

TOASTMASTER®

From Free to Fee

How to get paid to speak.

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The Power Behind Proper Branding

Toastmasters brand consistency connects members worldwide.

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What's Next?



Sometimes events happen so fast that we hardly feel the shift of the different phases as they occur in our lives. Yet there are other phases that pass so slowly we wish they would move faster just so we could explore future possibilities, and the decisions that we need to make.

Sometimes we simply want to ponder the refreshing question, "What's next?" We often ask that question with the expectation of a phase coming to an end—and the results connected to that ending. Of course, for me this question pertains to my journey as president of Toastmasters International. Yes, it is time for

me to come up with an answer to that question, as others have repeatedly reminded me throughout the year.

I had a full year—12 months filled with excitement, enthusiasm and enlightenment—to think about it. These inquisitive, involved and interested

Our roles are part of life, and life continues on as a journey full of experiences and achievements.

members hope the answer I provide will put an end to their endless efforts to answer that same question for themselves. The good news is that I do have an answer: There is no "what's next?"

Another question asked of me during my term as president was, "What do you want to achieve in your year?" Again, the good news is: There is no "my year." My perspective is that once we transition into our roles, it is misleading to look back and review the past year as a separate unit of time. Change is continuous. After we hand over our responsibilities, it takes five to 10 years before we can look back at our results and see if our progress continued year after year. Therefore, the question becomes redundant and must be replaced by a new question: "What do we want to do better in the years to come?"

Eliminate the words "what's next" and "my year" from your vocabulary. Our roles are part of life, and life continues on as a journey full of experiences and achievements. When we keep that thought in focus, I have no doubt our lives will become more fulfilling. I know mine will.

I am honored to have served you, and I look forward to what will come in the next 10 years, and beyond. **T**

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International President

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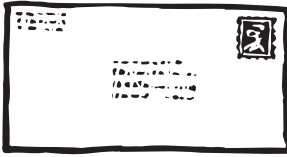
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“Through my enjoyment of the talents of others, I am inspired to keep going, and to be in a state of perpetual inspiration.”

— Tessa Jean
Hunter Toastmasters club

Life Is Funny

I love the June issue of the *Toastmaster* magazine, especially the practical advice in the “Make the Most of Your Roast” article by Craig Harrison, DTM.

Another effective roast technique is to “spread the wealth.” Being the guest of honor can be lonely if you’re the only one being hit with zingers. If you’re a roaster, consider throwing a gentle jab at the Roast Master or making fun of yourself. Or deliver a comic line directed at one of the other roasters. If others are receiving ribbing, it softens the sometimes perceived attack nature of the roast.

I was also excited to read the insights in “Improve with Improv” by Caren Neile, ATMS, CL. Improv theater games teach us to be in the moment and show us how to be funny by not trying so hard. Life is funny enough. Improv is an excellent tool for adding spice to a Toastmasters meeting. For example, many improv games are easily adaptable to Table Topics. Keep in mind, it’s not about the laughter, it’s about what you learn from the exercises.

John Kinde, DTM, AS
Powerhouse Pros
Las Vegas, Nevada

Double the Pleasure

Which is better, the print or the tablet version of the *Toastmaster*? I am thankful for them both.

When I joined Toastmasters about a year and a half ago, I started out reading

the print edition, but now I read both. To me, the question is not which edition to read. The articles in any form bring me such joy as I immerse myself in them. I appreciate having the hard copy because I can write notes on it, and it is easier on the eyes. However, out of haste, I might leave the print version at home, or it may be unrealistic to carry several issues in my bag. Therefore, it is a blessing to also have the tablet edition, which I can read during my commute to work or whenever I travel.

To me, the magazine, be it the print or the tablet edition, is always a delight to read.

Cheryl Wang, CC, CL
ALE Ultimate club
Taichung, Taiwan

Leaders of the Future

Our club piloted a Youth Leadership Program in an elementary school for its after-school program. After the first session, I was hooked. I realized that if you can hold the attention of a room full of children for one-and-a-half hours, public speaking is a breeze.

Toastmasters use the slogan “Where Leaders Are Made,” but a key part of leadership is providing opportunities for others to grow. This happens in a Toastmasters Youth Leadership Program. It is extremely rewarding to help children find their voice, confidence and the opportunity to have a positive influence on their peers. I urge you to check out this program and get your club involved. The youth of today are the leaders of tomorrow, and we can help them make a difference.

Kerin Lester, CC, CL
Transit Talkers club
Atlanta, Georgia

Moments of Enjoyment

I’m relatively new to Toastmasters. My club, King’s Speakers, named after the film *The King’s Speech*, is the only one in the U.K. that was formed specifically for people with a stutter. In the past I’d do anything to get out of speaking in public. Now I enjoy giving prepared speeches and participating in club duties. Everyone is so supportive that my confidence has increased dramatically.

It was therefore with some trepidation that I agreed to deliver a 400-word testimonial to approximately 200 people on the topic of volunteering. I actually

looked forward to it, and received praise afterward. I know this was a direct result of my Toastmasters experience. I now not only have the confidence to speak in public but also a desire to speak more often. I feel liberated. Thank you Toastmasters!

Tony Weiss
King’s Speakers
London, England

A Contradiction

I enjoyed the article “Coming to America” (April) about Scarlett Xu’s successes, which she generously attributes largely to her Toastmasters experience.

However, I was dismayed by Xu’s account of auditioning for her school’s Gavel club. My view is that Toastmasters clubs, including Gavel clubs, should serve those who most need improvement or who are most motivated. Making membership a reward for a well-delivered speech is a contradiction of the claim that Toastmasters is “the safe place to fail.”

When membership is limited by necessity, there must be a better way of selecting members than auditions.

Eileen Pålsson, CC, ALB
ReadSoft Toastmasters
Kista, Sweden

An Inspired Start

I recently joined a club and I am excited to see myself morph into a great speaker.

As I read through my first copy of the *Toastmaster* magazine (the May issue), I was elated to accept all the great advice. I especially liked the International President’s piece “Addicted to Inspiration.” I am deprived of talent for music, dancing and most sports. However, I never lack inspiration. Through my enjoyment of the talents of others, I am inspired to keep going, and to be in a state of perpetual inspiration.

Toastmasters is my new inspiration.

Tessa Jean
Hunter Toastmasters club
New York, New York

DO YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY?

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

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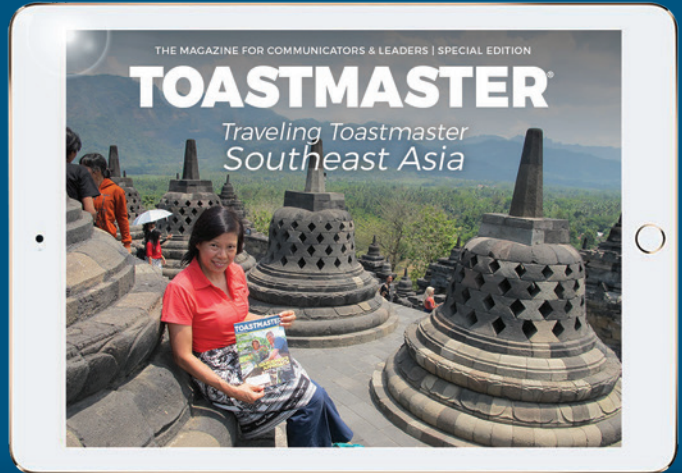
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TRAVELING TOASTMASTER

Working in the Digital World



Gemma Costello

Gemma Costello grew up in the picturesque town of Ballyshannon, located on the northwestern coast of Ireland in County Donegal. She lived abroad for three years working as a conference producer in Amsterdam, but she has since settled down in Dublin.

Costello works on the digital sales team of the Irish National Tourism

Development Authority, known as Fáilte Ireland. As part of her job, she edits an electronic magazine, the *Digital Alert*, and writes articles on the latest developments in digital marketing and sales. Costello is a member of the Vox Populi club in Dublin, and two years ago served as its vice president public relations (VPPR) to gain practical experience in areas such as blogging and managing the club's Facebook page.

Why did you join Toastmasters?

I qualified as a speech and drama teacher in my 20s and have always had an interest in public speaking. I was a member of a semi-professional theater company back then, too, and enjoyed performing on stage. Toastmasters was a natural follow-up from this interest. I was also keen to further develop my presentation skills for career reasons.

How has Toastmasters helped you?

I was asked to give a presentation at work to 60 Dutch students and their lecturers. It went really well, and I believe it was because of the practice I had giving speeches at my club, Vox Populi. I used to get nervous about Table Topics—I was terrified that I wouldn't be able to think of something to say! Over time, I have learned to relax and even enjoy Table Topics, and I am grateful for my new skills in "thinking on my feet."

What did you learn when you served as VPPR?

I enjoyed writing the weekly club blog and coming up with innovative topics, such as "The Vox Populi Toastmasters Ten Commandments" and "Spread Your Wings with LinkedIn and Toastmasters." I also became comfortable using Facebook. I gained practical skills that I apply to my work.

What do you like most about the digital world?

My initial experience of blogging as VPPR motivated me to start blogging on social media. Arising from this I was invited to blog

on DigitalDoughnut.com [a website for marketing professionals]. I enjoy staying in the know and writing about topics that I have researched, including email marketing, Facebook, digital photography and YouTube.

What else do you want members to know about you?

I have traveled to various countries in Europe during my career. I enjoy going to the theater with my husband, going to the gym, walking and visiting museums and galleries.

Read some of Gemma's digital tips for your club's social media platforms on page 14.

