

# TOASTMASTER®

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JANUARY 2013

22 COLLEGE CLUBS  
MAKE THE GRADE

26 5 STEPS TO  
ACING AN INTERVIEW

28 ZAPPOS CEO  
SHARES CORE VALUES



## GET IT DONE IN 2013!

Realistic planning  
beats positive thinking  
in achieving goals.

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## WHAT'S YOUR GOAL FOR 2013?



**It is the beginning of a new year.**

What are your goals for 2013?

For us to make a real difference in life, it is critical that we have a clear direction. But it must be a clear and *specific* direction.

Every year I set my SMART goals. They are Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Timely. I keep it simple so I can remember, visualize and realize the goals I wish to achieve. Every evening before I retire to bed, I take 10 minutes to recite my goals and I evaluate my progress toward achieving them.

My goal this year is simple. I say, "I am a Competent Leader by 5 p.m. on May 31,

2013," and I write the goal in the present tense. I write particularly tough goals 10 times, twice a day, in my book. This helps to engrave them in my mind, and also creates within me a burning desire to achieve them.

**I write particularly tough goals 10 times, twice a day, in my book.**

Similarly, we can set a goal for ourselves at the club level. Our goal can include doing at least one manual speech every month or sharing the benefits of Toastmasters with at least one friend each month. We can also set a goal to achieve our Competent Communicator or Advanced Communicator award, Competent Leader or Advanced Leader title, or Distinguished Toastmaster award, or to be a club officer.

Leadership is about the positive changes and growth a leader can bring to a team. As leaders, we can reach out to discover other members' needs and set a goal to serve them better in the coming months.

We need to work on our plan. We should visualize achieving our goals and the value that will then be added to our lives. We should also visualize the growth we can bring to our family members, close friends and team members. We must stay focused on our goals, one goal at a time.

As we complete each goal, our lives become transformed—and we experience growth. We can also bring positive change to the people around us—and they will sense the change in us. Everyone benefits when someone achieves a goal.

We celebrate with team members the success of Toastmasters, where leaders are made.

Best wishes, and happy New Year! 

**JOHN LAU, DTM**  
International President

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**WHERE LEADERS ARE MADE**  
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International President

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

By regularly giving speeches, gaining feedback, leading teams and guiding others to achieve their goals, leaders emerge. They learn to tell their stories. They listen and answer. They plan and lead. They give feedback— and accept it. They find their path to leadership.

**Toastmasters International. Where Leaders Are Made.**



*"The two articles on humor in the October Toastmaster were exceptional, original, practical and very useful."*

— Judith Tingley, DTM

## Get Them **Laughing**

The articles on humor in the October issue reminded me of something I was told some 20 years ago. I was attending a seminar for owners and managers of small retail stores. A professor of business psychology, who studied store layouts, gave a presentation in which he covered the psychology of the shopper. He spoke about where to place certain types of merchandise to maximize sales. His presentation was lively, full of humor and packed with information.

After the session, we ended up having lunch together, and he made a comment I will never forget: "My job as a presenter is to get the audience laughing, and then, when they open their mouths to laugh, I shove in a fact."

Jon S. Greene, DTM  
First Nevadans Toastmasters  
Sparks, Nevada

## Article **Authors**

I have noticed in recent years that few articles in the *Toastmaster* magazine are written by Toastmasters. In fact, in a recent issue, I only saw two articles that were written by club members. I appreciate the content of the articles by freelance writers, but I would rather read articles written by Toastmasters, and hear about what they have to say. It appears as if Toastmasters either have little to say or have not yet developed adequate writing skills. I don't believe either is true.

Aron Fox, ACB  
Greater Sandpoint Toastmasters  
Sandpoint, Idaho

## **Well Said**

The two articles on humor in the October *Toastmaster* were exceptional, original, practical and very useful. They were written so well by Judy Carter and Lars Sudmann, without overlap. The two authors reflect the advantages of diversity, too: a man and a woman, a Belgian and an American, a DTM and a stand-up comic. I'll hang on to this issue of the *Toastmaster* for the long term, and will follow up with the recommended resources.

