

# TOASTMASTER®



## IN PUBLIC RELATIONS, **PERSISTENCE PAYS**

PR pros share  
tried-and-true tips  
on promoting  
the brand

### How to Persuade

Use ethos, pathos and logos

### Is Leadership for Me?

5 characteristics for  
cultivating self-leadership

# Embracing Change

As a member of the baby boomer generation, I've seen dramatic changes, such as the advent of the internet, smartphones, texting, social media, self-driving cars and incredible new technologies from innovative companies like Microsoft, Apple, Google and Amazon.

What changes have you experienced in the past two years? How have you adapted to those changes? When my husband died of cancer in 2014, my life was forever changed. It was the saddest year of my life, but I resolved to move forward, to make my late husband proud.

Toastmasters has progressed with time too. Just in the last two years, we moved our World Headquarters from California to Colorado. We changed to annual district conferences and implemented a virtual district council business meeting this year. Most notably, we launched our new online Pathways education program.

How well do you and your club members adapt to change? Have you and your club members taken your Pathways assessment and chosen your first path? Feel free to complete your desired goals in the traditional education program but know that you can work in both programs simultaneously. The sooner you begin your journey in Pathways, the sooner you will experience the depth and breadth of expanded learning opportunities.

**“Excelling in these efforts is not a goal, but rather our new gold standard.”**

In January 2019, we launched initiatives such as the *Wow!Factor* Project, to highlight the importance of consistent high-quality club experiences. This included a club quality checklist (available at [bit.ly/TI\\_CheckList](http://bit.ly/TI_CheckList)) based on the *Moments of Truth* program to use in analyzing your club's strengths and areas for improvement. Have you submitted your club's *Wow!Factor* video yet? If you value the “wow” of your club, please showcase your club in your *Wow!Factor* video.

Furthermore, as an incentive to the Club Coach program, anyone serving as a successful Club Coach by June 30, 2020, will receive double credit—credit for being a club coach and district leader credit toward their Distinguished Toastmaster award.

Your Board of Directors has initiated significant changes in the last two years. We sincerely appreciate your positive support as we move through these changes to a more successful future.

Excelling in these efforts is not a goal, but rather our new gold standard. You can learn more about the current club quality initiative on the next page.

Thanks for all you do to serve Toastmasters. I am excited about The Year of the *Wow!*

**Lark Doley, DTM**  
International President



# TOASTMASTER®

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## Toastmasters International Mission:

We empower individuals to become more effective communicators and leaders.



**WHERE LEADERS ARE MADE**  
[www.toastmasters.org](http://www.toastmasters.org)

The *Toastmaster* magazine (ISSN 00408263) is published monthly by Toastmasters International, Inc., 9127 S. Jamaica St. #400, Englewood, Colorado, United States 80112. Periodicals postage paid at Englewood, Colorado. POSTMASTER: Send address change to the *Toastmaster* magazine, 9127 S. Jamaica St. #400, Englewood, Colorado, United States 80112.

Published to promote the ideas and goals of Toastmasters International, a nonprofit educational organization of clubs throughout the world dedicated to teaching skills in public speaking and leadership. Members' subscriptions are included in the \$45 semi-annual dues.

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

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Printed in the United States.

# “What makes your club so special? Film a one-minute video!”

The Wow!Factor Project is aimed at making clubs across the globe more uniform and top-performing. You can **play a part** by promoting the club mission, publicizing club details and recruiting new members through open houses. When the club is ready, show and tell what makes it so great and different through a one-minute video.



Visit [www.toastmasters.org/WowFactor](http://www.toastmasters.org/WowFactor) to learn more.

**#wowfactor**

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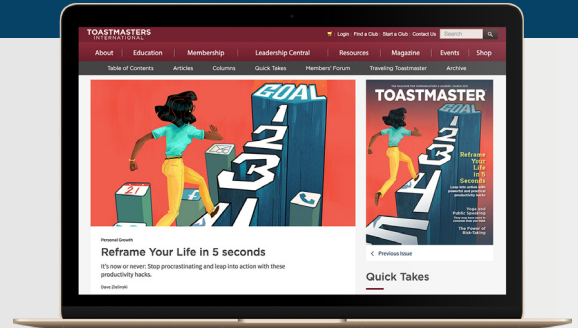


# Toastmaster Magazine Online

See more photos, videos and links online at [www.toastmasters.org/Magazine](http://www.toastmasters.org/Magazine).

## April Online Extras:

- **Is Leadership for Me?**—Listen to a podcast interview with Past International President Mohammed Murad and watch a video from his 2018 education session on leadership. ▶ 🔊
- **The Path to Innovative Planning**—Hear what members are saying about their experience in the Innovative Planning path and how it benefited their careers. ▶
- **Last-minute Meeting Scramble**—Listen to an audio recording by the author for additional tips on what to do when your club meeting goes off course. 🔊



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## Spotlight on WHQ's Magazine Team

Staff makes members' stories come to life in print and online.

Now in its 86th year, the *Toastmaster* magazine continues to be a treasured publication for members around the world. The 32-page monthly print edition, featuring articles on communication, leadership, humor, mentoring and more, has also evolved into an interactive experience through its web-based edition at [www.toastmasters.org/Magazine](http://www.toastmasters.org/Magazine).

Over the last several years, the *Toastmaster* staff has grown in more ways than one. To keep pace with the digital era, the online edition has become an important focus in addition to the print, as well as cross-promoting the magazine content on other digital platforms. The team, composed of six employees, are writers, editors, content curators and customer service providers with many years of professional editorial experience.

The Magazine department receives more than 100 photo and article submissions per month which are considered for use in the print or online magazine. In addition to forming member submissions into articles, the staff assigns and writes articles and curates content from a variety of sources.

Content strategy for the magazine begins three months in advance and the staff is constantly planning, editing and proof-reading several issues at a time.

Team members are not just passionate about prose; they aim to make the *Toastmaster* a resource for information, tips and encouragement. The staff conducted a magazine survey in early 2019 to gauge readership habits, both in print and online. With this feedback, the team will determine new ways of recognizing clubs and members.

While words may be the focus of this team, you—the member—make the words come alive. If you have a story to tell, advice to give or professional tips to share, the magazine staff wants to hear from you. So next month, whether you're flipping or clicking

through the *Toastmaster*, know that it was created by a staff who care about its readers, all around the world.

### Subscription Information:

- ▶ To opt out of the print edition, update your address and manage other preferences, log in to your **Toastmasters Profile** or contact [membership@toastmasters.org](mailto:membership@toastmasters.org).
- ▶ For questions on magazine delivery, contact [tracking@toastmasters.org](mailto:tracking@toastmasters.org).
- ▶ To confirm your address with WHQ, contact [addresschanges@toastmasters.org](mailto:addresschanges@toastmasters.org).

### Magazine Queries:

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- ▶ Photo submissions: [photos@toastmasters.org](mailto:photos@toastmasters.org)
- ▶ Letters to Editor: [letters@toastmasters.org](mailto:letters@toastmasters.org)
- ▶ General magazine questions: [magazine@toastmasters.org](mailto:magazine@toastmasters.org)

### Want to Read More?

Did you know that every issue of the *Toastmaster* is available for download by PDF? The archive for 2012–present is located at [www.toastmasters.org/Magazine](http://www.toastmasters.org/Magazine) under the **Archive** tab. If you're looking to take a bigger step into *Toastmaster* history, visit the public Toastmasters Gallery at [toastmasters.photoshelter.com/galleries](http://toastmasters.photoshelter.com/galleries) for issues from 1930–2011. Article indexes are also available for your convenience to help you search for a specific article by topic or author.

**Editor's note:** This article is one in a recurring series about the various departments at Toastmasters World Headquarters.



## And the Award Goes To ...

*During its annual awards meeting last year, Kauai Toastmasters club in Lihue, Hawaii, recognized members for their educational achievements and celebrated the club's 40th anniversary. The group received a proclamation from the Lihue mayor's office honoring the milestone, and the meeting included a slideshow featuring photos of members through the years. The event also highlighted the awards theme with a formal Academy Awards-inspired program, red carpet and assortment of mouth-watering snacks.*

## ▶ **HUMOR TIPS**

# Finding the Funny for Your Speech

The world is a funny place and stories that make you laugh are everywhere. Finding humor that works for an audience, though, takes a little more work. We've all experienced situations where we tell what we think is a sidesplitting story but are met with blank stares. These anecdotes tend to end with those dreaded words, "I guess you had to be there."

The goal of great humor is telling stories in a way that makes your audience feel like they were there.

### **Be There Yourself**

In the morning, make it your daily goal to find the funny. That means actively listening and observing. So, for that day, put away your headphones. Instead of browsing the internet, get up from your desk and get out of your comfort zone.

It's also not enough to simply hang out waiting for something funny to happen. Talk to people, ask questions about their lives and offer your own insights. Humor begins with shared experiences.

### **The Pen Is Mightier Than the Phone**

The best place to find humor is in your daily life, but active listening isn't always enough. If you hear something funny, you need to write it down, and you need to write it down quickly. Why?

Studies show that after only 12 seconds, 15 percent of the original memory remains. If you want to remember the details, keeping a pen and notebook around is essential.

Phones won't do, either, because a phone is much more than its notetaking app. It's a tiny computer that literally holds the knowledge of the entire world, not to mention some really distracting games with gems and candy.

### **Feel Free to Refine**

Compelling humor is exaggerated. Once you find and write down a great anecdote, take time to break it down. Why did it make you laugh? Search for the key element and enhance it. If the story is ironic, play up the irony. If it ends with something cute your kid said, make your kid really, really cute.

Humor is all around us; it's just a matter of keeping your eyes and ears open. Including engaging, relatable humor in your next speech will ensure that your listeners tell their friends that they really should have been there.

**Nick Jack Pappas** is a stand-up comedian and comedy writer in New York City. He's one of the founders of **Comedywire.com**, a startup that helps businesses, brands and individuals find the funny.

▶ MEET MY MENTOR



## Garth Thomson

“Tell me about your favorite soccer team.” This Table Topic began the mentor-mentee relationship between Garth Thomson and Matimu Marcus Manganyi. Matimu had been working for an international management consulting company for only a few months when Garth, his coworker, gave a presentation on the social and professional benefits of Toastmasters.

After participating in a brief Table Topics session and learning about Toastmasters, Matimu approached Garth about joining the corporate club Deloitte Siyakhuluma in Johannesburg, South Africa. Immediately, Garth showed Matimu how he could benefit from the experience to reach his personal goals.

