

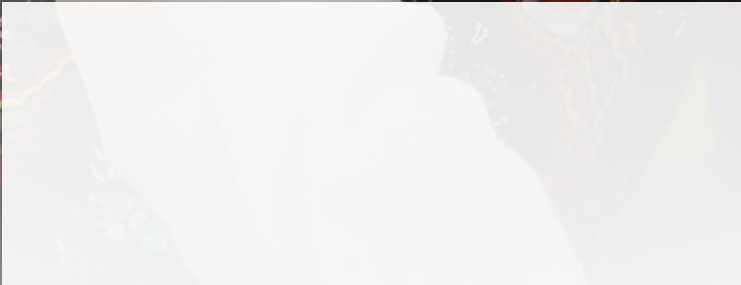
T♥ASTMASTER®



Love Stories

Love can grow when members open their hearts

Snackification of Communication:
the pros and cons



Take Pride in Your Club

The Toastmaster's Promise lists a series of promises a new member commits to. Today I'll mention the fifth one: *"To help the club maintain the positive, friendly environment necessary for the membership to learn and grow."* This is perhaps the promise that is most often overlooked and difficult to recognize. To be successful, it requires a team effort and a focus on the basics.

"Familiarity breeds contempt," is a popular saying. Many members lose sight of deficiencies that can creep into their clubs over time. Standards that were originally upheld can slip with the passage of time. For example, this year, during my club visits I noticed a lack of variety in the programs presented at many meetings. I have also seen a vast difference in meeting room presentations and in the welcome messaging received by guests.

Variety is "the spice of life," and having all members engaged is vital to creating a healthy club environment where all members have the opportunity to learn and grow. To fulfill this commitment, every member has to play a part. The club's officers must ensure that the venue is easily accessible and that it meets the club's needs. The sergeant at arms must ensure that the meeting room is set up properly with the club banner displayed in a prominent position. The lectern, timing device, gavel and other materials must be organized prior to the meeting.

Having all members engaged is vital to creating a healthy club environment where all members have the opportunity to learn and grow.

Program variety is vital to maintaining interest and providing stimulation for members and guests alike. The vice president education must make the program agenda available to each participant and ensure that the agenda offers the opportunity for full participation by all members in attendance.

Membership as a whole must be prepared for club meeting roles and be enthusiastic in the support of their fellow members, thereby creating a positive, vibrant experience for all.

I ask all members to look at their club from the perspective of a guest who attends a meeting for the first time. Conduct a "Moments of Truth" module regularly to ensure that the club is providing the right atmosphere for all members to learn and grow. Each club is encouraged to have a unique culture without compromising adherence to the basic Toastmasters program.

Excellent clubs provide fun and diversity. They stimulate and challenge their members through participation while at the same time create an atmosphere that encourages members to attend. How does your club shape up? Consider your venue, the meeting room setup and your personal presentation and be sure these are all things that you can be proud of. Remember, it is your responsibility to create a positive and healthy club environment.

MIKE STORKEY, DTM
International President



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Connecting with other members is an important part of the club experience. These clubs found ways to have fun in different settings.

Young members of the Agua VIT club hold their 175th meeting outdoors, 6,000 feet above sea level, in Munnar, Kerala, a beautiful hill station and one of the most popular travel destinations in South India.



Members of Apeldoorn Toastmasters club pose at their annual barbeque party last September in Apeldoorn, the Netherlands.



The Parramatta Club in Parramatta, Australia, celebrated its 50th anniversary with over 130 people in attendance, including the club's founder. The event featured a parade of past presidents and guest speakers.



Send your fun club photos to photos@toastmasters.org. Include a description and your club name, number and location. Photos must be in jpeg format with a resolution of at least 300 dpi (dots per inch) or 1 MB (megabyte). Out-of-focus images cannot be accepted. It is not necessary to include the Toastmaster magazine or other branded materials in your photos, but if Toastmasters materials are displayed, they must reflect the current brand.

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Photo of Marzena and Hadrian (Lutogniewski) Augustyn by Anna Bak



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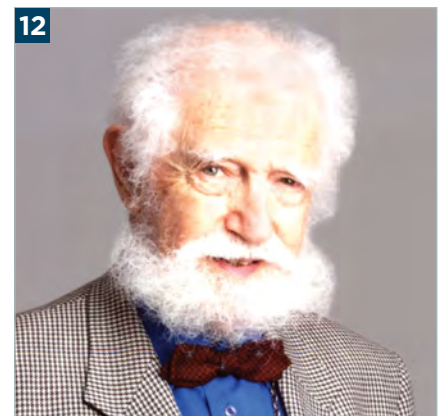
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TRAVELING TOASTMASTER

▶ MEMBER MOMENT



The Desert Doctor

BY SHANNON DEWEY

Imagine working in an extreme environment where daytime temperatures reach triple digits and seasonal night-time freezes occur. Where your neighbors are spiny tailed lizards or horned vipers, and a slight breeze could quickly turn into winds of gale force. For Dr. Shaikh Shakil Anjum, the sandy terrain of the Arabian Desert has doubled as his office. Originally from Mumbai, India, the general practitioner spent six years in Yanbu, Saudi Arabia, working as a company physician for the Yanbu Cement Plant.

After his time in the desert, Shakil Anjum returned to India in 1986 to serve as a lecturer teaching medical courses at a junior college in Pune, and he was also an honorary lecturer at Unani Medical College, where he had a private practice for eight years. After two more job transitions in India, he moved back to the desert of Saudi Arabia in 1997 to work as a physician for National Pipe Company Ltd. He still works there today, but now lives in the city of Al-Khobar with his family.

Shakil Anjum, DTM, joined Toastmasters in 2007 and is on his way to earning his 12th Competent Communicator award. He believes that learning is a continuous journey and not a destination. When he's not busy attending meetings at his five clubs, he enjoys conducting Youth Leadership programs and supporting Gavel clubs.

Why did you become a doctor?

I originally aspired to be an actor, but my cousin's death due to cancer became a turning point in my life, and advice from my grandparents helped me to select this path. I am a general practitioner, and also have interest in alternative medicines.

What's it like practicing medicine in the desert?

In my experiences in Saudi Arabia, I worked for companies, not hospitals. As most of these companies were based in the desert, along with the entire community, I stayed in deserts only. I treated patients who were company employees as well as the local residents.

I see different types of patients in the desert: a) Seasonal—in climatic changes we have such cases. Winters will precipitate muscle and joint pains with skin problems. Summers increase the cases of heat exhaustion, heat stroke, humidity dermatitis and renal issues. b) Chronic cases—hypertension, diabetes, etc. c). Emergencies—including medical and surgical.

Tell us about your current job.

The National Pipe Company's manufacturing plant is 30 kilometers (about 18 miles) away from the main city toward the desert. The plant employees work around the clock, so I am there during the daytime until evening, and then on call for 24 hours in case of emergencies.



Dr. Shaikh Shakil Anjum, DTM

I look after the welfare of the employees like they are my family members. I cover the day-to-day management of sick patients, following up in hospitals and getting them treated. I look at different medical problems or sports injuries and even look into the employees' family illnesses. I provide counseling for them, so they are well aware of the diseases.

I also lecture on safety and prevention measures and help the company in supervision of the kitchen food quality, and periodically check up on food handlers and other employees for occupational hazards, etc. There is no end of responsibilities—anything related to the welfare of our employees, I am there.

How has Toastmasters played a role in your career?

Toastmasters gave me a positive environment, a battery of friends with positive attitudes, and taught me the importance of a pause and, of course, time management. Even though I never felt any difficulty with communication early on, Toastmasters has taught me to concentrate on words, sentences, grammar, and phrases and quotations. I did not pay any attention to these factors before. I am still learning, and I realize my mistakes even now. For those who cannot express themselves, what better place to learn than Toastmasters?

Any advice you'd like to share?

Once a Toastmaster, always a Toastmaster. When you complete a DTM, irrespective of how much time you take, enjoy it while completing it. And do not stop after completing it; continue to do your projects again and again. This will not only make you a better speaker, but also a better human.

Shannon Dewey is the editorial coordinator for the Toastmaster magazine.

▶ SNAPSHOT



Youth from Spain, Portugal, France, Italy and Syria celebrate after successfully completing the Youth Leadership program (YLP) conducted by Werner Iser, ACS, ALB (pictured in back, center), and sponsored by the Rhetorik Club Zürich, Switzerland.

The YLP was one of 20 workshops during the 12th annual European AYUDH Youth Summit, “One World. One Home,” in Germany last July. The summit was carried out in partnership with the United Nations Inter-Agency Network on youth development. More than 300 young people from 27 countries joined together for a week of learning, inspiration and exchange.

▶ NEWS FROM TI

Preparing for Pathways

Before the Toastmasters Pathways learning experience rolls out in your district, make sure you take this step if you haven't already: Log in to the Toastmasters International website.

Pathways is scheduled to launch this month and will be rolled out in phases, region by region. You can't begin your Pathways journey without logging in to the website. It's important that all members know their login information so they can participate in the new education program from the day it rolls out in their district. And better to do it now than on that first day: When you're already eager to get started, you don't want to wait for your password to be reset if you don't remember it.

To log in, go to the Toastmasters website (www.toastmasters.org) and click on “Login” at the top of the home page. (Or just go to www.toastmasters.org/Login.) Be sure to have your username and password available. If you have forgotten your password, simply click “Forgot your password?” and a new one will be sent to you via email.

Once you are logged in, click on your name at the top of the page and confirm or update your email and contact information.

Pathways Guides

As Pathways rolls out, a key member of each district's launch team will be the Pathways Guide. These members will partner with Ambassadors to prepare clubs for the arrival of Pathways in their district. With Ambassadors, they will visit clubs to raise awareness, build excitement and educate club members about the program. They are the first point of contact to help with Pathways training and will support each club's vice president education in helping members use Base Camp (Pathways' learning management system).

