

THE MAGAZINE FOR COMMUNICATORS & LEADERS | SEPTEMBER 2016

TOASTMASTER®

LEADERSHIP LESSONS FROM THE REAL WORLD

How to advance your skills
with a High Performance
Leadership project.

The Ralph C. Smedley
Memorial Fund®
launches new phase.

Meet International President
Mike Storkey, DTM



A Commitment to Serve

As I begin my term as your International President, I am mindful of the commitment I have made to serve you, the members and this global organization to the best of my ability. A commitment is so much more than an obligation, which infers an expected minimum response to fulfill a position or role, not necessarily entered into voluntarily. A commitment has no such minimum boundaries; it requires a voluntary, wholehearted response and binds those who make it to a higher degree of personal accountability.

Twenty-five years ago when my wife, Lesley, and I first attended a demonstration meeting of the proposed Whitsunday Toastmasters club, little did I realize the commitment I was making or how it would change my life. When signing the application, I hardly looked at it to see what I was undertaking—the promise I was making to my fellow members, my club and the organization as a whole: the Toastmaster’s Promise. It was some time later, when our area governor visited our new club and drew our attention to what she referred to as the guidelines to success as a Toastmaster, that I first realized how joining a club came with responsibilities.

A commitment requires a voluntary, wholehearted response and binds those who make one to a higher degree of personal accountability.

It is regrettable that today so few members recall the vital promise we all made when we first joined—the simple set of guidelines that, if we made the commitment to observe, would ensure that individually and collectively we would all reap the benefits of the Toastmasters program. Imagine how your club would look if we all made the commitment to fulfill the responsibilities outlined in the simple 10-point promise. With our current drive to achieve quality clubs, meetings and service to our members, what better way to achieve these goals than commit to the promise?

I challenge you, my fellow members, to revive your awareness of this often neglected but vital component of Toastmasters. I recommend that you consider making the Toastmaster’s Promise an integral part of your meetings by interspersing it with the reading of the Toastmasters mission. Make more of it during the induction of new members and, most importantly, individually commit to fulfilling that promise. We all have expectations of the Toastmasters organization but might I suggest, by paraphrasing President John F. Kennedy’s famous inaugural words, *Ask not what your organization can do for you, ask what you can do for the organization and your fellow members.*

... **Remember the Member.**

MIKE STORKEY, DTM
International President

TOASTMASTER®

PUBLISHER Daniel Rex
MANAGING EDITOR Suzanne Frey
SENIOR EDITOR Paul Sterman
ASSOCIATE EDITOR Mary Nesfield
EDITORIAL COORDINATOR Shannon Dewey
GRAPHIC DESIGN Susan Campbell
and Bianca Montoya

TOASTMASTERS INTERNATIONAL

P.O. Box 9052 • Mission Viejo, CA 92690 U.S.A.
+1 949-858-8255 • Fax: +1 949-858-1207
Voicemail: +1 949-835-1300

www.toastmasters.org

CONTACTING WORLD HEADQUARTERS

For information on joining or building a club, visit:
www.toastmasters.org

Article submission:
submissions@toastmasters.org

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

Toastmasters International Mission:

We empower individuals to become more effective communicators and leaders.



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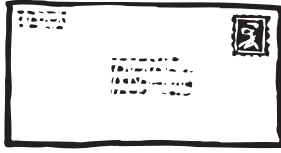
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“What a stunning achievement to sponsor 164 Toastmasters clubs in one lifetime!”

— RALPH WALKER, DTM
QUESTMASTERS • TAMPA, FLORIDA

On Youth Leadership

The news from Christine Clapp about the YLP in the March issue of the *Toastmaster* magazine is exhilarating. As a rocket scientist who worked for the Indian Space program for more than three decades, I am fascinated by the Toastmasters Youth Leadership Program (YLP). I am also active in Rotary International and support many such ventures. Students are the source of inspiration for the development of the nation and hence high priority should be given to their leadership development and team working abilities.

Let me also congratulate the president and officers of Trivandrum Toastmasters for maintaining the dignity and decorum of the organization.

Dr. N.R. Unnikrishna Kartha, Ph.D.
Trivandrum Toastmasters
Trivandrum, Kerala, India

A Man Set Apart

Thank you for finding Peter Kossowan, DTM, and putting the (June) spotlight on him. What a stunning achievement to sponsor 164 Toastmasters clubs in one lifetime! This is so valuable to all of us. Practical advice, simply implemented and carefully adhered to, over and over again. It is difficult to be set apart in a huge group of achievers, but on the rare occasions that I met such people, they inspire me to be like them.

Ralph Walker, DTM
Questmasters
Tampa, Florida

Impromptu Services

I was impressed by “An Impromptu Eulogy” in the Members’ Forum in the May issue. It was an inspiration.

I volunteer at a nursing home. After one of the residents passed away, her friend asked me to sing “Amazing Grace” at the memorial service. Then came another request to sing “In the Garden.” Although neither was rehearsed, I delivered both songs with heart.

Later, during the service, another friend asked me to share a poem she wrote. That made three different requests I was able to do without any preparation.

I’m grateful to Toastmasters for helping me gain the skills to give an impromptu presentation. I hope I brought some comfort on this sad occasion.

Mary E. Hunter, ACB
Bangor Toastmasters club
Bangor, Maine

When in D.C.

I enjoyed the article in the June issue on clubs related to government agencies in Washington, D.C., and the storied buildings in which they meet. When in D.C. on business last fall, I visited the warm and welcoming National Press Toastmasters club. As a former news reporter, it was a thrill for me to visit that historic building.

I participated in Table Topics at the meeting, so now I joke that I can add “Spoke at the National Press Club” to my qualifications.

Sue Davis, ACB, CL
Ventura Powerpoint Toastmasters
Ventura, California

One Environmental Example

I am a big fan of the *Toastmaster* magazine. From the very first page, I can’t stop reading until I reach the end.

In the Quick Takes section of the April edition, I read about how the Qatar Malayalam Toastmasters club in Doha, Qatar, held its first paperless meeting last December as an initial step to incorporate environmental considerations into their club meetings. This is a great idea.

I thought, why not put it into practice in our clubs here in Hangzhou, China?

With the help of my mentor, and all the sergeants at arms from each club in Hangzhou, I conducted a survey on the use of paper agendas in meetings in all the clubs in Hangzhou. With the data, I successfully delivered a speech about paperless meetings for Project 7 “Search Your Topic” and earned the best speaker ribbon.

The ideas in the magazine are inspiring. I love Toastmasters and its communities.

Lois Tang
Hangzhou METALK Toastmasters club
Hangzhou, China

Why Serve?

You may ask: What can serving on the club leadership committee do for me? The first thing it will do is reveal your weaknesses, but it will also show your strengths. It can be difficult to work as part of a team, but it brings great benefits.

To encourage members, we reserve three minutes each week for a committee member to explain the duties of their role. It works! As we say in our club: Ask not what your club can do for you, but what you can do for your club.

Diane Oatley, CC, CL
Mallorca Wordsmiths
Balears, Spain

A Source of Inspiration

The “The Power of Story” by Carmine Gallo (May) was an inspiring article. I recently gave a speech, “Achieving Your Personal Grand Slam,” in which I told the story of the Russian-born Uzbekistani tennis player, Denis Istomin, who overcame a serious car accident and made it, despite great odds, to the ATP men’s tennis tour. His struggles and triumphs provide inspiration to me as I achieve my goals.

Edda R. Bevilacqua, CC
Santa Maria Toastmasters club
Santa Maria, California

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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- ▶ Read it from your desktop, laptop, iPad, tablet or smartphone
- ▶ Enjoy favorite articles at your leisure and scroll through photos with ease
- ▶ Click on links for additional resources

Visit: www.toastmasters.org/Magazine

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▶ MEMBER MOMENT

Golf Coach Communicates on the Course

BY SHANNON DEWEY

On any given day, Cathy MacPherson, CC, instructs golfers on their backswing, teaches them how to get out of a sand trap or helps with their stance.

For the past 20 years, MacPherson has been a LPGA (Ladies Professional Golf Association) Teaching and Club Professional. A Toastmaster in two clubs in Massachusetts, she was recently named a lead coach for the *Golf Channel Academy*—a network of top-tier golf coaches throughout the U.S.—and has been recognized as one of the best golf teachers in her region by *Golf Magazine*.

Raised in Tewksbury, Massachusetts, MacPherson had two loves as a child—playing sports and playing the trumpet. She thought music was her calling, but after being introduced to the game of golf in her 20s, her life was never the same.

MacPherson is also a licensed auctioneer. She pursued auctioneering to serve in the nonprofit world, and she continues to evolve and broaden this skill.

Why did you join Toastmasters?

I was intrigued by a presenter at a conference who talked about how Toastmasters helped him become better at public speaking. My hopes were to improve my skills as a communicator, and his talk inspired me to find my local clubs. Little did I know I'd soon find myself competing in and even winning several speech competitions!

Tell us about your golf career.

Although I played many sports growing up, it wasn't until age 24 that I started playing golf; I knew immediately that I would make it my career. My goal was to become a LPGA Tour player and I went through all the trials and tribulations on the journey to that goal: getting sponsors, playing on mini-tours, going to Qualifying School and working part-time in the golf industry to help pay for tournaments. Ultimately, it was a part-time job that led me to discover my true passion: teaching the game of golf.

I operate my own golf instruction business, Cathy MacPherson Golf, at the Ferncroft Country Club in Middleton, Massachusetts. I work with men, women and junior golfers whose skills range from beginner to the aspiring tour player.

How important is communication in your line of work?

So much of what I do hinges on communicating ideas, techniques and strategies in as succinct and meaningful a way as possible. My success as an instructor depends on my ability to connect with clients and deliver information in a way they relate to. I must say, working through each project in the *Competent Communication* manual brought a different level of awareness to how I was delivering a certain message.