Judith C. Tingley, DTM  
U Speak Easy Toastmasters  
Bainbridge Island, Washington

## **Dissenting View**

I must take serious issue with the article "Dealing with a Distracted Audience" (July). The author, Tim Cigelske, condones the use of electronic devices [by audience members] at presentations, thinking, naively, that what is being transferred with those devices is, or will be, complimentary to the presenter. What would be most complimentary is the interest, attention and concentration of the audience.

At 76 years old I continue to give presentations, and I ask that all devices be silenced. I request my audience's attention.

Celestine Favinger, ATMB, CL  
Smithkline Speecham club  
King of Prussia, Pennsylvania

## Oh Caption, **My Caption**

In response to "Oh Caption, My Caption" by John Cadley (September), captions are critical for people with visual disabilities who use a screen

reader. Screen readers are not able to "see" a photo, table or graph; however, they will read the caption aloud, allowing the visually disabled reader to benefit from all components of an article. Using a caption for any image or graph is a best practice, especially if color is used to demonstrate a value, as people who are color blind could miss the illustration's significance.

On a related note, when making an oral presentation with visual supports, it is best to briefly explain the content of the visual support to include all audience members in your message.

Françoise L'Abbé  
Odyssea Toastmasters  
Gatineau, Québec, Canada

## **Editor's Note:**

*Effective immediately, the Toastmaster magazine has modified its submissions policy to include only the following: article queries (but not complete article submissions) and My Turn articles (submissions@toastmasters.org). In addition, we welcome submissions of high-resolution photos for the Traveling Toastmaster and Snapshot (photos@submissions.org) sections, as well as letters to this page (letters@toastmasters.org).*

## **Do you have something to say?**

Write it in 200 words or less. Include your name, address and club affiliation, and send it to **letters@toastmasters.org**.



# FACING CHANGE CONFIDENTLY

How I moved on after losing my job.

By Shelley Stutchman

**I** am 56 years old and had never been fired—until August 2011. I was a professional service coordinator for a hospice and home health company. For more than three years I was dedicated to my co-workers and clients: the hospice patients and their families. But on a Wednesday, I was invited by my

thought if I could stand in a room full of friends and strangers and give a speech, it would mean I wasn't defeated. I held my head high and went on to participate in the contest. Not caring if I even placed, I spoke to prove to myself that I was strong. I thought I had delivered a terrible speech, but I was proud to simply participate.

Change is hard—but change also shakes our world and propels us toward greater things.

supervisor and a new director to get a cup of coffee. It was then, without warning, that I was fired.

I signed the papers in utter shock, gathered my possessions from my company car and was driven home. I called a Toastmasters friend, as well as clients who had become friends, and informed them of what had happened. But I had not yet called my children. The thought of looking like a failure to *them* was more than I could bear. When I finally did call, my son and daughter were both supportive and kind. Telling my grown children I was fired was one of the most difficult things I had ever done.

Five days after losing my job, I was scheduled to be in a Toastmasters speech contest in Kingfisher, Oklahoma. I wondered how I would manage this, after all I had been through. But I


Then the award winners were announced. I was hoping my friend would win first place—but it was my name that was called! I won! I don't think I ever had a prouder moment.

My shoulders straightened up, my mind became clear, and I felt accepted again. I had fallen in love with being a Toastmaster. From then on, I made sure to attend Thursday night Toastmasters meetings, where I was surrounded by positive and caring people. I listened to my group as I struggled to keep my confidence. A club member pointed out that my once-good posture had eluded me. Another one told me I had ceased to look audience members in the eye when I spoke. Through this feedback, I regained my look of confidence—a much-needed interview skill. With encouragement from fellow Toast-

masters, I even gave a seven-minute impromptu speech! Once I did that, I knew I was ready to interview for a new job.

I did well in my interview. Thanks to Toastmasters and Table Topics, I handled questions with ease. When the interview question I dreaded—“Why did you leave your last job?”—came up, I took a deep breath, looked my future boss in the eye, straightened my shoulders and said, “So I can begin working for you.”