▶ IN BRIEF

UPDATED SPEECH CONTEST RULEBOOK

Are you using the most up-to-date *Speech Contest Rulebook*? The current version is effective July 1, 2015–June 30, 2016. Purchase a printed copy or download it for free at www.toastmasters.org/1171.

QUICK SPEECH TIP

As you're giving your speech, it's important to gauge your audience's response to your message. If listeners seem bored or uninterested, move on to something else by making impromptu changes to your speech.

CONGRATULATE YOUR DISTRICT SEMIFINALIST

Do you know who will represent your district at the International Speech Contest Semifinals? Visit www.toastmasters.org/Semifinals to see the names of all 96 semifinalists. Each semifinalist will compete on Thursday, August 13, in one of 10 semifinal speech contests. One winner from each semifinal will participate in the Toastmasters World Championship of Public Speaking the following Saturday.

GET A CONVENTION SNEAK PEEK

Don't miss the Toastmasters Podcast series. Get a preview of the International Convention's speakers and education sessions at www.toastmasters.org/Podcast.

Did You Know?

The Revitalized Education Program

will include training for mentors

Visit www.toastmasters.org/REP

Back to School

From left to right, **Jenny Graham, CC**, **Linda King-Karalfa, DTM**, and **Natalie Palmer, DTM**, served as the official name readers for Gonzaga University graduate and undergraduate commencement ceremonies in May 2015.

In 2014, Gonzaga—a college in Spokane, Washington—was seeking high-quality name readers for its commencement exercises and reached out to local Toastmasters clubs. Jenny, Linda and Natalie volunteered to take on the challenge, and have read the names for the 2014 and 2015 commencements.

At the graduate ceremony in May, the Toastmasters, dressed in full academic regalia, read more than 500 names. The next day they read 1,100 names of undergraduates. After the ceremonies, they met with staff to evaluate the process.

“Our Toastmasters skills have helped us excel in this unique opportunity,” Palmer said. “Speaking in front of a crowd of 14,000 people is a unique experience. Speaking into a microphone can be nerve-wracking, but then you remember the event is about the graduates and not you. Each name you read marks a moment of accomplishment in their lives.”



▶ **ADVICE FROM MEMBERS**

Why Do We Time Everything?

BY TIM POWELL, DTM, *club president of North Alabama Advanced Toastmasters in Huntsville, Alabama*



Keeping track of time in club meetings teaches us how to make our points within a specific time frame. When a speaker goes over time, it may mean someone else does not get the opportunity to talk.

Many clubs have only one hour reserved for meetings. Often a time constraint is placed on a location, and cannot be extended. The Toastmaster of the meeting plans the hour to accommodate prepared speeches, Table Topics, evaluations and reports from members performing meeting roles such as Ah-Counter. The president also needs a few minutes to conduct club business. With so many parts, club meetings move quickly!

If someone greatly exceeds their allotted time, the General Evaluator should mention it in their report at the end of the meeting. Follow these basic tips for prepared speeches:

- 1 Practice your speech with a stopwatch. Often, speakers will talk faster than when they rehearsed, but keep your practice time within the allotted time.
- 2 Include no more than three points in a five-to-seven-minute speech.
- 3 As you get more experienced, choreograph your speeches by standing in a different area of the room for each of your points. It will help you use your muscle memory to begin your speech and keep it on track.
- 4 At the yellow signal, finish the point you are on and if you still have a point left, save it for another speech. Do not rely on the red card.

More Options for Word of the Day!

Here's a challenge for you: Work *clickbait* into your next Table Topics speech.

That word is among 1,700 new entries in the *Merriam-Webster Unabridged Dictionary*. The list, announced by the company in May, includes a number of words connected to digital life. Among them:

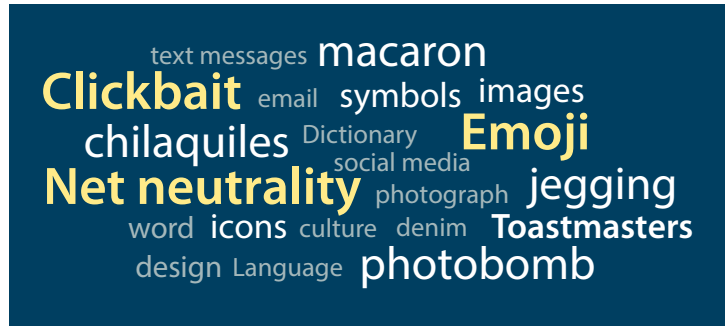
Clickbait (noun): “something (such as a headline) designed to make readers want to click on a hyperlink especially when the link leads to content of dubious value or interest.”

Emoji (noun): “any of various small images, symbols, or icons used in text fields in electronic communication (as in text messages, email and social media) to express the emotional attitude of the writer.”

Net neutrality (noun): “the idea, principle or requirement that Internet service providers should or must treat all Internet data as the same regardless of its kind, source or destination.”

Language is always evolving, and the new entries reflect words and acronyms popularized in contemporary culture, such as *photobomb* (“to move into the frame of a photograph as it is being taken as a joke or prank”) and *jegging* (“a legging that is designed to resemble a tight-fitting pair of denim jeans and is made of a stretchable fabric”).

Several of the 2015 entries are tied to food or drink. So if your Toastmasters club holds a culinary theme, your Word of the Day could be *macaron* (a type of sandwich cookie) or *chilaquiles*, which Merriam-Webster describes as “a Mexican dish of fried corn tortilla pieces simmered with salsa or mole and typically topped with cheese and other accompaniments.” Yum!



▶ WHAT'S THE BUZZ?

How do you eliminate memory lapses while delivering a speech?

“I simply write my speeches in full, and place key words in the margins. If I lose my place while practicing, I look at the key words. Once I know them, I’m ready to deliver my speech. Another thing I learned is if I don’t eat gluten for a day or so prior to speaking, I don’t experience brain fog.”

Debra Carr, ACS, ALB
HealthPlus Toastmasters ▶ Flint, Michigan

“I divide my speech into three main parts: the opening, middle and closing. Depending on the topic, I try to memorize the opening and the closing, but not the middle. However, I do memorize transition sentences—sentences that sequentially link the presentation’s body parts.”

Orestes Aguillon, CC
Next Step Toastmasters ▶ Chicago, Illinois

“A fellow Toastmaster once told me if you have a memory lapse during your speech, just repeat the last sentence you said. If nothing comes back to you at that point, then use that sentence as a Table Topic until your memory comes back.”

Jeffery Gunnels, ACB, ALB
Pro-MO club ▶ Kansas City, Missouri

“I have two recommendations: 1) Internalize your speech, do not memorize it. If you lose your place, you can say something close to what you meant to say; 2) Any time you lose your place, pause. It serves to emphasize your last point while you regroup and regain your place in your speech.”

Ann-Mary Currier, ATMB, CL
Saturday Brunch Bunch club ▶ Cumberland, Rhode Island

 Join the conversation on the Official Toastmasters International Members Group on LinkedIn.

Mentor Derrick Trimble, DTM

Derrick Trimble, DTM, is president and managing director of Paroxumos, a creative thinking consultancy in Essex, United Kingdom. He joined Toastmasters in 2003, and in 2006 was named Southern Division Area Governor of the Year. In 2014, he offered to initiate a formal mentoring program for the Chelmsford Speakers club in Chelmsford, England.

Jane Adshead-Grant, CC, joined Toastmasters with 13 years of experience as an executive leadership coach. As owner of Ashvale Consultancy Limited, London, she wanted to reach out to inspire more people. She attended an event sponsored by a publishing company, and one of the presenters spoke of how she began her public speaking career at Toastmasters. Jane searched online for a club close to her home and joined the Chelmsford Speakers club the same year.

Derrick was immersed in instituting the formalized mentoring program, and offered to be Jane's mentor. She was impressed by his "creative approach and ability to engage his audience on a wide variety of topics." Jane, the first to "graduate" from the club's revamped mentoring program, credits Derrick with having a significant impact on her journey to become a public speaker.

What was your first impression of Derrick?

I noticed his authentic style. His capacity to connect with the audience was amazing. He was energetic and thought provoking, and his movements seemed to naturally underscore the message he was sharing.

What makes him a good mentor?

Derrick engaged me in a conversation about both my short- and long-term objectives, and always has them in mind when giving me feedback. In every conversation we have, Derrick challenges me to raise my game. The time and effort he puts into his mentorship is outstanding. I was already an executive coach, but I now find that not only do I feel more confident in sharing my message to wider audiences, I have been able to coach others in the way they communicate and present.

What feedback does he provide that helps you most?

He offers me practical suggestions based on his exemplary speaking skills and, in particular, has helped me to think about my audience first. Derrick also helps me with transitions—and teaches me how to connect my ideas and allow the speech to flow.



FROM LEFT: Derrick Trimble, DTM, and Jane Adshead-Grant, CC

NOMINATE YOUR MARVELOUS MENTOR!