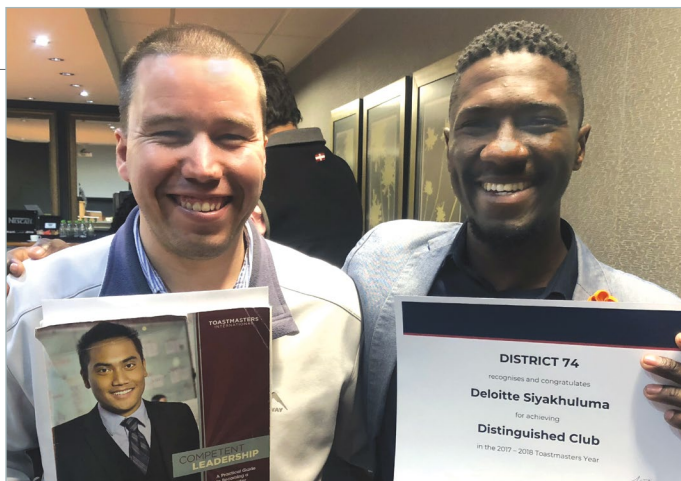
Garth used his quirky and infectious energy to encourage Matimu to advance as a Competent Communicator, and their friendship continued to grow as well. As Matimu became more involved with Toastmasters, he noticed Garth always said the word “fantastic” in speeches, evaluations or any other suitable opportunity in a meeting. He dubbed his mentor “Mr. Fantastic.”

### How do you explain your mentor-mentee relationship?

My relationship with Garth has developed from a mentor and mentee relationship to a friend, mentor and confidant relationship. We share not only our Toastmasters goals but our personal life experiences as well. Garth has opened avenues of learning for me and is always thinking of what’s next for himself—then he poses the same question to me. He’s challenging me to be an area director now. Garth epitomizes servant leadership.

### What is the most important lesson Garth has taught you?

Have fun. That’s what he always told me to do. Garth mentored me for my *Competent Communication* speeches and throughout other leadership projects. He was with me during speech contests



Garth Thomson, left, and Matimu Marcus Manganyi

and always said, “Dude, have fun!” He stretched my leadership attributes by asking me to be vice president education in my second month as a member, and he was delighted to see me advancing in Toastmasters. Garth is absolutely a fantastic human and a fantastic Toastmaster.

### What do you appreciate most about Garth?

He’s done so much for me. I gave one of my speeches about his mentorship and friendship, and it’s a speech I will share with my friends, family and future children. I’ll forever be a Toastmaster and forever be thankful for Mr. Fantastic.

**Laura Mishkind** is editorial coordinator for the *Toastmaster magazine*.

**Looking for a mentor in your club?** Ask your vice president education who is available to mentor you. To start a mentoring program in your club, order the Club Mentor Program Kit (Item 1163) at [www.toastmasters.org/Shop](http://www.toastmasters.org/Shop).

### WANT TO NOMINATE AN EXCEPTIONAL MENTOR?

Nominate your mentor by emailing your story and a photo (1MB or larger) to [MentorMoment@toastmasters.org](mailto:MentorMoment@toastmasters.org).

▶ NEWS FROM TI

## The Convention Is Coming to Colorado: August 21–24, 2019

Save the date for the 88th Annual Toastmasters International Convention in Denver, Colorado, the new hometown of Toastmasters International’s World Headquarters. Plan to attend this popular event, which attracts Toastmasters from across the globe to the newly completed “rustic-chic” Gaylord Rockies Resort & Convention Center, located just minutes from the Denver International Airport.

Bring a friend or family member and take in the scenic views of the Front Range of the Rocky Mountains while visiting popular local attractions. The International Convention marks the



highlight of the Toastmasters year with a schedule full of celebrations, education sessions and events that will enrich your life.

Visit [www.toastmasters.org/Convention](http://www.toastmasters.org/Convention) for more information and watch for updates on Toastmasters’ social media channels.





## An open platform for your tips, tactics, comments and encouragement.

### A Note of Appreciation

I recently came across the mention of Toastmasters and thought to myself, *Wow, I should write them a thank-you note. Better yet, I should write them an article telling everyone why they deserve a thank-you note.*

Growing up, I didn't have the moral and family support other children had. In fact, I became acquainted with the Toastmasters organization through the donation of their members' time, once a week at a youth home in Woburn, Massachusetts.

Someone would come in and teach us how to speak in front of each other and then in front of crowds. Oh, how nerve-wracking that could be for a 16-year-old! "But this will give you the experience," said one well-seasoned speaker.

How right he was. It helped us conquer any fears and intimidation we felt about expressing ourselves to others. One day we were asked if we wanted to speak at the University of Massachusetts Lowell so others could learn from our experiences.

On the day of the event, we arrived at the auditorium in the early evening. It wasn't full but was still a nice-sized crowd. I tried not to notice the audience. *If you don't notice them, you won't be nervous.* That's what I told myself over and over, while I reminded myself to just breathe easy.

My speech went so smoothly that I looked and felt like a professional. Due to the wonderful dedication and commitment that Toastmasters members gave to the Alliance House, the youth home where I resided in the late 1990s, I was able to

overcome many phobias and climb mountains I never knew existed. A long overdue thank-you, Toastmasters.

**Charles Higgins**  
Crystal Springs, Mississippi,  
United States

### Kicking Out Clichés

As a relatively new member and frequent abuser of clichés, I found the article "Kick Clichés Out of Your Speech" [January 2019 issue] to be a great wake-up call. "Inspirational" speeches are certainly less so if people doubt the sincerity of your message. It's so easy to get comfortable using phrases and words

like those mentioned in the article, but I can see how they do degrade your message. Thanks for the great advice as always!

**Sarah Kohl**  
Speak Up Club  
Batavia, New York, United States

### DO YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY?

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



Members of the Chua Chu Kang CC Mandarin club

### An Illuminating Experience

Members of the Chua Chu Kang CC Mandarin club in Singapore and the Johor Bahru Mandarin Advanced Toastmasters club in Malaysia came together in Johor Bahru, Malaysia, for their fifth annual joint meeting. The clubs focused on ensuring the event was filled with memorable and illuminating moments that would remind the members of their clubs' *Wow!*Factor. Cassandra Ang of Chua Chu Kang CC Mandarin club said, "This event was filled with excitement, energy and 'wow' moments for everyone!"

**Kim Siong Poh, DTM** • Chua Chu Kang CC Mandarin Toastmasters Club • Singapore



1

**1 | AMJAD ALI** of Dubai, United Arab Emirates, sits below the Acropolis of Athens, Greece, an ancient citadel perched above the city.

**2 | ADRIANA ARIAS RESTREPO** of Fort Lauderdale, Florida, explores the Church of the Good Shepherd on the shores of Lake Tekapo, New Zealand.

**3 | EVE WONG** of Selangor, Malaysia, walks through dramatically-lit stalactites in the Silver Cave—a multilevel cave meandering through 12 mountain peaks—in Guilin City, Guangxi Province, China.

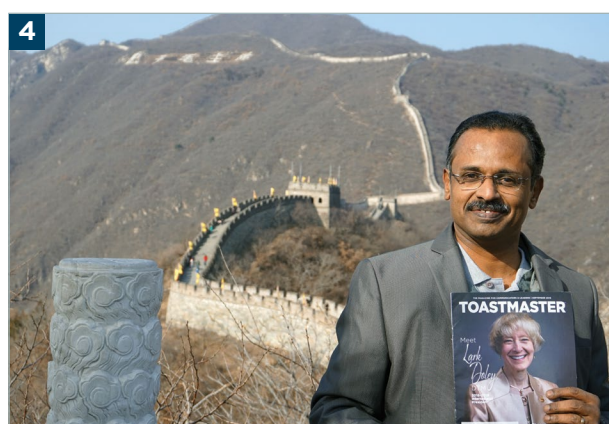
**4 | RAGHAVAN MENON, DTM,** of Doha, Qatar, walks along the Great Wall of China near Beijing.



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3



4



View additional photos in this month's *Traveling Toastmaster* photo gallery at [www.toastmasters.org/Magazine](http://www.toastmasters.org/Magazine).



**PICTURE YOURSELF HERE!** Pose with the *Toastmaster* magazine during your travels and submit your photos for a chance to be featured in print or online. Send images 1MB or larger to [photos@toastmasters.org](mailto:photos@toastmasters.org). Bon voyage!

# A Mother's Courage to Speak

How I regained a sense of self and became an advocate for voiceless children.

BY PRISCILLA DICKINSON

Following a solid year of nights spent sleepwalking from exhaustion and changing nappies—most of my conversations with other adults having been on the virtues of various bottle brands—I returned to work part time. I had been so focused on my two young children and all the work that came with them that I felt out of place in the corporate world.

My job required me to dial in remotely to a weekly team meeting and give a five-minute rundown of my work in progress. Sitting alone in an empty room, I grew to dread speaking into the large mobile-conferencing speakerphone. Without body language or other visual cues, I was lost. I stumbled through sentences, my voice giving way to pressure to get through my task list as quickly as possible.

It was those meetings, along with the days of anxiety I experienced each time I was asked to present to new advisors, that drove me to find a solution. I couldn't go on that way, my stress was affecting my loved ones too.

In late 2015, I decided to visit the Eden-Epsom Club in Auckland, New Zealand. The club members were supportive and diverse, reflecting many different nationalities, age groups and walks of life. I joined in October 2015.

Over the next three years, I slowly worked my way through the *Competent Communication* manual, seeing it as an ideal self-improvement tool while raising pre-school children. It was my fortnightly evening out and helped me slowly regain confidence.

In 2018, I completed project nine of the CC manual, "Persuade with Power," delivering a speech titled "Being a Voice for the Voiceless." While delivering this speech, I



Priscilla Dickinson and family

**“Nothing compares to the feeling of being heard—or speaking about something you're passionate about.”**

was able to step away from my notes, walk to the front of the lectern and make eye contact with my audience—a huge accomplishment for me.

As a mother, I understand the extent of influence that parents—and other adults—have in shaping a child for adulthood, which is why I became interested in the global issue of child trafficking. Although the issue isn't on my doorstep, I feel responsible to help protect all children from harm.