I now have a career as a marketing representative for a retirement village. I also have *another* mission in life—to give back to Toastmasters. I have taken on the role of president of my club. I have a message to share with others: Although we never know what life will throw at us, Toastmasters training, along with the friendships we make, provides us with a valuable foundation for moving on.

Change is hard—but change also shakes our world and propels us toward greater things. If you can reach out to friends and family, you will survive. You will move forward, confidently. You are a Toastmaster! 

**Shelley Stutchman** is president of the Enid Speakers of the Plains Toastmasters club in Enid, Oklahoma. She is a writer and a marketing director at the Golden Oaks retirement village, also in Enid.

## AROUND THE GLOBE

### ▶ INTERNATIONAL INTERPRETATIONS

HERE'S LOOKING AT YOU



The new year inspires people to set new goals, especially when it comes to losing weight, exercising and looking good. As the book *I'm Not Hanging Noodles on Your Ears* by Jag Bhalla shows, food-related idioms around the world offer colorful expressions for being fit and attractive. (An idiom is a cultural expression with a meaning that cannot be defined literally.)

For example, the French say “a wardrobe of ice cream” to describe a very large, strong man. That wardrobe of ice cream probably “had the French fry,” another French idiom meaning to be in great shape.

Similarly, Germans say “to have the salad” to describe someone who is fit. And Russians consider someone who is a picture of health to be like “blood with milk.”

### ▶ WHAT'S THE BUZZ?

HOW LONG DID IT TAKE YOU TO FINISH THE *COMPETENT COMMUNICATION* MANUAL?

**Members contributed to the discussion on the LinkedIn Official Toastmasters Members Group:**

“I finished my CC in one year. It takes commitment, being organized and planning ahead.”

— SARA MULFORD, CC  
SWEDE TALKERS, SWEDESBORO, NEW JERSEY

“I like that Toastmasters is self-paced. It took me two years to get my CC because of other life commitments, and our club meets twice a month. There should never be pressure to move a person along, only encouragement!”

— MARCIA BEDNAR, ACB  
TWIN CITY TOASTMASTERS, STEVENSVILLE, MICHIGAN

“It took me two years. It's not so much about how fast it's done, but how much knowledge is acquired during the process. It's not a race. Enjoy the journey.”

— ALEX NAZARIO, CC, CL  
STORYTELLING CLUB, ROSELAND, NEW JERSEY

### ▶ SNAPSHOT



Members of the Arbutus Toastmasters club in Parksville, British Columbia, Canada, gathered at dawn—when the tide on Parksville Beach was at its lowest—to draw the Toastmasters logo in the sand.

### BOTTOM LINE

#### Last Call for Presenters

Dynamic speakers are invited to present an education session at the 2013 Toastmasters International Convention. Apply by January 14 at [www.toastmasters.org/CallForPresenters](http://www.toastmasters.org/CallForPresenters).

#### Hall of Fame

See monthly DTM awards and club anniversaries of 20 years or more at [www.toastmasters.org/halloffame](http://www.toastmasters.org/halloffame).



#### 2012 Article Index

Looking for an article from 2012 in the *Toastmaster* magazine? The 2012 article index will make your search easy. [www.toastmasters.org/ArticleIndex](http://www.toastmasters.org/ArticleIndex)



## ► CLUB SURVIVAL TIP

### TIME'S A-TICKING

The timer serves an integral role for any club, keeping meetings on track and on time. Here are important points to keep in mind about the role:

- **Beginners Benefit.** Serving as the timer is an excellent way for new members to participate, especially ones who don't feel ready for Table Topics and prepared speeches but still want to practice public speaking.
- **Maintain Focus.** Being a time-keeper is a straightforward role, but it can also be demanding because you have to multitask. So minimize distractions—turn off your cellphone, for example—and avoid doing double-duty as a timer and speaker if you're too preoccupied with your speech.
- **Be Organized.** Orderliness is key to successfully performing the timer duties. Confirm the scheduled program ahead of time with participants and the evaluator, get your timing equipment from the sergeant at arms before the meeting starts, and be sure you know how to use it.