Cathy MacPherson, CC



How do you handle media interviews and TV appearances?

There is no doubt that I have Table Topics to thank for my improved ability to think on my feet and speak extemporaneously! Table Topics is not only enjoyable, it helps build a skill set that I use every day. As for nerves, I still have some when it comes to media interviews, live TV segments and other media elements, but the confidence Toastmasters has given me helps diminish nervousness significantly.

What advice do you have for members who want to coach or mentor others?

My advice to coaches or mentors is to get to know the person with whom you are working. Ask questions; discover their interests and passions. Use the listening skills you develop as a speech evaluator to better learn who they are and what makes them tick. Understanding them more fully will help you frame your ideas in a way that relates to them specifically.

How has Toastmasters affected other aspects of your life?

As a member of the Board of Trustees for The Greater New England Chapter of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, I've created and chaired multiple events. For five years I've co-chaired our Milestones Gala, and each year I conduct the live auction and bidding in the paddle raise segment. The skills I've developed through Toastmasters contribute to my ability to deliver our message about multiple sclerosis in a clear, significant and inspirational way. It was reflected in this year's paddle raise; the largest sum we've ever seen. Thank you, Toastmasters!

To learn more, visit cathymacphersongolf.com.

Shannon Dewey is the editorial coordinator for the *Toastmaster magazine*.

▶ SNAPSHOT



In April, members in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, celebrated the Dauphin Club's 10-year anniversary by hiking seven kilometers to the Ranch Le Montcel hotel in Kenscoff. To commemorate the decade-long status, the club is planning monthly club activities for the remainder of the year.

▶ LOOKING AT LANGUAGE

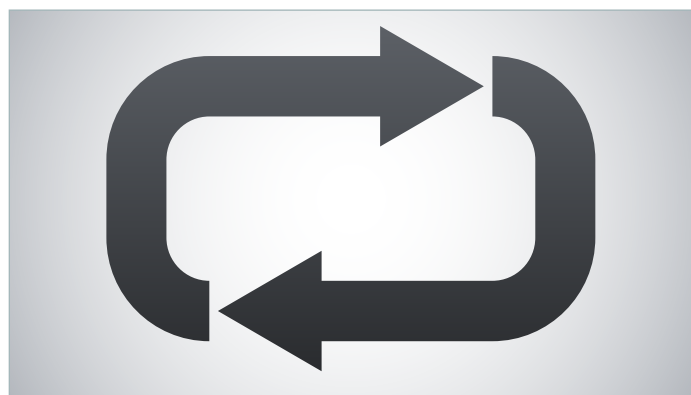
What You Say May Bear Repeating

BY PAULA FUCHSBERG

Repeating yourself in a speech may not sound like the wisest course—and often it isn't. But purposeful repetition used sparingly and strategically can add powerful cadence, emphasis and emotion to your remarks—particularly in a persuasive speech or a call to action.

Anaphora and *epiphora* are key rhetorical devices that can deliver those goods. Anaphora (a-NAF-or-a) involves repeating a word or phrase at the beginning of successive clauses or sentences. With epiphora (e-PIF-or-a), also called epistrophe, the repetition comes at their end.

Anaphora has been used memorably by famous orators like Winston Churchill ("We shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields ... we shall never surrender") and Martin Luther King Jr. (The phrase "I have a dream" starts eight successive sentences in his most iconic address.). In both examples, the growing momentum of the similar phrases, enhanced by a rhythmic delivery, create a visceral, inspirational effect. It's no wonder this device turns up frequently in poems and song lyrics as well as in speeches.



Along with anaphora, President Barack Obama has often employed its counterpart, such as in this example of epiphora: "There is not a black America and a white America and Latino America and Asian America—there's the United States of America."

How can you best use one of these techniques? Keep things simple by confining it to your primary point or message, and limit how many sentences or clauses it encompasses. Phrase those passages in the active voice, using vivid and compelling language. And be sure, when giving your speech, to judiciously use pauses and voice inflection to emphasize those words.

Once you've mastered anaphora and epiphora, perhaps you'll be motivated to weave them together, thus achieving *symproce* (SIM-plo-see)—the name for both devices combined.

▶ MEET MY MENTOR

Jacob (Jay) Lam, ACG, ALB

BY MARY NESFIELD



FROM LEFT: Jianke (Jack) Li, ACB, CL, and Jacob (Jay) Lam, CTM

Area Director Jacob (Jay) Lam, CTM, is an Emeritus Professor of Clinical Microbiology at The University of Massachusetts Lowell. He is a member of two Massachusetts clubs: the New Life Toastmasters and Tyngsborough Toastmasters, of which he is a sponsor.

Originally from Guangzhou, Guangdong Province, China, Jay joined Toastmasters in the 1990s. Grateful for the skills he developed, he pays it forward by mentoring members, including Jianke (Jack) Li, who in 2013 moved from Beijing to the United States to work as an engineer for a multinational corporation. Jack learned about Toastmasters from a friend. He joined the New Life club in Chelmsford, Massachusetts, to learn more about American culture, become proficient in English and develop his leadership

abilities. He earned an ACB and CL and in 2015 served as club vice president public relations (VPPR).

Tell us about Jay.

When Jay revealed he was a card-carrying member of the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), we started calling him “Uncle Jay” out of respect. He says he is not retiring but is *rewiring* to keep on living, learning and serving at different Toastmasters clubs. He promotes interclub activities and has chaired district speech contests. When he was VPPR, he organized club activities, including a New England Maple Sugaring tour and a job-interview seminar.

How has he helped you?

Jay reviewed all my *Competent Communication* manual speeches. He continues to follow up with me on my progress and sends me informative articles on public speaking and leadership. Whenever I encounter difficulty, we brainstorm a possible solution.

What do you like best about him?

Jay’s motto, “To serve and not to be served,” impresses me most. His passion for Toastmasters motivates me to participate in all club contests. Sometimes I’m not able to carry victory but gradually my public speaking weaknesses are discovered and I gain confidence as I improve. Uncle Jay encourages me to keep on going!

NOMINATE YOUR MARVELOUS MENTOR!

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

▶ PROMOTE THE BRAND

Video Brand Contest

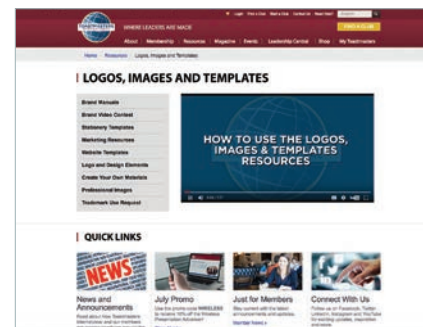
The Video Brand Contest is an opportunity for clubs to submit innovative videos highlighting unique ways they promote their clubs and the Toastmasters brand. Winners receive a branded banner, a lectern or marketing materials, along with public recognition by Toastmasters World Headquarters, potentially reaching thousands of current and prospective members with their messages.



This year’s contest runs through December 31, 2016. To participate, record a short video of your club members showing excitement for the Toastmasters brand, then email brand@toastmasters.org with a link of your club’s video.

Resource Library

Do you have an upcoming open house or conference? Visit the Resource Library for branded stationery templates and marketing materials to promote your club or district. Here you will find logos for download, branded photography and the Trademark Use Request form. For questions about the brand, email brand@toastmasters.org.



► NEWS FROM TI

Do You Remember ...

The Toastmaster's Promise?

In his Viewpoint column in this issue, International President Mike Storkey writes about the commitment he made when joining Toastmasters 25 years ago. He recalls the promise he made to his club and fellow members and challenges you to do the same:

As a member of Toastmasters International and my club, I promise

- ▶ To attend club meetings regularly
- ▶ To prepare all of my speech and leadership projects to the best of my ability, basing them on projects in the Competent Communication, Advanced Communication or Competent Leadership manuals
- ▶ To prepare for and fulfill meeting assignments
- ▶ To provide fellow members with helpful, constructive evaluations
- ▶ To help the club maintain the positive, friendly environment necessary for all members to learn and grow
- ▶ To serve my club as an officer when called upon to do so
- ▶ To treat club members and our guests with respect and courtesy
- ▶ To bring guests to club meetings so they can see the benefits Toastmasters membership offers
- ▶ To adhere to the guidelines and rules for all Toastmasters education and recognition programs
- ▶ To maintain honest and highly ethical standards during the conduct of all Toastmasters activities



Dues Reminder

It's Time to Renew Your Membership!

Don't forget; your membership is due to expire on October 1. To avoid a gap in your membership, please remember to make your semiannual payment of \$45. For more details, please select the FAQ tab at the bottom of the home page at www.toastmasters.org and click on the Dues Increase link.

TOASTMASTERS PATHWAYS

— learning experience —

When Will Your Region Experience It?

Liftoff for the Toastmasters Pathways learning experience is just a few months away—it is scheduled to launch at the beginning of 2017! Because Toastmasters has approximately 345,000 members around the world—and Pathways is such an ambitious program—it will roll out in phases. This approach will help the Pathways team manage the program's capacity and make adjustments as needed to support members.

The first phase kicks off in January, with three districts testing Pathways in a pilot program. The three are districts 51 (Malaysia), 57 (Northern California) and 27 (Washington, D.C.). The pilot is expected to last about three months.