For this reason, I'm a voluntary advocate for Child Rescue, a charity that rescues and rehabilitates sexually enslaved children across Thailand, Cambodia, India, the Philippines and other parts of Southeast Asia. Since 2011, the charity has rescued thousands of children and offered assistance, such as a safe place to stay, counseling and training in practical skills.

My experience writing and delivering speeches in my Eden-Epsom Club has empowered me to write social media posts and newsletters for Child Rescue and spread the word about child trafficking to friends and family. I assist with fundraising activities in my community and intend to speak at my local church and other local events in the future.

In my early career, I felt more comfortable writing than speaking. Three years at Toastmasters has given me the courage to speak with authority and inject

self-expression into my words. Evaluating speeches has improved my listening skills, making me a better communicator with friends and family. Beyond this, my skills are helping me spread the word about a cause that's close to my heart.

Nothing compares to the feeling of being heard—or speaking about something you're passionate about. Progress, no matter how small, builds over time. I joined Toastmasters to help myself. And now I'm able to help others too. **T**

**PRISCILLA DICKINSON** is a freelance writer and former member of Eden-Epsom Club in Auckland, New Zealand. Learn more about her at [www.justaminutemama.co.nz](http://www.justaminutemama.co.nz) and about Child Rescue's work at [www.childrescue.org.nz](http://www.childrescue.org.nz).

# Is Leadership for Me?

Great leaders last because they lead themselves first.

BY MOHAMMED MURAD, PIP, DTM

**H**ave you ever asked yourself if becoming a leader is a viable solution to your life challenges?

As a Toastmaster, this question might be prompted if you are asked to serve as an area or district officer. Giving it a little more thought, you might realize this same question already came up, indirectly, when you considered whether or not to join Toastmasters.

One question we ask ourselves daily—that may not seem like contemplating leadership directly—is, *How will my day be?* This could mean different things to different people, but ideally, as a potential leader, your question would be more like: *How will I succeed in everything I do today?*

When we analyze leadership in detail, it's clear that leadership is demonstrated in the smallest tasks—small successes are precursors to big successes. Our capabilities and perspective on leadership will greatly affect our acceptance of the fact that we are *all* leaders, and that leadership starts with self-leadership. Great leaders last because they lead themselves first.

This brings us to the crucial question: What does it take to become an outstanding leader? We need to emphasize the word *outstanding*, because it is what we must aspire to become.

In my mind, outstanding leadership is based on the “Five H’s.” I invite you to test my theory and consider these characteristics in leaders whom you admire. I have

no doubt the five traits will be apparent in each one.

**1 Head:** The brain is fascinating when it comes to learning. We can learn, unlearn and build on the knowledge we have acquired to make better decisions. Nurturing the brain—the head—through continual learning is the first trait of an outstanding leader.

For example, Steve Jobs attended a college calligraphy class to learn about typefaces, and that knowledge eventually inspired the beautiful typography of Apple machines. It's never too late to learn: Leo Plass, the world's oldest college graduate, earned his degree at 99 years old.

When we stop learning, our brains start deteriorating, as do our leadership capabilities. The “head” in leadership entails a relentless thirst for knowledge, not only in our field of specialization but the peripheries as well. Sometimes, seeking knowledge in a completely unfamiliar field gives us that “aha” moment we have been waiting for.

Biologically, within the head we have the inner ear, which helps us maintain balance in our movement. Similarly, leadership requires balance, not only in gaining knowledge but also in being levelheaded in decision-making. Balance helps us carefully weigh possible outcomes or consequences of decisions we make.

**2 Heart:** Alan Watts, a British-American philosopher, once said, “The only way to make sense out of change is to plunge into it, move with it and join the dance.”

It takes a strong heart to take risks and join the dance. Yet risks that are fortified with knowledge and balance from the head become calculated risks.

For example, Mahatma Gandhi took a huge risk when deciding to lead India's non-violent protests against British rule. His heart was drawn to leading change, yet he wasn't acting impulsively. His actions were based on the knowledge he gained while studying law in England, along with his experience during apartheid in South Africa. His knowledge, coupled with his legal background, turned his calculated risk into one of the greatest leadership journeys in history—one that led India to independence and inspired peaceful protest and civil rights movements for years to come.

In addition to his passion and knowledge, Gandhi used another aspect of the heart: empathy. He cared greatly for those he wanted to help. Taking a risk and focusing purely on goals, without regard to people, deprives leaders of a crucial element—loyal followers, who believe in the goal and in the leader.


**3 Health:** Health is often neglected by some leaders, who think they lack



“Outstanding leaders treat everyone else as if they are also leaders—or leaders waiting to emerge.”

In psychologist Abraham Maslow’s famed hierarchy of needs, the highest goal is self-actualization, which is a sense of well-being, or happiness. Every one of us has leadership within. To find that leader, all we must do is remove our self-doubt—along with the tendency to doubt others—and be confident.

We all have heads and hearts; we can certainly develop a healthy lifestyle and learn that humility is a form of understanding other people. But to answer the complex question, *Is leadership for me?* ask yourself the simpler question: *Do I need to be happy?*

My answer, and I presume any sane person’s answer, is, “Yes.” After all, who doesn’t want to be happy? 

**Mohammed Murad, DTM**, of Dubai, United Arab Emirates, served as Toastmasters International President in 2014–2015. A retired senior police officer, he holds several academic degrees and has more than 28 years of experience at the director and chief executive officer levels in emergency medical services management, human resource development and strategic planning for organizations.



**ONLINE EXTRAS:** Listen to a podcast interview with Past International President Mohammed Murad and watch a video from his 2018 education session on leadership.

the time to tend to their own well-being. It is flawed thinking to believe that achieving goals is the utmost priority without considering how both the head and the heart will weaken without physical and mental health.

Those who preach about leadership with little or no mention of health may look at leadership from a narrow perspective rather than holistically. A holistic approach needs to include the three main elements of attaining physical health: nutrition, exercise and sleep. Through exercise, the heart muscle will be fortified for physical strength.

As for the “head’s” role in wellness, mental health is crucial for attaining clear and focused thinking. This is aided by memory-enhancement exercises, by clearing the brain from clutter through meditation and relaxation, and by widening one’s perspective through visualization and self-affirmation.

It is important to understand that health is a lifestyle, a habit and a lifelong practice.

**4 Humility:** Successful leadership will only be attained if followers feel genuinely appreciated and treated with respect. That achievement begins with respect for oneself. Once that is accomplished, respect for others becomes an automatic progression.

Only humble leaders can be generous in giving due credit to whomever deserves it.

Humility requires being a good listener, a trait that conveys a person is caring and is comfortable putting other people first. Leadership begets more leaders. Outstanding leaders treat everyone else as if they are also leaders—or leaders waiting to emerge.

Humility is often confused with passivity or meekness. This is not true. A leader can be humble but also aggressive in achieving goals and taking risks.

**5 Happiness:** We have many reasons for wanting to better lead ourselves or others, but the true and ultimate reason to lead is to achieve happiness.



# Need to Make an Impact? Get Loud

Turn up your volume for benefits far beyond simply being heard.

BY JOEL SCHWARTZBERG, DTM

For more than 10 years as a public-speaking coach, I've run the same simple exercise and gotten the same results. I ask each of my workshop students to say their name, their title and a single point, in a very loud voice.

Not just louder than usual, I say. I want you to speak *uncomfortably, embarrassingly, inappropriately* loud, without yelling. After each student performs the exercise—or tries to—I ask the group two questions:

1. Would you consider the speaker “too loud” if you heard him or her at that volume during a meeting?
2. What changed in your perception of the speaker as a result of the loudness?

The answer to Question No. 1 is almost always a hard “no.” Most speakers simply can't bring themselves to speak too loudly, even if I were to beg them. At best, they're a little louder than usual, and only for the first few words. Few speakers can speak in an inappropriately loud voice—and keep it up. By the fifth or sixth word, they're generally either at a perfect volume or still too soft. Because of that, the first big takeaway is this: There's no such thing as being too loud. Even if there were, our internal self-control systems would never allow it.

The answer to Question No. 2 is where things get interesting. When I ask the group how their impression of the speaker changed as a result of the increased volume, they describe a marked increase in the perception of *assertiveness, competence, expertise* and *leadership*.

Indeed—for the quiet speakers in particular—a simple increase in volume makes an intern sound like a manager, and a manager sound like a vice president,

even though no one's actual job titles took the same leap.

## A Simple Adjustment

Training yourself to seem “more authoritative,” or to sound more “like a leader,” or to “exude confidence” is nearly impossible because there are no clear tactics to create those results. They're vague and mean different things to different people.

“Being louder is not just about being heard, it's about making an impact.”

Raising your volume, on the other hand, is clear and actionable. Anyone can do that. And when communicators make their point with strong volume, they do seem more authoritative, sound more like leaders and exude confidence. Yes, it's that simple.

## Benefits of Volume

Even if you're not sold on the idea that increasing your volume enhances your presence, there are other clear benefits to speaking more loudly.

- ▶ **It keeps you from mumbling.** There's no such thing as a loud mumble—volume forces you to articulate.
- ▶ **It keeps you on an even pace.** It's nearly impossible to speak both loudly and quickly. You just don't have enough breath.
- ▶ **It invites more pauses.** Because you have less breath to work with, you're more likely to pause, which drives attention, slows you down and gives audiences time to digest your points.
- ▶ **It helps you end sentences with periods instead of question marks.**

When speaking in a loud voice, it's easy to end in a lower pitch, which sounds confident. It's much harder to end with a question mark or engage in uptalk, which sounds unsure.

## Gender Perceptions

The benefits of volume apply to both genders equally, but female students occasionally share a fear that if they increase their volume, they'll be perceived as “aggressive” or “shrill,” which could turn an audience against them.

I don't pretend to be a scholar on gender bias, but when this happens, I survey the room.

“Did she sound aggressive to you?” I ask the other students. The typical response: a unanimous “no.” Are her fellow participants just being nice? Perhaps, so I ask another question: “How *did* she sound?”

The adjectives they offer up reinforce the benefits of increased volume: “strong,” “confident,” “authoritative,” “assertive”—all indicators of a polished speaker.

That doesn't mean gender bias doesn't exist or that you'll never run into it. It does exist, and you may experience it. But my suggestion to those who fear being perceived negatively is to ignore that fear. Your job is to step up and to speak up, even when your audience's job is to grow up.