## MEMBER MOMENT

### LUCKY CONTESTANT

Anita Jefferson, DTM, spun the Wheel of Fortune in the American TV game show last year and won approximately \$18,000, including a trip to Costa Rica. She is a business analyst and an author of five self-help books. Jefferson volunteers as a radio show host and radio reader for the blind. A 17-year member of Dawn-Breakers Toastmasters in Decatur, Georgia, it took her six months to work up the nerve to give her Ice Breaker speech.



Anita Jefferson, DTM

### How did Toastmasters prepare you for the game show?

While I was auditioning, the producer kept commenting that I spoke with clarity and excellent enunciation, thanks to Toastmasters. Table Topics provided the best preparation since that is how I learned to deliver sharp, cogent answers to rapid-fire questions with confidence and a smile.

### Which skills benefit you in your radio work?

The skill that has benefited me the most is clear enunciation and voice quality. Because I know the listeners are non-sighted, it is important that they can distinctly hear what I see as a reader, which I augment with vocal inflection, energy and tone.

### What is the best thing you have gained from Toastmasters?

My most valuable lesson happened after my first Ice Breaker speech when my evaluator said to me, "You've got potential." Those encouraging words propelled me to not only earn one of many Competent Communicator awards, but also two DTMs, and to serve District 14 in many leadership positions.

Learn more about Anita Jefferson at [anitajefferson.com](http://anitajefferson.com).

## Marvelous Mentors

Do you know an exceptional mentor who has positively influenced you or someone else? Send a 200-word description about that person to [MentorMoment@toastmasters.org](mailto:MentorMoment@toastmasters.org).

## Corporate Sponsors

Toastmasters can fulfill your organization's communication and leadership needs. Find out how to bring Toastmasters to your workplace at [www.toastmasters.org/CorpSponsors](http://www.toastmasters.org/CorpSponsors).

## Inspiring Video

Learn more about the finalists in the 2012 World Championship of Public Speaking by watching this video on the THNKR YouTube Channel: <http://bit.ly/TIConv12Vid>.

## AROUND THE GLOBE

### ADVICE FROM THE EXPERTS



**IN THIS COLUMN**, Accredited Speakers and Toastmasters World Champions of Public Speaking share lessons learned.

Patrick Hardy, ACG, ALB, a member of the Lompoc Valley of Flowers club in Lompoc, California, earned the Accredited Speaker (AS) designation in August. The AS title is awarded to those who demonstrate the expert skills needed to be a professional speaker.

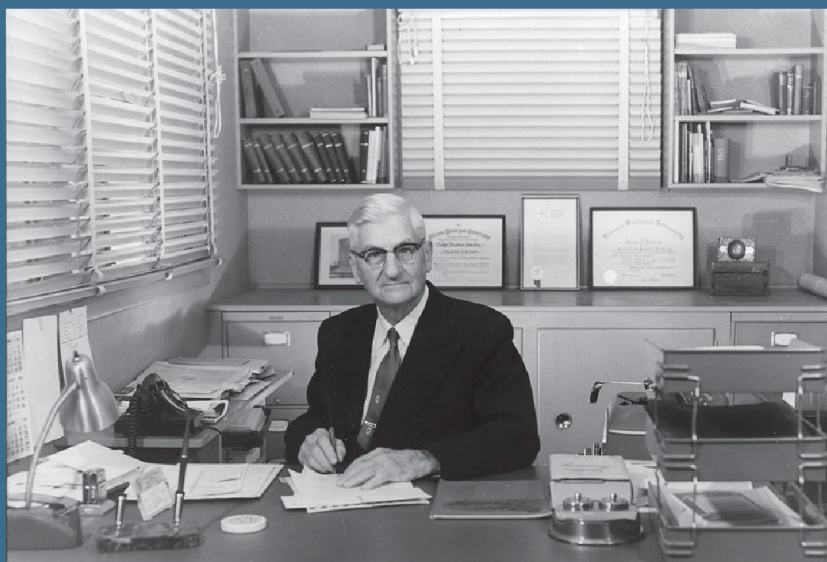
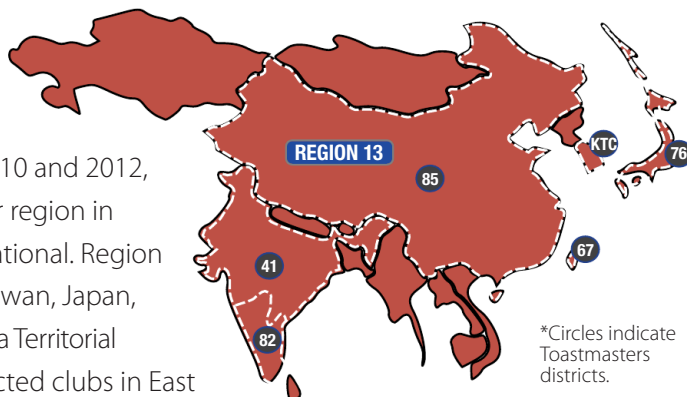
#### What is the most difficult aspect of public speaking to master?

