his furrowed brow as people smile and applaud Harris for his inspirational words.

A look of modest satisfaction is evident on Garrett's face as he realizes he's written another successful speech.

"Not only do I enjoy writing speeches, I enjoy studying the craft, working hard to be the best I can be. It's a true challenge ... and I'm the guy who's perfectly willing to do the work." ■

AMANDA DUNFORD works as a Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class in the U.S. Pacific Fleet Public Affairs Office and has been in the Navy for nearly 10 years.



Michael Flynn has worked as the deputy director of speechwriting for U.S. Vice President Joe Biden.

Michael Flynn: **Flying High**

White House speechwriter gives voice to top political and business leaders.

BY JULIE BOS

Few people have the honor of writing speeches in the White House, traveling on the private plane of the United States vice president, and rubbing elbows with the country's highest-ranking leaders. Yet for Michael Flynn, deputy director of speechwriting for U.S. Vice President Joe Biden from 2011 to 2013, these unique experiences helped make him the expert resource he is now.

During his time with Vice President Biden, Flynn worked on speeches ranging from major policy addresses to commencement speeches. In 2012, he was part of the speechwriting team at the U.S. Democratic Convention, where he drafted, edited and oversaw speeches for senators, governors, four-star military leaders and many other speakers. Before that, he spent two years as a press aide and speechwriter for then-Senator John Kerry of Massachusetts. (Kerry is now the U.S. Secretary of State.) A native of North Attleboro, Massachusetts, Flynn graduated first in his class at New York University.

Today, Flynn is a senior writer at West Wing Writers, a company serving the private sector. Many team members have written speeches in the West Wing, the section of the White House where the U.S. president and his staff work. The company writes for leaders in politics, business and the nonprofit world.

What was life like as a traveling speechwriter?

Someone on the traveling staff once gave me a great piece of advice: "Never skip an opportunity to eat or go to the bathroom. You never know when you'll have your next chance." That about sums it up. It's the most amazing job I've ever had, but it's not always glamorous.

You spend a lot of time standing behind teleprompters. Sometimes you're still editing a speech in the car on the way to the event. And often you wind up furiously typing in a hotel room (or a restaurant, or at any flat surface you can find) late into the night, because even after the plane has landed and all the meetings are over, you still have to write what we're going to say tomorrow.

What are the key attributes of a speechwriter?

The best speechwriters I've worked with have an ear for story and an eye for detail. That's why sometimes we'll talk to someone for hours just to write a 20-minute speech. We've asked CEOs about their favorite childhood memories, and famous musicians about their favorite kinds of wine. This may all sound random, but you never know what will turn a good speech into a great speech.

Oh, and the best speechwriters also tend to read a lot. You'd be surprised how often a random anecdote about the invention of air conditioning will come in handy. (That's a real example, by the way.)

Traveling aboard Air Force Two—the plane that carries the U.S. vice president—and working in the West Wing are things most people can only dream of. What's it like being privy to the workplaces of the highest leaders in the U.S.?

An amazing honor. I'll always feel lucky that I had the chance to work with such talented, committed people. I doubt anything in my life will ever quite match the experience. Luckily, I still have a drawer full of [customized] presidential M&M's and vice presidential Frisbees, so part of the experience will always be with me.

What were a few things you learned while writing speeches for Vice President Biden? And for then-Senator Kerry for two years before that?

I learned how to write more quickly than I ever thought possible. I learned to make a first draft count, because sometimes you don't have time for a second. And I learned how to translate even the densest policy description into something resembling English. (I hope I did, anyway ...)

“The best speechwriters I've worked with have an ear for story and an eye for detail.”

What were some high points of writing speeches for the 2012 Democratic National Convention?

This was one of the best experiences of my speechwriting life. There were about a dozen of us on the speechwriting team, and we spent two weeks crammed into our makeshift office—the referees' locker room in the basement of the arena. [The Convention was held at Time Warner Cable Arena in Charlotte, North Carolina.] Virtually every word that was spoken at the Convention came across our desks. By the time we were done, we'd written and rewritten about 150 speeches in 10 days. It was exhausting, intense work—and we would all go back and do it again tomorrow if we could.

How much time are you typically given to write a speech?

In the White House, deadlines can be pretty crazy. There are times when you have to write a speech in just a few hours. But you get used to it, and the pace of every job after that feels like a dream.

How do you put aside your own political ideas when writing a political speech for someone else?

I've been lucky to work for people I agree with almost all of the time. But even when you don't, it's not that hard to put your feelings aside. It goes with the territory. Because really, it's not your speech. Someone else is going to stand up there and deliver

it. Someone else is going to be judged for what it says. It *has* to reflect what they believe.

Is it difficult writing speeches using a prominent politician's unique voice?

After a few months on the job, the bigger problem is figuring out how to *stop* writing in their voices. I *still* find myself using Bidenisms in emails sometimes.

Do you typically work on several speeches at once?

All the time. It's pretty common to spend the morning writing a policy address about trade relations with Japan and the afternoon writing jokes for a political roast.

Do you ever get writer's block (and if so, how do you overcome it)?

You can only get past a blank page one way: Start writing. Write whatever comes to your mind. When you're done, you might have a pretty mediocre draft in front of you. But then you can go through and make that draft better. Then you can go through again and make *that* draft better. And then you just keep doing that until you've got a great speech in front of you.

As senior writer at West Wing Writers, what do you look for when hiring writers?