Always remember: Being louder is not just about being heard, it's about making an impact. When you turn up the volume, everything else rises as well. **T**

**Joel Schwartzberg** is a professional speechwriter, public-speaking coach and author of *Get to the Point! Sharpen Your Message and Make Your Words Matter*.

# Leaders on Leadership

Leadership—the concept has been defined, debated, dissected, celebrated and enacted by humans around the world for thousands of years. Leadership is an act that can be defined in a variety of words, yet it is a concept that reflects a world of common ideas and values, as the quotes below reveal.

**“People are more willing to follow a leader who knows where he is going.”**

—RALPH C. SMEDLEY

**“The art of leadership is saying no, not saying yes. It is very easy to say yes.”**

—TONY BLAIR

**“Leadership is all about emotional intelligence. Management is taught, while leadership is experienced.”**

—RAJEEV SURI

**“The world is changed by your example, not by your opinion.”**

—PAUL COELHO

**“Effective leadership is not about making speeches or being liked; leadership is defined by results not attributes.”**

—PETER F. DRUCKER

**“Leadership is the art of giving people a platform for spreading ideas that work.”**

—SETH GODIN

**“Vision without action is a daydream.**

**“Leadership is a matter of how to be—not how to do it.”**

—FRANCES HESSELBEIN

**“One must be convinced to convince, to have the enthusiasm to stimulate others.”**

—STEFAN ZWEIG

**Action without vision is a nightmare.”**

—JAPANESE PROVERB

**“I believe in a quiet, strong and grounded leadership. I think some of the best leaders are those whose work is widely known and respected but who, themselves, are relatively unknown.”**

—RACHAEL CHONG

**“Only the (one) who isn’t rowing has time to rock the boat.”**

—JEAN-PAUL SARTRE

**“It always seems impossible until it’s done.”**

—NELSON MANDELA

# In Public Relations, Persistence Pays

Last year's top PRMs share their best talk-up-Toastmasters tactics.

BY TESS IANDIORIO

In the business world, aspects of public relations are carried out by marketing and communication professionals, event planners, social media managers, speechwriters, content marketers and others. Their wide-ranging efforts all serve

the same purpose: building relationships and generating goodwill. Professionals who handle public relations—directly or indirectly—protect an organization's reputation through thoughtful and careful communication.

Within Toastmasters, it works the same way: District public relations managers (PRMs) promote Toastmasters by “establishing and maintaining lines of communication between the district and its clubs, as well as between the district and the public,” as explained in the *Let the World Know* publicity handbook. The responsibilities of PRMs encompass many duties, including training club vice presidents public relations to promote the organization at the club level.

PRMs work tirelessly to foster communication within their districts—to the community at large, the media, and among clubs

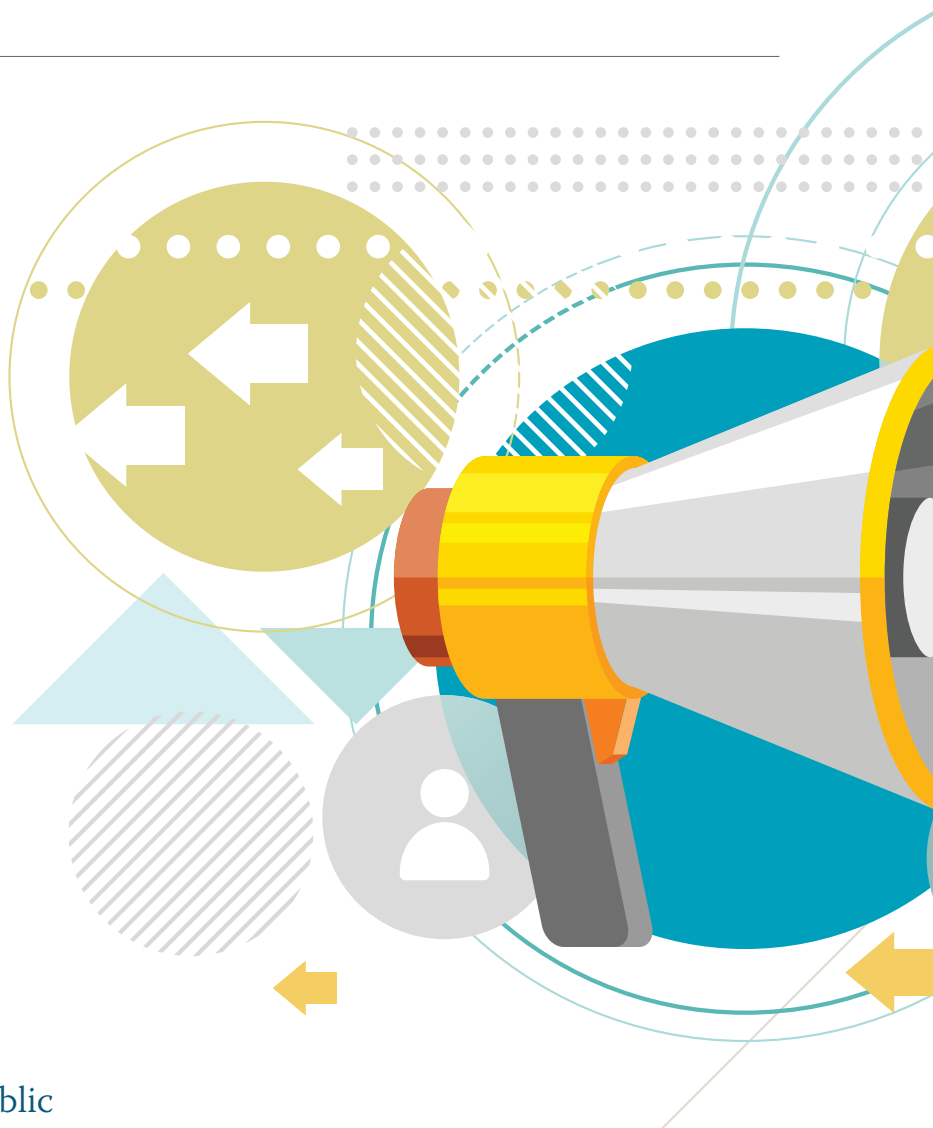
and members. During their year in the role, PRMs will secure media coverage, social media engagement, branding compliance and attendance at district events, such as conferences and officer training—all of which support district growth.

By investigating what a successful tenure as PRM looks like, any Toastmaster might glean useful advice about promoting and protecting the Toastmasters brand. Here, five public relations managers who served in 2017–18 in different districts share their experience on talking up Toastmasters.

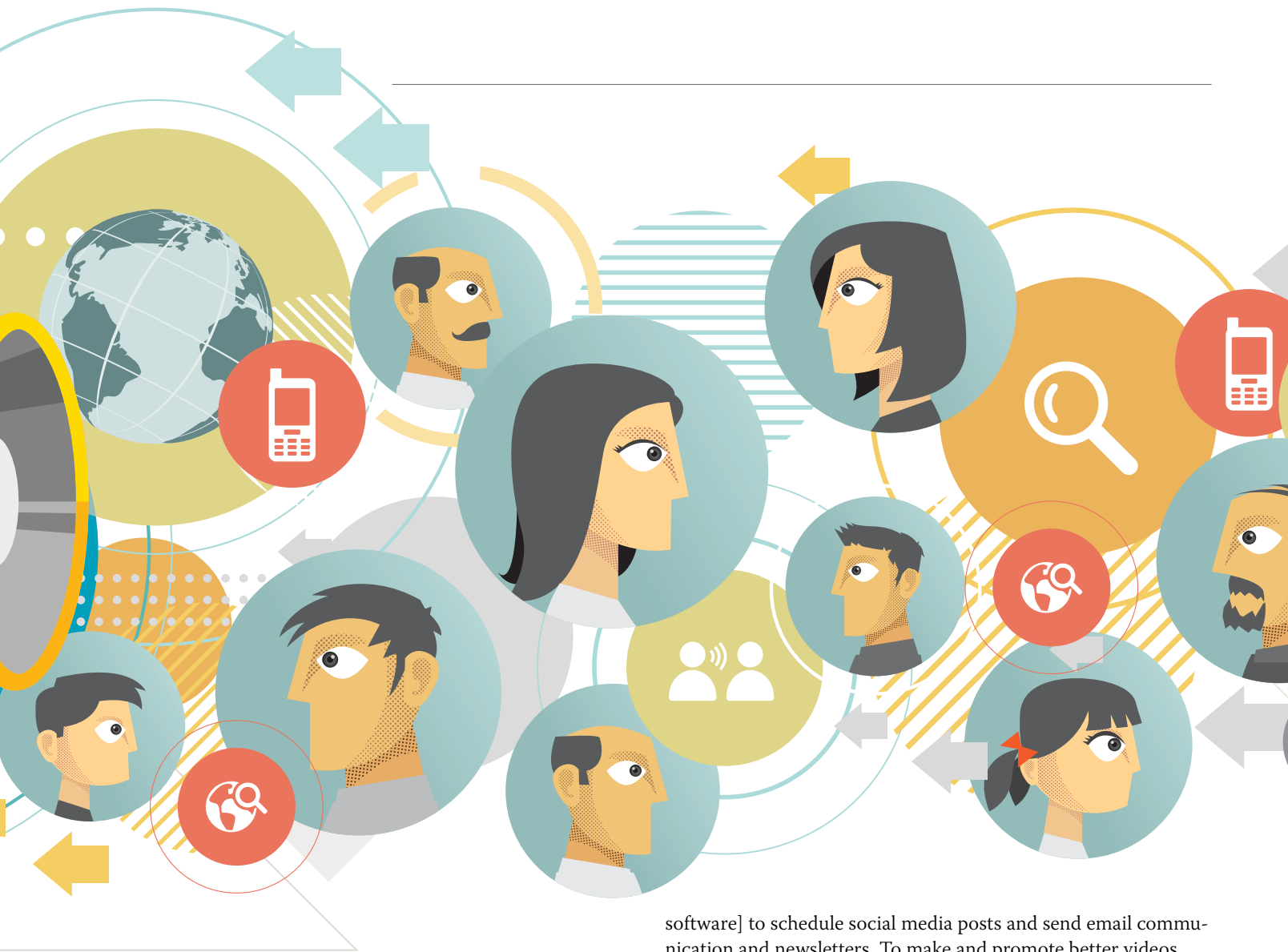
## Meet the Five Standouts

Niteash Agarwaal, DTM, of Pune in Maharashtra, India, achieved great success promoting District 98, generating more than 30 media stories during his year as PRM. Juliana Jamal, DTM, organized a successful gala in Sydney to promote the launch of the Pathways learning experience in District 70. The event, attended by around 500 members and non-Toastmasters, contributed to the district's 10 percent membership growth in 2018.