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

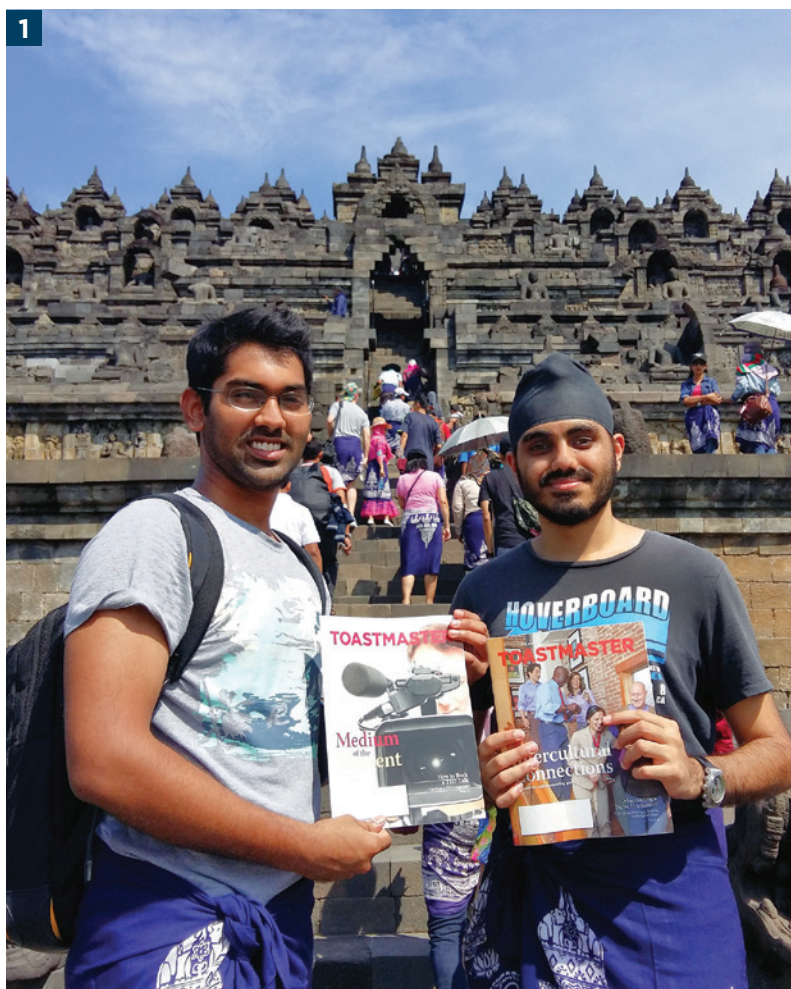


90TH ANNIVERSARY Time to Celebrate

Members of the Ridgefield Toastmasters club in Ridgefield, Connecticut, celebrate Toastmasters' 90th anniversary with balloons and a cake.



TRAVELING TOASTMASTER



1 | YOHANATHAN KUMARAN, CC, CL (LEFT), AND JESSYNDER SINGH JEGGY, CL, BOTH FROM KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA, explore the Borobudur Temple, Yogyakarta, Indonesia.

2 | HELMI ALFARRA, CC, FROM KUANTAN, PAHANG, MALAYSIA, takes a scuba diving course in the waters of Tioman Island, Malaysia.

3 | MICHELLE HERRING, FROM TOKYO, JAPAN, stands among the natural travertine terraces at Pamukkale, Turkey, which means “cotton castle” in Turkish.

4 | BRENDA GUTIERREZ, FROM FORT LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA, visits Twelve Apostles, a collection of limestone stacks off the shore of the Port Campbell National Park in Victoria, Australia.



View more photos on your tablet or on our Facebook page: Toastmasters International Official Fan Page.



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

A Mother's Mission

How love—and listening—helped my daughter battle bipolar disorder.

BY MONA COOLEY, DTM

I was almost speechless when I was presented the Governor General's Caring Canadian Award on January 27 by the Canadian Mental Health Association. The award recognizes living Canadians who have made significant and sustained unpaid contributions to their communities, in Canada and abroad.

When you do what you love—in my case, helping families who are faced with mental illness—then you love what you do. The bonus of the Caring Canadian award ceremony, held in Calgary, was that my daughter Candace received the same award.

My daughter said to me, “Mom, you don’t listen, and by the way, quit telling me what to do and help me problem-solve.”

In 1995, Candace was diagnosed with bipolar disorder. Our family did not know what was ahead of us or what Candace's future held. As our daughter worked on achieving health and wellness, the family had to change what was not helping her. That meant learning how to lessen the fights, yelling and chaos at home. Once we did this and communication improved, we didn't feel so frustrated and overwhelmed.

Our family was fortunate enough to have resiliency and unconditional love. But the pressure and emotional overload of this struggle was beyond words, and we wanted to create a program that could help other families facing the same kinds of issues.

Our idea to start a family support program was championed by the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) in 1996. With the CMHA's help, we developed and implemented a six-week program—now known as Capable Carers—to help educate families about health and wellness.

Thanks to our family's success, CMHA asked me to speak at a book event to raise awareness of mental illness. Anxiety and fear



Candace Watson and her mother, Mona Cooley.

set in. The thought of speaking to a crowd of people with media present had my stomach turning somersaults. I needed Toastmasters!

I joined the Palliser Toastmasters club in 1997 in Calgary and then went on to initiate the start of Igniters club in 2004, where I became a member. My most significant growth occurred when I took on district leadership roles. I started as an area governor and eventually became the 2006–2007 District 42 Governor. Leading others in Toastmasters helped me to find my voice.

Looking back at Candace's struggle, I remember how hard it was for me to accept that I could not control this situation as a mom—and, even more so, to accept that I had to change my way of communicating. At first we tip-toed around what to say to Candace and when to say it. Over time we learned what was working and what was not. One key to our success was *listening*. My daughter said to me, “Mom, you don't listen and by the way, quit telling

me what to do and help me problem-solve.”

These words have impacted my way of communicating and coaching, and of solving problems.

This 20-year journey that led me to speak openly about mental illness and do what I love for a career has gone beyond my wildest dreams. Facing this crisis, my family learned to thrive by working as a team, leveraging our strengths, communicating effectively, listening to each other and focusing on finding solutions. Developing skills and practicing at my Toastmasters club helped me to excel personally and professionally.

I never realized how my theme as district governor, “Communicate with Confidence, Lead with Purpose,” guided me to speak out about mental illness and help other families speak up as well. **T**

MONA COOLEY, DTM, is a member of the Igniters club in Calgary, Canada. She speaks to many different groups on the topic of mental illness.



A ‘Top Notch’ Turnaround

How one club rebuilt and nearly quadrupled its size.

BY JULIE B. COSGROVE, ACG, ALB

In 2012, when the economy took a nose dive in our area, my club—Top Notch Toastmasters in Fort Worth, Texas—lost 15 members in six weeks. All of these members left because they either had to take on second jobs or move for better opportunities. All were sad to go and vowed they would return one day.

Until we knew what made visitors walk through the door, how were we to know what our club could offer them?

Three years later, a few have returned. However, in 2012 that didn't help our Distinguished Club Program (DCP) goals.

The seven of us who remained decided we would hold quality meetings no matter what. “This club will not die on my watch,” said our president at the time, Chuck Mencke, now a DTM and the new District 25 Club Growth Director.

As club secretary, I agreed, as did the other five remaining members.

Two members were often absent due to their jobs, so that meant doubling up on the officer roles. I took on sergeant at arms as well as secretary, and I split the duties of the vice president education role with the vice president public relations. The club president, meanwhile, also took on the treasurer role. Another member took over as vice president membership.

For the next few months, the potential membership faucet barely dripped. We added one new member. Then, the spigot turned on full blast. Within four weeks, we had 12 visitors. We signed up five visitors in one night and three the next meeting, which doubled our membership!

By the time I took over as president in July 2013, we earned President's Distinguished recognition with 20 members. By the end of 2013, we had 27 members.

How did we do it?

Formula for Success

We took several key steps to increase our membership.

1 We established an active presence on social media.

We signed up for Meetup (a network of local groups), created a Facebook page and encouraged members to post on it and tweet on Twitter. We joined LinkedIn. We created a club website with FreeToastHost 2 and kept it upbeat and current. I printed club business cards and each of us distributed them to people we met.

Another member left old *Toastmaster* magazines in doctor and dentist waiting rooms, attaching a sticker to each with our club name, location and meeting times. We hung posters in local restaurants and apartment mail rooms, and on community bulletin boards.

2 Our club established quality standards for our meetings, even though we didn't have 15 members.

At times, I think each of us seven wished we could have cloned ourselves. I recall one meeting where I was the Toastmaster, gave a speech and served as Topicsmaster. That was typical. Was it exhausting? Yes. Did any of us falter in our positivity? Of course. But when we did, the other six boosted that member's spirits and we kept going.

3 We greeted our guests and treated them like royalty.

We asked them to sign a guest book and gave each a name tag to wear. We also gave each guest a hearty handshake and a sincere smile. One of us sat by each guest, handed him or her a guest packet to take home and was more interested in listening to their story than in telling ours. In other words, we listened. Until we knew what made them walk through the door, how were we to know what our club could offer them?

4 As the club secretary, I mailed a personal, handwritten thank you note to each visitor within 24 hours of the meeting.

I told the person how much we appreciated their presence and invited them back the next week. I also gave them my phone number as well as our club president's so they could contact us. In addition, the president emailed guests, thanking them for visiting us. Then the vice president membership called them two days before the next meeting and invited them back. If they did not return, she or the president contacted them one more time.

Our efforts made a difference. We had an 85 percent return rate among guests, and of that number, 70 percent joined within three weeks of their initial visit.

5 Finally, we strived—and still do—to keep each member in the loop and show them how much we value their presence.

The meeting minutes recorded all the positive feedback. Each week, those minutes arrived in every member's (and guest's) email within 48 hours. People told us that when they missed a meeting they still felt as if they were a part of it once they read the email. It inspired them to come back. We also assigned mentors for new members as soon as possible.

Signs of Success

Today, Top Notch Toastmasters is President's Distinguished for the fourth year in a row. We are serious about DCP goals;

however, we are not stuffy. Our motto is: "Our unity is our diversity." Members have ranged from 18 to 81 years old, from blue collar to executive, from college student to retired military, and the club includes members of various ethnicities.

How do we keep the momentum going?