After the first phase is complete, Pathways will roll out by region in eight subsequent phases:

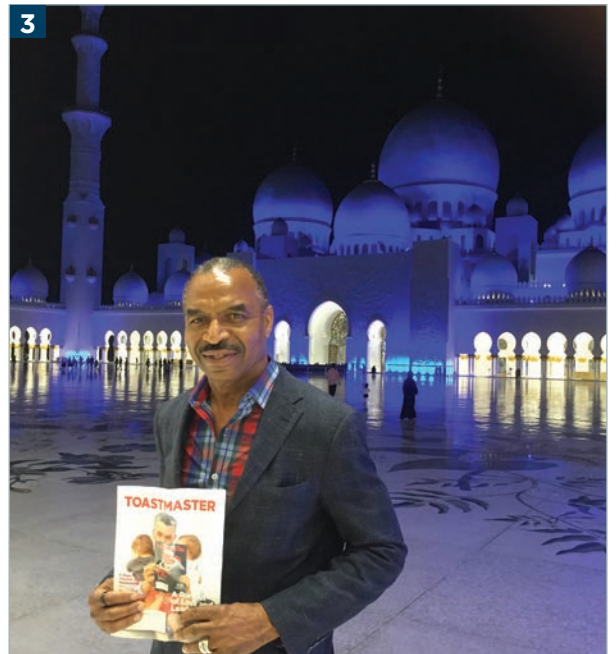
ROLLOUT #2:	Region 14
ROLLOUT #3:	Region 2
ROLLOUT #4:	Regions 6 and 7
ROLLOUT #5:	Regions 10 and 12
ROLLOUT #6:	Regions 1 and 11
ROLLOUT #7:	Regions 4 and 13
ROLLOUT #8:	Regions 3 and 5
ROLLOUT #9:	Regions 8 and 9

The rollout order is based on several factors, including the size of the regions, the availability of translated materials and the desire to have a mix of international and North American regions, with no preference for either.

Due to the fluidity of the rollout process, the exact time frame for each phase cannot be predicted. Once your region rolls out, you can either work in the Pathways learning experience or continue to work in the current education program during the transition period, when the two programs will run concurrently. When the transition ends—two years after the last region rolls out—all members will work in Pathways.

For more information, visit www.toastmasters.org/Pathways.

TRAVELING TOASTMASTER



- 1 | **VESNA KAVAZ**, from Athabasca, Alberta, Canada, stands in front of a hand-painted Easter egg on display in Zagreb, Croatia.
- 2 | **ELIZABETH BORELLI**, from Los Gatos, California, gets cozy with the elephants in Chiang Mai, Thailand.
- 3 | **STEPHEN GILES**, from Dallas, Texas, takes in the view at the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates.
- 4 | **BERNICE COCKLE**, from Burlington, Ontario, Canada, poses with her family while on vacation at the Jewel Resort in Montego Bay, Jamaica.



View more photos on Toastmasters International Official Fan Page on Facebook.



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

Rising from the Shadows of War

How Toastmasters helped me cope with PTSD and reshape my brain.

BY SAEED FASSAIE, ACS

War changed my life. In 1980, Iraq invaded Iran and a horrifying conflict raged on between the two countries for eight years. In 1983, I was drafted into military service in Iran to fight in a war I didn't believe in, for a government I opposed. That service left me with serious psychological and emotional scars. I will never forget the tragedies I witnessed, including the death of a friend. Years later, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) paralyzed me. I found giving my full attention to certain activities very difficult because of my obsessive inward focus on debilitating symptoms, including heart palpitations and chest pain.

This all started when my friend was shot dead. The scene was harrowing: A bullet had torn through his chest and his heart had been pushed partly through his ribs. After I witnessed that, anything related to the heart or chest, or to war or other violent scenes, could fire up a circuit in my brain that automatically triggered my symptoms. It seemed to be completely out of my control. That inner focus, coupled with chest pain, would trigger feelings of disempowerment and despair, anger and frustration, as well as the fear of heart attack and death.

It is difficult to perceive the outside world when looking through a microscope, but I couldn't pull my eyes away. I was terrified of the flashbacks and nightmares I was having.

Finally, years later, in Australia, I regained some balance through therapy and personal study. It is easier to use the word "recovery" for physical injuries or illnesses, as those are more tangible and can be measured more easily. When it comes to nervous illness and psychological disorders, it is harder to gauge improvement. Disruptive circuits in my brain had been dominating my moods, thoughts and physical state—and quite simply, my life. After receiving professional help I became less paranoid, but still many images, memories and even thoughts could trigger my symptoms and make me startled and unsettled. I had to find ways to lessen their effects. This meant I had to make major changes deep within my own psyche, changing my biological nature.



Saeed Fassaie

I felt dizzy, my mouth was dry,
and I had shortness of breath.
I whispered in amazement:
This is fantastic!

During my first job at a consulting firm in Sydney, in 2001, I deliberately avoided telephone conversations and contact with clients or even my colleagues, as I was afraid of the potential humiliation of making mistakes. The firm's secretary noticed my fear of expressing myself and suggested I join a Toastmasters club.

When I visited the first time, I was impressed by the warm welcome I received. I listened to three prepared speeches and watched Table Topics. Still, I was terrified of speaking in front of total strangers.

After a few meetings I allowed my nerves to be tested during Table Topics. After that, I decided to give my first prepared speech: the Ice Breaker. Although I had been living with my own familiar fears for so long, it was amazing to notice that the fear of public speaking didn't fire the unwanted circuits in my brain; I felt something different and very powerful, which overshadowed my

other fears. Surprisingly, speaking didn't trigger my heart palpitations either. Instead I felt dizzy, my mouth was dry, and I had a shortness of breath. I whispered in amazement: *This is fantastic!*

Considering the shadows in my head, I realized that Toastmasters was exactly what I needed: to put myself in a situation where my inward focus would be overpowered by an external activity, dealing with the fear of a real challenge instead of being consumed by the unreal fears in my head.

Similarly, with the guidance of a therapist, I applied a few more methods to stabilize new and constructive brain circuits and get on with my life. It was neither simple nor easy, but my future depended on reshaping my brain, and I managed to make that happen. My experience is a testament to the positive impact the Toastmasters program can have on one's mental state. **T**

SAEED FASSAIE, ACS, is a member of Lane Cove Toastmasters club in Australia. He is a design manager at SRG Limited and author of *Rising From the Shadows*, a memoir about revolution in Iran and his struggle with post-traumatic stress disorder.



From the Kitchen to the Stage

Former executive chef finds peace at the podium after two decades of cooking.

BY MELANIE D.G. KAPLAN

The first time Heather Turner, ACG, ALB, went to a Toastmasters meeting, she was 18 years old and painfully shy—the opposite of the easy, articulate communicator she is today. Feeling awkward, she didn't return for a couple of decades.

A graduate of the Culinary Institute of America, Turner has been an executive chef in Vermont at the Cliff House at Stowe Mountain Resort and at Harvest Market in Stowe, and on Cape Cod at The Olde Inn. In 2003, she hung up her apron and founded Forfeng Designs, a hospitality consulting business, and Forfeng Media, offering social media training and workshops. She continues that work today, speaking at conferences around the United States and hosting webinars on social media. She is also marketing manager for the Professional Association of Innkeepers International (PAII).

Turner has long since overcome feelings of awkwardness from her first Toastmasters experience and is active in three clubs in Connecticut, Cromwell Community Toastmasters, Speech Weavers club and Mass Mutual club, and has served as area director. She received the 2013-2014 District 53 Governor's Award for her dedication to excellence in communication and servant leadership. Heather recently talked to us about cooking, short tempers and her career in public speaking.

What inspired you to join Toastmasters?

I used to be really shy, so someone suggested it as a way to get out of my shell. At my first meeting, I was the youngest person by decades, and all the members were men. It was very formal, and nobody smiled—nothing like it is today.

When did you learn how to cook?

I learned in my first job in Kingston, New York, when I was 13. I've always been a bit of a bookworm, and my appetite for

books outweighed the amount of money I had to spend to buy them. So I got a job at a gourmet café and catering company. I remember they had a “death by chocolate” cake that took three days to make.

Preparing food with others requires a lot of communication. What did you learn from that?

In my first job, the kitchen was small; we all worked around an island and had to be very coordinated. Over the years I developed a really bad temper, primarily I think, because I worked with a lot of chefs who worked that way—yelling, screaming, throwing things.

My breaking point came on New Year's Eve at the Cliff House at Stowe Mountain Resort. At 1 or 2 a.m. we were super busy and running low on food when a server dropped our last lamb rack and filet mignon on the floor. I freaked out and went nuts on her. As she stood on the other side of the line, tears streaming down her face, I had this aha moment and thought, *what am I doing?* I had high blood pressure, an ulcer, and I was making this poor lady cry. From then on, it was different.

Are chefs notoriously bad communicators?

I think there's a fine line between management and uber-management. Most of the best-run kitchens are either so well organized that they run seamlessly or they're run like a dictatorship and everyone is afraid of the chef. Many of my Toastmasters talks include the crazy chefs I've worked for. I've got the French accent down pretty well.

When did you make your career move?

After 20 years of cooking, I got burned out. I'd always had an interest in graphic design, and so I set out with a computer and a digital camera to do web design for restaurants. My business has evolved significantly since then.



“A well-run kitchen is like a well-run Toastmasters club with all sorts of personalities that mesh well.”

– HEATHER TURNER, ACG, ALB

At the Fall 2014 District 53 Conference, Cromwell Community Club member Heather Turner received the 2013–2014 District 53 Governor’s Award and Bill Sullivan, ACS, ALB, won the Humorous Speech Contest.

What made you join a club again after so many years?

When I started my business in 2003, I was doing workshops and getting engagements to speak in front of large groups at lodging conferences. At one conference, they needed someone to speak to a crowd of about 500. I got up and froze for what felt like 20 minutes. I remember thinking it would be nice to be more polished. I wanted to learn how to slow down to make points so people would remember them.

How has cooking prepared you for leadership roles in Toastmasters?

A well-run kitchen is like a well-run Toastmasters club with all sorts of personalities that mesh well. If you have someone who is really egotistical, you get conflict. If you get people working for the common good, you can work smoothly together and make progress.

What have you learned about public speaking?

Slow down! When I speak now, I speak a lot slower. Early on, when speaking at a seminar, I tried to cram as much information as I could into a 60- or 90-minute presentation. As I slowed down, feedback showed me that my audience had better retention rates.