Speed and pace. I received my public speaking training as a debater in college; from that training, I developed a rapid-fire approach to rhetoric and oratory. It was only at the end of my first year of academic competition that I learned that speaking pace needs to be controlled, not abolished. It's like driving a car. On the freeways, you need to speed up, but when you are on surface streets, you need to drive slower and more deliberately. Each has its place.

## FACTS WORTH KNOWING

### Fastest-growing Region

Region 13's membership grew an average of 19.2 percent between 2010 and 2012, faster than any other region in Toastmasters International. Region 13 includes India, Taiwan, Japan, Sri Lanka, China, Korea Territorial Council and undistricted clubs in East Asia. By comparison, the second-fastest-growing region, Region 11, grew an average of 12.9 percent during the same period. Region 11 includes Britain, Ireland, Continental Europe, southern Africa and the West Africa Territorial Council.



### FROM THE ARCHIVES

Toastmasters International founder Dr. Ralph C. Smedley poses in his office on Eighth Street in Santa Ana, California. This photograph is from the 1950s.



## MENTOR MOMENT

**N**o one has the potential to influence a member's experience like a mentor. Cynthia Brandt, a member of the Capital City Toastmasters in Frankfort, Kentucky, shares how she has benefited.



Steve Lanham and Cynthia Brandt

### Why did you join Toastmasters?

After my children left for college, I compiled a list of things I wanted to accomplish. My list included improving my public speaking skills, and so I joined Toastmasters. I also joined to improve my professional skills. I am a case consultant for Disability Determination Services in Kentucky, and I need to think quickly on my feet to answer questions from claimants, co-workers and doctors.

**Tell us about your mentor.** Steve Lanham, ACS, CL, a business analyst, has been my mentor since I joined Toastmasters in April 2012. As a former journalist, he provides insight on writing a speech with purpose. He never allows me to settle for mediocrity. Under his guidance I discovered a passion for speaking I never knew I had. I participate in Humorous Speech contests and have reached the district level. This is a testament to his mentoring.

**How does Steve give feedback?** Steve gives me positive feedback, but then sandwiches the negatives in between the positives. Sometimes those comments are hard to swallow, but in the end, they make me a better Toastmaster.

**What is your favorite thing about Steve?** I call the phrases he uses "little Steve-isms." When talking about people who give prepared speeches, he says, "There are two kinds of people in the world: those who do, and those who criticize those who do."

## DR. SMEDLEY SAYS

Toastmasters founder Dr. Ralph C. Smedley shared many insights worth remembering, such as:

"We learn in moments of enjoyment."



Dr. Ralph C. Smedley  
1878-1965

## LEARNING ABOUT OUR PAST... INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENTS



ROBERT W. BLAKELEY, DTM, SERVED AS INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT IN 1976-77.

### Q: What inspires you?

**A:** Pride and leadership development are two key factors that inspire me to remain active in Toastmasters. I'm proud to have been a Toastmaster for 56 years, and I'm inspired by our collective achievements and the evolution in the organization's leadership development track.