Here are the Ten Top Notch Targets:

- 1. Each July, the new club officers meet for two hours.**
Together, they develop a flow chart illustrating who will do what if a guest arrives, and if the guest eventually becomes a member.
- 2. In early January we hold a Moments of Truth meeting** (named after Toastmasters International's guide for club quality standards). Everyone's input is valued and members say that, as a result, they feel they truly have ownership in the club.
- 3. We regularly have a module speech** from the Better Speaker, Leadership Excellence or Successful Club series.
- 4. We hold Executive committee meetings** every six weeks.
- 5. We make sure club meetings are well-executed**, fun, positive and uplifting.
- 6. Members are recognized for their contributions** and accomplishments.
- 7. We have themed meetings**, such as Don't Wear Socks Day or Chocolate Cookie Day, and design our Table Topics questions around the theme.
- 8. Occasionally, we mix things up** so the meetings remain fresh and lively. For example, we have Table Topics first, speech marathons, or round robin evaluations when someone wants help with a competition speech.
- 9. We generate birthday and get-well cards** for each other.
- 10. Our vice president education keeps track** of who has done what and encourages members to take on new opportunities.

Individually and collectively, our club members have won a number of awards. These awards would not have happened had it not been for those initial seven members passing on a dedication to excellence to new members and officers. Last week, I looked around the room where our club meets. The meeting had been adjourned for 10 minutes, and people were laughing and talking with each other and with guests. My eyes welled with pride. I can truly say my club has lived up to its name: Top Notch.

Never give up on your club. Toastmasters is worth the time, effort and commitment. Once you offer people respect and friendship, and then put on a quality meeting where each member is valued for their contribution, your guests will whip out their pens and say, "Where do I sign up?" ■

JULIE B. COSGROVE, ACG, ALB, has held many officer roles in her club, Top Notch Toastmasters in Fort Worth, Texas. In November 2015 she was awarded Outstanding Club President for District 25. She is a professional public speaker and published author. Learn more about her at www.juliebcosgrove.com.



Social Media Tips for Your Club

BY GEMMA COSTELLO

Past Vice President Public Relations, Vox Populi club, Dublin, Ireland

Social media and digital marketing are great tools for recruiting new members and engaging existing ones. My club, Vox Populi, has active Facebook and Twitter accounts, and we post updates regularly on our club website. Maintaining these sites for your club can be labor intensive, but the results are worth it.

Promote Your Club on Facebook

One thing I stress to members of other clubs is not to worry about lack of strong engagement on your club's Facebook page. Facebook changed its algorithm in December 2013, making it more difficult for the posts of businesses and organizations to appear organically in members' newsfeeds. According to Felicity McCarthy, founder of the digital marketing consultancy company SparkDigital.ie in Ireland, the "magic formula" for newsfeed visibility is dependent on a combination of the following factors:

- Your audience's level of interest in the creator of the post
- How much your post is liked, commented on or shared
- The performance of your past posts
- The type of post your user prefers (status, photo or link)

- How recent your post is

I recommend that you think of ways to optimize each of the components of this magic formula to increase the possibility of your posts appearing organically in newsfeeds of your club's members and prospective members.

When creating a Facebook post, consider the following:

- Short posts have more traction than long ones, so be succinct. The optimum character count is 90 to 100, so hook your readers quickly!
- Aim for a friendly, approachable tone, as it invites the user to interact with you. Humor works well here.
- Effective use of imagery, particularly emotive imagery, is crucial. It sparks an emotional reaction and stimulates sharing.
- If you are posting images as advertisements, know that Facebook prohibits images that are covered by more than 20 percent of text.
- A few posts of high quality are preferable to many posts with marginal relevance to your fan base.

Find and Enhance Images

Posting images on your club website and Facebook page is a good idea, but keep in mind copyright laws. The following tools can be useful.

Register on www.freeimages.com for access to free imagery for non-commercial use. I discovered **Camera+**, a great photo editing app for the iPad and iPhone when I received training in image editing at my workplace. **Word Swag** is another app for the iPad that allows you to put creative captions on images in a variety of stylized fonts.

A great graphic design tool is www.canva.com; it offers templates for creating customized images and graphics. I used them to post club milestones such as our inaugural Vox Populi debate night and our "Voscars" awards ceremony.

When you post images on your club's Facebook page, check the statistics on Facebook's Page Insights. I found that members responded to posts of eye-catching graphics or images, particularly when used in connection with a milestone. I'm confident that you will see the same results. **T**



Toastmasters Leaders club officers celebrate the club's fourth anniversary in April.

RICH'S 10 TIPS FOR A GREAT CLUB WEBSITE

CLUB MANAGEMENT

Toastmasters Leaders club in Warsaw, Poland, has an average of 55 to 85 members, and sometimes up to 20 guests, attending each meeting. To handle a group of that size, club officers must run meetings efficiently.

On average, when guests attend a single meeting, nearly 20 percent of them want to join the club straightaway. This kind of challenge calls for the ultimate leadership skills and teaches you how to plan, implement and execute all the processes, meetings and events run by the club. The Toastmasters Leaders club is a place where, as per Toastmasters' motto, leaders are made. The exciting environment stimulates creativity and pushes leaders to grow fast.

Maciej Kietlinski, CC, ALB
 Immediate Past President
 Toastmasters Leaders club

GET THE WORD OUT

"At our club, we reach out to various newspapers, digital websites and social media outlets to promote our club meetings and open house events," says Glenn F. Laveson, ACG, immediate past vice president public relations of the Lower Bucks Toastmasters club in Langhorne, Pennsylvania. He offers these tips to help you promote your club's activities.

- **Connect with people in your community.** Contact small community newspapers. Larger newspapers often have space restrictions, and typically, small publications have more opportunities to cover local events.
- **Write a brief, specific description to spread the word about your event.** Always include the five W's: who, what, when, where and why.
- **Persistence is the key to success.** Be organized. If you have an event coming up, send a reminder to your media contacts three weeks prior. This gives everyone enough time to plan.



- 1 Make sure your club's contact information is accurate on your website and on the Toastmasters International website in Club Central (under the Leadership Central tab).
- 2 List your meeting time and location, and post a map that marks the spot.
- 3 Recognize new members by posting their photos.
- 4 Publicize members' accomplishments, such as education awards, by posting photos and commendations.
- 5 Create a "Meet Our Members" section. Include photos and short biographies or captions, but make sure to have the members' permission before doing so.
- 6 Post photos of your club's special events, such as anniversary parties and speech contests.
- 7 Show action photos of club members having fun.
- 8 Create and post a two- to three-minute video on YouTube. Have members share testimonies of how Toastmasters has made a difference in their lives.
- 9 Post a message from your club president.
- 10 Create a page that explains what happens in your Toastmasters meetings.

Rich Rodgers, ACS, ALB
 Past District 16 Public Relations Officer
 Capitol City Communicators
 Oklahoma City, Oklahoma



The Power Behind Proper Branding

Toastmasters brand consistency connects members around the world.

BY CATHEY ARMILLAS, DTM

Imagine this scenario. Three first-time guests show up at your next club meeting. Being the good Toastmaster that you are, you make conversation with each of them.

The first guest is Ming-Yen, who just moved from Taiwan to the United States for a job. She was a Toastmaster in Taiwan years ago and thought joining a club would help her make new friends in the U.S. So she sees Toastmasters primarily as a social club.

The next guest is George. He received a promotion at work and his new position requires him to give presentations. His boss recommended that he check out Toastmasters. Unfamiliar with the organization, George went online to learn more. He sees Toastmasters as a class for learning how to prepare speeches.

The third guest is Karin. Her sister is a Toastmasters district leader in another state and their grandfather was also a Toastmaster. Karin works at the U.S. Patent Office, which has several corporate clubs. In spite of her family and work connections, and though she has seen many fliers and marketing messages, she is still not quite sure what Toastmasters is. She's just visiting a club at the urging of her family.



Members from around the world present the Toastmasters brand in a positive and consistent way. From left: Members of District 34 in Mexico, the Amsterdam Toastmasters in Amsterdam, and two members from the Irvine Lunchtime Toastmasters club in Irvine, California.

Before the meeting even starts, each of them has preconceptions about Toastmasters. These are formed from logos they've seen, from fliers they've read about an open house, from invitations they've received, from past Toastmasters and current members they talk to, and from any number of random sources. All of these add up to what they think of Toastmasters. And all three guests probably have a very different perception of what Toastmasters stands for.

Have you ever thought about how you personally affect people's perception of the brand?

It Takes Two to Make a Brand

Branding is one of the easiest concepts to understand, yet it's one of the hardest to execute. A brand consists of two active parts: how it's represented and how it's experienced. The one presenting the brand controls how it looks, the messaging it

delivers and the consistency of those two things. Consistency is the single most important factor in creating a strong and recognizable brand. It's more important than the quality of the design or the eloquence of the tagline. It's the most important thing there is, in fact. When there is consistency in the look of a brand—and in the message that it sends about the organization—people not only know what to expect, they expect what they know.

And then there is the one receiving the presentation of the brand. This relates to how the brand is experienced. The way people absorb the brand is how they feel about what they see, hear, touch and read. How they process those sensations and ideas is their experience. And from that experience they form a judgment, good or bad. Creating a positive experience is the most overlooked factor in creating a strong and recognizable brand.

BRANDING

Consistency

The best way to represent the Toastmasters brand is to keep it consistent—in its look, feel and messaging. The power of consistency is not only good for the Toastmasters organization as a whole; it's good for the district and the club. It's even good for you as a member. The Toastmasters brand is interdependent: It needs you and you need it. Think about it. If the brand as a whole is strong, it makes your job easier when you introduce people to the organization. And when we maintain consistency in our clubs, it helps cultivate our worldwide brand.