Tell us about your audiences.

When I do workshops, maybe I’ll have 12 in the audience. When I speak at conferences, I get 50 to 600 people. Generally, it’s for those in the lodging industry, but I’ve done presentations for Realtors and insurance companies. I also do hands-on social media training webinars.

How is running a webinar different from public speaking?


You have to be comfortable with the technology. When you’re speaking to an audience, you can see them. Are they bored or puzzled? Do they have questions? Are they paying attention or playing on their phone? In a webinar, you can’t see any of that because you’re talking to a computer. The only sign you have that someone isn’t paying attention is an indicator that shows they’ve switched to another tab on their screen.

There’s a time lag between when the presenter shows something and when it shows up on a laptop (or on the participants’ computers). I use both my main desktop and a laptop, but I talk to the laptop because the timing is more aligned to what the audience sees.

How much has Toastmasters influenced your social life?

Half of my friends are innkeepers and the other half are Toastmasters. My Toastmasters friends are of every age, every profession and from every walk of life. I enjoy mentoring new members and seeing how people interact. When we have guests, I encourage them to visit other clubs because each has its own dynamic.

Do you still cook?

I do! My husband does about one-third of the cooking and I do the rest. We cook everything—Indian, Moroccan, French, Mexican. My vice? Goat cheese. 

MELANIE D.G. KAPLAN is based in Washington, D.C., and writes for many publications, including *National Parks magazine* and *The Washington Post*. View her website at melaniedgkaplan.com.

Open Doors of Opportunity

The Ralph C. Smedley Memorial Fund® launches new phase.

“Here we are, with tremendous opportunity before us. I challenge you to get to work to bring us up to a higher level of service. Let us share with others the benefits we have gained for ourselves.”

— RALPH C. SMEDLEY,
FOUNDER OF TOASTMASTERS INTERNATIONAL

Since its start in 1924, the Toastmasters program has benefited millions of people worldwide. With renewed skill and confidence, members have conquered fears, found their voices and become leaders in their communities. Like many of the organization’s current volunteer leaders, Ralph Smedley was motivated by the idea of helping others. He knew that as people become better speakers, they gain confidence and skill in other areas as well. He said, “As we gain speech facility, we gain in our thinking and in our listening powers. We extend our horizons and enlarge our interests. We become better neighbors. We help in the cause of human progress.”

Smedley eventually assigned all rights to the organization he founded to Toastmasters International. “I would rather be rich in friendship than in money,” he said. “It is a privilege to make a contribution to the welfare of my fellow man.”

After Smedley died on September 11, 1965, the Ralph C. Smedley Memorial Fund was established in his memory, for the purpose of advancing the mission of Toastmasters International through the research, development and distribution of educational programs and materials relating to communication and leadership in a wide range of cultural, social and economic situations. On November 20, 1965, the Toastmasters Board of Directors unanimously voted that the Smedley Fund may never be comingled with general funds or used for operating or capital expenditures of Toastmasters International.

Over the years, money has been raised through the generosity of individuals, clubs and corporations in the form of honorary and memorial contributions, bequests, life insurance, grants and matching gifts. The Smedley Fund has supported educational programming such as a youth market research project, market



research on the awareness of Toastmasters International programs, and most recently the development of the Toastmasters Pathways learning experience.

Research and Development

The Ralph C. Smedley Memorial Fund is an opportunity for members to participate in keeping Smedley’s vision alive. Member contributions (which are tax deductible in the United States) support research and development and guide the creation of future programs that empower individuals to become more confident communicators and leaders.

As the organization grows, Toastmasters International must evolve to meet members’ changing needs and remain innovative to stay relevant in the marketplace. Smedley Fund contributions will support areas of greatest need.

Based on member feedback on a benchmark survey, the Smedley Fund can be used to explore opportunities like the following:

Educational Materials

Smedley Fund contributions can enhance and expand education to meet the specific needs of more individuals in culturally diverse environments. Examples include advancing educational technology, increasing the offering of translated materials, creating materials for young adults in colleges and universities, and modifying materials for the disabled.

“The most fulfilling part of our work is the expectation that it will help make the Toastmasters journey easier for many.”

BUNZO SUZUKI, ACG, CL, VOLUNTEER CHIEF REVIEWER,
CHIEF AMBASSADOR • JAPAN



Educational Materials



Geographic Initiatives



Youth Outreach



Hardship Assistance



Emergency Relief

“All civilization, all progress, depends on the communication of ideas.”

— RALPH C. SMEDLEY

Geographic Initiatives

Although Toastmasters serves approximately 345,000 members in 142 countries, it is essential to invest in new and developing markets in order to make the program accessible to more people. Smedley Fund contributions will provide greater access to the Toastmasters learning experience by helping build and grow clubs in territories where Toastmasters does not have a presence or is experiencing growth challenges.

“Some challenges of developing markets include language barriers, distribution of marketing materials, legalities, and the cultural concept of understanding a nonprofit such as Toastmasters. However, as leaders, we grow and learn. And with this knowledge we will continue to grow Toastmasters in Brazil.”

BILL MCCROSSEN, ALB • BRAZIL

Youth Outreach

Today’s youth do not have enough opportunities to practice public speaking and leadership. Smedley Fund contributions can build the confidence of tomorrow’s leaders by offsetting the costs of programs and materials, such as the Youth Leadership Program, for those younger than age 18.

“It’s inspirational to watch students grow their confidence and leadership skills that will help them throughout their life!”

SARAH ROLLINS, YOUTH LEADERSHIP PROGRAM COORDINATOR • UNITED STATES

Hardship Assistance

Individuals in hardship situations need encouragement and hope for the future. Smedley Fund contributions can give these people a helping hand by covering membership costs for those in homeless shelters, transitional living, rehabilitation or correctional facilities and working to make a positive change in their life.

“Everything about the Mission Impossible Toastmasters club runs counter to the perception of what a homeless person is. You just have to give them the chance to reveal the gem hidden side.”

TERESA LOOMIS, CC, CL, CLUB PRESIDENT, MISSION IMPOSSIBLE TOASTMASTERS CLUB • UNITED STATES

Emergency Relief

Economic challenges, natural and man-made disasters are a reality to many. Contributions can provide relief to those suffering losses due to extreme economic hardship or disasters by covering the costs of their Toastmasters dues. This can include individuals who wish to obtain or retain their membership, but do not have the means to do so.

“During one of the worst natural disasters in modern history, Hurricane Katrina, many Toastmasters members were affected. They experienced a disruption of services and club meetings. Dues were waived and any lost materials were replaced without charge.”

JON GREINER, DTM, PAST INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT (2004-2005) • UNITED STATES

You Can Make a Difference

How has Toastmasters changed your life? The Ralph C. Smedley Memorial Fund is an opportunity for you to pay it forward and help change the lives of others around the world.

As a nonprofit organization, Toastmasters International relies on the support of volunteers, members and contributors. Your contribution will help people to reach their greatest potential and become confident communicators and leaders.

“Toastmasters International has opened doors of opportunity in my life, and I have seen it do the same for countless others around the globe. I am proud to embrace and extend our founder’s vision and give back liberally to the Ralph Smedley C. Memorial Fund.”

“Quality educational products highlight the success of our worldwide brand, and the Smedley Fund enables the development of superior educational resources. Each gift leaves a legacy of excellence that delivers dynamic, high value programs to our worldwide membership. This investment pays big dividends in personal and professional growth. Will you be a part of it? I challenge you to give generously and support the Ralph C. Smedley Memorial Fund.”

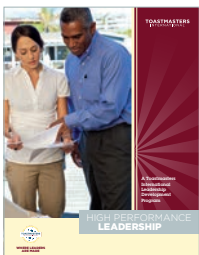
MICHAEL NOTARO, DTM, PAST INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT (2011-2012) • UNITED STATES

To learn more about the Ralph C. Smedley Memorial Fund, please visit www.toastmasters.org/smedley. 

Leadership Lessons

FROM THE REAL WORLD BY DAVE ZIELINSKI

How to advance your skills with a High Performance Leadership project.



The best way to build leadership skills isn't to read leadership books, attend training classes or watch instructional videos. While those methods can be helpful and necessary, the best way to develop as a leader is to test and grow your skills in the trenches—in the crucible of real-world leadership scenarios.

That's the essence of Toastmasters' High Performance Leadership (HPL) program, in which you take on a practical project that enables you to hone leadership skills in areas like developing a vision, goal-setting, conflict management and teambuilding. Working in the High Performance Leadership manual guides you through the steps you need to succeed. One of the first steps is assembling a guidance committee to advise you through your project.

Completing the HPL program is required to earn a DTM. In the Toastmasters Pathways learning experience, the new education program launching next year, the HPL will continue to be a big part of the program; however, it won't be required to earn a DTM.

(Read more about the Pathways HPL in the accompanying article on page 19.)

The following members have completed their HPL projects either through events orchestrated outside the Toastmasters environment, such as organizing a TEDx event, or with in-club projects such as creating a structured mentorship program. They offer advice on how to choose the right project and extract the most value from leadership lessons learned along the way.



PRIYANKA KOMALA, DTM

Washington, D.C.
Project: Organizing a speech contest

When Priyanka Komala was just 5 years old and living in India, she stepped onstage and gave an impromptu speech. It was a harbinger of future success: She went on to become an accomplished Toastmaster serving as a division governor and club coach.

Komala is a technology director at The National Academy of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine in Washington, D.C., as well as a member of the National Academies Toastmasters club. She chose to organize an area speech contest for her HPL project. More than 30 members attended. Komala says she chose the project because she knew it wouldn't be easy. Lessons she learned:

Reach out. When Komala began planning her project, no one in her club had experience with the process. She asked others, including some area governors, for input on how to choose the



best project. The process of reaching out taught her the value of asking for help.

“It’s okay to be vulnerable as a leader,” she says, “and let others know you don’t have knowledge in certain areas. The only way to learn is to acknowledge that you might not have all the answers.”