If you are interested in applying to be a Pathways Guide, please review the role description (see the link below). If you feel you have the necessary knowledge and skills for the role, please contact your district's Chief Ambassador or program quality director.

To learn more about Pathways, view the Pathways Learning Experience page at www.toastmasters.org/Pathways.

To learn more about Pathways Guides—including the role description—go to www.toastmasters.org/Resources/Pathways/Volunteers/Pathways-Guides.



▶ MEET MY MENTOR



Marsha Collins, ACB, ALB

BY MARY NESFIELD

Marsha Collins, ACB, ALB, is a GIS spatial analyst for Fairfax County, Virginia. She prepares maps and graphics for presentations at public meetings. She has also worked with the Fairfax County Adult Learning Program to help people obtain their GED or improve their basic skills.

Qais Bashir, CC, is a transportation construction project manager for Fairfax County's Capital Facilities Division. Born in Afghanistan and raised in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, he heard about Toastmasters from co-workers and company emails. A life-long stutterer, he joined the B-2 Toasters club to improve his speaking, and Marsha became his mentor.

What was it like for you to join a club?

When I was introduced to Marsha, I was so self-conscious about my stuttering that I couldn't even say the word stutter. Marsha sensed my pain and frustration and inspired me with her wisdom, passion and enthusiasm for public speaking.

How has Marsha helped you?

She introduced me to other Toastmasters clubs, where I drew more inspiration, met new friends and was inspired to practice more, speak better and make positive changes in my life. In fact, I grew so passionate about speaking better that in June 2015, I



FROM LEFT: Qais Bashir, CC, and Marsha Collins, ACB, ALB

attended the Successful Stuttering Management Program, a three-week intensive speech program in Cheney, Washington.

What do you appreciate most about Marsha?

It is Marsha's passion to help people. What had been a major difficulty for me turned into an opportunity. She said I would surprise myself if I remained committed to Toastmasters. I thank her and my club members for their encouragement and support. I couldn't have imagined the improvements I've made over the past few years. I have truly grown and surprised myself.

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.

▶ THE CLUB EXPERIENCE

What's a Club President to Do?

BY ROBERT WILLIAM CASE, ACG, ALB

Thirty members of the Cherry Creek Toastmasters club in Denver, Colorado, stood outside the building of our backup meeting place, milling around the sidewalk at 6:55 a.m. in early June. Once a year our club must vacate its regular meeting place in favor of preparations for a fundraiser.

Already, there were rumblings about canceling the meeting. Our past president was trying to contact someone with a key. Several members suggested alternative locations—a nearby park, a private home or a convenient breakfast place. The Toastmaster of the day was on time and ready to go. She looked at me with an uncertain smile. We had speakers prepared and ready to go. As club president, they were looking to me for direction.

It was just barely after seven when the sergeant at arms—without tables, chairs or electrical outlets—called the meeting to order. Like a well-trained race horse, the meeting was out of the



gate and running, full steam ahead. Without walls and only grass for a floor, we wrapped ourselves in the familiar structure of the Toastmasters meeting agenda.

This event has become one of my fondest memories of my term in office. It was a poignant demonstration of the adage that leaders are not born. They are made. And so, I challenge you to discover the unplanned satisfactions of leadership by becoming an officer in your club.

Robert William Case, ACG, ALB, lives in Denver, Colorado, where he writes, presents keynotes and workshops, and serves on several nonprofit boards. He's been an active member of Cherry Creek Toastmasters in Denver since 2010 and served as club president in 2016.

▶ ADVICE FROM MEMBERS

How to Be a Prepared Presenter Outside of the Club

When you step into the spotlight, be ready for anything.

BY MARCIE HILL, ACS, CL

Technology can fail at any time during a presentation, so it's important to be armed and ready when it does. Here is a checklist of tips and tools to help you become efficient and prepared for all occasions.

Prior to Presentation

- ▶ Text or email handouts to attendees 24-72 hours prior to a presentation. In addition to establishing a rapport with the initial contact, you're reducing printing costs and the amount of inventory you have to carry.

- ▶ Speak to the meeting coordinator to confirm that your presentation room will be set up. Inquire about seating accommodations, audio-video equipment and Wi-Fi connectivity.
- ▶ Print screenshots of your presentation just in case technology fails.
- ▶ Store your presentation, handouts and all other documents on USB drives and back them up on cloud storage.
- ▶ Download your preferred presentation app on your tablet or mobile device and then upload your presentation.
- ▶ When traveling, prepare a three-ring binder for travel and hotel information as well as documents, contracts and contact information.

What to Bring

Equipment

Always assume you're going to need your equipment

- ▶ Projector. Bring your own projector in case the one at the venue is not compatible with your laptop or stops working
- ▶ Your laptop, tablet and mobile device
- ▶ Presentation pointer and batteries
- ▶ Two lavalier microphones—one long and one short
- ▶ Audio recorder—record your presentation to create eBooks, blog posts and other content to supplement your topic

Cables

Always make sure your equipment works

- ▶ Cables, connectors and adaptors for Mac, laptop and mobile devices
- ▶ HDMI cord to connect laptop and mobile devices to projectors and TVs
- ▶ VGA cable or adaptor to connect older computers to older projectors
- ▶ Ethernet converter to access the internet using cables
- ▶ Wall and car chargers for devices
- ▶ Two-prong extension cord with additional 3-prong ground adaptors
- ▶ Three-prong surge protector

To Live-Stream Your Presentation

- ▶ Camcorder, tablet or mobile device
- ▶ Tripod
- ▶ Selfie stick and mini tripod
- ▶ Double camera mount tripod bracket to connect two recording devices simultaneously
- ▶ Lighting kit to ensure you have sufficient light when recording

Marcie Hill, ACS, CL, belongs to MJM Speakers' Circle in Chicago, Illinois. She is a writer, blogger and author. Learn more about Marcie at www.marciewrites.com.

▶ SPEAKING OUTSIDE THE CLUB

Taguspark Speakers club in Oeiras, Portugal, participate in a walking tour at the city center of Lisbon where members had the opportunity to travel in time with history and great speeches.






- 1 | **CYNTHIA CHAN, CC, and JIMMY CHAN, CC, CL**, from Cerritos, California, ride a gondola while on vacation in Venice, Italy.
- 2 | **SANDY KARDIS, DTM, PDG, and TONY KARDIS, CC, CL**, from Creve Coeur, Missouri, visit Lake Louise in Alberta, Canada.
- 3 | **MATTHEW YEARBURY, ACS, CL, and NINA YEARBURY, ACG, ALB**, from Queensland, Australia, visit Uluru (Ayers Rock) in Central Australia.
- 4 | **BETTY FICKE, CC, CL, and JASON FICKE**, from Anaheim, California, visit Bora Bora, French Polynesia, for their honeymoon.



 **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!

Serving the Community

How I helped fight crime in Malaysia.

BY JOHN LAU, DTM, PIP

Back in August 2014, when I stepped down as Immediate Past International President of Toastmasters International, I was often asked if I would serve the organization in a different capacity. In response, I smiled and said I would continue to apply my Toastmasters skills in service to my community.

Toastmasters gave me the opportunity to travel the world in my role on the Board's Executive Committee. I met lots of people from different walks of life. One thing that struck me when visiting different neighborhoods was that every citizen plays an important role in crime prevention. With this idea in mind, I started the conversation with my friends about keeping our community safe here in the state of Sarawak, Malaysia. Using the communication and leadership skills I learned in Toastmasters, I was able to recruit many friends to volunteer and our Community Policing Association was launched on March 1, 2015, in the presence of senior police officers. We received the Malaysia Registrar of Society approval on May 28, 2015. Since then, our membership has grown and community policing has spread through Sarawak. The Sarawak Community Policing Association (SCPA) is a voluntary organization with leaders and members working with the police in crime prevention. Our members work from 9 p.m. to 3 a.m. during weekends.

For a crime to be successfully committed, three elements must exist—a desire (the criminal), a target (the victim) and an opportunity (the circumstance).

Thus, by reducing the opportunities for a criminal to target community members, the number of crimes will be greatly reduced. When a society is peaceful and the environment free from fears and worries, people can focus on their family and work. Our members act as eyes and ears for the police. They have created a powerful synergy between police and residents



Past International President John Lau (front row, fifth from left) poses with police and volunteers of The Sarawak Community Policing Association in Malaysia. The volunteers work with the police in crime prevention.

that discourages criminal activity. Our goal is to assist the police and reduce crime by five percent every year. So far, the latest statistics indicate that crime in the state of Sarawak was reduced by more than 12 percent.

Using the communication and leadership skills I learned in Toastmasters, I was able to recruit many friends to volunteer for our Community Policing Association.

The community-based policing we have started will serve as a helpful support system for the police. And of course, public participation in community policing is a vital cog in the wheel of crime prevention.

To date, we have 134 community policing units that use social media to alert members of our team and improve the

communication between them. In addition to night patrol, we educate members of the public on crime prevention strategies and distribute crime prevention leaflets in three languages—English, Mandarin and Malaysia language.

We have been getting good feedback on our proactive approach and we keep adding new units and new members to our team. This way I'm using the communication and leadership skills I honed in Toastmasters to benefit the community. ■

JOHN LAU, DTM, served as the first International President of Toastmasters International from Malaysia in 2012–2013. He holds advanced degrees in several fields, including a Ph.D. in strategic marketing, and was appointed a Knight of Malaysia. Lau joined Toastmasters in September 1990 and remains active in two Toastmasters clubs in Kuching, Malaysia.

To learn more about Lau, see his interview in the September 2012 issue of *Toastmaster magazine*.

Curiosity and the Power of Words

Remarkable senior spent 57 years recruiting club members.