Devina Chaturvedi, DTM, in Guatam Budh Nagar, Uttar Pradesh, India, managed a PR campaign focused on Toastmasters CEO Daniel Rex's visit to District 41 in late 2017; the publicity







surrounding this campaign garnered more than a dozen media hits. Molly Ketcham, from Cleveland, Ohio, consistently pitched stories to the city’s media representatives, resulting in publicity for District 10 and its members, especially district leaders and contest winners. Michelle Hanchey, DTM, from Atlanta, Georgia, successfully established relationships with the media in District 44, resulting in substantial publicity for the district’s International Speech Contest semifinalist.

#### How were you successful in promoting Toastmasters events in your district?

**Ketcham:** Energy and enthusiasm go a long way. Just like a VPPR [vice president public relations] of a club, a PRM is a cheerleader and storyteller. People respond to energy and excitement, and you can positively influence members of the public and members of your district with that energy.

**Hanchey:** To be impactful in this role you need a team of dynamic, dedicated Toastmasters who are willing to use their PR skills as well as learn new ones. We started using great tools, such as CoSchedule and Constant Contact [online marketing

software] to schedule social media posts and send email communication and newsletters. To make and promote better videos, we bought a tripod, lights and microphones, as well as portable equipment to record from cell phones using a stabilizer, lights and directional mic.

**Chaturvedi:** We organized visits from three Toastmasters World Champions of Public Speaking (Manoj Vasudevan, Mohammed Qahtani and Mark L. Brown) as well as our region advisor, Kumaran M. Pethi, DTM, and Toastmasters International CEO Daniel Rex. These events served as amazing opportunities for publicity efforts. As a result, we grew our presence across North and East India, Bangladesh and Nepal.

#### What advice can you offer club VPPRs?

**Agarwal:** We emphasize the importance of branding and that clubs have to conduct activities that promote Toastmasters as a unified brand—rather than [promote] the club by having unique taglines and other materials specific to the club.

**Hanchey:** Do less—be more effective. One VPPR was spending hours developing and emailing a newsletter that only one or two members were reading. She stopped doing expansive newsletters and now texts members to reference their club Facebook page and links to the club’s website. In addition, she found that most



new members came via a current member’s invitation. As a result, she ordered Toastmasters brochures for members to use to invite guests.

**Chaturvedi:** “First comes the brand” was the key phrase our team used to encourage VPPRs. The idea was—be it communication with the public, communication among members, recognition, publicity, planning events or something as routine as planning a meeting—the brand plays a part in everything. It gives all Toastmasters a unique identity and the opportunity to leverage it.

**What’s your time-management hack for handling your PRM duties?**

**Agarwaal:** Prioritization and delegation help me manage my time well.

**Ketcham:** A district public relations calendar is very helpful [Sample calendar is available for download at [www.toastmasters.org/Public-Relations](http://www.toastmasters.org/Public-Relations)]. Create a schedule of all district events, how the event will be publicized and when each task is due. I also suggest planning all the hours of your day. Decide when you are going to work on Toastmasters, spend time with family, exercise and socialize. Just like any job, you cannot do it well if you are not taking care of yourself.

“It’s important to consistently post once per day. Posts should always include pictures or short videos.”

—NITEASH AGARWAAL

**Hanchey:** Work with your district director, program quality director and club growth director on what they want to see throughout the year and then plan to be flexible. Have the right tools such as Canva for graphics, CoSchedule to organize social media and Constant Contact for e-newsletters and announcements.

**What is the best way to delegate PRM responsibilities?**

**Jamal:** Trust your team and constantly over-communicate. We had monthly—and for some groups—weekly teleconference calls.

**Ketcham:** Sometimes you simply need help, so humbly ask someone for it, and express your sincere appreciation!

**Chaturvedi:** When it comes to choosing between talented and hard-working people, choose hard-working people for your team. Those are the ones who will be willing to learn more and, hence, serve better.

**How do you manage the district’s social media channels?**

**Agarwaal:** It’s important to consistently post once per day. Posts should always include pictures or short videos.

**Jamal:** Keep the message simple and have powerful visuals.

**Ketcham:** Find someone who is already active on each social site and ask them to help with promoting your district since they already know the ins and outs of that channel.

**Hanchey:** An effective social media hack is to re-post from Toastmasters International’s social media sites.

**What is your best advice about working with the media?**

**Hanchey:** Establish a professional rapport with the media. They are working with a deadline—give them a complete story with up-to-date facts and statistics that they will not need to double-check. But keep in mind: It must be newsworthy.

**Chaturvedi:** I would urge PRMs to remember when to stop. Media personnel do not have a lot of time to spare. They are bound to say no sometimes. If they decline, remember to be courteous. Thank them for their time instead of pushing them to accept your request. In my experience, next time around, they are more willing to listen and accept.

**What’s your favorite tool for communicating internally?**

**Agarwaal:** WhatsApp was the best. It was fast and cannot be missed, as Indians around the world now use WhatsApp as their tool to chat and get the job done.

**Jamal:** The telephone.

**Ketcham:** Using multiple channels is important. Not everyone checks their email, so the information needs to be posted on social media and communicated verbally. Important information that is passed down to the club level and shared by the president or VPPR is highly impactful; you create energy when discussing information and events in person.

**Hanchey:** We used Constant Contact and found that emails that focused on specific groups got the most reads. Example: Our

monthly training email to VPPR would get about 38 percent open rate. Our “News You Can Use” email to all Toastmasters received around 28 percent open rate.

### When Board members visited your district, how did you promote those visits?

**Jamal:** The International President at the time, Balraj Arunasalam, DTM, visited and we organized corporate visits to Westpac Club, Malaysian Investment Development Authority and The Tamil Chamber of Commerce, during his stay.

**Ketcham:** Past International Director Vera Johnson, DTM, was the keynote speaker at our fall conference. We used this opportunity to present American Greetings with a corporate recognition award for their support of Toastmasters and our district. In addition to my efforts, the company’s own marketing department took photos and promoted the event.

**Chaturvedi:** We had a visit from Toastmasters International CEO Daniel Rex for our Mid-Year Conference. Apart from the conference, we were able to plan several corporate visits in four distinct parts of the district: North, East, Nepal and Bangladesh. We received tremendous support from the local media. Corporations were willing and able to leverage their media contacts for coverage of the sessions—we really had to do very little once we had their support.

### Which resources from Toastmasters International have you relied on most?

**Agarwaal:** The Brand Portal section of the Toastmasters website had everything I needed. The *Brand Manual* and the *Let the World Know* manual were so helpful.

**Ketcham:** The *Let the World Know* manual was my go-to resource. I recommend it for VPPRs also because it provides ideas that perhaps no one has shared with them yet. My favorite resources, though, were the digital news release templates. I also



appreciated when Toastmasters staff sent us special templates, such as templates for promoting the district speech contest winner or the Pathways program.

**Hanchey:** I used tons of resources from Toastmasters International. For example, when a member became a DTM we would send a sample news release and tutorial to both the recipient and their VPPR and ask that they submit it to their local paper, company newsletter and alumni association. When we did this, we had a 30 percent increase in having something published.

**Chaturvedi:** The Brand Portal and PRM Training Webinar recording for knowledge and the writings of Ralph C. Smedley for inspiration.

Whether you are a PRM this year, your club’s VPPR or just a member who wants to help promote the organization, take these tactics, tips and techniques and talk up Toastmasters! **T**

**Tess landiorio** is senior editor for the *Toastmaster magazine*.

## PROMOTE, PERSUADE, PROTECT 5 PR RESOURCES

**1** **Let the World Know** - This manual offers practical ideas and advice for reaching large numbers of people with information about your club and the benefits of joining.

**2** **PRM Training Webinar** - This presentation explains the PRM role, provides tips, tools and strategies to help districts reach their target audiences and gain more media exposure.

**3** **Media Center** - Visit this section by scrolling to the bottom of the [www.toastmasters.org](http://www.toastmasters.org) website to find news releases, featured content, a media kit and several other resources courtesy of World Headquarters.

**4** **“Your Path to Leadership”** - This brochure covers the benefits of Toastmasters as it pertains to leadership opportunities in the organization. Item #101 at the Toastmasters Store.

**5** **“Navigating Pathways”** - A flier designed to inform members and prospective members about Pathways: the benefits provided, the various paths, how to get started and what people are saying about it.

Visit [www.toastmasters.org/Public-Relations](http://www.toastmasters.org/Public-Relations) to find more promotional resources and information and guidance on public relations.



# The Path to Innovative Planning

These Pathways projects help you plan events and lead teams to success.

BY JENNIFER L. BLANCK, DTM

If you manage projects or teams, or want to start doing so, the Innovative Planning path in the Pathways learning experience can boost your abilities in every phase of taking a project from conception to completion.

Like the other paths in the new education program, Innovative Planning develops public speaking and leadership skills throughout five levels of increasing challenges. The beginning mix of required and elective projects focuses on writing and delivering speeches, connecting with an audience and understanding the speaker's preferred leadership style.

From levels 3 to 5, the path brings those skills together with a new emphasis: understanding what it takes to manage a project successfully and to create innovative solutions. At the end of the path, participants synthesize their skills with their newfound knowledge and demonstrate their understanding with a major project of their own.

You don't have to work in the project management field to benefit from completing the projects in Innovative Planning, says Kevin Markl, a member of the Prep Squad Toastmasters club in San Ramon, California. "There are a lot of different competencies to learn, and some you probably haven't covered yet."

## Leading Through Empowerment

Markl selected Innovative Planning because it parallels his job, which involves launching new products. The path also relates to his Toastmasters district leadership role. "As I move up in both my career and Toastmasters, I need different skill sets to be successful," says Markl. "I can get that through Pathways."

*"You don't have to work in the project management field to benefit from the projects in Innovative Planning."*

—KEVIN MARKL

He found "Manage Projects Successfully," a Level 4 project in Innovative Planning, to be particularly productive. It helped him understand what it takes to be a successful project manager, including establishing relationships with stakeholders and team members. It also develops the skills he needed to delegate tasks and manage resources.

To complete the assignment, participants must form a team, create and

present a plan, complete it and then present another speech that reflects on the experience. Like the other projects in all the paths, videos, interactive activities and other resources supplement the learning experience.