She also points out that not everyone has time to help. “You have to be okay with hearing no from people.” That gave Komala the opportunity, for example, to ask if they knew others who might have advice to offer. She received suggestions that turned into valuable contacts.

Influence without authority. Delegating tasks to those assisting her didn’t always come naturally to Komala. “I had to delegate more than I was used to,” she says, “but empowering and trusting those on my team was key to getting the job done. Taking on more of an influential, rather than authoritative, role was enlightening to me and often created better team dynamics.”

Accept hiccups. As someone with an admitted perfectionist streak, Komala came to accept that not everything in her project would go smoothly. “Things don’t always shape up the way you plan, so you have to see it as part of the process and not take it personally,” she says. “It helps you be more creative in problem solving.”

Showing you care. The HPL also underscored for Komala that showing concern for your colleagues is a key to leading

well. “At the end of the day, what really matters is being kind to people,” she says. “When you acknowledge that your team members have lives and challenges outside of Toastmasters, it helps build rapport.”



EDWARD WEDLER, DTM

Annapolis Valley, Nova Scotia, Canada
Project: Organizing a TEDx event

Edward Wedler had no shortage of promising ideas for his project, but one stood apart from the others. Wedler, a member of the Annapolis Valley Toastmasters in Nova Scotia, Canada, who splits his time between Florida and Canada, opted to organize a TEDx event. TED stands

for Technology, Entertainment and Design. A TEDx is an independently run TED-like event that attracts those seeking to share and exchange ideas to solve problems or address pressing issues.

“I wanted to bring thought leaders together to discuss ideas about attracting the next generation of people and industries to rural communities,” says Wedler, an Ambassador for the Toastmasters Pathways learning experience.

Wedler knew hosting a successful TEDx wouldn’t be easy. Such events require a high-interest theme to attract quality speakers



“I learned as a leader that sometimes you have to step in and make decisions or say no if things are heading in the wrong direction.”

— EDWARD WEDLER, DTM

and meet audience expectations. In his favor were TEDx’s proven formula, strong track record and supportive service.

Applying a global concept locally. Wedler says the project taught him how to orchestrate a community-driven event and seek and coordinate high-quality presenters from a broad range of backgrounds. “I wanted to learn how to take a global concept like TED and apply it locally,” Wedler says. “We identified nine finalist speakers from a list of 29, each of whom spoke for about 15 minutes, and we had an experienced Toastmaster act as master of ceremonies.”

Planning and execution of the event took five months, and 50 volunteers assisted along the way.

Success and failure. Following the event, in a presentation to his club, Wedler highlighted what he perceived as his strengths and weaknesses in leading the project. Strengths included surrounding himself with good people and getting tasks done on time and within budget. Wedler used Google Docs, arranged team Skype meetings and designed effective marketing posters and multimedia emails as part of the project.

His weaknesses? “There are times I think I could have been firmer in making decisions myself rather than delegating.”

One challenge was managing the event’s finances. “I learned as a leader that sometimes you have to step in and make decisions or say no if things are heading in the wrong direction,” he says. The key to success, Wedler believes, is setting achievable project steps or milestones and monitoring them throughout the process.

Beyond Toastmasters. Wedler believes there are multiple advantages to staging a project outside of Toastmasters. “HPL projects done outside the Toastmasters comfort zone help strengthen our brand image, create good public relations and attract new

members,” he says. “When the event succeeds, it celebrates Toastmasters and becomes a great marketing tool.”

Seeking feedback. Wedler solicited feedback from his team on his performance as a leader. “I think it’s important to get feedback from those you lead during the project as well as at its end,” he says. Such feedback can help leaders make valuable mid-course corrections.

Wedler believes there are two types of leaders: those who lead through authority and those who lead through example and persuasion. “This project really helped me hone the latter skills,” he says.



MARK BENSINK, ACB, ALB
Thousand Oaks, California
Project: Improving mentorship program

After Mark Bensink earned his CC and CL awards, his club’s vice president education suggested that he carry out an HPL project to revitalize the club’s mentorship program.

“This was the perfect topic for me, as I had spent many years as an adult educator focusing on

mentorship and coaching in one of my past jobs,” says Bensink, now a director of global health economics at Amgen in Newbury Park, California.

Bensink created a vision for his project around the idea of the “virtuous circle,” a concept he practices as a martial arts instructor. A virtuous circle refers to a beneficial cycle of events where each event has a positive effect on the next. Bensink, a member of the Amgen Noon Talkers in Thousand Oaks, California, applied the concept to the practice of mentoring.

PATHWAYS HPL DRAWS PRAISE

The Toastmasters Pathways learning experience

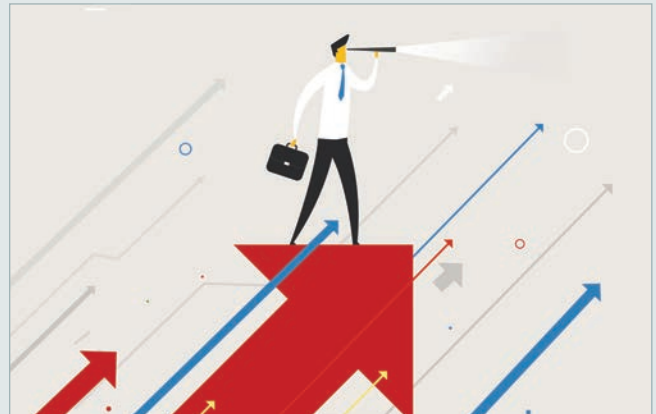
will include a streamlined version of the High Performance Leadership (HPL) program.

The revised HPL is one of nearly 60 learning projects featured in Pathways, the new education program launching next year. In the current education program, members complete the HPL by working in a 70-page manual and doing a personal project. In Pathways, you will work in an online HPL learning project and carry out a personal project.

In revising the current HPL, the Pathways development team simplified some of the language in the manual and condensed the content while still maintaining the essence of the program. The Pathways HPL features worksheets to help with planning your project (with such categories as “budget” and “key deliverables”), marking your progress and holding team meetings with members of your guidance committee.

Marlon Shaw, ACS, ALB, who reviewed the new HPL last year as part of the Pathways content pilot, says it is more relevant to what people do in the workplace.

“The content is not much different, but what I liked about it is the forms that are available for recording and tracking your work,” says Shaw, a speaking coach in Pickering, Ontario, Canada. “It matches what executives in the professional world expect team leaders to do in terms of tracking their work.”



Shaw completed his HPL project last year, helping teenagers at his church develop communication and leadership skills.

Seema Sureshkumar, DTM, says she, too, is impressed with the tools that the revised HPL provides for members, noting that she had to create many of her own worksheets for her HPL project. “I found it more streamlined, and it has more questionnaires and forms and evaluation notes that might really help members,” says Sureshkumar, who reviewed the new HPL as part of the content pilot.

An administrator at Syracuse University in New York, she also teaches classical Indian dance to youngsters between 5 and 10, and her HPL project consisted of helping her dance students develop public speaking skills that they use in performance.

Three Levels of Mentoring. Working with a small team of club members and his HPL guidance committee, Bensink developed a structured mentorship program based on three levels of mentoring:

At Level 1, new club members receive mentoring for their first three speeches in the *Competent Communication* manual and first three projects in the *Competent Leadership* manual.

At Level 2, these new members deliver speeches 4, 5 and 6 in the CC manual, at the same time becoming mentors to newly arriving members. The new mentors, in turn, are mentored by senior club members, who hone their leadership skills.

At Level 3, members give speeches 7 through 10 in the CC manual. Here senior club members—those completing advanced levels—are asked to find a similarly advanced member to form a mentorship team. “This is a co-mentorship relationship where people might spend an hour together switching roles between mentor and mentee to further build skills,” Bensink says.

Learning your style. The project gave Bensink a better understanding of his own leadership style as well as where his mentoring skills needed improvement. “The amount of mentoring I did myself helped me better understand the mentor-mentee relationship and drive the mentoring vision for others,” he says. “It’s a mastery paradigm. When you do something for a long time and get comfortable with it you’re in a better position to lead and teach it.”

Measuring progress. The project also gave Bensink a greater appreciation for the value of meeting goals in increments. “Many times we set project goals and only look at the end point,” he says. “We don’t track how we’re doing at designated steps and milestones along the way.” For example, if mentors and mentees meet for just 30 minutes every two weeks, mentees can use the advice they get to develop a good speech within two months.

(continued on page 29)

Get Your CC Before the Final Countdown

Secure your Competent Communicator award before Pathways launches.

BY RAVIKANTH PONNAPALLI, CC, CL

It is a common experience in any club, and you probably have experienced it firsthand. Members are excited, motivated and appear to be committed at the time of joining. But after attending a few meetings and delivering a few speeches, they disappear.

I have seen this happen with many friends and club members. We are all busy and life consistently poses challenges; I am no exception. I battle with an extremely demanding job, a two-income family structure, two school-age kids and a variety of other distractions.

Despite this, I was able to complete my Competent Communicator (CC) in less than six months from the time I joined. I hope to motivate other Toastmasters and accelerate their journeys in the program. To that end, I have compiled the following six pillars to help you achieve your goals. The golden guiding principle, in my opinion, is: *If you fail to prepare, prepare to fail.*

1 Confidence, conviction and discipline: Like other goals in life, a goal in Toastmasters requires confidence, conviction to conceive and meet your targets, discipline to practice and progress, and the application of new skills to refine your strategies.

2 Focus on the journey, not just the goal: I believe that the journey is more significant than reaching the goal itself. The path to earning your CC, your first designation, is a beautiful journey. It's no wonder many Competent Communicators come back and do another track; they learned so much—and enjoyed it.