BY CHERYL ANDRICHUK, ACB, CL

Dr. Ralph Yorsh, DTM, a member of Cloverleaf Toastmasters in Vancouver, Canada, has been promoting the benefits of Toastmasters since 1959 when he attended his first meeting and thought, *Where have you been all my life? This is where I belong.*

The retired dentist, now in his mid-90s, is known for his groundbreaking use of hypnosis. He says, “Half the world’s problems can be solved with better communication.” He believes strongly that his goal is to give one Toastmasters recruiting talk per day—something he achieves four or five times a week. “Many people are not good communicators,” he says, “and Toastmasters is practice ground for real life.”

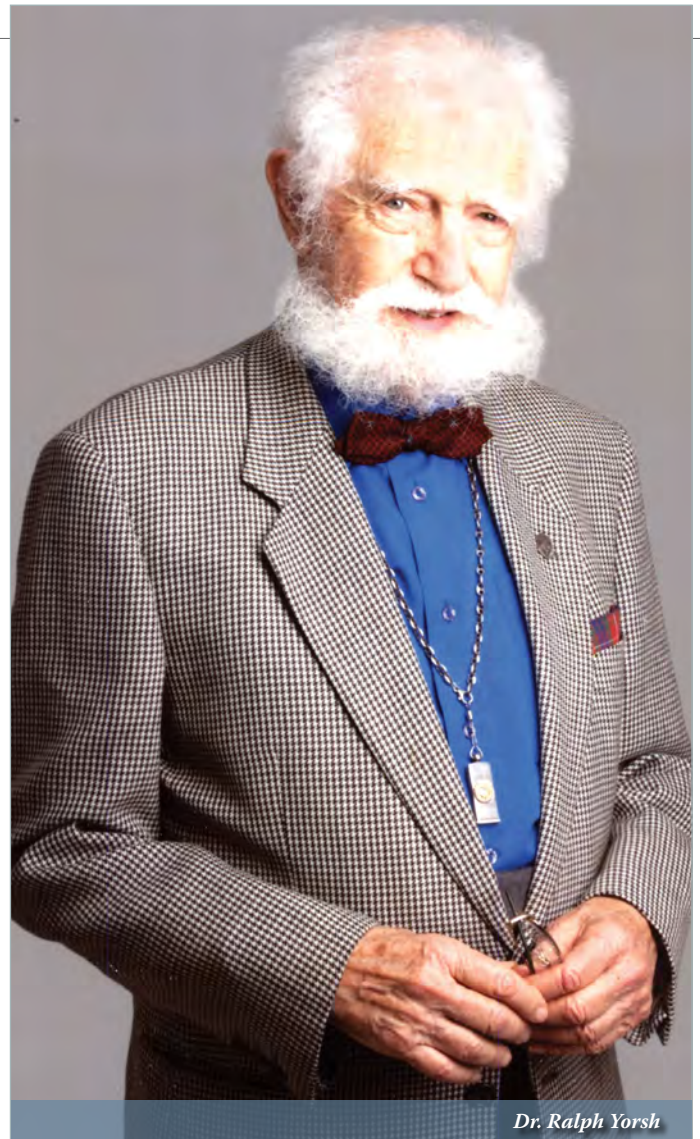
One of the myriad people he introduced to Toastmasters was a chartered accountant whom he felt needed better presentation skills. It changed her life. He says it was like watching a caterpillar turn into a butterfly. Yorsh has seen many of his personal recruits flourish but insists that all clubs have success stories.

In 1979, while Yorsh was a lecturer at the University of British Columbia, he chartered a Toastmasters club after seeing the need for improved communication by staff, faculty and students. He named the club after Walter Gage, a university president whom he admired as a “fabulous communicator.” Yorsh stayed on in the club as a mentor for five years. He emphasizes how clubs benefit from experienced members and reinforces the discipline of Toastmasters to “keep things on the rails” by informing club members of the rules governing proper conduct in meetings.

The Savvy Traveler

The nonagenarian has visited over 90 countries and strives to attend a club meeting wherever he goes. His travels have led to club visits in Mexico, where meetings were held in Spanish, to Ukraine, where he says members spoke “perfect English.” Sometimes a local Toastmaster will pick him up at his hotel to take him to a meeting so he doesn’t get lost on the way.

His hobby is traveling to learn “how things work.” “Curiosity is my middle name,” he says. For example, Yorsh has gained admittance to 1,100-plus mines and factories out of a desire to learn, and credits Table Topics with giving him an edge to get in. Often



Dr. Ralph Yorsh

Yorsh credits Table Topics with giving him an edge in gaining admittance to more than 1,100 mines and factories during his travels.

it’s a cold call when he asks for a tour with no letter of introduction and he must think on his feet to request access or a tour. When he visited the universities in Pyongyang and Shanghai, he brokered a trade: In exchange for delivering a speech at the universities, the dean not only gave him a letter of introduction but also a driver to take him to factories he wanted to visit. He says his approach works 98 percent of the time.

An Early Apprentice

Yorsh was born in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, in 1921, three years before the first Toastmasters meeting was held. His fascination with the possibilities of effective communication is deeply rooted in his childhood. Yorsh helped out with his parents’ retail business during the Depression, and even as a boy he loved to

interact with customers and take their orders. His parents ran the store on the premise that all transactions would be cash or barter—and every sale mattered. His parents instructed him to call them when he believed he was about to lose a sale. But instead of slinking off he stayed to watch how they clinched the deal.

“They were Toastmasters without knowing it,” Yorsh says. “Both were articulate and successful, and I learned a lot about communication from them.”

Another early learning experience for Yorsh was during Canada’s 1930 federal election, when the 9-year-old accompanied his father to hear politicians deliver their messages. Often the only child there, he listened to their addresses and was inspired by the power in their words.

A Path to Success

Yorsh practiced dentistry and trained dentists and patients in relaxation and pain management techniques for decades. His success in his profession can be attributed to the effective communication lessons he learned. As a dentist, he discovered that every case presentation and patient interaction is “show business.” One way that he helped patients relax is through hypnosis. A founding member of the Canadian Society for Clinical Hypnosis and a fellow of the American Society of Clinical Hypnosis, Yorsh received a Distinguished Service award from the British Columbia Dental Association and was recognized for his application of clinical hypnosis and public speaking in dentistry.

Yorsh describes hypnosis as an altered state of awareness that is a form of induced, focused attention that helps patients relax on demand. Some might call it meditation. Yorsh consciously used his voice to calm patients. Any dentist who has developed a good chairside manner may be using some of his methods, practicing a form of hypnosis without knowing it. That’s why Yorsh encourages dentists to join Toastmasters to make every word, gesture, smile and move count to give the patient confidence.

Word choice and evaluation are two aspects of Toastmasters that Yorsh considers invaluable. He maintains that using the right words counts—whether in sales, business, relationships or politics.

Yorsh recalls how, before the age of recording devices, public figures hired “image-makers” as their “evaluators.” They would sit in meetings and critique the politician’s presentation, style and everything else right down to their choice of socks, shoes and barber. Yorsh says members get the same benefit from their Toastmasters club. He asserts that the evaluation is as important as the speech. The evaluator has to learn to listen and the speaker gets valuable feedback.

Still Going Strong

Today, at age 95, Yorsh is an engaging speaker with a mellifluous voice. In private conversation or at a public presentation, his speaking style is comfortable, clear and organized and he commands the audience without superfluous gestures or antics. Club meetings are Yorsh’s favorite part of the week and members see him as a vital role model. He looks authoritative as he assumes

the “Yorsh stance” based on what he learned during his six years in the Canadian Armed Forces—at attention, feet together, hands by his side, fingers slightly curled. From this position, each gesture has an impact. He has mastered the lessons of Toastmasters and applies them with every word, phrase and sentence. He suggests taking advantage of technology to watch yourself on video. That, combined with input from your fellow Toastmasters, is key to improving, he says.

Yorsh says he would probably have been voted “least likely to lead” in his high school days, but adds, “The mere fact that you are speaking publicly gives you leadership qualities.” He credits Toastmasters with helping him be successful in business and in life. He continues to spread the word of Toastmasters. ■

Cheryl Andrichuk, ACB, CL, is the president and a charter member of Off the Page Toastmasters, an advanced writers’ club in Coquitlam, British Columbia, Canada.

A CHANCE ENCOUNTER

BY RUTH TUBBESING, CC

Seating was close to capacity one Saturday evening for the Vancouver Institute Lecture series at the University of British Columbia, when a white-haired gentleman pointed to an empty seat beside him where I could sit. It was Dr. Ralph Yorsh. He engaged me in conversation about Toastmasters. Any hesitation I had didn’t have a chance. I was flattered when he offered to be my mentor.

I’ve been a member of the Cloverleaf club going on five years now. Ralph draws on his tremendous experience to deliver surprising speeches spontaneously, with great presence of mind and, not infrequently, mischievous wit. Ralph is a mentor to everyone in our club, and is tremendously appreciated.

Yorsh recommends the following:

- ▶ Record your speech and listen to it.
- ▶ Stay in one place while speaking.
- ▶ Keep your hands at your sides to make any gestures more effective.
- ▶ Speak about what you know.
- ▶ Speak clearly right to the end of each sentence.
- ▶ Seek or, if necessary, create opportunities to speak outside of the club.
- ▶ Don’t give up on Toastmasters; it offers a lifetime of learning.

Ready, Set, Goals

How Vanguard corporate club members leverage their skills to reach professional goals.

BY PAULA FUCHSBERG

The resolutions you declare each year may motivate you at first, but making them a reality takes more than resolve. What's essential is translating them into specific, attainable goals—with a timeline and action plan for achieving them. And once you have, you may feel driven to aim even higher.

Take Gerri Sanchez, who joined Majestic Toastmasters in Malvern, Pennsylvania, “basically on a whim” when it formed in 2014. At the club’s demonstration meeting, a woman she used to work with got up to speak, Sanchez recalls. “I thought to myself, Wow, she is an introvert. I don’t understand how she’s giving a speech in front of everybody and basically not fainting. If Toastmasters could do this for her, what can it do for me?”