Consistency in how clubs operate is the string that connects us to other members around the world. In psychological terms, it's called *group cohesiveness*. We have a bond with others who share the same interest in Toastmasters as we do, regardless of anyone's lifestyle or cultural background.

When I was in Australia speaking at the District 73 conference, I got the chance to visit several clubs. I even stayed in the homes of members and their families. I felt an instant and deep connection knowing that Toastmasters meetings in other countries far away from home operate in a similar way, with prepared speeches, Table Topics, evaluations and everything being timed.

Remember Ming-Yen, the former Toastmaster from Taiwan who wanted to meet friends in her new American home? Her conception of what Toastmasters can do for her is directly affected by what her club did for her on the other side of the Pacific. If there is consistency, she'll know exactly what to expect and she will get the most out of Toastmasters.

Club and district officers can carry out this desired consistency by using Toastmasters-branded materials.

Toastmasters' Brand Refresh

In 2011 Toastmasters took on the daunting task of updating its brand. It was the first time in the organization's history this had been done. When the branding was completed and launched, Toastmasters experienced what most organizations do when they go through a re-brand: divided opinions. Some people loved the inclusion of leadership as a main component in the messaging, and some didn't. Some loved the new brand colors and the design elements; others disdained the new look.

When organizations re-brand, they typically see a burst of excitement, confusion and contempt. Then, as people get used to the updated brand, it's hard for them to even remember the old one. The new brand becomes the new normal.

For Toastmasters, it has been four years now and the brand refresh is established and accepted. Now it's up to all of us to make sure it thrives. Clubs from around the world have brought their Toastmasters passion to life through the organization's Brand Video Contest. A good example of this collaboration is from The Leader Ship Club in Lodz, Poland. Watch their video at <http://ow.ly/OvijL>.

The Brand Game

Let's play a little game to see how the power of consistency works. The Brand Game included at the upper right side of the page is an alphabetical listing of elements of corporate logos. Some reflect mainstream brands, some are industry-specific and others are part of more obscure brands. From these fragments, try to guess the brand name of each. If you can guess them, it's because of consistency.



See Brand Game answers on the opposite page at the bottom.

Disclaimer: The Brand Game is created by Cathey Armillas. All graphics used are for educational purposes only in accordance with the Fair Use Act. The graphics are logos, or partial logos, and are the property and trademarks or registered trademarks of their respective owners. They are not the property of Toastmasters International.

I use this game when I give marketing presentations around the world to go along with the first rule in my book, *The Unbreakable Rules of Marketing*. Rule No. 1 is: Consistency Beats Ability. Even in a small room of people, the crowd is able to guess all 26 brands—every time. This shows the power of consistency.

Applying Consistency

So what can we do to work *with* the Toastmasters brand instead of against it? It's simple. We can use the tools and elements that Toastmasters has already created for us. You can find them all in Leadership Central on the Toastmasters website. [www.toastmasters.org/Logos]

There's an entire section dedicated to brand elements, and a brand manual governs the application and uses of the logo, fonts, color palette and even style of photography. You can download the logo in various formats. There's also club and district stationery, business cards and fliers. Just about anything you need has already been created for you. And, most important, there is a concise expression of the Toastmasters brand positioning to remind you of why Toastmasters exists.

There is no need to design your own materials. It's not only a waste of time but it's also counterproductive because when you do, you dilute the brand. You can, however, create your own materials if you use the Toastmasters brand elements and follow the guidelines in the brand manual. That supports consistency.

The Toastmasters Experience

Even though the brand experience—how it's received—is going on in someone else's head, this is the part you have the most control over. You can help strengthen the Toastmasters brand by creating and crafting the "Toastmasters Experience."

It's the experience we should be striving to create every time someone has an interaction with Toastmasters. Experiences are created by the conscious mind as it makes observations and instills them with meaning, order and emotional response. With the Toastmasters experience, the meaning, order and emotion should elicit confidence, camaraderie and a motivation to help people nurture their own self-development. This is the desired end, the purpose of the Toastmasters brand.

Think of a brand experience that you've been a part of. For instance, when you wear a pair of Nike shoes, you have a specific experience related to that interaction. How did you feel trying them on? Lacing them up? Did wearing the shoes make you feel like you could run faster? Did it do something for your self-confidence? Or your energy level? Each of us may react to a new pair of Nike shoes in a different way. But it's all part of the Nike brand experience.

A person can even experience a brand by inference. If you hear stories about, or see results of, what other people have experienced with a brand, you tend to put yourself in their shoes. A few years ago, a young woman named Katie joined one of my clubs. She was very nervous at first, but about a year later, she gave her 10th speech in the *Competent Communication* manual. She invited her boss to come watch. I'll never forget what he said: "I didn't know anything about Toastmasters except what Katie told me. But I've seen her go from being overly shy to amazingly confident. Toastmasters has worked well for her. So well, in fact, we are losing Katie as she is being promoted to assistant manager of another branch."

Whether or not her boss ever joins Toastmasters himself is beside the point; he was able to experience the brand and his opinion of Toastmasters has forever changed. It came from an inferred experience, but his opinion, which he will continue to share with others, is exactly what strengthens a brand.

Choose to Give

In every interaction, you make a conscious choice to give people the Toastmasters experience or rob them of it. There is no middle ground. How can you rob someone of their Toastmasters experience? Let me give you an example. When I served as an area governor, I visited one of the clubs in my area that had been having problems retaining members and meeting its Distinguished Club Program goals. One of the first things I noticed was that, although the members were giving speeches, they were not following the Toastmasters' education guidelines. After the meeting, I spoke with the club president. He told me his club was doing fine because a few of the core club members already had their DTMs.

A first-time visitor would think that was how all clubs operate. That would be their brand experience. But that club is not typical of most.

The point is, don't rob others of the Toastmasters experience. You can give them the experience in so many ways. The simple act of making genuine conversation with a guest when he or she visits your club does wonders. Avoid being judgmental when evaluating members; instead, give them only the information they need to further their skills. Even sharing anecdotes about your own experience can positively impact people's perceptions of our brand. This, in fact, can do far more for the member, than providing a bulleted list of facts.

Keep This in Mind

If you remember nothing else, remember these two things: consistency and brand experience. They are vitally linked. To seed Toastmasters as a force for good in the world, you have to attend to how everyone experiences its brand. And to grow the Toastmasters brand and reputation from that seed, you need to apply all of its brand elements consistently. This includes its messaging.

CREATE THE
TOASTMASTERS EXPERIENCE

Do This	Not That
Share your transformational story with others	Only tell facts to others about Toastmasters
Use Toastmasters branded materials	Try to reinvent the wheel and be inconsistent with the Toastmasters brand
Keep your club information updated on Toastmasters.org and your club website	Have incorrect or outdated information listed publicly
Send out a club newsletter or meeting communications regularly	Have irregular or non-existent communication
Welcome and acknowledge guests	Put guests on the spot
Consistently create an experience that brings people back	Rob members of the Toastmasters Experience

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Remember those three hypothetical characters who showed up at your club meeting? Ming-Yen, George and Karin? Each with their own widely different goals? Well, if their Toastmasters experience is consistent, they'll each determine on their own how to apply that experience to their own personal needs. And the cycle will be complete.

By delivering the brand experience in a consistent way, you'll not only enhance the Toastmasters mission, you won't disappoint anyone who tries Toastmasters, because they'll know what to expect. And they'll bring more friends who will bring other friends, and so on **T**

CATHEY ARMILLAS, DTM, is a member of the TV Toastmasters club in Beaverton, Oregon. She runs PURA Marketing, a strategic marketing company, and is the author of the award-winning book *The Unbreakable Rules of Marketing: 9 1/2 Ways to Get People to Love You*. She's also a TEDx organizer, speaker coach and speaker. To learn more, visit www.CatheyArmillas.com.

TABLET SPECIAL: Watch a Poland club provide members with an excellent brand experience.

THE BRAND GAME ANSWERS:

- | | | | |
|---------------|-----------------------|--------------|------------------|
| A = Adobe | H = HP | O = Oakley | V = Virgin |
| B = Barbie | I = IBM | P = Puma | W = Warner Bros. |
| C = Coca-Cola | J = Johnson & Johnson | Q = QuickTme | X = Xbox |
| D = Disney | K = Kellogg's | R = Ray-Ban | Y = Yankees |
| E = eBay | L = Lego | S = Sega | Z = Zenith |
| F = Fila | M = MTV | T = Texaco | |
| G = Google | N = Nintendo | U = U-Haul | |

Walter Isaacson: Writing a New Chapter

Former CNN chief now helps leaders grow at the Aspen Institute.

BY PAUL STERMAN

Walter Isaacson has been a leader at the highest levels of journalism, serving as managing editor of *Time* magazine and then as chairman and CEO of CNN, the 24-hour cable news channel. Now he heads an organization dedicated to leadership itself.

Isaacson is president and CEO of the Aspen Institute, whose aim is to foster effective and principled leadership around the world. Based in Washington,

“People who are great thinkers can’t be great leaders unless they know how to communicate and listen.”—Walter Isaacson

D.C., the 65-year-old organization offers leadership programs and non-partisan forums to tackle critical issues. Its programs include the Global Leadership Network, geared to young leaders from business, government and the nonprofit sector. More than 2,000 people from 48 countries participate.

In a recent phone interview, Isaacson, 63, reflected on different types of leadership, including motivating volunteers—something Toastmasters leaders know well. Isaacson says it’s



Walter Isaacson, a longtime journalist and author, heads the Aspen Institute, which fosters strong leadership around the world. Isaacson’s biography of Steve Jobs in 2011 sold more than 3 million copies in the U.S. alone.

crucial to listen to the volunteers you work with, and then inspire them “to do things based on their own values and their own goals.”