A research paper on the successful pursuit of goals by the University of Toronto recommends avoiding tunnel vision—or a focus on *reaching* the goal rather than acquiring the needed skills. With a focus on learning, you avoid shortcuts and consider achieving the goal as a byproduct of the main goal—to acquire knowledge and practice skills to make them become second nature. In other words, you don't want to *look* good, you want to *be* good. Understanding what is needed to succeed with each Toastmasters speech project is of paramount importance. The questions you need to ask yourself include: *Did I understand the purpose of this speech? Can I apply what I learned to my future speeches?*

The following exercise gives me several clues for improvement: First, I create an audio recording of my speech and then refine it, often consulting one or two friends. Next, when it reaches a satisfactory level, I video record and review it, multiple times, each time critiquing myself as an outsider.

3 Believe in yourself and envision yourself as the best speaker: You may have joined Toastmasters because your primary goal is to overcome the fear factor. You should envision yourself as a glib and fluent speaker and be confident that you are naturally good; you only need to overcome a few hurdles to reach your potential. In Toastmasters you can remove anything that blocks your progress and let your real self shine. If you have the right spirit and expectations, your confidence can drive you forward. The first and best way to develop vision and confidence is to observe other speakers and develop a style of your own.



Don't lose steam! Do it now before Pathways becomes the new learning experience.



4 Prepare a plan: Read the *Competent Communication* manual, multiple times if necessary, from beginning to end—preferably in one sitting. Next, form a plan of approach. You know best your strengths and weaknesses, and availability. In the beginning stages, I recommend that you seek a mentor, especially for the first three to four speeches, even if you do not feel the need. Plan to work with the mentor to refine the speech before you deliver it in your club.

However, *please do not let the mentor choose the topic of the speech for you.* You need to own that part. Wade through the woods! Keep looking at topics—you will develop an eye for them. I used several resources to identify the topics of my first five speeches. Newspapers, magazines, Ted Talks, keynote speeches and conference sessions are a few to consider. It took me longer to identify and develop topics for my first four speeches, and then I got used to it.

5 Consistency and commitment to implement the plan: Take a different perspective. Promise yourself that you will do this despite other priorities in your life. Remember, it is easy to put your goal on the backburner. It can happen without your knowledge. Consistency can be attained through regular attendance, which keeps your spirit up and unscathed, and by your continuous pursuit of improvement.

6 Hard work: You may agree that there is no substitute for hard work. Choose a suitable target date to achieve a Competent Communicator award and put it on a calendar. Traverse in the reverse direction to design intermediate milestones. Schedule as many speeches as possible on the club calendar. Cancel them if you cannot prepare to your satisfaction. I noticed that a few members have all the intention but want to “do it later.” That “later” never comes for some.

No matter how old you are or what you do for living, you have joined Toastmasters for a reason—to become a better communicator and leader. You have taken the first step in that direction. This gives you an opportunity to demonstrate to yourself and to your club what you are capable of.

As they say, the real character of a person is demonstrated by what one does when nobody is watching. What are you waiting for? Nobody is watching! Don't lose the steam! *Now* is the right time to practice, refine and achieve, and become a Competent Communicator! Yes, you can do it. Good luck! **T**

RAVIKANTH PONNAPALLI, CC, CL, is a member of Spirited Speech Masters club in Houston, Texas.

MEET **MIKE STORKEY,** DTM



When Mike Storkey joined Toastmasters 25 years ago, his goal wasn't to become a better speaker or leader. He simply wanted to enjoy a social event with his wife, Lesley.

Toastmasters' 2016–2017 International President is an Australian businessman hooked on travel.

BY TOASTMASTER
MAGAZINE STAFF

Photo by Kim Kirker

But it wasn't long before Storkey was learning new skills, competing in speech contests and tackling one leadership role after another, including serving on the Board of Directors from 2010 to 2012.

And now, he is the 2016–2017 Toastmasters International President. Storkey belongs to three clubs in Queensland, Australia, including the Leaders by Design club, in which his wife, Lesley, DTM, is also a member. He says of Lesley, "She is my life partner, mentor, best friend and constant source of support." Married for more than 30 years, they have five adult children and 13 grandchildren.

Storkey worked in the real estate business for many years, becoming a highly successful salesman. In 2005 he co-founded Storkeys' Team, a facilitation and leadership organization that provides communication training. A coach and trainer (as well as a certified auctioneer), he runs the business with his wife.

Tell us about Storkeys' Team.

In providing communication and leadership training for our clients, we focus on time management, change management, delegation, teambuilding, conflict resolution, customer service and goal-setting. Our clientele is predominately local government organizations such as local councils and small-to-medium businesses in Queensland.

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

Both Lesley and I caught the travel bug as children. We both had parents in military service and spent three years in Singapore—but at different times. My father was part of the supply-support arm of the British armed services. He was stationed in Singapore when I was 7 to 10 years old. Lesley's father was in the British Royal Navy and he too was stationed in Singapore from the time Lesley was 7 to 10. Lesley likes to remind people that she and I were the same age when we

were in Singapore—however, being older, I was there earlier!

My family returned to England for a short period, and then I lived in Germany where I attended boarding school for two and a half years before returning to England and immigrating with my parents to Australia. Lesley immigrated to Australia with her parents some years later.

This experience of living in, and visiting, different countries has instilled in both of us a love of travel. Therefore, I feel confident in speaking for both of us when I say *everywhere* interests us, and the experience of meeting people and experiencing different cultures is something we embrace with a passion. Thanks to Toastmasters, the opportunity to indulge our passion and make new friends continues.

Tell us about your hobbies and interests outside of Toastmasters.

I am an avid model railroader. However, I seldom have the time to devote to the hobby. I love all types of music, especially classical. I am also an enthusiastic collector, much to Lesley's dismay! I collect matches (though they are getting hard to find these days and I have not smoked for many, many years), lapel badges (collar pins) and peaked caps (a type of hat often worn by those in the armed forces, law enforcement agencies or fire departments) from around the world.

Lesley and I share a love of theater and actually met through amateur theater, when we were cast in an Australian production that called on me to play the role of her lover. It's a role that has continued for over 30 years. In addition, I have been a Rotarian for 12 years and remain active in the organization when time permits. I'm also extremely interested in politics and history, and I can honestly say there is seldom a dull moment.

When and why did you join Toastmasters?

Lesley and I first joined the Whitsunday Toastmasters club in Cannonvale to do something



Mike and Lesley Storkey during the 2015 Toastmasters International Convention in Las Vegas.

socially together. In the town where we lived, there was plenty to do during the day, like swimming, scuba diving, sailing and fishing; however, when the sun went down social life consisted of nightclubs and bars. Toastmasters offered the opportunity to mix socially with a diverse group. We didn't join to improve our communication skills or to become leaders—but see what can happen if you participate fully in your club activities?

What motivated you to stay in Toastmasters?

The opportunities for growth as a speaker and leader encouraged me to explore both roles. Being competitive by nature, I entered our club's Table Topics competition and I won two district speech contests: Table Topics and Evaluation.

Once my competitive nature had been satisfied, I became an area governor (now called area director); a leadership role I still claim is the most rewarding in the organization. The connection with members gave me the impetus to serve and represent their interests to the best of my ability: a challenge that still motivates me today.

How has Toastmasters helped you in your personal and/or professional life?

My confidence over the past 25 years when dealing with all sections of the community has grown as a direct result of what

I have learned and practiced regularly in my club, as well as from the evaluations I have received.

One major skill Toastmasters has taught me is to be an effective listener. I learned to ask for clarification rather than assume I had heard correctly and jump to conclusions. We should all remember that Toastmasters is not here to make us better Toastmasters but to make us better people, who can use the skills we hone in our clubs in our family, business and community lives.

Have you had any Toastmasters mentors through the years?

Without mentors I would not be where I am now. My early club mentors encouraged me to step outside my comfort zone and start my Toastmasters journey in earnest. They pushed me to step up and seize an opportunity—sometimes suggesting I do it, sometimes urging me to do it and other times pushing me to do it. Other mentors later encouraged me to tackle the doubts and misgivings I had about taking on higher leadership roles.

Finally, Clare Murphy, DTM, PID, fed up with me bemoaning what I perceived as a lack of direction in the organization, challenged me to get up off my you know what and run for international director if I was so concerned.

Currently, I have four mentors, one of whom is a past international director in Texas and two who are in my home district. My fourth mentor is my life partner. Without these people I probably would no longer be a Toastmaster.

What advice would you give to someone seeking a leadership position for the first time?

Just do it—you never know where it will lead. Whether you love the journey or want to get off at the next stop, it is an experience everyone should have. You will never know until you try, and to miss the opportunity will leave you wondering for the rest of your life, *What if?*

What is a favorite public speaking memory of yours?

Receiving my first standing ovation, which came after I gave a keynote—"Step Up, Step Out and Seize the Opportunity"—at a district conference, and then having members personally thank me for my presentation. Very humbling.

What motivated you to run for the office of International President?

I don't believe that anyone joins the organization to become the International President. I know that I didn't. It was a series of events, opportunities and discussions that led me to the confrontation with my mentor over the dinner table that motivated me to run for the position of the last international director from Districts Not Assigned to Regions (DNAR) in 2009. I lost but ran unopposed the next year for the position of first international director from Region 12 (Australia and New Zealand). It is funny how things turn out!



ABOVE: Mike and Lesley stand together with their children, some of their grandchildren and Lesley's mother, for a family reunion.

RIGHT: The couple traveled in 2008 to western North America where they enjoyed a view of the Rocky Mountains.



What aspect of Toastmasters do you like best?

Mentoring is the reason I will continue to stay a Toastmaster after my term on the Board concludes. The opportunity to help another person realize their potential is not to be missed. I believe that everyone is a mentor even though many never realize it. For me, mentoring stands for:

MEMBERS
ENTHUSIASTICALLY
NURTURING
TRAINING
OTHERS
REGULARLY (and)
IDENTIFYING
NEW
GOALS

I also believe that all DTMs should think of the acronym as standing for Dedicated to Mentoring. Our organization's future depends on our current members mentoring the speakers and leaders of the future.