Thus inspired, Sanchez resolved to build up her own confidence in conversing with new acquaintances and speaking before a crowd. Over the next two years, she earned Advanced Communicator Silver (ACS) and Advanced Leader Bronze (ALB) designations and served on the club’s executive committee. After retiring from her job in 2016, she became the club advisor and area director, and she now is aiming for Distinguished Toastmaster status by mid-2017.

“I used to be a very quiet person,” Sanchez said. “Now I never stop talking.”

Self-identified introverts are common in the Majestic Toastmasters club, which meets at the headquarters of Vanguard, the U.S.-based mutual fund giant. Identifying and accomplishing goals is a key element of Vanguard’s performance management standards—a major reason many club members seek to sharpen and polish their presentation and networking skills.

To coincide with the start of the company’s goal-setting process for 2017, club president Christina Inners, CC, led a special “Ready, Set, Goals” session to help members consider how Toastmasters fits in with their professional development plan. (She even offered door prizes as an extra incentive to attend.)

Pursuing Work-Related Goals

Inners spun a tale of three fictional Toastmasters with work-related objectives: “Rhonda the Responder,” who wants to maintain her composure and credibly answer questions in challenging situations; “Matteo the Meeting Master,” who’d like to run effective project meetings; and “Tonya the Top Candidate,” who aspires to manage people but needs leadership experience.

Inners pinpointed a goal that each of the three could pursue through Toastmasters, what each might do to achieve it and how progress would be measured.

“Rhonda,” for instance, could immerse herself in Table Topics to develop strategies for avoiding nervousness when peers ask her unanticipated questions. She could gauge her progress through her ability to win Table Topics ribbons, through feedback from her mentor and by her manager’s observations in related situations.

Inners encouraged attendees to put down on paper a personal goal tied to their own Toastmasters involvement. Table Topics-master LeRoy Moser extended the theme with questions tied to workplace aspirations, such as “What makes a good boss?” and “How do you define success?”

“When I do my volunteer work, I’m much better, because I’ve always thought that if you want to save the world, you need a voice.”

— GERRI SANCHEZ, ACS, ALB

Moser’s own development plan has included challenging himself to participate regularly in Toastmasters by giving a speech every other month and filling a major meeting role in between. In 2016, he also took on the duties of club treasurer.

“Being an introvert, I tend to overthink things way too much,” Moser observed. “I work best when I have a goal to work toward.”

He has made considerable progress toward earning his Competent Communicator (CC) and Competent Leadership (CL) awards. Constructive and supportive feedback from other members in addition to his manager’s “100 percent” support for his Toastmasters participation helped him stay focused.

Felicita Schofield, CC, CL, used to fear speaking before smaller audiences at work that included senior management. Her initial goal was to become comfortable at such presentations so she could “be perceived as confident, trustworthy and influential,” she said.

Simply soliciting feedback from managers and peers “was not an ideal way to meet the goal, since I’d essentially need to ‘fail’ in front of these individuals,” Schofield said. At Majestic Toast-



masters, she set out to build up a comfort level and increase her confidence each time she presented.

Schofield, who earned both her designations within two years, now knows how to plan for presentations more efficiently. She expanded her network, shares what she learned both with colleagues and as a mentor, and is motivated to aim for higher designations, with a longer-range goal of becoming a Distinguished Toastmaster.

Classroom Presentations

Deitra Jackson, CC, joined the club at a time when she was both working and pursuing an MBA in organizational leadership. “Just about every class required me to present, and I was so petrified of speaking that it was affecting my grade,” Jackson said. When a professor suggested Toastmasters, “it was refreshing to know there was a program that could help me master public speaking. It was equally refreshing to know it would help with my grades.”

Jackson outlined an action plan and time frame. “I needed to stay disciplined, attend meetings regularly and volunteer for roles and speeches often,” she said. “I took lots of notes when feedback was given to others, and I read *Toastmaster* magazine every month.” She earned her CC within a year.

Now the club’s co-vice president public relations, Jackson recently spoke before 60 people at a Toastmasters district training event and led a breakout session for the sergeant at arms role. She mentors others on public speaking with “great enthusiasm and a sense of accomplishment,” and her next goal is earning the Advanced Communicator Bronze designation.

“It’s OK to be scared of public speaking,” Jackson assured newer members at the club’s goal-setting meeting. “It’s normal. You just have to get up and do it.”

Striving for Personal Growth

For the once-quiet Sanchez, who knew when she joined Toastmasters that she expected to stay at her job only a few more

years, her determination to gain confidence in speaking wasn’t about helping her career. “It was about helping me socially and with a lot of the volunteer work I do,” she said.

As she started making headway through the manual, her first best-speaker ribbon “helped with my very frail ego.” Encouraged by a colleague who praised a subsequent speech she gave as effective and touching, Sanchez entered the International Speech Contest and won at the club level. Later, she said, “I was told I was a good storyteller, so I started giving the dramatic speeches.”

“Being an introvert, I tend to over-think things too much. I work best when I have a goal to work toward.”

— LEROY MOSER

But to reach her goal of mastering impromptu speaking, Sanchez needed more than 1½ minutes a week of “very reluctantly” volunteering for Table Topics. So she added her own form of practice: “Every time I’d be in a store, I would stop and talk to the cashiers, and just talk about anything, to get into the habit of doing it. And after a while it became easier.”

Sanchez—who nowadays comes up as an extrovert on personality tests—keeps looking toward new objectives because “with public speaking, as with anything you do in life, if you stop doing it and stop practicing, you lose your skills.”

“So for me, Toastmasters was life-changing; I’m not afraid to talk to people anymore,” she said. “And when I do my volunteer work, I’m much better, because I’ve always thought that if you want to save the world, you need a voice.” ■

Paula Fuchsberg is an editor at *Vanguard* and a member of *Majestic Toastmasters* in Malvern, Pennsylvania.

When Chance

Love can grow when members open their hearts.

BY MARY NESFIELD

In Toastmasters we learn and practice the art of capturing—and keeping—our audience’s attention when we speak. Our communication and leadership skills improve, and we develop better relationships with co-workers, clients, family, friends and neighbors.

But sometimes the unexpected occurs. Bonds that form between club members can last a lifetime—and romance, or even marriage, can ensue. Here are the stories of a few couples who met and fell in love in Toastmasters.

Marzena and Hadrian Augustyn (Lutogniewski) MUNICH, GERMANY

In December 2011, while former Area Governor Hadrian Lutogniewski, ACG, ALB, was commuting between Munich, Berlin, and Wrocław, Poland, for his employer in Wrocław, Marzena Augustyn, CC, ALB, was busy organizing a flash mob in Kraków, Poland. A member of the Toastmasters Kraków club, her goal was to promote Toastmasters in the community and attract new club members.

Hadrian, a member of two clubs in Poland, heard about it and flew in from Berlin, Germany, to join the event. He met Marzena and noticed how “her smile, softness and stubbornness merged into the very able leader that she is.” It was love at first sight, as that day they began their life together.

In August 2016, on their way to the International Convention in Washington, D.C., the busy couple stopped in New York City to be married.



Hadrian and Marzena Augustyn

Photo by Anna Bak

A financial adviser, Marzena delivered the couple’s first child, Mosi, in 2014, just three months prior to hosting almost 500 members from 24 countries for three days as the main organizer at her district’s conference. And, as a former division governor, Marzena served one third of Poland’s Toastmasters members, but now she will devote time to raising the couple’s two children, one of whom began visiting clubs at 2 months old and has already attended two International Conventions: in Kuala Lumpur and Washington, D.C. Due to the international approach to life that Marzena and Hadrian enjoy, they moved their young family to Munich, Germany, to enable their children to grow up in a country with a language different from their own.

Meetings Take on New Meanings

Sarah Drolet and François-Xavier Bélisle

QUEBÉC CITY, CANADA

On January 10, 2013, the French-speaking Charlesbourg club met in a tiny room above an Italian restaurant in Québec City, Canada. On his first visit to the club, François-Xavier Bélisle, CC, ALB, crossed the dining room to access the stairs. Prior to visiting the club, François-Xavier had contacted the public relations officer saying his new year's resolution was to improve something engineers weren't particularly good at: communication skills.

The first person François-Xavier saw at top of the stairs was Gabriel, the sergeant at arms who assigned him to a young member, Sarah Drolet, CC, who would explain to him the nuts and bolts of a Toastmasters meeting. "Sarah had a few years of experience under her belt, considering Charlesbourg was her second club," François-Xavier says. "She easily answered all my questions throughout the evening."

Sarah and François-Xavier met in 2013 at the Charlesbourg Club in Quebec City, Canada.

Being a nurse, Sarah was forced to skip some meetings while François-Xavier attended every one. And then, in mid-February, to celebrate St. Valentine's Day, when most of the club roles were assigned to member duos, both Sarah and François-Xavier volunteered for the Topicsmaster role. Although the event went well, again, there were no apparent sparks between the two. But they did decide that night to commute to club meetings together.

In May, the young engineer gave his third speech, on how to select a bicycle. After hearing the speech, Sarah asked



François-Xavier Bélisle and Sarah Drolet

François-Xavier to help her resolve her bike's recurring flat tire issue. They met at François-Xavier's apartment and he taught Sarah how to perform the repair herself. Realizing that she had left her bike's reflector at François-Xavier's home, Sarah went back the following week to retrieve it. "That July evening turned into a date that coincided with Québec City's foundation celebrations," François-Xavier says. "After an impressive outdoor show and fireworks, we toured the old city. It was only as the birds began to sing that I left Sarah on her porch."

A few years later, on September 10, 2016, the two celebrated their wedding on the nearby Island of Orleans, François-Xavier's hometown.