Markl says he's traditionally been a micromanager. "Manage Projects Successfully" provided the opportunity to improve on that. He applied the project to a Toastmasters Leadership Institute (TLI), the semi-annual district training for officers and members.

As the District 57 program quality director, he shared a vision and goal for the event with the TLI dean, who oversaw all aspects of the event. "I wanted to pack the house and give additional sessions hosted by and promoting our specialty clubs," says Markl. He also led the TLI committee that organized the event. "TLI is a big event with lots of moving parts. I needed to delegate [responsibilities to] people on the TLI committee and empower them. I couldn't be second-guessing or reaffirming everyone's decisions."

The project helped him succeed in working with members on organizing the event and motivating them to achieve a common goal. Markl calls it "the art of working with other people." As a result, the TLI sold out a week



beforehand, with 390 attendees. One of the advanced clubs that presented a session at the event saw an increase in membership afterward. “It was very successful without me micromanaging anything,” Markl says.

### Leading Through Listening

HPL allows you to apply your leadership and planning skills by leading a team to complete a project. There’s a guidance committee to provide advice and feedback along the way. The project requires two speeches: one to present a plan and vision, and another to report on results and experience. It also requires “360-degree evaluations,” which means obtaining feedback from all directions, including team and guidance committee members.

In Pathways, HPL has more interactive materials than in Toastmasters’ traditional education program.

### Leading Through Self-Reflection

As a project manager for a construction company, Steve Dahlgren presents

weekly reports to 15 to 20 people. “I was really nervous giving the reports and realized I needed help,” he says. Dahlgren joined the Marin Toastmasters 890 club in San Rafael, California, and eventually started working in Pathways. He says the “Understanding Your Leadership Style” project, in Level 2 of Innovative Planning, benefited him greatly.

**“Part of my job is to ensure that subcontractors deliver on time, and that needed a stronger style of leadership.”**

—STEVE DAHLGREN

Dahlgren was impressed by the many materials associated with the project, including a quiz and extra reading, and says it helped him focus on an area he had rarely thought about: what kind of leader he is. He learned that his leadership style was democratic and collaborative;

however, his job required him to be more authoritative.

“I was less comfortable doing that,” he says. The project helped him identify when to use varying leadership styles. “For example, part of my job is to ensure that subcontractors deliver on time, and that needed a stronger style of leadership. The project helped me take the role of ‘the boss’ rather than a friend, which is more my style.”

He considers the Innovative Planning path helpful to anyone in project management, but that’s not all. “I think people stepping into leadership roles, or anyone whose job requires planning or running meetings, would benefit from this,” says Dahlgren. **T**

**Jennifer L. Blanck, DTM**, is a member of Skyline Toastmasters in Denver, Colorado, and a regular contributor to the *Toastmaster magazine*.



**ONLINE EXTRAS:** Hear what members are saying about their experience in the Innovative Planning path and how it benefited their careers.



# How to Persuade Others

Learn about your listeners, tailor your speech to their needs ... and brush up on your Aristotle.

BY CHRISTINE CLAPP, DTM

Persuasive speaking has always been among the most challenging of rhetorical exercises. It's downright difficult to convince an audience to believe something or to take a particular action.

Why else do you think speakers were getting tips on this task as far back as the fourth century B.C.? That's when Aristotle himself wrote *Rhetoric*, a treatise that outlines the foundational tenets of persuasive speech. The famed Greek philosopher focused on three ways an orator can appeal to an audience: **ethos**, **pathos** and **logos**. In short, ethos emphasizes the speaker's credibility, pathos appeals to emotion and logos refers to reasoning—specifically, the structure and content of an argument.

The ancient ideas have stood the test of time. As Toastmasters teaches, you have to know your audience, and Aristotle's ideas reflect that principle. Jeanine Turner, associate professor of communication, culture and technology at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., says Aristotle taught the importance of adapting one's messages to different groups. For Aristotle, "it was not about creating the slickest thing, but targeting your audience specifically and the ethos, pathos or logos that resonates with them," she says. "It's always about the audience."

You need to assess your audience's specific needs and tailor your speech to meet those needs. "The mistake of a novice persuader is saying what you want to say rather than what the audience needs to hear," says Clay Warren, another Washington, D.C. university professor.

Once you know your audience, decide how to best incorporate and prioritize the three modes of persuasion to appeal to particular listeners. The "Persuasive Speaking" project in Pathways, Toastmasters' new education program, offers valuable tips. (The project is in Level 3 of the Presentation Mastery path in Pathways.)

- ▶ **Ethics (Ethos):** Credibility is particularly important in getting the audience to trust you. Make sure to reference your expertise and work on this topic and include examples of personal experiences.
- ▶ **Logic (Logos):** In short, your argument has to make sense. Explain, in clear and concise terms, why audience members need to change their opinion or behavior. Boost your argument with comprehensive research.
- ▶ **Emotion (Pathos):** Evoking emotions in listeners, such as happiness or empathy, in relation to your topic is a powerful tool. Using storytelling to make your points is particularly effective.

## Talk to Your Audience

When you give a persuasive speech, it's important to prevent a disconnect between what you say and what the audience needs to hear. One way to do that is to research and ask questions ahead of time. If possible, talk to audience members beforehand in conversational settings. Too often, "speakers come with a sales pitch," says Kim Fredrich, a U.S. consultant originally from Canada who conducts sales training for non-salespeople.

She recommends interacting with audience members by "taking the temperature of the room. Ask for names and why they are there." Observing nonverbal cues, gauging opinions with a raise of hands or electronic polling devices, and asking for feedback, are other ways to glean useful information.



Information from listeners may change the speaker's goal. "The best questions [to ask audience members] are ones you are curious about because you are truly open to changing your narrative based on what they say," says professor Turner. Too often, she notes, speakers aren't truly listening, but rather, asking questions to "trap listeners into agreeing with us."

Turner says it's also important to remember that audiences are not homogenous. Even when audience members share demographic characteristics or a cultural background, their opinions and preferences can vary widely and may be influenced by geographic region, age, learning style and many other factors.

If you want to give a powerful persuasive speech, she says, don't make broad assumptions about who you are talking to. Listen and learn. Audience-centered communication is about truly understanding audience members.

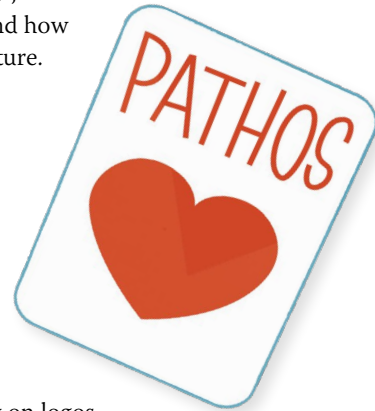
**Emotions and Reason**

Warren, who has taught university courses in persuasion for more than 30 years—currently at George Washington University—says emotion has to support the rational or it will be hard to persuade anyone of anything. He isn't advocating that persuasive speakers "kick out logos"; instead, he wants speakers to understand how logic fits into the overall persuasive picture.

"The mistake of a novice persuader is saying what you want to say rather than what the audience needs to hear."

—CLAY WARREN

Persuasive speakers who rely heavily on logos have a limited ability to foster long-term persuasive



**BEWARE THE LOGICAL FALLACY**

One of the most common missteps in persuasive speaking is using logical fallacies. Simply put, these are arguments lacking in sound logic. Plenty of arguments that are fallacious or otherwise flawed are in fact widely accepted, say debate experts Kate Shuster and John Meany in their book *On That Point: An Introduction to Parliamentary Debate*. For example, the fallacy known as *slippery slope*, described below, appears repeatedly in public policy speeches.

Here are a few common logical fallacies to avoid in your next speech—or to be aware of when someone tries to persuade you of something.

- ▶ **Slippery slope.** This argument contends that events will set off an uncontrollable chain reaction when there is no real reason to expect that reaction will occur. Example: "If we start regulating carbon dioxide, the next thing you know the Proposition Team will be telling you what to eat for breakfast."
- ▶ **False dichotomy.** This fallacy occurs when an argument presents two alternatives and suggests that it is impossible to do both, or that they are mutually exclusive—e.g., "It's either free school

lunches or nuclear war"; "Either you let me go to the concert or my life will be ruined."

- ▶ **Appeal to ignorance.** When an argument has not been disproved, it does not therefore follow that it is true. Yet the appeal to ignorance works a surprisingly large amount of the time, say Shuster and Meany, particularly in conspiracy theories. "No one has yet proven that aliens have not landed on Earth, therefore our theory about ongoing colonization should be taken seriously."
- ▶ **Simplistic appeal to emotions.** Speakers routinely try to play on the emotions of the crowd by saying something simplistic and melodramatic, instead of telling engaging stories or making real arguments. "I know this national missile defense plan has its detractors, but won't someone *please* think of the children?"
- ▶ **Red herring.** An old standby, the red herring is an attempt by the arguer to divert attention to another issue and then draw a conclusion based on that diversion. "The candidate has a weak stand on education: Just look at what she says about foreign policy."

Dave Zielinski is a freelance business writer.



## TOASTMASTERS TIPS FOR A PERSUASIVE SPEECH

In a persuasive speech, your aim is to influence the thinking or behavior of listeners. You can do this in several ways.

**Inspire:** You want to inspire excitement in your audience about your topic or reinforce their existing ideas and beliefs.

**Convince:** You want to change audience members' opinions or persuade them to develop the same opinion you have.

**Call to action:** You want listeners to take some type of action after hearing your speech, such as buy a product, try an activity or volunteer with an organization.



One key to making a powerful argument is knowing your topic well. Keep these suggestions in mind:

- ▶ Research the issue thoroughly
- ▶ Be prepared to support your position with evidence from credible sources
- ▶ Look at different perspectives surrounding the issue
- ▶ Know your goal

Language is important too. Include strong, descriptive phrasing whenever possible. The words you use have an impact on your audience.

change, says Warren. “Facts go through your brain like water through a sieve. But a story creates an emotional connection. If you get the emotion, you will remember. It is harder to attach an emotion to a number.”

“Heartfelt speeches should be well organized, crafted and rehearsed, just like analytical ones.”

—DAVID HENDERSON, 2010 TOASTMASTERS  
WORLD CHAMPION OF PUBLIC SPEAKING

As an example, he points out that many people can't remember the date on which they got married, yet they can recount specific details when telling a story about their wedding day.