The Toastmasters Pathways learning experience is scheduled to launch during your term. What will this new program mean to members?

Toastmasters Pathways is the first major change in our organization's education program in many years, and as such, is a

key event in the life of every member. The Ambassadors and Learning Masters, who are among the volunteers contributing to Pathways, have done a sterling job!

Members are going to be excited about Pathways once they experience it and discover the many benefits: the opportunity to work online and use interactive tools; the learning that's tailored to individual goals, and all the wide-ranging, relevant skills they can develop. This updated education program provides a learning experience that will help members flourish in all areas of their lives.

So much work has gone into building this program; I'm thrilled to see it being implemented.

What are your goals for your year in office?

A couple of areas I hope to see addressed in the coming year are those of membership retention and youth participation. While membership growth is an important goal, I believe our organization's first responsibility is to those members we already have. Therefore, a greater emphasis on meeting our current members' needs is essential. I'm convinced the Pathways learning experience will address many of those needs and current members will be eager to try it out!

I look forward to working with you all in the year ahead. **T**



Finding the Funny

Prospect your past to dig up humorous stories for future speeches.

BY CRAIG HARRISON, DTM

"Laugh and the world laughs with you."

— ELLA WHEELER WILCOX

As a professional speaker and co-founder of the Toastmasters specialty club LaughLovers, I am often asked about how to find funny material to put in future speeches. People always say, "Nothing funny ever happens to me." And yet when I'm coaching them, as we explore their lives we find myriad experiences that are, in retrospect, funny. Even better, the humor found in their unique stories is universal. We can *all* relate to their seemingly personal experiences.

What about you? Can you readily recall experiences that would make for

humorous speeches? Even past travails and traumas may now be ripe for comedic retelling. After all, that classic comedy formula often rings true: Tragedy + Time = Comedy.

For you as a speechmaker searching for humorous material, I recommend you eschew using other peoples' humor, the retelling of apocryphal stories or recounting of clichéd jokes. Instead, I invite you to become a raconteur of your own stories.

You are seen as a confident speaker when you can tell humorous stories that are self-effacing, making light of your own weaknesses, foibles and mistakes. We've all fallen short, said the wrong thing, meant well and messed up, and made boneheaded mistakes. Laughing at them is actually therapeutic.

Laughing at the Man in the Mirror

"You endear yourself to listeners when you share vulnerability," according to Mr. Jollytologist®, Allen Klein, a Certified Speaking Professional (CSP). Klein is the author of *The Healing Power of Humor* and *Learning to Laugh When You Feel Like Crying*. "Poking fun at yourself in stories and speeches shows your humanity," he says, "and helps listeners relate to your experiences, which they relive with you when you retell your stories. When we laugh together, like crying together, we bond!"

Interview Yourself

Next are some questions to ask yourself (or have a partner ask you) to identify

personal material from which to fashion humorous stories for speeches.

- ▶ Describe a time when something went wrong! What was it? Give us the gory details. What were the ramifications? Were the stakes high? Were the penalties painful? Do tell!
- ▶ Have you ever been in the wrong place at the wrong time? What was that like? How did you feel? Describe the inner dialogue that accompanied those fateful moments. Did you experience dread, trepidation or consternation? We want to know.
- ▶ Faux pas! Did you ever put your foot in your mouth by saying the wrong thing to the wrong person, or say something inappropriate at the wrong time? Were the authorities involved? In-laws? Parents? Children? Recreate that dramatic dialog!
- ▶ How about the *first* time you did something? The first time you drove a car, traveled overseas, went on a blind date, met your boss or cooked a soufflé. Relive the experience and all that it encompassed.
- ▶ Did you survive a traumatic experience you can now look back upon with a

“Protect your audience by making yourself the butt of the jokes and humor in your presentations and they’ll laugh more, and more genuinely.”

— LARRY WILDE

fresh perspective? Once we’ve had time to accept or understand what happened, we can share the horror and its humor with others.

- ▶ Ever gotten really, really lost? Oh, it can be a matter of degrees! Were maps involved? Landmarks? Misunderstandings? We want to know the choices and consequences.
- ▶ Ever broken something expensive, rare or sacred? Did someone see you? Did you try to fix it? Did you make it better or worse? There’s nothing like calamity compounded by ineptitude. Share your foibles!

Congratulations, you’ve now uncovered great stories to tell in your presentations. Now what?

Developing Your Stories

After answering the questions above, take a particular experience and now, close

your eyes and relive the experience in all its rich detail. According to humorist Ray Engan, ACB, of **SenseiHumor.com**, and member of Toast of Petaluma club in California, people often fall down on remembering and relating the story details. “They leave out details that would make something funny. They’ll just say, ‘I drove a car to the bar.’ Yet if they really went back and remembered, they’d recall that they were driving a *pink 1972 Ford Pinto* that had half its side caved in ‘cause it *rolled three times* and it really looked like *a terrarium on wheels*, and they walked up like a human *gecko*.” These details delight the audience and add to your presentation’s humor.

You may choose to record your reminiscences into a microphone, or perhaps recount the experience to a friend or family or club member. You may want to tell it a few times to different people to see what *else* you remember, and also to gauge

IMPROVE YOUR HUMOR WITH THE *HUMOROUSLY SPEAKING* MANUAL

BY BILL BROWN, DTM

As a four-time vice president education, I have frequently been asked by newly minted CC’s: “Which manuals should I work on next?” I always recommend that they go through the *Humorously Speaking* manual – but not necessarily right away. In my opinion, that manual is the hardest of all of the Toastmasters Advanced Manuals, because it is the only one with an objective standard. If they don’t laugh, you weren’t funny.

That is actually good, though. It forces you to think about what you said and why you got the reaction that you did. Why didn’t they laugh? Was it because you set up the joke incorrectly? Was it because it was one of those “I guess you had to be there” jokes? Or was it just plain not funny? (I’ve certainly told a lot of those.)

If you put in the time to seriously answer those questions, you will improve. And you will get more laughs.

I have found that one of the best ways to improve your “funny bone” is to get around funny people. If there is a humor-oriented Toastmasters club in your

vicinity, by all means, join it—and attend every meeting. In addition, become a student of humor. Understand the structure of jokes. There are proven techniques that you can apply.

But the most important way to learn humor is to do it. The *Humorously Speaking* manual is certainly a challenge. If you want to start a little slower, go for the *Entertaining Speaker* manual. (That’s what I did.) There your task is to make them smile. Then, when you have mastered that skill, roll up your sleeves and go for the laughs. By the time you finish the *Humorously Speaking* manual, you will be amazed at how much funnier you have become. And that is no joke.

Bill Brown, DTM, is a Speech Delivery Coach from Las Vegas and a member of Powerhouse Pros, which specializes in observational humor. Learn more at billbrownspeechcoach.com.

how others react to it. Consider telling it at a local story swap or gathering where tales are told. For some, this may be at a café; for others, a tavern!

Crafting Your Content

Now, write your story down for telling conversationally. Details are key here. Remember, specific is terrific! Answer the following questions about each particular experience:

- ▶ What was the context for a given story? (Where and when did this experience take place? Describe it with adjectives to paint the picture for the listener.)
- ▶ Who were the characters? (Describe them by their physical attributes: the way they sounded, thought, dressed, stood and carried themselves.)
- ▶ Can you attach distinctive voices and appropriate accents to key characters? (This helps the listener track the story effortlessly and adds richness to the tale.)
- ▶ What were the stakes? (The more severe, the more dramatic!)
- ▶ Can you remember key dialogue? (Recreate it.)
- ▶ What were the pivotal plot points?
- ▶ Are there surprises in your story? (Understand them, where they fit, and how and when they are to be revealed for maximum impact, whether comedic or dramatic.)

Finding the Funny

Through the use of this process I've reviewed experiences in my life and uncovered numerous events that helped me complete the *Entertaining Speaker*, *Humorously Speaking* and *Storytelling* speech manuals:

As a child I erected my lemonade stand—during the Berkeley (California) riots of the late '60s, with tear gas and mayhem in the air.

For a junior high school English assignment to write original poetry, my friend and I instead plagiarized lyrics from popular songs—only to be undone when our instructor asked us in class to recite our poems and other kids who knew the

songs started to recite along with us. (I've since embraced honesty unconditionally!)

As a college student, a summer job at an industrial factory saw me ill-equipped to operate heavy equipment. Calamities ensued as I dropped a forklift load of supplies on nearby railroad tracks as a train approached, ran out of gas while driving a flatbed truck—only to learn such trucks have *two* gas tanks—and unintentionally learned multiple ways to jam and ruin expensive radial arm saws.

The Why in Funny

What makes such stories funny? I asked Engan, a past District 57 Humorous Speech Contest winner, about his definition of humor. He cited the work of HuRL, the Humor Research Lab (humorresearchlab.org) and the definition put forth by Peter McGraw

Missteps, accidents, lapses of judgment, naïveté and bad luck tend to be funny to others when they listen to stories. Your personal story has universal implications.

and Joel Warner, the authors of *The Humor Code*: “Humor is a benign violation of a norm that surprises you.” As Engan explains it, “If I fall down and don't hurt myself, it's hysterical to you. If I've hurt myself then it's not funny, but if there's no pain, then that's funny.”

No doubt you, too, have stories that can be funny when related to others. We've all had bad hair days, bad school days and bad work days. We've all had family functions that flopped or performances that fell flat. It's what makes us human! If we can laugh at it, our audience can too.

Keeping Your Audience Safe

According to standup comedian, actor and motivational speaker Larry Wilde of Carmel, California, audiences would rather laugh at your foibles than their own! The author of 53 books on humor, Wilde contrasts the attack approach of comics like Don Rickles, who insult their audiences, with the ways in which most comedians


and entertainers will serve themselves up as the subject for laughter. “Audiences need to feel safe,” he says. “They come to be entertained, not attacked. Protect your audience by making yourself the butt of the jokes and humor in your presentations and they'll laugh more, and more genuinely.”