Jessica Lawrence and Vance Johnson

Jessica Lawrence and Vance Johnson
KINGSTON, JAMAICA

Vance Johnson describes his first meeting with Jessica Lawrence, the woman he later married, this way: “It wasn’t love at first sight when we met 13 years ago,” he says. “We attended the same Bible study sessions in Jamaica and were introduced by a mutual friend. Our interactions were always brief.” Jessica describes Vance as an introvert who didn’t talk much. She calls herself an extrovert, “outgoing and always in the company of others.”

Jessica and Vance parted ways to pursue postgraduate degrees: Vance at The University of the West Indies in Trinidad and Tobago, and Jessica at Dartmouth College in Hanover, New Hampshire, in the United States. But Vance’s feelings for Jessica changed when he returned home after graduation.

So how does a quiet guy get the attention of the woman he admires? Jessica wasn’t aware of Vance’s feelings, so the solution for Vance was to become a Toastmaster.

Vance had learned that Jessica was a member of the Nova Powerspeakers club in Kingston. He developed a plan to connect with her at the club, but when he showed up, Jessica wasn’t there. “It was the first time I attended a Toastmasters meeting. I was asked to participate in Table Topics and I handled the question as best as I could,” Vance says.

Vance showed up on another night and this time Jessica was there. Ironically, now it was Jessica who was called for Table Topics. “I was asked to describe my perfect guy,” she says. Hearing her reply bolstered Vance’s confidence to approach her—he believed that he could meet her expectations. Vance joined the club and eventually made his intentions clear. “He told me that he was interested in courting me,” Jessica says, adding that she was shocked and in disbelief. “After he explained all the effort he made to reach out to me, I decided to give the possibility of our relationship a chance.” Their courtship culminated in marriage in January 2016.

Vance summed it up: “Not only did Toastmasters help me to connect with Jessica, it also helped me develop my public speaking, interpersonal and leadership skills. I am often asked to make presentations to clients, and these skills are very useful to me as a part-time lecturer at The University of the West Indies,” he says. “Toastmasters got me out of my shell.”

Andrea Darabos and Maurizio Paoella
LONDON, ENGLAND

Maurizio Paoella’s life took a new turn early in 2015, after he accepted an invitation to attend a club meeting. After seeing the potential of improved public speaking skills, he joined PMI UK Toastmasters in London.

“We believe that Toastmasters gave us a community in which to grow—a welcoming network of friends, and skills way beyond professional use.”

—ANDREA DARABOS

Maurizio is from Naples, Italy, where he attended school and earned an engineering degree. When an opportunity arose to serve as a vice president for a global advisory company, he accepted the offer and moved to the United Kingdom. Andrea Darabos, from Hungary, had moved to the U.K. a few months earlier, and the two met when Andrea joined the PMI UK club. Maurizio fell in love with Andrea’s Ice Breaker speech. “I was fascinated by learning about all the experiences she has had,” he says. “It was such an amazing opportunity to know so much about her in a bit more than five minutes!”



Andrea Darabos and Maurizio Paoella

Andrea earned an MBA in Singapore, and worked in other countries, including China and Canada. She settled in the U.K. and started a digital business-transformations and change-management company. She joined Toastmasters because of a recommendation and sponsorship from London's Project Management Institute, which sponsors the club.

Andrea says it was Maurizio's welcoming attitude toward new club members that immediately attracted her. "But the real spark for me," Andrea says, "was one of Maurizio's humorous talks. He was myth-busting some typical Italian stereotypes [including heavy gesturing], but when he spoke, he unconsciously gestured himself."

Wanting to keep the communication going, Maurizio visited Andrea at her business in downtown London. "I found a good excuse: to understand more about her business." After Andrea showed Maurizio around, they took a walk to St. Paul's Cathedral. "We went to a restaurant," Maurizio says, "where Andrea told me the full story of her travels around the world."

Today, the couple continues to work together on their communication skills. Maurizio says they both speak English pretty well, but have fun learning each other's languages.

Andrea says, "As a mixed nationality couple, respect for cultural differences and good communication are essential. To ask for and give proactive feedback are Toastmaster skills that are hugely helpful in our relationship, *and* in everyday life. We both believe that Toastmasters gave us a community in which to grow—a welcoming network of friends, and skills way beyond professional use. We are eternally thankful!"

Maurizio says, "I found the love of my life at Toastmasters. I will never forget what brought us together!"

Jessie Chen and Hector Mascorro
ROSEMEAD, CALIFORNIA

Jessie Chen, CC, CL, and Hector Mascorro, DTM, first met at work in the gymnasium at Southern California Edison Company in Rosemead, California. Jessie is from Taiwan and Hector from Mexico. "We had a rough start because we come from different backgrounds," Hector says. "One of our biggest arguments was about which food is the better choice. Is it Chinese or Mexican?"

Jessie was doing commodity-trading presentations at work, and Hector recommended she join Toastmasters. Jessie joined his club, Edison Powerlines Toastmasters, in July 2013, and the couple kept their relationship quiet; only one person knew about it. "We acted professionally," Hector says, although he admits to being known



FROM LEFT: Tommy Navarro, Hector Mascorro, Jessie Chen and Miranda Chu and Miranda's son Lucas Huang.

as the jokester of the club. Years passed, and Jessie eventually won the argument of which food is better. "I let her win," Hector jokes.

Hector proposed to Jessie in 2015, and was shocked when she said yes. "We made plans for the wedding in 2016," he says. "Ok, let me rephrase that, *Jessie* made *all* the plans for the wedding."

The week before the marriage, Hector went to the couple's Toastmasters meeting, although Jessie could not attend. It was only then that Hector told the club about the relationship. He said, "I have good news; I'm getting married next week." A member replied, "Congratulations! Do you know our president, Jessie, is getting married next week too?" Hector replied, "Yes, I know, but do you know she is hosting her wedding at the same time and place as mine?" Another member suggested that he ask for a discount for having the two weddings at the same time. That got Hector laughing. "Ok guys, you don't get it, I'm marrying Jessie!" he announced. That started everybody laughing, and one member even said, "Come on, I know you are a jokester, tell us the truth." The club was shocked by how well the couple had kept their secret. "Tommy Navarro, a longtime Toastmaster," Hector says, "was the one person who knew the secret, and he was my best man."

March 2016 was a good month for Hector. "I celebrated my birthday, I found a job at the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA), I was promoted in the California National Guard from captain to major and, the best of all, I married a wonderful person."

Strong bonds often form when Toastmasters open their hearts and tell their stories. For these members, love blossomed and they reaped the unexpected benefits of membership. Who will be next? ■

Mary Nesfield is the associate editor for the Toastmaster magazine.



The 7 Most Common Negotiating Mistakes

Want to win a deal? Learn from this expert.

BY ELDONNA LEWIS-FERNANDEZ, ACS, ALB, AS

While even the word “negotiation” can evoke fear, stress and anxiety for many, the intent of it is quite simple: to discuss and ultimately agree on a deal. Whether a multimillion-dollar contract is in the works or just plans to meet for lunch, life is rife with negotiations. And, the negotiation process is a lot like a chess game in which strategy reigns supreme—one thoughtfully considered move at a time. Make a careless, short-sighted move and suffer the consequences.

Even when faced with the most daunting of deals, regarding the act of negotiation as a game may alleviate your apprehension and give you the confidence to make power plays that will facilitate your desired result. Unlike strategy games such as chess, however, the most effective deals result in win-win situations for all parties, rather than win-lose. To maximize one’s bargaining prowess in business and in life, let’s review the seven most common mistakes made during negotiations:

Lacking confidence

Many people think they need to show a certain kind of confidence, even getting loud, bold or brazen, to successfully negotiate a deal. Others think that a lot of experience is required to be a good negotiator. Most of the time it merely takes tenacity and good old preparation to ensure you are aptly equipped to assert mutually desirable terms, anticipate objections, and discern what motivators or “hot buttons” will resonate with the other side.

Having confidence also means having heart, which is endearing to others whether or not you have years of negotiation experience. Your authenticity can also result

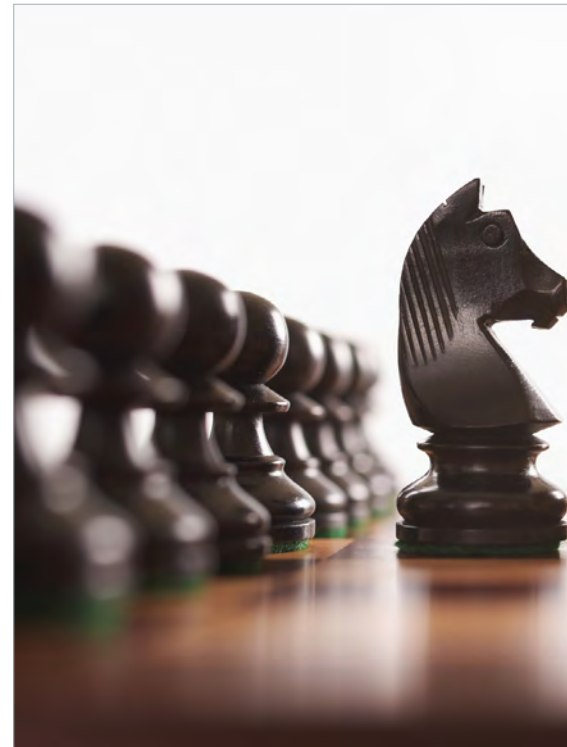
in the opposition having a less defensive stance, making them more amenable to your stipulations. Projecting a notable level of confidence, and backing that up with solid, well-researched information, maximizes your chances of success.

Thinking something is non-negotiable

When you think like a negotiator, everything is negotiable! It’s a mindset you have to operate from in order to become not just a good negotiator but a great one. When you decide that the terms for anything can be changed in your favor, a world of opportunity presents itself. Of course, as with most things in life, there will be rules for each deal on the table, which are needed to evade chaos and keep discussions on track. However, even rules are negotiable! They can be modified if you simply propose an ethical, viable and mutually beneficial alternative solution. Powerful negotiators are rule breakers!