Aside from his work with Aspen, which has campuses in Aspen, Colorado, and the Maryland shore, Isaacson is a prominent author. He has penned popular biographies of historic leaders and visionaries, including Benjamin Franklin, Albert Einstein and Steve Jobs. In the case of Jobs, the notoriously private Apple co-founder hand-picked Isaacson

to tell his story. Released right after the tech titan’s death in 2011, the book *Steve Jobs* reveals the passion and genius of Jobs as well as his emotional volatility.

“I tried to show all sides of Steve, in a balanced way, because he was a great leader but also a person with some rough edges,” says Isaacson.

The author’s latest book, *The Innovators*, is about the digital revolution—specifically, the long line of creative pioneers whose efforts led to the advent of the computer and the Internet.

What drew you from a career in media to leading the Aspen Institute?

Well, having worked in the media, I noticed how polarized our national conversation had become [in the U.S.], and I even felt that the media *contributed* to that. I wanted to get more involved in finding solutions to problems rather than stirring up polarized debate about problems.

I also liked that the Aspen Institute trains young leaders, finds common ground on important policy issues and

“We sometimes think of leadership as a loner’s game, but it’s really a team sport.”—Walter Isaacson

brings people together to discuss ideas. That to me was a dream job.

Why is it important to study leadership and the ways leaders can improve our society?

When I was editor of *Time*, I realized the importance of leadership in all fields—not just politics but in business and technology and the arts and sciences. And being a good leader requires more than just being smart. Smart people are a dime a dozen, and they don’t always amount to much. But good leaders are people who have a strong vision, a reliable moral compass and the ability to inspire people. And I think imaginative, innovative, morally centered leaders are the most important part of any community or society.

You give many speeches. Have you always been comfortable with public speaking?

I do think you can learn to be a good speaker, but I was lucky that even as a kid I had the opposite of stage fright—I kind of had stage *delight*. It’s an important trait to teach in schools; every kid needs to be on the podium now and then, whether introducing a program, making daily announcements or being part of a play,

because people who are great thinkers can’t be great leaders unless they know how to communicate and listen.

In your *Steve Jobs* book, you share powerful personal anecdotes about Jobs. Why is storytelling such a valuable tool in both speaking and writing?

I often tell this story but I’ll tell it again. When I was young, I got to know the novelist Walker Percy, who lived near New Orleans, where I grew up. When I read his

books, I realized he was trying to convey some pretty deep messages and values. So I asked him about that, and he said, “There are two types of people who come out of Louisiana: preachers and storytellers. For heaven’s sake, be a storyteller—the world has too many preachers.”

I learned at *Time* that if you want to convey important ideas or great issues, it’s best done through the stories of real people who are involved.

How has your own leadership style evolved through the years?

Well, first you have to look inside yourself and see which leadership skills you have and which ones you don’t have. When I was at CNN, I realized that I was not a great manager of large numbers of people. It was easy for me to express ideas in small groups and even to try to inspire large groups. But when it came to the nuts and bolts of management, I was not very good.... And I learned that the key component of leadership is being able to build a team that makes up for any weaknesses you have as a leader, and a team that also works together as a collaborative unit.

We sometimes think of leadership as a loner’s game but it’s really a team sport.

In *The Innovators*, you describe teamwork as one of the keys to the digital revolution.

If you ask yourself who built the first computer, it’s hard to find an answer, but that’s partly because there were collaborative teams rather than an Edison having a lightbulb moment.


Does the abundance of digital tools hurt or help in-person communication?

That’s an important lesson: that the Digital Age and social networks have *increased*, rather than *decreased*, our desire to get together in person. The secret to the Aspen Ideas Festival [an annual gathering in Aspen, Colorado, for leaders around the world] is that people can launch videos and network online throughout the year, but every now and then they like to go somewhere and talk to people in person.

It’s why when Steve Jobs built the Pixar [film studio] headquarters, he built a huge atrium, so that people would run into each other. And it’s why Marissa Mayer, when she took over as CEO of Yahoo, told [employees] to quit telecommuting and emphasized that creativity happens in person.

Do the leadership projects at the Aspen Institute have real-world application?

One of the missions we have is turning thought into action. If you’re part of the [Global Leadership Network], you have to commit to doing a specific project that your fellow classmates help you with. That can be anything from solving an environmental problem to finding ways to get eyeglasses to people in rural Africa.

It’s important to find ways to have a real impact; otherwise, you’re not really being a leader. 

PAUL STERMAN is senior editor of the *Toastmaster magazine*.



From Free to **FEE!**

Eager to make speaking a career?
Learn from the experts.

BY CRAIG HARRISON, DTM

In professional speaking it's said that "success leaves footprints." Over the decades, thousands of Toastmasters have migrated into the professional ranks to earn a living as a speaker, trainer, facilitator, consultant or coach, or a blend of these occupations. Toastmasters World Champions of Public Speaking as far back as Cavett Robert (1942), the founder of the National Speakers Association, have made this journey, as have other Toastmasters, and you can too.

Yet to succeed in this arena, many lessons must be learned, as the assembled Toastmasters voices in this article can attest.

Dananjaya Hettiarachchi: **Expert In His Domain**



Dananjaya Hettiarachchi, winner of the 2014 World Championship of Public Speaking, says he knew that winning the competition wouldn't be an automatic ticket to being a professional

speaker. He had to have expertise in his subject area. Hettiarachchi, CTM, is a human resources specialist who has MBA degrees in both marketing and management.

"Find your niche and become an expert in your domain!" he advises those who want to pursue a professional speaking career.

Yet finding your niche isn't enough. "You need to be seen and be heard," Hettiarachchi says. He suggests aggressively seeking opportunities to speak for a fee, or for free, as he did for a year: at conferences, conventions, local meetings and special events.

"Collect references and testimonials, and build evidence of your impact" as a speaker, he says. The first native of Sri Lanka to win the Toastmasters World Championship, he offers another piece of advice: Understand how adults learn best—it gives you insight as a speaker.

Hettiarachchi invested heavily in learning by taking courses, studying the psychology of how content is structured and understood by an audience, and dissecting the brilliance of Toastmasters' 1994 Golden Gavel winner Les Brown's speechcraft, as well as studying other great speakers.

He has also stressed the importance of learning from mentors, heaping praise upon his own mentor: Balraj Arunasalam, DTM, Toastmasters' 2014–2015 Second Vice President.

Rory Vaden: Expand Your Options



Rory Vaden is living proof that sales experience, drive and problem-solving skills are highly valued in the business world.

"Being paid as a professional speaker is much more a reflection of your *expertise* than your skill at speaking," says Vaden, runner-up in the Toastmasters 2007 World Championship of Public Speaking.

Vaden, a professional speaker, entrepreneur and author, advises aspiring pro

speakers to adjust their perspectives on how to make money as a speaker.

“Shift away from the idea of ‘I get paid a fee to come stand onstage,’” he says. It’s more competitive than ever to survive on that check alone. As Vaden notes, you can expand that idea to include other options such as speaking for free and then selling your product at the back of the room, creating training videos and promoting them online, or becoming a trainer.

“The number one way you can get hired to speak is to be seen speaking,” says Vaden. “It’s not because you are a World Champion, have great looks or a TV show. It’s because a decision-maker saw you speak.”

So get out there and speak! Vaden, a resident of Nashville, Tennessee, urges

“It is easy to get into the speaking business. But it’s very hard to stay in it full time.”

— Marquesa Pettway, DTM

speakers to master their material. If you have clients, focus on their needs, not your own, he stresses. The co-founder of Southwestern Consulting, Vaden coaches speakers extensively on making this transition.

Marquesa Pettway: Become a Speakerpreneur



For Distinguished Toastmaster and Certified Speaking Professional Marquesa Pettway of New York City, the path to professional speaking has been filled with teachable moments. In five short years she achieved these notable titles from Toastmasters and the National Speakers Association. In the process, she learned a great deal.

“It is easy to get into the speaking business. But it’s very hard to stay in it full time,” says Pettway. “To do so, speakers must be *speakerpreneurs!*” She coined this term to describe how speakers must gain entrepreneurial skills not necessarily taught in the corporate world.

Early on, Pettway paid her dues by joining a seminar company. She didn’t focus on the money she was earning (“99 cents an hour!”) traveling from town to town, but appreciated the experience of speaking daily, learning to sell other peoples’ products in the back of the room and building her confidence.

As her speaking business grew, so did her savvy. She “picked a lane” and became an expert. “Being an expert means that you can solve a problem for people, whether it is helping them find the love of their lives or lose weight or become healthier. You’ve got to be an expert in at least one category to get hired.”

But there’s so much more to master. “Speakerpreneurs” can position

themselves effectively in the marketplace—partly through social media. After delivering value to an audience with their speech, they are comfortable making an offer from the platform to sell coaching services, products, retreats, boot camps or other packages. It’s an art form, and it takes practice. Mostly, says Pettway, “You have to have a mindset of it being a business and not just about giving speeches.”

Mark Hunter: Make Your Mark in the Big Game



For 2009 World Champion of Public Speaking Mark Hunter, credibility and authenticity are keys to success in the professional ranks. Credibility, he says, is both personal and perceived. Personal credibility means ensuring that you have standing in the topics you choose—solid expertise and knowledge in the area you speak about—while perceived credibility is “how audience members see you.”

7 TIPS FOR EMERGING PROFESSIONAL SPEAKERS

If you want to be a professional speaker, here’s how you can take advantage of all that Toastmasters has to offer.