Horror to Humor

Missteps, accidents, lapses of judgment, naïveté and bad luck tend to be funny to others when they listen to stories. Your personal story has universal implications. And remember, audiences love stories!

Engan cites a London Business School study about what audiences remember. “If I fill my speech with statistics, my audience remembers 3 percent. If I show a pretty picture behind me (the PowerPoint effect), it goes up to 15–20 percent. If I tell a story, the rate of retention rises to

50 percent, and if that story is funny, retention skyrockets to about 70 percent.” And that's the story of why personal stories of a humorous nature trump studies and statistics, win contests, and get told and retold.

It's time to go prospecting in your past to uncover hidden story treasures from your own life, and share them with the world! To paraphrase a popular quote, “When you can laugh at yourself, the world laughs with you.” So sharpen your pencils, sharpen your wit and story on! 

Craig Harrison, DTM, PDG, of Berkeley, California, believes in recycling. As a professional conference speaker and storyteller, Craig retells tales of humor and humanity from his childhood in his keynote presentations and training programs. For more on Craig, please visit www.SpeakAndLeadWithConfidence.com.

LEADERSHIP LESSONS FROM THE REAL WORLD

(continued from page 19)

A skilled mentor will keep mentees accountable but also help curb any perfectionist tendencies, Bensink says.

“A good mentor will help you focus on areas that need improving but also tell you when your speech is good enough to go.” In other words, the best mentors help mentees strive for excellence and not perfection.



CARINA SCHEY, DTM

St.-Prex, Switzerland
Project: Organizing a TLI

When Carina Schey considered options for her HPL project, she decided on organizing a Toastmasters Leadership Institute (TLI) event. A member of several clubs in Switzerland, she recalls attending a similar event where the keynote speaker was less than inspirational.

“I committed right there to holding a TLI where the speakers would do a great job of inspiring everyone,” says Schey, an Ambassador for the Toastmasters Pathways learning experience. “I also wanted an event that would be highly interactive so everyone felt involved and there wouldn’t be any death by PowerPoint.”

Schey began organizing the TLI in the city of Bern for the three Toastmasters divisions in Switzerland. Along the way, she learned important leadership lessons she now applies in her profession as a consulting health economist, as well as in her leadership roles within Toastmasters.

Create contingency plans, and backups for contingencies.

When one of the speakers for Schey’s event canceled, she decided to find back-up speakers for all of her TLI sessions. That planning paid off when another speaker canceled the night before one of the sessions. Such contingency planning is often easier said than done. “It took a bit of diplomacy, because no one wants to feel they are second best,” Schey says. “But I contacted people who I thought would cherish the opportunity to be backup speakers.”

View obstacles as a challenge. Most Toastmasters encounter obstacles in planning or executing their HPL projects, but Schey says the key is to keep moving forward. “If you really believe in your project you can overcome any obstacle.”

Brief your speakers. Another lesson Schey learned, which she now applies to the professional conferences she organizes, is to give speakers a detailed brief of what is expected from them. “Because I wanted TLI speeches that were highly interactive, I ended up briefing the speakers in more detail than I usually do in my professional life,” she says. “But now it’s something I do in my work conferences as well.”

The High Performance Leadership manual (Item 262) can be purchased through the Toastmasters International Online Store, at www.toastmasters.org/Shop. You can also purchase a digital download in seven translated languages.

Dave Zielinski is a freelance business journalist based in Minneapolis and a frequent contributor to Toastmaster magazine.

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Robert's Rules

Ignore them at your peril. They could save your life.

BY JOHN CADLEY

On an evening in 1876, a United States Army major named Henry Martyn Robert sat down to write *Robert's Rules of Order*. He did so not from ambition but for personal safety. Earlier that evening he had conducted a church meeting which, due to what he perceived to be his poor leadership, had, according to one report of the incident, “erupted into open conflict.” Robert had decided that, all things being equal, meetings could henceforth be more productive if the participants weren’t trying to kill each other—him in particular.

As a Toastmaster, you are probably familiar with parliamentary procedure, and in the United States, Robert's Rules rule. You have lived by them more than you know. They have become a template for organizing, managing and, given Robert's experience at the First Baptist Church, even civilizing people who have come together as a body to make some sort of decision. Being both a military man and an engineer, Robert's goal was precision, order, discipline and efficiency—qualities that human beings are not likely to adopt of their own free will. And at first they didn't. Since its original publication in 1876, Robert's manual has gone through 11 revised editions suggesting that even when individuals are told exactly what to do, their first response is, “Why should I?”

One of those revisions was a shorter version of the original, which ran to 669 pages. It was found that by the time the book was read in its entirety, the reason for the meeting—along with a goodly number of the prospective attendees—had long since passed away. There were also those who, remembering Robert's unfortunate experience in 1876, feared that if “open conflict” were ever to erupt again, a book of 669 pages could be far too dangerous a projectile. Other important revisions occurred in the third edition (1893) when “Motion to Lie on the Table” was changed to “Motion to Lay on the Table” (maybe not important to you but these guys are *precise*), and the seventh edition (1970), when references to the United States Congress were removed—probably out of concern that in a book of rules meant to get something accomplished, it would be counterproductive to mention a delibera-

If you disagree, you can withdraw your motion without consent of the seconder, who must then sit there slightly embarrassed at having seconded ... nothing.

tive body that accomplishes absolutely nothing. The tenth edition (2000) “recognized the existence of the internet” and the possibility of electronic meetings, and the eleventh (2011) agreed that notices could be sent by email. (I said they were precise, not fast.)

The rules themselves strive to anticipate and prevent every possible eventuality that may erupt in conflict, open or otherwise. If you attend a meeting governed by Robert's Rules, you will listen as the minutes of the previous meeting are read aloud, along with

the treasurer's report, both of which have been sent to you previously by mail. You will be asked if you have any objections or modifications, which you will not because you did not read them. (You know the person who takes the minutes and he just goes on and on.) If you have a motion, you must stand and be recognized by the chairperson. You cannot raise your hand. Hand-raising is seen as a lack of commitment (“If you can't stand up for what you believe in then sit down and shut up!”). And if you stand while someone else is already standing you will be

ruled “Out of Order.” That's a bad thing. If and when you do get to make a motion it must be seconded (by the “seconder”). However, before the chairperson can state the motion all other attendees are given the opportunity to modify your motion. If you disagree, you can withdraw your motion without consent of the seconder, who must then sit there slightly embarrassed at having seconded ... nothing.

You can also invoke a Point of Privilege if you'd like to complain about, say, the temperature in the room ... or a Point of Information to ask the speaker a question ... or a Point of Order if you believe someone has broken the rules ... or a Point of Point where you can ask, “What's the point of all this?” (I made that last one up.)

Space forbids me from going on but you get the, uh, point. A Robert's meeting is a place where the Rules rule. And with that I move to adjourn this meeting. Anyone second the motion? ■

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

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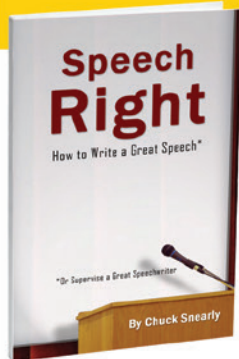
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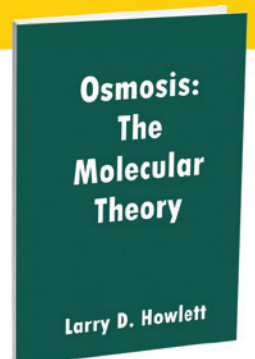
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For more than three decades author Chuck Snearly has been writing highly acclaimed speeches for leaders around the world, including the top executives at Ford Motor Company, Royal Dutch Shell, the Bosch Group and Dean Foods. In his book *Speech Right* the award-winning speechwriter will show you how to write a great speech – one that engages emotions, shapes opinions and makes things happen. Whatever your current skill level, *Speech Right* will help you write the speech right.

Finally, after 250 years, a solution to this intriguing and important phenomena of osmosis has been found. Many other solutions have been proposed, no others fully explain the process and the many applications. This book introduces a new understanding of osmosis, solids, liquids, and vapor pressure and more...

For those that already understand osmosis, we suggest that you begin with the last chapter. The first chapters may sound like heresy. For others, beginning with the first chapter will take you through the many levels of understanding that we followed to develop the Molecular Theory of Osmosis.



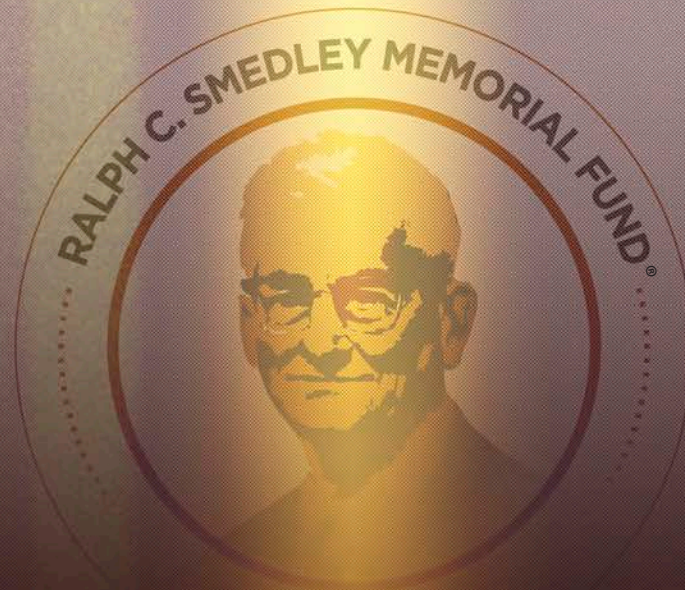
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