We look for people with strong writing instincts—who know the difference between writing for the page and writing for the ear. Since we write speeches, op-eds [opinion pieces], books and everything in between, we need people who have a feel for all those different formats. You can't necessarily teach someone why one sentence sounds better than another. Sometimes it just does. So we look for people with a natural feel for the flow of language, a lot of creativity and a great mind for compelling arguments.

Do you work alone, or with other speechwriters?

We have a team of 18 incredibly talented people at West Wing Writers, and we collaborate all the time. A speech is always better if you have the chance to bounce ideas, lines and jokes off of someone else. I've spent more Friday afternoons than I can count with three other writers, all huddled around one computer, all working to make a closing line perfect. It's a great way to work.

What are three things you should never do in the speechwriting business?

1. Never miss a deadline.
2. Never take an edit personally.
3. Never use more words than you need.

What do you consider to be your greatest accomplishment?

Taking my parents to see the Oval Office on a West Wing tour. Nothing beats that for me. ■

JULIE BOS is a freelance writer for the *Toastmaster* magazine.



The Filibuster

Just let me say this. And this. And this.
And furthermore, this.

BY JOHN CADLEY

When H.L. Mencken wrote, “Democracy is the art of running the circus from the monkey cage,” he was obviously being unkind—to the monkeys. As much as our hirsute relatives chatter, they can’t beat politicians when it comes to talking the ears off a statue. In fact, many of the world’s governing bodies have institutionalized the practice with the filibuster. The word comes from the Spanish *filibustero*, and no, it doesn’t mean full of bluster. (It should, but it doesn’t.) It means “freebooter” or “pirate,” which Latin Americans used to describe the American adventurer William Walker, who went down there in the 1850s to make all Latin American people his personal slaves. For some reason they didn’t like that idea.

In the U.S., filibustering is called “the soul of the Senate” because it has so many able practitioners.

When Mr. Walker saw he was about to get killed for his magnanimous offer, he tried to talk his way out of it. Having once been a lawyer, he was quite a talker. He talked for hours while the Honduran army listened patiently. Then they killed him anyway.

Thus, the connection with the modern word *filibuster* (not really, but it makes sense)—which means to kill not a person but a vote. If a political party or individual doesn’t want a piece of legislation passed, he or she may talk until the session closes and no further action can be taken. The bill is then placed at the bottom of the pile where it must again wait its turn. (I say “he or she” out of political correctness, even though no woman has ever demonstrated logorrhea like a male politician who isn’t getting his way. [*Logorrhea: a mental disorder in which the patient mumbles monotonously to others or, more likely, to himself.*] Seriously.)

Filibustering goes all the way back to the Roman Senate. One of its greatest practitioners was Cato the Younger (to distinguish him from Cato the Elder, who was a lobbyist for Worldwide Pillaging and Plundering, a military contractor of the day). Cato found that when his wife asked him to do something, if he simply blathered on about his day at the office she would eventually forget what she asked and do it herself. He took the practice to the Senate. Unfortunately,

Cato did most of his filibustering against Julius Caesar, who did *not* like people standing in his way (just ask the Gauls). As we all know, Caesar became Emperor of Everything and Cato committed suicide so he wouldn’t have to hear “veni, vidi, vici” one more time.

Many countries have the filibuster. The English Parliament calls it “talking out,” but it’s not so bad in the U.K., because that mellifluous British accent can often sound more like a Shakespearean soliloquy than a 14-hour attempt to block the Daylight Savings Bill.

Australia tries to eliminate filibustering by imposing strict limits on the time a statesman may speak. Politicians being what they are, they’ve found a way around it with “suspension of standing orders,” which basically means: “That law about limits is an inconvenience so let’s ignore it for now.”

New Zealand politicians filibuster by voting very slowly. It took one of them 19 hours to say the word “nay.”

In the U.S., filibustering is called “the soul of the Senate” because it has so many able practitioners. The best was Strom Thurmond, a Democratic senator from South Carolina who holds the all-time record at 24 hours, 18 minutes. It was delivered in 1957 and Mr. Thurmond prepared for it by taking steam baths to dehydrate his body so he could absorb liquids without having to use the bathroom. When Mr. Thurmond was done, he left the dais and drank his swimming pool.

More recently, Ted Cruz, a Republican senator from Texas, clocked in at 21 hours, 19 minutes, filling the time with, among other things, a paean to White Castle hamburgers and readings from Dr. Seuss’s *Green Eggs and Ham*. Unlike Sen. Thurmond, however, Mr. Cruz wasn’t really blocking anything. In the end he even voted for the bill he was supposedly filibustering. What was the senator doing? Proving that you can utter complete nonsense for one whole revolution of the sun while appearing to serve your country. Now *there’s* a politician. ■

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



Did you know John Cadley has written for the *Toastmaster* since 1991? Visit the tablet edition to read his first article, “I Am Manager, Hear Me Roar.”

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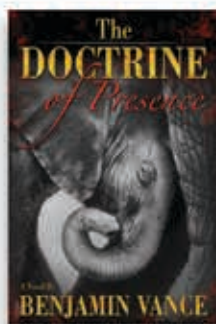
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The Doctrine of Presence introduces the reader to dedicated men and women, concerned with animal abuse and poaching in Kenya. There are no heroes in this adventure novel; just determined people, disgusted with the misguided waste of Earth's beauty and bounty. A bewildering transition

from benign exposition to bloody manhunts places the characters on a poacher's kill list, but *The Doctrine of Presence* demonstrates how leadership and evoked skills can meet any challenge; individually or governmentally fabricated. *The Doctrine of Presence* promotes active rescue and elevation of life, rather than the ongoing apathy toward the mass killings occurring worldwide (www.benjaminvancebooks.com).

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