1 Join your local district’s advanced or specialty clubs that focus on professional speaking, storytelling, humor, training or other specialties needed by pro speakers. Request high-level evaluations!

2 Work in advanced manuals such as *The Professional Speaker*, *Storytelling*, *The Entertaining Speaker*, *Humorously Speaking*, *Communicating on Video* and others.

3 Join your district’s Speakers Bureau. Speak about Toastmasters and your district at local service clubs, or address your own topics. Experience non-Toastmasters audiences and different room set-ups, equipment, lighting and times of days to speak.

4 To master technology and build poise, deliver modules of pre-existing slides and scripts from Toastmasters’ *Better Speaker*, *Successful Club*, *Success/Communication* and *Success/Leadership* series.

5 Volunteer to speak on your district’s local cable-access television show, if it has one. Gain experience speaking on camera, and see how you come across on TV.

6 Gain stage time: Volunteer with your district to serve as an emcee, facilitator, moderator or interviewer. Master each specialized skill that people will pay for.

7 Earn the Accredited Speaker designation. For details on how to apply, visit www.toastmasters.org/resources/contests/Accredited-Speaker.

— Craig Harrison, DTM

“Protect your personal credibility—it’s in your control!” says Hunter, a Distinguished Toastmaster. Have an honest conversation with yourself and those who know you best regarding your primary values. This helps you define and protect your credibility.

A resident of Helensvale, Queensland, Australia, Hunter describes authenticity as “the harmony between what is seen by the audience and who we are.” In other words, be yourself and be real. He’s seen speakers portray one persona onstage, and another offstage. Audiences detect this contradiction.

Hunter, a trainer and coach who helps organizations improve the speaking skills of their employees, says another vital step in launching a speaking career is to keep learning. He says he has actively sought feedback, learned from his mistakes, and watched other speakers to affirm or challenge what he does and how he does it.

SPEAKER RESOURCES

Here’s what every emerging professional speaker needs.

- A high-quality demonstration video showing you connecting with a live audience.
- A media kit with a one-sheet description of you, your speaking programs, a client list, testimonials, articles by or about you, and descriptions of your books, DVDs or other products, if applicable.
- A website and/or social media platform(s) to share your brilliance and build a following. Include sample videos, audios and video testimonials from your fans.
- A great speech! It’s the best marketing strategy. Hone yours and it will open doors quicker than any fancy collateral material.
- People who help you improve, such as a speech coach, business coach or mentor.

— Craig Harrison, DTM

“I am both a lifelong learner and a reflective learner,” says Hunter.

Allison M. Shapira: Leading Through Speaking



For Allison M. Shapira, ACS, ALS, leveraging the communication and leadership skills she developed in Toastmasters was natural. The founder and president of Global Public Speaking in Washington D.C., she coaches clients in professional speaking. Being a paid coach, says Shapira, requires passion and purpose. Her advice for finding clients: “Dive in with a relentlessness of purpose! Have courage and a belief in what you are doing and the importance of the skills you teach.

“Sell the value you bring to others and the benefits that accrue to them through working with you,” she adds.

Shapira’s path to coaching speakers has been a fascinating and diverse one, showing that there is no one right path to

take. As a college student, she was a vocal performance major—planning for a professional career as an opera singer—but then switched her major to Italian literature. After graduation, Shapira landed a job at the Israeli consulate in Boston and was expected to give speeches on the consulate’s behalf. Thus, she joined Boston University’s Toastmasters club.

Her Toastmasters training has been invaluable, says Shapira, adding that her experience with music, language and diplomacy has contributed to her coaching career as well. It’s all about helping people find their voice, she says.

The road to professional speaking awaits you. May these tips eliminate detours and wrong turns and accelerate your journey to professional success. ■

CRAIG HARRISON, DTM, is a past district governor and a member of Lakeview Club in Oakland, California. He has served as president of the National Speakers Association, Northern California chapter. Learn more at www.ExpressionsOfExcellence.com.

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The Elevator Speech

Take advantage of this essential tool for marketing yourself.

BY CHRISTINE CLAPP, DTM

The first impression we make on people is crucial. That's why introducing yourself with a strong "elevator speech" is so important. Maybe one day you'll hop on an elevator and travel up 30 floors with the CEO of a company for which you've always wanted to work, or with the key investor you've been pursuing for your new business venture.

But whether or not you ride an elevator with a leader in your industry, you undoubtedly will need to introduce yourself at meetings, conferences, social functions and job interviews. When asked "Tell me about yourself" or "What do you do?," introduce yourself confidently and effectively to make a strong first impression. If you don't have an elevator speech—a one- to two-minute pitch about yourself—you're missing opportunities to grow both professionally and personally.

Just because you're introducing yourself in a conversational or small-group setting doesn't mean you should improvise. In fact, you should prepare and rehearse your personal introduction to an audience of *one* with as much care as you would a conference keynote to an audience of a *thousand*. Your elevator speech is an essential tool for marketing yourself.

Craft your message as you would a formal speech. Prepare strategically, rehearse thoroughly, ask fellow Toastmasters for feedback and rework material if it is not achieving the results you want. This doesn't mean your elevator speech should be scripted, stiff or unchanging. On the contrary, make sure it is conversational and can be adapted to fit the situation you're in. Keep the following three guidelines in mind, and you'll be prepared to introduce yourself to any person you encounter.

1 Describe yourself as a solution to a problem. The most important part of your elevator speech is the first sentence. When you don't have much time, use this sentence as a



An elevator speech should be compelling enough to engage a stranger in conversation, whether you're in an elevator or not.

condensed version of your elevator speech. When you have a minute or two for your full-length version, the first sentence will determine whether your listeners will engage in conversation with you or search for a polite excuse to end the exchange.

For that important first sentence, make sure you describe yourself as a solution to a problem faced by your clients, customers or business associates. Listeners don't necessarily care what your job title is, how your industry describes the work you do or what degrees or technical certifications you have earned. Listeners want to know *how you can help them*.

Take, for example, Rui Sun, an accountant in New York City, whose introduction starts, “I take the dread out of April 15.” American taxpayers recognize this familiar date as the annual deadline for filing a U.S. tax return and immediately have a sense of Sun’s work and its value to clients. Video journalist and Atlanta native Kendall Payne opens with, “I bring news stories to life.” This first line has an element of intrigue that makes listeners want to learn more. And Victoria Harding, who works for Massachusetts General Hospital’s Aspire program for children with autism spectrum disorder, introduces herself by saying, “I help children with social disorders make a best friend.” With this, Harding shares a concrete benefit she provides, and avoids using formal titles or medical terminology.

The ultimate goal of your elevator speech is to learn about the person you are meeting and how you might help him or her.

In these examples, the speakers get to the point in plain terms to ensure that listeners engage and don’t lose interest during the recitation of an official title, certifications, an alphabet soup of acronyms or other jargon. They also keep it brief. An elevator speech can’t be comprehensive, but it should be compelling enough to spur conversation. Remember, the person you are introducing yourself to won’t always be the specific type of person you can help. But he or she might know exactly the person who needs your expertise.

2 Tell an anecdote. After you describe how you solve a problem, tell a short story to explain your motivation for doing what you do. This anecdote should be a “signature story”—one that reveals the *ah-ha* moment when you first realized what you wanted to do, or an example that shows how exceptional you are at your craft.

Payne, the video journalist, tells a story about how she became interested in journalism. “When I started applying for internships, I would change my phrasing, but for the most part, I stuck to a simple anecdote about feeling lost and with no creative outlet when coming to college until I joined the school newspaper.”

The personal story you share will help establish a connection and build rapport with listeners. People don’t always remember a name, but they can usually recount an interesting narrative. Stories are entertaining and more memorable than lines from a resume.

As mentioned by Payne, your anecdote doesn’t need to be scripted; the way you tell it will be a little different each time. And depending on the situation—like whether you’re talking to a prospective employer, having a causal conversation at a neighborhood party or networking at an industry conference—you may want to keep a few signature stories in mind. Select the one to share based on the audience and context.

Just remember, your *entire* elevator speech is just one to two minutes long, so your anecdote must be brief. It should have specific details to make it interesting and should include vivid language that piques your listener’s curiosity. But it should also be told in a breezy manner. It’s not an epic tale.

3 Start a dialogue. Finally, conclude with an open-ended question—one that can’t be answered with a simple “yes” or “no.” The best introductions are short and end with a question that turns the interaction into a dialogue. The ultimate goal of your elevator speech is to learn about the person you are meeting and how you might help him or her. To achieve this, your ears have to do some of the work.

Carolyn Semedo, a program manager in Virginia for Arlingtonians for a Clean Environment, says it’s important to be realistic about what will happen after you share your elevator speech. It’s not likely that you will land a job or close a sale after giving a one- to two-minute introduction. But it is feasible to make a connection that leads to further conversation and collaboration, notes Semedo. Starting a dialogue can do that. “Closing with a question draws the listener in, creating a dialogue that can serve as the foundation for a deeper conversation and, eventually, a relationship,” she says.

The question you ask at the end of your introduction can be as simple as, “And what is it that you do?” Or, depending on the occasion, you can make it more specific to your field of work or the type of person you are networking with. Above all, the question must show you are genuinely interested in learning more about the person and not just making a sale or advancing your agenda.

A memorable elevator speech will help you market yourself and capitalize on opportunities that come your way—whether you’re in an elevator or not! ■

CHRISTINE CLAPP, DTM, *develops the voice of experts who want to broaden their impact. She is the author of Presenting at Work: A Guide to Public Speaking in Professional Contexts and the president of Spoken with Authority.*



Putting the “PR” in Professional

Tips for promoting your club and district.