Not building relationships first

This is probably one of the biggest mistakes one can make in regard to negotiation and in business in general. Perhaps you have attended a standard “networking” event where you give dozens of cards out without having a real conversation with anyone. It’s time to slow down and start making real connections with people—particularly those you might be involved with in a deal later on. Find out something about them and their life. Get personal. Much useful information can be gleaned during casual conversation, including what someone values in life, what motivates them, what annoys them, and



so on. You might be surprised how well you can leverage what you learn through a genuine conversation with someone.

Not asking for what you want

There is one key truth in negotiations: You must ask for what you want. This sounds simple enough, but in practice it can be daunting. People naturally fear rejection. Most of us were taught not to be “greedy” as children, so we instinctually refrain from asking for things we want in life. However, in business, rejection is never personal—it’s merely a reflection that you did not present a viable argument substantiating why you should get what you want. It’s the offer that is being rejected, not you, so keep emotions in check and re-calibrate your approach. “No” often just reflects a need for more information. Take heart in knowing that people say no an average of three times before they say yes. It is important to understand that if you don’t ask, you don’t get, and the only way to master the art of negotiation is to get rejected and keep asking. When negotiating, make it a priority to ask for exactly what you want. Most of the time you will receive either that or an acceptable alternative.



The negotiation process is a lot like a chess game in which strategy reigns supreme—one thoughtfully considered move at a time.

said and what they “think” you said can be two different things. Documenting the agreement eliminates such perception problems and protects the interests of all parties involved.

Signing without reading

Before you sign on the dotted line, it’s imperative you read what you are signing—no matter how large the packet it is. Modern life is fast-paced, and people are usually engaged in multiple things at once, causing some to sign legal documents without reading them first. The result can be disastrous. Make sure you read any agreement or contract in full, to ensure you are not confirming terms you will regret and cannot undo, which can cause copious problems for your future.

Whether you are a seasoned negotiator or someone who avoids dealing with people, you will vastly improve your results and be motivated to “get in the game” by knowing how to avoid these negotiation pitfalls. When seeking to gain advantages in your business or personal life, the art of “thinking like a negotiator” will profoundly impact your ability to actualize your desired outcome. **T**

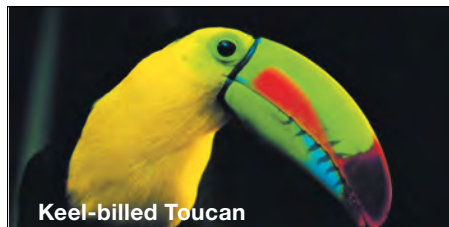
Eldonna Lewis-Fernandez, ACS, ALB, AS, is author of *Think Like a Negotiator* and has spent 30 years negotiating deals. She’s CEO of *Dynamic Vision International*—a specialized consulting and training firm that helps individuals hone negotiation skills—as well as a professional speaker. Reach her at www.ThinkLikeANegotiator.com.

Talking too much

Talking too much is a sure-fire way to kill a deal. Have you ever been offered a product or service, but the salesperson kept talking until he or she talked you right out of the purchase? If they had simply asked for the sale and then stopped talking, their chance of success would have been significantly better. Never underestimate the power of silence. There’s an old adage that says he or she who speaks next loses. When discussing a deal, if you simply stop speaking and get comfortable with the awkwardness of silence, your ability to win your argument, sell the product or get a concession in the negotiation increases significantly.

Not documenting

The importance of getting the final agreement in writing cannot be stressed enough. Even better, get it in writing and then consult with a contracts attorney to review documents that require a signature. The purpose of a written agreement or contract is to provide protection for both sides and alleviate any ambiguity of terms. Myriad problems can occur when the terms of a deal are not put in writing, because what you “think” the other party



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SNACKIFICATION

Like a healthy diet, your interactions must be balanced.

BY LISA B. MARSHALL

According to research by the food and dining industry, we are snacking much more frequently. In the United States, 90 percent of people are snacking multiple times a day and eating less during traditionally scheduled meals, sometimes foregoing them altogether. This is true in my own life. Recently we've had fewer proper family dinners and instead, about once or twice a week, we eat smaller, individual snack-like dinners we call "grab and go."

Interestingly, in a recent interview, the executive chairman of Evernote, Phil Libin, compared trends in technology to snackification (yes, that's a real term). He explained that the average interaction time when using laptops can be as long as several hours, but interactions with phones are measured in minutes, while interactions with smartwatches last only a few seconds.

So why talk about these food and technology trends toward briefer, more frequent, more casual interactions in a magazine about *communication*? Because our communication is becoming

"snackified" too. At work and at home, there is a definite trend toward shorter, more frequent, more informal interactions while we are doing something else.

Snackification at Work

My own business as a communications consultant is a good example. Slowly, over the years, my clients began requesting shorter and shorter training programs: from multi-day programs to single- or half-day programs to two-hour seminars to hour-long webinars. Now I'm frequently asked to deliver a live Q&A session instead of a formal program and recently, a client requested a series of short one- or two-sentence "tips" in response to specific questions from their team.

In fact, snackification of communication is typical in most workplaces. Reports used to be long and detailed. Now many professionals consume and share information either in short, bulleted, slide presentation form or in multiple emails with text and video attachments. Meetings that used to last half a day are getting shorter or are eliminated. Interestingly, according to a 2014 survey, 43 percent of workers avoid spontaneous conversations in favor of email and myriad collaboration tools that enable them to have short "conversations" throughout the day.



OF COMMUNICATION

Snackification at Home

We also consume entertainment and news in bite-sized chunks. In our house we occasionally listen to podcast episodes or watch a movie together. But sometimes we spend time together while watching short videos, reading or listening to music tracks on tablets or phones *individually*: we being “alone together.” My personal communication is no exception. I used to have hour-long phone conversations with family and friends, but now I rarely have a telephone conversation lasting longer than a few minutes, and recently even these are being replaced by text messages.

But at age 50-something, I’m a bit late to the party; a survey by OpenMarket from May 2016 reported that 75 percent of millennials actually prefer texting over talking. (The research suggests that this has been a consistently growing trend for several years, indicating that this is not a fad.) I know my kids (twin 12-year-olds) only send texts to their friends (unless I force them to pick up the phone). In fact, my kids have even said, “Mom, if you think about it, phoning is a bit rude—it puts our needs ahead of our friends.” And that’s consistent with the research data, as well. In addition, millennials prefer texting because they say it’s less stressful since it doesn’t require them to come up with answers on the spot and allows them time to choose and edit their words.

We owe it to ourselves to take breaks from technology; we need to disconnect to reconnect.

Impact of Snackification

Whenever I mention this trend toward snackification of communication, the immediate response is, “So Lisa, do you see this as a bad thing or as a good thing?” But that’s really the wrong question—because the answer is, It’s both! What’s more important to ask is, “What is the impact of our reliance on digital devices to communicate?” By better understanding both positive and negative consequences, we can make better decisions about our own communication choices.

It’s Fast and Efficient ...

On the plus side, it’s easy to argue that brief and transactional communication is efficient. Instead of getting out of the car to spend time getting grilled by your new girlfriend’s father, you simply wait in the car and text, “I’m here.” Texting is the most-used data service in the world; and when you factor in apps such as Messenger and WhatsApp, we send 80 billion messages a day.

We send transactional texts to avoid explanations or long conversations. Texts are less intrusive and we can get right to the point. Snackified communication is faster.

... And It's Authentically Compelling

Furthermore, exactly because it is less intrusive, this type of communication needs to be concise and compelling. In today's world we are all competing for attention. Not only do we have to compete with a barrage of other quick communications, we also compete with other activities. We use our mobile devices to communicate while driving or walking, while at a party, or dinner or work. So if we want to cut through the clutter of a constant stream of communications, our messages need to be clear, concise and compelling.

So how do you gain attention and ensure that your message resonates? You make it informal and appealing, so it's easy to consume. A communication snack uses short sentences. It uses contractions, emoticons and image stickers to create colorful, casual messages. And it's exactly this appealing, fun, authentic voice that can be quite compelling.

But Are We Trading Empathy for Efficiency?

Snackified messages, however, are so condensed and informal that they sometimes fail to convey the intended emotional meaning and instead create more misunderstandings. And when we consider the overwhelming amount of electronic exchanges we have, some of which are with people we've never met in person or have never even had a phone conversation with, this just increases the chances of misinterpretation.

Written messages don't carry the tone, pitch or emphasis of our voice, which can make it quite difficult to determine if someone is being e-serious or e-sarcastic, or if a person is just e-busy and not e-angry. In fact, in one study participants were only able to correctly identify the intended emotion of a written message 56 percent of

the time (a little better than chance), but when the same message was communicated by voice, correct identification rose to 73 percent. When we don't hear a voice or see a face, or fully understand the context of written words, we are bound to make incorrect assumptions, which in turn negatively impact how we view others.

Are We Now More Separate and Alone?

Laura, a college student who taught my children digital art over the summer, told me that she didn't get a phone or her own computer until she was a junior in high school. That was somewhat surprising, but I was even more surprised when she added, "I think having a phone these past few years has made me less understanding, more impatient, and even a bit anxious." While she recognized the efficiency of snackified communication, she was also painfully aware of emotional misinterpretation. More importantly, she told me that she now found herself comparing her life to others' lives. In fact, this particular anxiety has been described by psychologists as the "compare-and-despair" factor. We see photos and posts on social media channels from acquaintances and friends at a fancy party and our weekend spent cleaning the house pales in comparison, which then leads to unsettling feelings of personal failure and takes a toll on our self-esteem.