David Henderson won the 2010 Toastmasters World Championship of Public Speaking with an emotional speech about coping with loss. At the heart of the presentation was his story about losing a cherished childhood friend. For him, pathos is the most important part of persuasive speech, and storytelling is the key to pathos. Stories, he says, resonate with the deeply held values that motivate our thoughts and actions.

“To persuade people, you need to find something they already identify with and tap into it. The best way to do that in a non-confrontational way is by telling a story,” says Henderson,

who also uses his persuasive-speaking skills in the courtroom: He is a civil rights attorney in Dallas, Texas.

Henderson is quick to add that logos and pathos are not mutually exclusive in communication. “Heartfelt speeches should be well organized, crafted and rehearsed, just like analytical ones.”

A final tip: To be convincing, you also need to be flexible, whether you're delivering a persuasive speech or proposing a new work project, says renowned communication coach Nick Morgan.

“You can't control everything in the moment. You need to have rehearsed so well that you can adjust on the fly if necessary,” he wrote in a post about persuasive speaking on his blog, *Public Words*. “It's important as part of your persuasive arsenal that you always appear under control, poised and ready for anything.”



**Christine Clapp, DTM**, is a member of the United States Senate club in Washington, D.C., and is a presentation skills consultant who helps professionals build the confidence to connect and the capacity to lead. Reach her at [christine@spokenwithauthority.com](mailto:christine@spokenwithauthority.com).

# The **Secret** to a **Meaningful Evaluation**

You hold yourself to a high standard—apply the same expectations to all speakers.

BY DAN STRUM

**A**lthough prepared speeches are a foundational element of the Toastmasters experience, they represent only a tiny fraction of the speaking opportunities we encounter in daily life. For all the value of becoming a better presenter, there is at least as much value in developing an ability to speak spontaneously. And of all the spontaneous-speaking skills gained in Toastmasters, I find evaluating the most valuable.

When I say “evaluation,” I am not talking about a sandwich of affirmation, tepid critique and encouragement. I’m talking about the ability to dig in, say something significant, make a strong argument and help someone improve. This is the heart of what public speaking—and leadership—is about.

Yes, it is important that you provide a civil response. But your civility should be in service to the fundamental point you want to make, not the other way around. Your critique should have teeth.

I recently attended an elaborate meeting during which a business proposal was being discussed. The presenters were well prepared and had many visual aids to help them make their case. But halfway through their presentation, they came to a slide with financial details of the deal that differed dramatically from what had been the understanding prior to that point. When I raised the issue, I was civil and constructive in recognizing their effort and professionalism. But my purpose wasn’t to be civil—it was to make it abundantly clear this issue needed to be urgently addressed.

## Use Your Safety Net

Toastmasters meetings are safe—the respect and support in a club meeting are almost palpable. Everyone in the room is there to develop speaking and leadership skills, while at the same time supporting

you in developing yours. Take advantage of that safety and take some risks. Dig deeper when giving critiques of the speeches you hear.

This will provide twin benefits: Not only will you give better evaluations in the

## 5 TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE FEEDBACK

**C**onstructive feedback is essential to the professional and personal growth of every Toastmaster, and that’s why effective evaluations are key to overall club excellence. The “Evaluate to Motivate” module from Toastmasters’ Successful Club Series includes the following five tips when offering an evaluation:

- 1 Demonstrate your interest in both the speech and in the speaker’s ability to grow and improve.
- 2 Personalize your language and put yourself in the speaker’s shoes before giving an evaluation. Avoid phrases like “you didn’t” or “you should have ...”
- 3 Stimulate improvement with helpful words, such as “I believe ...”; “My reaction was ...”; or “I suggest ...” Follow the evaluator’s mantra—what I saw, what I heard, what I felt. Focusing on these points will help you sharpen your evaluation skills.
- 4 Evaluate the speech, not the person. Your main goal is to support and encourage, while offering at least one actionable suggestion for improvement. Watch for symptoms of fear or insecurity. Empathize with the speaker’s desire to learn and become a better presenter.
- 5 Promote self-esteem by sharing positive reinforcement when improvements occur; make sure your praise is honest and sincere.

And remember, always end your evaluation on a positive note.

The Successful Club Series is available for free download at [www.toastmasters.org/shop](http://www.toastmasters.org/shop).

club setting, you will also become a better evaluator in other areas of life. Such a skill will serve you when you find yourself in a contentious community hearing, an important business meeting, a consequential courtroom session—moments when you need to take an unequivocal stand.

### Write an Evaluation for Yourself

When I joined Toastmasters, I was daunted when evaluating experienced speakers. Did I really need to run through a checklist of body language, vocal variety, eye contact and message content for these polished presenters? And even if I did, who was I to tell them how to improve when their skills were so much better than mine?

“Of all the spontaneous-speaking skills gained in Toastmasters, evaluating is the most valuable.”

I pondered this through my early months as a member, steadfastly avoiding giving evaluations to advanced members. But then I got an idea: Every time I finished giving a speech in my club, I sat down and filled out an evaluation form *for myself*. Don't get me wrong—I've received some great feedback from my fellow Toastmasters, but some of the very best feedback I've received has come from my own self-evaluation.

When you think about it, this makes sense. When preparing a speech, I have a vision of what I want to achieve, what challenges I am facing and how I intend to overcome those challenges. I am the ultimate authority on my speech.

The fact that I find my self-evaluation so helpful made me wonder if I could somehow apply that strategy when evaluating other speakers. As I listened to other speakers, I wondered, *If it were my speech, how would I improve it?*

As a writer, my early evaluations had a distinctly editorial quality. I might



recommend a stronger introduction, better transitions, more examples or even a bit of levity to break up the tension—all issues that could be resolved through writing. Then, as my skill at public speaking evolved, I gradually expanded my range of feedback beyond writing, to other facets of public speaking, such as presentation style and stage presence. Personalizing my feedback in this way has worked for me. By explicitly basing my evaluations on *my* experience, I increased my authority, and therefore my insight.

### Get It Down

Of course, not all evaluations are spoken. After a recent speech, I received an evaluation slip telling me that an anecdote I shared was funny. I knew that I'd *tried* to be funny, but in this case, a club member who I know to have a strong and natural sense of comedy affirmed the quality of my humor. This was meaningful to me!

On the flip side, I am sometimes surprised at how people don't embrace the challenge of written evaluations. I can't tell you how many times I get unsigned evaluation slips in my club after giving a speech. Anonymity hardly serves either the evaluator or the speaker.

### Evaluate the Evaluators

Then there's the role of General Evaluator. At the end of our meetings, the General Evaluator steps up to report on the meeting as a whole, which includes evaluating the evaluators who spoke at the meeting.

The General Evaluator's reports at my club tend to be good, noting and reviewing the ways in which evaluations were successful. But I'd offer the same suggestions to General Evaluators as to speech evaluators: Realize that this is a leadership skill. Offering up more concrete feedback to the evaluators would serve not only them but the General Evaluator and the club as a whole.

Each day presents opportunities to engage the people around us and offer our honest opinions and ideas. Every word we utter may not be warm and fuzzy, but if a solid evaluation helps someone improve their skills, we are doing our part as thorough evaluators. So be yourself and take some chances. ■

**Dan Strum** is the president and founder of NY Smarts, a language school in New York City that aims to help international professionals advance their careers through mastery of the English language.

# 5 Easy Tips for Crafting a Speech

Start with the two basic concepts of construction and content.

BY JUDITH T. KRAUTHAMER

**W**hat do the phrases “I want to learn more” and “The ideas are inspiring” have in common? They are both evaluations of a Toastmasters speech that address the *content* of the talk. *What* speakers say is as important and impactful as *how* they say it.

A new speaker often has questions on how to organize material into a cohesive and interesting presentation. Few speakers can write an “I Have a Dream” speech, but each of us can put together a talk that is understandable, meaningful and relatable to the listener. It is a challenge we can all overcome.

A good speech relies on two basic concepts: 1) The construction—the speech’s building blocks of beginning, middle and end—must be consistent. It contains at least one thread that runs throughout the talk that ties the parts together as a whole. 2) The content—whether it is a personal story or a quote—creates a connection. Listeners respond to content that is relatable or of personal value.

Here are five easy tips to ensure that people who are new to public speaking can meet these two basic concepts with aplomb:

**1 Make your introduction relevant to the rest of the speech.** The introduction is an opportunity to tickle curiosity and generate excitement. It creates anticipation about what *listeners expect they will learn*. The audience is listening for the connection between the opening and the rest of the message. If we don’t provide that, we risk leaving the audience confused.

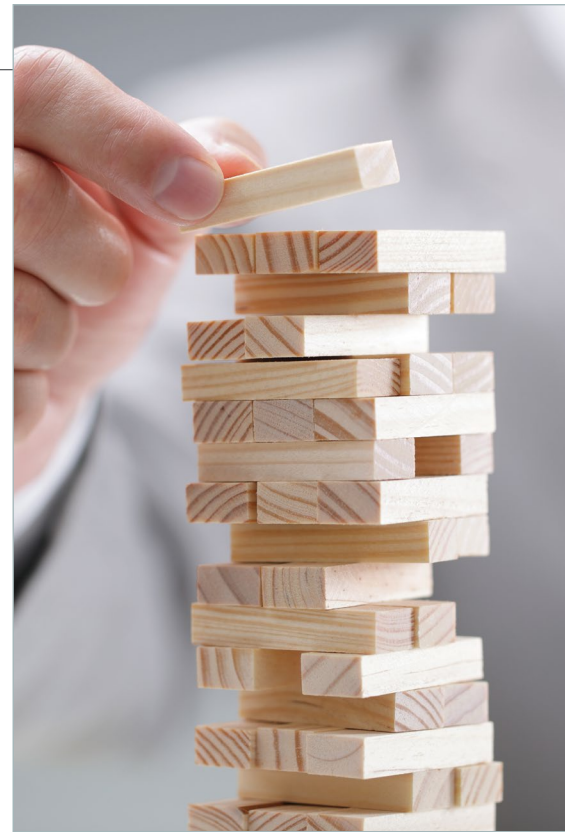
**2 Aim for simplicity.** A good story has a beginning, middle and an end. Remember that it’s often that simple. It is much easier to tie those components together with a few main points, without an abundance of detail. A typical club speech of five to seven minutes provides a perfect window of time to make a few solid key points before the audience succumbs to instinctive thought-wandering. Fewer details can have a much greater impact than too many.