BY DENNIS OLSON

Typically, the first response I get after telling someone I'm the public relations strategist at Toastmasters International is, "Oh, that sounds interesting. Wait, what is public relations?" At Toastmasters we define public relations (PR) as "The practice of creating, promoting and maintaining a favorable image of an institution among its audiences through the use of a variety of communication channels and tools."

Practicing good PR is vital to the many activities you'll participate in throughout your lifetime. Do you want to impress potential employers during a job interview? Wearing a nice suit instead of jeans and a T-shirt is practicing public relations. Are you trying to

secure a new client? Communicating to them in a professional and friendly manner is practicing PR. Is your business holding an event that you want the public to attend? Asking the local media to cover the event and help get the word out is practicing PR.

While most people may think these examples are simply interpersonal communication, any time you behave in a particular manner to affect how you are perceived is practicing PR. Good PR gives an organization or individual greater advantages than other promotional options such as advertising. PR is based on relationship building and generating goodwill, which leads to credibility.

For example, if a newspaper article mentions Toastmasters training as a great way to enhance one's career, that article carries more credibility than if Toastmasters International had an advertisement on that same page. Advertising and marketing focus on buying and selling, with the intent to create a demand for a product or service, which is often expensive. The result of a good PR program is free publicity. Whether it's an appearance as a guest on a TV show, or an article published in a newspaper, PR is the most effective form of public contact because it establishes credibility for a product, company or person.

THE ANATOMY OF A NEWS RELEASE

A news release is the most widely used means of informing the media about an event. It also serves as the basis for a potential news story. News releases are the most important of all collateral pieces that PR professionals send to the media because they:

- Tell an important story and offer a topic for media to cover.
- Have the ability to reach all of the media on the same day.
- Give the media contact direction as to what to do next.
- Are cost effective.

Items To Include in the Format of a News Release

A Logo—a company logo should appear at the top of the page.

The name, title, telephone number and email address of the contact person.

A boilerplate—a one-paragraph summary of the organization.

The end mark (###)—these symbols placed below the content signal the end of the release.

The Content of a News Release

The headline and subhead should be short, descriptive and clear.

List the dateline, which is the format you use to begin the release. Write the city and state of the origin of the news first, followed by the date the release is distributed.

In the body copy, appeal to the target audience (the media's readers, viewers or listeners). Open with an attention-getting lead that answers who, what, when, why and how. Present the most important information early; subsequent paragraphs present supporting information.

Use a meaningful quote to illustrate an idea through someone's voice. Be sure to attribute it correctly.

Emphasize central selling points with bullets.

Include a call to action, such as: "Go to a website to find and visit a club, or learn more about your announcement."

Check for accuracy and errors.

Links to sample news releases and the Toastmasters International logo can be found at: www.toastmasters.org/PublicRelations.

For more information, see *Let the World Know* (Item 1140), Toastmasters International's Publicity and Promotion Handbook.



TABLET SPECIAL: Learn how to pitch your news release to the media and see how others have done it.

While district public relations managers (PRMs) and club vice presidents public relations handle the majority of the PR efforts in Toastmasters, all members are encouraged to learn the basics of PR and collaborate with their district and club to maximize publicity opportunities. [Before district leader titles changed in July, the PRM was referred to as public relations officer (PRO).]

Good PR in Action


PRMs have a number of responsibilities with the most significant being to promote the district and clubs within it to local media. Many things might be newsworthy, including member success stories, club open houses, district conferences, international officer visits, speech contest announcements and notifications of contest winners. Below are two examples of exceptional work by district leaders:

When Stan See, DTM, began his term as District 55 PRO in southern Texas in July 2014, he set out to raise public awareness of the district. To accomplish this, one of his first objectives was to work with the district leadership team to launch its first Toastmasters International Week the following February. See suggested that the district extend an invitation to Toastmasters International CEO Daniel Rex and International Director Karen Blake, DTM, asking them to visit the district during the week. Rex and

PR is based on relationship building and generating goodwill, which leads to credibility.

Blake accepted. Both spoke at events in Austin and San Antonio, and were presented with a signed proclamation from the Governor of Texas officially declaring it Toastmasters International Week in the state of Texas. See's efforts paid off as District 55 saw an immediate increase in membership.

With District 14's April conference a few weeks away, District PRO Paul Jacobs, ACB, and the conference PR committee contacted the local media to notify them of the event and inquire about publicity opportunities. Impressively, the committee was able to secure a segment on *The Dee Armstrong Show* in early April on the Columbus, Georgia, NBC affiliate. Jacobs, along with District 14 Governor Charlie Mae Ferrell, DTM, and Karen Jakes, DTM, did an outstanding job of promoting the upcoming conference and Toastmasters International during the seven-minute TV segment. District 14 credits the segment with boosting attendance at the district conference and attracting more visitors to club meetings.

The excellent work by See and Jacobs are examples of what can be accomplished when best practices are used. In a PR role, it's crucial to follow the necessary steps to be successful. Whether it's writing a catchy headline for a news release or creating an email pitch to get the media's attention, practicing good PR will benefit both you and your organization. 

DENNIS OLSON is the public relations strategist at *Toastmasters International*.



Stop It!

Please—think before you speak.
You're making my left eyelid twitch.

BY JOHN CADLEY

I'm mad as heck and I'm not going to take it anymore. The next time someone offends my linguistic sensibilities, I'm going to say what I'm thinking. I have to. Holding it in is killing me—literally. At my last physical exam the doctor asked, “Why is your left eyelid twitching?” and I said, “Because people say ‘It’s raining outside.’”

You have to understand. I love language. I believe in the sanctity of the spoken and written word. When someone says “It’s raining outside,” it sparks an interior diatribe I cannot control: *It’s always raining outside, you imbecile! If it were raining inside it wouldn’t be raining, it would be leaking. There’s a difference, one which you and those of your ilk apparently fail to perceive!*

Holding that in is not good for my health. Perhaps if this were the only example, I could carry on. But people say so many other things without thinking that cause me to think: *What are they thinking?* For instance, how many times do you hear that someone has made a “small fortune”? *If it’s small, it’s not a fortune! Could he have made a “big fortune”? A fortune is big. That’s why it’s a fortune. If it were small it would be my 401(k).*

Or how about “perfect stranger”? First of all, *nobody’s perfect.* It’s a universal truth. Second, if he or she is a stranger you have no idea how imperfect they are—unless they’re robbing you at gunpoint. Then you *might* have some idea.

And please—*please*—don’t let me hear you refer to “recorded history.” *That’s what history is!—stuff people wrote down a long time ago so future high school students could say, “What do I need to know this for?” If it’s not recorded it’s still history but at least you don’t have to memorize it for social studies.*

If you really want to see my left eyelid twitch, start a sentence with “Despite the fact that ...” You might even see my right eyelid twitch over that one. Four words to say a simple “although.” Seriously. Stop it. Right now! And while you’re at it, stop saying “foreseeable future.” *Can you foresee the future? You can’t see something that hasn’t happened yet, even with glasses. The only thing that’s foreseeable in the future is that if you use the phrase “foreseeable future” it’s foreseeable that I’ll hurt you.*

Furthermore, if I ask, “What are you doing?” *do not* say “nothing.” You cannot “do” nothing. Nothing is the absence of doing. If you’re sitting on the couch, watching television or failing to be in any way productive, you can say, “I’m being.” That, I will accept. After all, you’re not dead. Close, maybe, but not medically certifiable. You’re existing, taking up space, breathing air, and that’s something. (In fact, for me it’s quite enough but my wife begs to disagree.)

How many times do you hear that
someone has made a “small fortune”?
If it’s small, it’s not a fortune!

Nor do I ever want to hear the word “several,” which means “more than two but less than many.” That’s not a definition, it’s a guess. What it really means is: *You have no idea what you’re talking about. You’re making a wild conjecture. You’re too lazy to count!*

These inanities go on and on but my column can’t, so let me conclude with just two more examples. There is a difference between “farther” and “further.” “Farther” describes physical distance (“South America is farther south than North America”) and “further” denotes metaphorical distance (“A person who confuses ‘farther’ and ‘further’ could not be further from my good graces.”). There is also a difference between “continuous” and “continual.” Something that is continual starts and stops, as opposed to its being continuous, which means never-ending. Thus: “Your continual misuse of the English language is at least mitigated by the fact that you pause every now and then to take a breath. Your ignorance of the aforesaid language, however, appears to be continuous.”

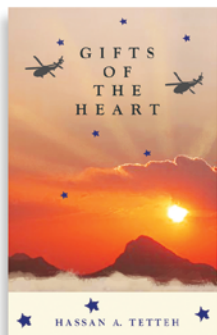
Can I go home now? ■

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

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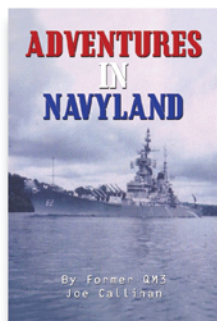
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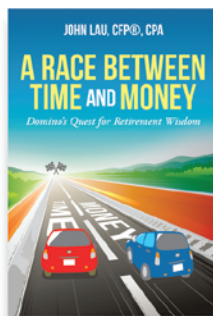
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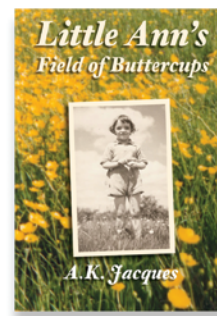
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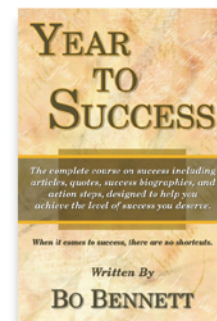
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