How to Have Your Snack and Eat Well, Too

There is no doubt that snackified communication is here to stay, and that it has definite advantages. We are able to stay in touch easily, letting loved ones know they are on our minds. We can get information to people quickly and efficiently. And sometimes it's just plain fun. But as studies (and Laura's experience) show, we have to be aware of its drawbacks and make necessary adjustments. One adjustment is to specifically express our emotions, like "I was sad ..." or "I am surprised ...," and if necessary before hastily and negatively responding, clarify a confusing message by asking, "Here's what I got ... is that what you meant?"



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Toastmaster - Australia

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Second, a little face-to-face time without digital devices goes a long way toward reducing emotional misinterpretation and increasing empathy. Sherry Turkle, a Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) researcher who studies how technology influences relationships, wrote a popular book titled *Reclaiming Conversation: The Power of Talk in a Digital Age*. She says we learn to develop empathy and intimacy through in-person conversations “where we learn to make eye contact, to become aware of another person’s posture and tone, to comfort one another and respectfully challenge one another.” Don’t be put off by “the boring bits” and awkward silences in a conversation, she cautions. “If the conversation goes quiet, you have to let it be. For conversation, like life,

“It is often in the moments when we stumble, hesitate and fall silent that we most reveal ourselves to one another.”

— SHERRY TURKLE



has silences. It is often in the moments when we stumble, hesitate and fall silent that we most reveal ourselves to one another,” she writes in a 2015 *New York Times* editorial titled “Stop Googling. Let’s Talk.”

Unfortunately, because of the snackification of communication, and because our technology is almost always with us, we have fewer of these types of meaningful conversations. One thing we can do for ourselves and our children is to schedule “digital holidays” or attend phone-free events. One study showed that sixth-graders who went to camp without their technology for just five days were substantially better at reading human emotions than students who didn’t go to camp or give up their digital devices. In another study just the mere presence of a silent phone reduced how connected a person felt toward their conversation partner. We owe it to ourselves to take breaks from technology; we need to disconnect to reconnect.

Turkle cautions against multitasking in favor of doing one thing at a time. “One start toward reclaiming conversation is to reclaim solitude,” she writes. “Some of the most crucial conversa-

tions you will ever have will be with yourself. Slow down sufficiently to make this possible. Think of unitasking as the next big thing. In every domain of life, it will increase performance and decrease stress.”

Find a Healthy Balance

We are all looking for more interaction. But it has to be the right kind. We need to communicate facts clearly and concisely, but we also need to communicate emotion accurately, and develop healthy, supportive, interpersonal relations. This can’t be done through snackified communication alone. Like a healthy diet, our communication must be balanced. And just as we see a new trend in snacks becoming more healthful, I am hopeful that understanding the influence of snackified communication will move us in a healthier direction. ■

Lisa B. Marshall is a communications expert who delivers consulting and workshops, the author of *Smart Talk and Ace Your Interview*, and host of the *Public Speaker and Smart Talk* podcasts. Learn more at www.lisabmarshall.com.

Member Achievements

How Toastmasters skills apply beyond the club.

Mandy B. Fernandez, CC

Western Gate Toastmasters • Pensacola, Florida

A More United Community

As I faced a crowd of over 100 business professionals, I delivered my ninth prepared speech in celebration of National Small Business Week to chamber of commerce members in Pensacola, Florida. Just one year prior I had joined Toastmasters to combat my speaking nervousness. Now I was commanding the audience with a self-assured smile.

I began my journey with Toastmasters simply to gain confidence, but my outlook soon changed and I had a new desire to not only improve myself but also to actively engage in my community.

After I delivered my speech to chamber members, someone from the audience asked me to speak to the local United Way organization. This nonprofit group is known worldwide for its advocacy and efforts to improve local communities. I felt honored. I agreed to speak and simultaneously took on my first club leadership project. As the only female, I led five male volunteers to produce a 50-minute presentation for a group of executives who had recently joined the Escambia County United Way. For their orientation, they wanted inspiration, real tips and practice with public speaking. United Way also asked our team to facilitate Table Topics as part of the meeting.

In taking on this project, our group became a tighter unit. I coached my fellow Toastmasters with encouragement and feedback. In turn, they inspired me to give my best as a leader. The prospect of motivating United Way representatives who would then go out and inspire our community became a real joy for us. Our whole club felt we were doing a great service for the greater good.

Toastmasters' mission is the important vehicle to affect positive changes in ourselves, our neighborhoods and in all that we face.



Mandy Fernandez (second from left)



Karen Armstrong

Karen Armstrong, DTM

Birdcage Club • Victoria, British Columbia, Canada

Sigh, My Mom's a Toastmaster!

So you think it's hard to be a Toastmaster? Try being the kid of one. When my 8-year-old daughter's class was learning how to debate, she came home from school one day and asked, "Mum, what's a good reason for a 13-year-old to use a gun?" Motherly instincts responded, "There is no good reason!" With a sad face she explained to me that was the issue she had been assigned to defend. I assured her that Toastmaster skills would help her through the assignment and I would teach her how to research, write and present her debate.

After some web surfing, we discovered that Olympic athletes were eligible to compete in shooting as young as 14 years old. Common sense then dictated that Olympians would begin training much earlier, and biathletes would, by necessity, have to start shooting at a fairly young age. I contacted the coach of the Canadian biathlon team, who assured me that the training for the young biathletes was so safety oriented that Olympic biathlon sites had only a first-aid attendant, whereas the hockey arenas had

ambulances lined up outside waiting for injuries.

After completing the research, I helped my daughter with the structure of her presentation and her speech performance. She memorized the openings and conclusions of her presentations so she could maintain eye contact with the judges. She practiced her inflection and body language.

Not only did she win the debate easily, mostly due to the overconfidence of her opponent, but she earned an A. When a classmate congratulated her by saying, "Merrick, you got an A, that's a really big deal!" My daughter responded with a sigh, "Dana, my mother's a Toastmaster. If I *didn't* get an A, it would be a really big deal!"

George Alger, DTM

Renaissance Speakers • Hollywood, California

Toastmasters Inspires Award-Winning TV Series

“Welcome to Our Ventura TV. Today’s guest is ...”

If you live just north of Los Angeles, you might hear those words on a local cable TV talk show with a theme of, “People Doing Good Things in Ventura County.” However, without Toastmasters, this award-winning series would not have come to fruition. Or if it had, the title of this article would be “How I Was Tortured to Death on Television.”

My first TV experience was when I appeared on a talk show as a specialized technology expert in the mid-90s. It was a catastrophe. Have you ever endeavored to suppress vomiting and control tremendous bathroom urgency while simultaneously attempting to speak with some semblance of coherence on live TV? That was when I imagined how the TV cameras aimed in my direction were pulsing an evil electromagnetic force, tormenting every cell in my body while death rays (designed to look like studio lights) concentrated their energy beams towards vaporizing my will to live.

Once I survived, I contacted Toastmasters International. My mission was to learn how to defend myself against violent cameras and death-ray lights, in addition to bettering my public communication abilities. After some time, I appeared as a guest on another local talk show and this time it went smoothly! The cameras and lights—sensing my greater confidence—maintained their distance and made no attempt to hasten my demise. In fact, I had fun.

Since then I’ve established a local cable TV series which features nonprofits, community advocates, artists and those with a story—including Toastmasters. The entire Toastmasters program is an apt training foundation for television. The manuals establish the fundamental skills for public communications and communicating on video. However, I think the greatest benefit is simply the regular impromptu speaking experience provided by every club around the globe.



Sharon Justice, DTM and Nancy Jo Moses, DTM

Hilo Toastmasters club • Hilo, Hawaii

Buddy Up to Achieve Your DTM

Retired public school teachers Sharon Justice of Texas, and Nancy Jo Moses of Minnesota, met at a Hilo Toastmasters meeting after they both moved to the Big Island of Hawaii in 2010, unsure of what life had in store for them.

Sharon didn’t expect much; “a flushing toilet and a comfy chair” were her requirements for moving to be near her daughter. For Nancy Jo, the desire to breathe the clean, moist air brought her to Hawaii with her husband.

Sharon thought she was in Toastmasters for her own development, but she soon found “it is just as much fun learning from other members and watching them grow.”

Nancy Jo didn’t set out to be a DTM. “Early on, I gave speeches but I didn’t understand the scope of the Toastmasters program. Then I learned

that what I accomplish can help move our club forward, the area forward, the district forward.”

Being a DTM has provided Nancy Jo with an extra boost of confidence and ample opportunities. She is the co-director of a non-profit—Self Discovery Through Art. She has fielded questions, written news releases, presented at a regional mental health conference and spoken at county counsel meetings. “The skills I learned in Toastmasters fused so well with life after retirement.”

Sharon takes advantage of her Toastmasters skills by teaching improvisational comedy, because “laughing is a serious job,” she says, explaining, “Like a Toastmasters meeting, improv helps you overcome fear and build relationships.”

From competing in the District 49 International Speech Contest, to sponsoring and mentoring Waimea Toastmasters, to serving as area governors and working with the Boys and Girls Club of Hawaii, the friends have motivated and inspired each other.

Buddy up, fellow Toastmasters, and make a difference! 📣

Contributed by Mary Park, ACS, ALS, of Waimea Toastmasters and Kona Toastmasters clubs in Hawaii.

Do you have a Toastmasters success story you’d like to share about yourself or another member? Write it in 300 words or less and send with a high-resolution photo to submissions@toastmasters.org.



Reading a Prepared Text

How to slow down and avoid the deadly sing-song effect.

BY BILL BROWN, DTM

The Toastmasters *Competent Communication* manual urges us to memorize our speeches, or at least parts of them. There are times, however, when we find that we are reading parts, or even all, of our speeches.

Maybe you are reading a lengthy quotation from a book to support your speech's main point. Maybe you are a minister reading a section of Scripture during a sermon. Maybe you have been asked to introduce the main speaker at a major event and are handed an introduction to read verbatim. Or maybe, as a Toastmaster, you are tackling the *Interpretive Reading* manual in the Advanced Communication Series.