**“Listeners respond to content that is relatable or of personal value.”**

An audience’s naturally short attention span is actually an advantage for the speaker. A few substantiated facts should be enough to garner credibility—you do not have to be “the expert” on the topic you are presenting. An added bonus: You do not have to spend arduous time over-researching your topic.

**3 Rely on your own voice and wisdom.** Building a story becomes much easier when the topic is familiar or important to you. If you normally do research for your vocation or avocation, pick a topic you find comfortable or compelling. If something has piqued your interest, pursue it. If experience has taught you a lesson, share it. An audience is apt to relate to a speech that has commitment and passion behind it.

**4 Include something personal in the talk.** People love stories,



particularly personal ones. Science suggests the brain is wired to listen for—and respond to—stories. Audiences connect to speeches that have heartstrings attached.

**5 Relate the conclusion back to the introduction.** A good conclusion ties up all loose ends for your audience. Listeners feel a sense of comfort and completion when a speaker offers an idea, follows through with information and finishes by solidifying the takeaway. Connect back to your introduction with a call to action, an upbeat ending, a surprise or a parting quote. The conclusion is likely to be the most memorable part of the speech and is what your typical listener will recall.

These basic guidelines help new speakers create an attention-holding talk that builds experience, confidence and a new comfort level with audiences. In fact, these tips are largely timeless and will help speakers hone public speaking skills, whether you’re a novice or a seasoned Toastmaster. **T**

**Judith T. Krauthamer** is an author and contributing writer for various websites and print publications. She is the president of the APL Toastmasters Club in Laurel, Maryland. Visit [www.quietSPACEcoaching.com](http://www.quietSPACEcoaching.com).



# Last-minute Meeting Scramble

Tips to turn meeting surprises into surprising successes.

BY BILL BROWN, DTM

**Y**ou are this week's Toastmaster and it is game day. You have worked hard to fill all the roles. The meeting is planned. The agenda is printed. And then—it happens.

One by one the emails come in: "I just got called into an all-day meeting." "I'm sick." "I'm in the hospital with double pneumonia." "I have to reorganize my sock drawer."

Suddenly you are left with nothing. What do you do?

You might be thinking, isn't that a bit exaggerated? Actually, a recent club meeting turned out just like that, including the double pneumonia situation (true story).

Yes, it's time for another exciting episode of everyone's favorite game, Last-minute Meeting Scramble.

First, let's see how bad it really is. Obviously, the grammarian, Ah-Counter, timer and evaluators can be assigned at the meeting, even if people have to sign up for more than one role. But what if all your speakers cancel? Can you find substitutes at the last minute? And, if not, how do you fill the time?

Some replacements can be found through a quick email. In my club, one of the members only needed to present a Successful Club Series speech to finish her Advanced Communicator Bronze (ACB). She already had her manual and just needed a few minutes to familiarize herself with the information. What if your club had a few of those manuals in your file box ready to go? What a great opportunity to train the club. Start with Table Topics to give the speaker a few minutes to prepare.

And, dare I ask, how about you, Toastmaster of the day? Maybe you have

a speech you could give. It would not be the first time the Toastmaster was also a speaker.

But let's say that no speaker is available. What do you do?

This may be the perfect time for an extended Table Topics.

This could entail the usual questions. If your assigned Table Topicsmaster is in attendance, he or she already has some questions prepared. It is perfectly fine to go a second and even a third round with the same questions. He or she could also generate a few additional questions.

## “Recently, our meeting leaders decided to play ‘Two Truths and a Lie.’”

Or maybe it is time to practice some creativity. Here are a few ideas:

Take the opportunity to gather member feedback. How about a question like, “If you could make one change in our club for the better, what would it be?” A question like that has its pros and cons, but it could help prevent situations like this during future meetings.

Here's a more interactive approach I have used. I carry a manila envelope to meetings, just in case. In it are 26 small pieces of paper, each with a letter of the alphabet on it. Each member selects a letter. Then they are asked to describe themselves with three qualities that begin with the letter they chose.

Exercises like this can be fun. It is not uncommon that the speaker gets stumped.

If that happens, any member may shout out a suggestion. The speaker can accept or reject it. This usually results in a lot of laughter. And you come away knowing your fellow club members better.

Let's look at a third idea: Recently, our meeting leaders decided to play “Two Truths and a Lie.” Each member gives three “facts” about themselves; only two are true. The other members then vote on which of the three was false. Of course, we kept track of how many each member got right, and kudos were handed out appropriately. It was a fun way to get to know more about our fellow members.

It is not unusual for some roles to become available at the last minute. Fortunately, it is rare that this happens to all the key roles. But it could happen. Hopefully, this gives you some ideas on how to handle last-minute changes to your meeting agenda.

If nothing else, look at late changes as opportunities to practice leadership and creativity, and have some fun in the process. In fact, it could turn into the meeting members talk about for years to come. **T**

**Bill Brown, DTM**, is a speech delivery coach from Las Vegas and a member of Pro Toastmasters and Ahead of the Curve Toastmasters. Learn more at [www.billbrownspeechcoach.com](http://www.billbrownspeechcoach.com).



**ONLINE EXTRAS:** Listen to an audio recording by the author for additional tips on what to do when your club meeting goes off course.



## Watch Your Tone

It's not just what you say, it's how you say it. So listen up!

BY JOHN CADLEY

I had never heard the word but I knew immediately what it meant. I was 7 years old and my mother had asked me to clean my room. I did not want to clean my room. (If you know a 7-year-old who wants to clean his or her room, send me the name and I will forward it to Ripley's *Believe It or Not!*)

I could not say “no,” but I could say “yes” in a way that expressed my displeasure at being ordered to perform such an onerous task. So I said, “Yes, Mother” in the manner of an obsequious mama’s boy. That’s when my mother said, “Watch your tone, young man.” I knew from *her* tone that she understood my disrespect, especially when she said, “And when you’re done, you can walk the dog and bring in the garbage can, Mister Wiseguy.”

It was then I learned that “tone” was the word for conveying a meaning other than the words you speak. I instantly thought of a schoolmate who always said “I’m sorry” in a way that gave you the distinct impression it was *you* who should be sorry. So that was “tone,” eh? Powerful stuff.

Just how powerful is indicated by the so-called Tone List, which was developed by English teachers and identifies 180 (!) ways we humans have devised to say what we’re not saying, from sarcastic to stentorian, arrogant to apathetic, callous to concerned, and so on, right through the gamut of human emotions. I always thought “I love you” meant ... I love you. Well, if we throw a dart at the Tone List and hit “hesitant,” I’m really saying, “I love you ... I think.” If my tone is “reverent,” I’m saying,

“I love you because you are a saint free from all human failings.” The recipient of that tone may like it, but the user will soon learn that “restrained” might have been a better choice. “You’re crazy” is another expression which, if said in an “amused” tone, would mean “Your eccentric behavior entertains me,” but which, if spoken in a “concerned” voice, means you’re crazy.

**“Businesses have a tone of voice as well as people, and they would be wise to choose it carefully.”**

A study by the University of Southern California monitored verbal interaction of hundreds of couples in marriage therapy. The counselors counseled and the couples talked, and when all was said and done, no amount of professional help could predict the success of a marriage better than the tone of voice each partner used with the other. If one said in an angry tone “This is your fault” and the other responded in a sarcastic tone, “Of course it is. Everything’s my fault,” the therapists could predict with some confidence that a certain legal procedure involving no-fault lay somewhere in the future.

Women have a particularly difficult challenge with tone. Research has shown that businesswomen speaking in a lower-pitched tone are taken more seriously than those who speak at higher frequencies. Certainly unfair, but apparently true. Why

else would such a formidable figure as former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher have worked diligently to lower her voice by a full 46 hertz? She knew that if she was going to say things like “If you want to cut your own throat, don’t come to me for a bandage,” it would require a tone that did not sound like one of the celestial cherubim.

Businesses have a tone of voice as well as people, and they would be wise to choose it carefully. Telling a customer bluntly, “Your product is no longer covered by warranty,” will be heard as, “You thought you were smart not buying the extended warranty. How do you like us now?” Or “Your subscription does not include that feature.” Translation: “If you think we’re going to give you something for free, forget it!”

If you really want to learn about tone, learn Mandarin Chinese, the world’s foremost tonal language, in which vocal timbre will give the same word multiple meanings. For instance, *ma* can mean horse, mother, scold or hemp, depending on intonation. You can see the danger. One wouldn’t want to confuse one’s mother with hemp, or scold her for being a horse.

Even this very column has a tone. Some of my readers have called it skeptical, even cynical. To which I reply—Yeah? So? You got a problem with that? **■**

**John Cadley** is a former advertising copywriter, freelance writer and musician living in Fayetteville, New York. Learn more at [www.cadleys.com](http://www.cadleys.com).

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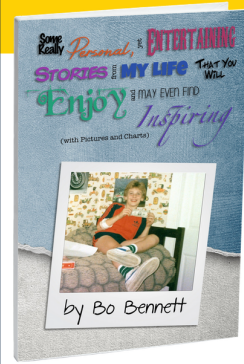
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## CLIENT SPOTLIGHT - BO BENNETT, DTM



You might know Bo as the creator of FreeToastHost, the host of the Toastmasters Podcast, or the Founder of eBookIt.com. Or perhaps you never heard of the guy. Either way, you will enjoy his latest book, *Some Really Personal, Yet Entertaining Stories From My Life That You Will Enjoy and May Even Find Inspiring*.

What is a "normal childhood?" Does it include almost being murdered by your sister with an ax? Speeding around town in the back of a station wagon because your mom is chasing an "alien spaceship"? Being busted by the police for intent to light a pond on fire? Tackling your mom to the ground and wrestling a knife out of her hand because she was trying to kill your dad? While my stories may be unique, readers will be able to relate to the broader themes that are part of a normal childhood such as sibling rivalry, eccentric parents, doing stupid things, and frequently preventing one's parents from literally murdering each other.

Although some of the subject matter is not something one would generally laugh at, you have my permission to laugh. Social rules don't apply here; my rules do. It works for me, and who knows, after reading the stories from my past, you might be inspired to see your own screwed up past in a more humorous light.

*Some Really Personal, Yet Entertaining Stories From My Life That You Will Enjoy and May Even Find Inspiring* by Bo Bennett is available in ebook, paperback, and audio, at 

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