It may seem counterintuitive, but reading a text is one of the hardest ways to speak. Yes, it makes it easier for you to get the words out. But if you want it to sound real, if you want it to sound alive, if you want it to sound like you really believe it, you have to put some effort into it. Make it sound like you normally talk.

All too often I hear speakers going along just fine, but then, when they start reading a segment, they sound flat. They might as

well say, “blah, blah, blah.” As a professional narrator, I know how easily that can happen.

The energy that you put into a speech and the way that you emphasize your words are important elements in speaking. They help keep your audience engaged. Those qualities are easier to maintain when you are speaking in your own words—words that reflect your passion for your topic. But you can lose that energy when you read a text if you treat all words alike, without any vocal variety.

While I have done some commercials, including one for Del Taco, most of my projects have been marketing and training videos. (Did you catch my video on that tortilla making machine—or the training on how to make dental caps? Yawn ...) My job is to make boring subjects sound interesting. My narration experience has had a major impact on how I speak and read today.

I have my own recording studio in my home, so many of my clients send me a script and ask me to, “record it, edit it and send the final file.” That has given me the opportunity to agonize over retake after retake until I get a reading that works. And that has

taught me how to use my voice to captivate an audience and move them to action. When I hear a speaker reading a text in a blah, blah, blah manner, I realize the effect that that reading is having—or not having—on their audience.

Your objective, as a speaker reading someone else's text, is to capture the intent of the author. You selected to read that text for a reason. It spoke to you and it illustrates your point. Make sure that your audience senses that, too. That is the big picture. Now let's get into the details.

Tools of the Trade

When I am reading a text, I prepare it in a special way, and I mark it up—a lot.

1 Begin by printing out the text you will read, but do so in a larger font. Some experts suggest using Times Roman or a similar serif font style. I personally prefer Arial. Pick one that you find easy to read. Boost it to a 14 point size at a minimum, possibly 16. I usually use 14, because I want to minimize the number of times that a sentence wraps around to the next line. I use a line spacing of 1.15 or 1.5, but choose whichever works best for you. The purpose is to leave some space between the lines to allow for plenty of room to mark up the text without getting confused by markings from above and below.

2 Read through the text several times to understand it. Note the important words and phrases, and underline words or syllables that need emphasis.

3 If you want to pitch up on a word, put a line with an upward slope above the word. If you want to pitch down, draw a line with a downward slope.

4 If you want to add a short pause for clarity, insert a slash between the words that require the pause. If you want a longer pause, particularly for effect, use a double slash.

5 Any script will have words that cause you to goof up every time. When that happens to me, I circle that word. That way, when I am reading it, I see it coming and pay more attention to it.

Next let's look at word groupings and technical terms—the two constructions that can be particularly problematic when you are reading a text.

Word Groupings

Word Groupings, at least as I am using the term, are words that need to be stated as, essentially, one term. For instance, the tagline of this magazine is "The Magazine for Communicators & Leaders." "Communicators & Leaders" is a group, so I put brackets around it. This has two benefits. First, I know to read it as one. Second, if there is a line wrap after "Communicators" I don't say, "The Magazine for Communicators—pause—and Leaders." That can ruin the effect. When I see the front part of a bracket,

I know that there is more on the next line and that helps me to read it accordingly.

Technical Terms

Sometimes words in a particular industry or context take on a meaning special to that field. They become what are known as "technical terms." And all too frequently they take on either a pronunciation of their own or are treated as one word.

Here's an example from the world of Toastmasters. As I write this, it is speech contest season. In fact, I am assisting the contest chair at a division contest. Outside of Toastmasters we would pronounce that title *Contest CHAIR*—two words with the emphasis on the second word. When I begin my part in the division contest, however, I will use the Toastmasters pronunciation and pronounce it *CONTESTChair*—as one word, with an emphasis on the first syllable.

While this may seem to be a minor offense, I watched a video from a company in a field in which I once worked. It referred to a manufacturing method known as "tape wrapping." In that industry, we called it *TAPEwrapping*—again, pronounced as one word, with an emphasis on the first syllable. The video called it *tape WRAPPING*. That different pronunciation raised questions about the company's knowledge of the method.

It may seem counterintuitive, but reading a text is one of the hardest ways to speak.

There are technical terms in your field, as well. Bracket them, so that you see them coming. And one more thought about markings: Do them in pencil. You can see them better and you can change them, if necessary.

Finally, once you have your text prepared, deliver it with the same energy, pacing and vocal variety that you use in the rest of your speech. As I said in the beginning, make it sound like you normally talk. Record yourself as you practice. Ask yourself, "Did I lower my energy level on the reading?" "Does it have a sing-song sound to it?" "Did I quicken my pace?" We read at a faster pace than when we speak. If we speak the quotation at our reading pace, we will blitz through that segment and the audience may not get the full impact.

Effectively reading a text takes preparation, practice and time to master the skill. But it is a skill that can make a dramatic difference in the effect that your selected quotation has on your audience. That text had a strong effect on you. Make sure that it has that same effect on your audience. ■

Bill Brown, DTM, is a professional narrator and speech delivery coach based in Las Vegas, Nevada. He helps clients breathe life into their words. You can sign up for his speech delivery tips at www.billbrownspeechcoach.com.



Be My Valentine

How do I love thee? Let me count my money.

BY JOHN CADLEY

It's February, and that means Valentine's Day. Lots of other things happen in February worldwide but the 14th day of the month is the one that really counts, the day when merchants sell 144 million cards, 35 million boxes of chocolates and 320 million roses, generating \$20 billion in consumer spending and belying the romantic notion that love is free. The origins of the day are shrouded in mystery and myth, unless you accept my father's confirmed belief that Valentine's Day is "a bogus invention of greedy retailers to sell cards and candy and flowers!" This didn't stop him from buying my mother a card, candy and flowers, but ... well, let's just say that he preferred to be a hypocrite with a happy wife than a cynic with an unhappy wife. Smart man.

The truth is there really are historic origins for Valentine's Day and its association with romance, going all the way back to the ancient Roman fertility festival known as Lupercalia. This involved the sacrifice of a goat and a dog, whose skins were used to gently whip willing young women in hopes of increasing their fertility. Not exactly the same as *in vitro* fertilization at the Mayo Clinic but Rome *did* produce 90 million people so ... one way or another those folks knew how to get the job done.

Moving down through the centuries we come to France and England where, in the 1300s, people believed February 14 was the beginning of the bird mating season. This may seem unlikely, since February was the time when every bird's primary objective was to avoid freezing his tail feathers off. On the other hand, if the larks were huddling together for warmth, it's

not hard to see how one thing could lead to another.

Giving credence to this avian theory is no less a personage than the Father of English Literature, Geoffrey Chaucer, who referred to Valentine's Day in a poem thusly: "*For this was on Seynt Volantynys day when euery bryd comyth to chese his make.*" ("For this was on Valentine's Day when every bird comes to choose his mate.") So maybe there is some truth to the bird thing, although you would think that, of all people, the Father of English Literature would know how to spell.

The modern Valentine's Day card lets you express your deepest, most personal feelings of intimacy in words written by somebody else.

Then there's the story of the three martyrs, all named Valentine and all meeting their fates on the same day, which was—you guessed it—February 14th. The story most often told is of a good friar who, in A.D. 270, displeased the Emperor, Claudius the Cruel (and you don't want to displease a guy with a name like that). Sentenced to prison and death, Valentine befriended the jailer's daughter and, on the way to his execution, handed her a note that said, "From your Valentine." Kind of sad, really—not what you want to think about on a day meant for love and

affection. On the other hand, if you are a person who has completely forgotten it's Valentine's Day and you come home to your significant other with no card, candy or flowers, staring death in the face doesn't seem quite so far-fetched.

An actual written declaration of undying love for one's paramour—the Valentine's Day card—didn't start until the Middle Ages with handmade paper notes, and then only to a limited degree since 99 percent of the population was illiterate. As a result, from the 12th to the 15th centuries only 13 Valentine's Day cards were actually composed.

Then came the Enlightenment and the education of the masses. Finally, the butcher, the baker and the candlestick maker could write their amorous feelings in words. They just didn't know what to say. Hence, the origins of our modern Valentine's Day card, which lets you express your deepest, most personal feelings of intimacy in words written by somebody else. In those days it was the poets, including Shakespeare, who actually had a side business writing greeting cards. Here's an example: *Tomorrow is Saint Valentine's day/All in the morning betime/ And I a maid at your window/To be your Valentine.* The Bard liked this one so much he had Ophelia say it in *Hamlet*. Of course, Ophelia goes nuts so ... by all means get your Valentine something nice. Just don't overdo it. **T**

John Cadley, a former advertising copywriter, is a freelance writer and musician living in Fayetteville, New York. Learn more at www.cadleys.com.

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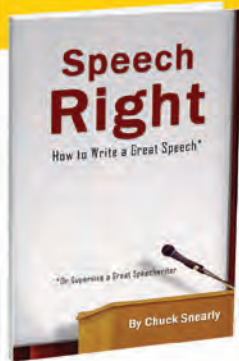
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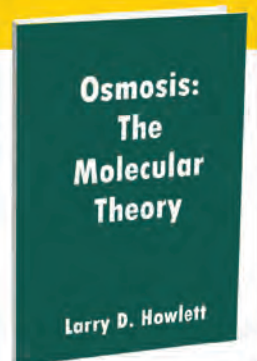
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For more than three decades author Chuck Snearly has been writing highly acclaimed speeches for leaders around the world, including the top executives at Ford Motor Company, Royal Dutch Shell, the Bosch Group and Dean Foods. In his book *Speech Right* 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.



Speech Right by Chuck Snearly and *Osmosis: The Molecular Theory* by Larry D. Howlett are available at amazon

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