The late Peter Drucker [a widely influential thinker on the topic of management] taught us that effective leadership is not about making speeches or being liked; leadership is defined by results, not attributes. Also: Management is doing things right; leadership is doing the right things. My career leadership experience tracks with Drucker's definitions. I moved from an authoritative style to being more flexible based on the conditions at hand, then to a mode of helping others define what they need to achieve success.

# Tobias Lorenz: **BRIDGING THE LANGUAGE BARRIER**

German entrepreneur helps teachers and improves cross-cultural dialogue.

By Julie Bawden-Davis

**I**n 2002, when Tobias Lorenz visited Guatemala for a friend's wedding, he was struck by the disparity he saw between his home country of Germany and the Third World country. While the house he stayed in had a large freshwater pool in the backyard, circumstances were much different for many of the country's citizens.

"I wanted to encourage intercultural dialogue and create a global community in which people could learn firsthand about life in other countries."

— Tobias Lorenz

"Once I walked out into the streets, I saw there wasn't enough clean water for many of the country's people, who had to ration water for drinking and hygiene," says Lorenz, a member of the HanseRedner Toastmasters club in Hamburg, Germany.

That trip, and other trips to developing countries, laid the seeds for the business Lorenz started in 2010. **Glovico.org** (the name is a derivation of "global video conference") is a fair trade nonprofit that provides online language lessons via Skype. It teaches a wide variety of languages, including Spanish, Arabic, Chinese, Portuguese, Vietnamese, Quechua, Igbo and Swahili.

The idea for Glovico came to Lorenz when he visited Eritrea in 2009 while working on a doctorate in social entrepreneurship, which he earned in 2011 from the University of Witten/Herdecke. "I was struck by the poverty of the people in Eritrea in contrast to their broad skill sets," he says. "I decided to start Glovico to allow people from chal-

lenged economies to profit from their most natural skill—their language."

More specifically, Lorenz, whose parents are both educators in Germany, wanted to enable people in underdeveloped countries to earn income by teaching languages, particularly since very few opportunities exist to study some of these languages. He also says he wanted to "encourage intercultural dialogue and create a global community in which people could learn firsthand about life in other countries."

## **Benefiting from Glovico**

Victor Sanchez Baeza of Guatemala is a good example of someone who has

benefited from Glovico's model. In a country with an average annual income of \$2,740 (USD), Baeza teaches Spanish through Glovico and says the organization pays better than what he could earn if he taught at a nearby university. With the money he makes, he is able to support a family.

"It is a great opportunity," says Baeza, who studied law at the Universidad de San Carlos de Guatemala and is planning on taking the bar exam. "I appreciate the income and enjoy meeting the students and making new friends."

In Vietnam, where the average annual income is also low, Trường Thanh Vân has also found tutoring to be beneficial.

"Teaching Vietnamese is a good way to earn money ... and it helps me practice my English," says Trường, who graduated from the School of Foreign Language at Hanoi University of Science and Technology. The 22-year-old, who recently started tutoring through Glovico, has successfully schooled two American students for the last three years, one of whom travels to Vietnam and can now successfully communicate.

When Glovico was in the start-up phase and organizations began asking Lorenz to speak to increasingly larger





**Tobias Lorenz, founder of Glovico.org, says the nonprofit business enables people in underdeveloped countries to earn income by teaching languages.**



audiences, Lorenz joined Toastmasters to improve his speaking skills. The move paid off immediately, he says. “I received an enthusiastic welcome and a tremendous amount of support, which inspired me.”

Tilo Maria Pfefferkorn, ACS, CL, is Lorenz’s club mentor. “I’m always amazed to hear Tobias speak about Glovico and to see his passion,” she says. “He fills the stage with his presence.”

### **Practicing Leadership**

Lorenz has also learned leadership skills in Toastmasters, which help him manage a team of 30 teachers. “Managing others was a new experience for me, but it has gone very well,” he says. “The response I get from teachers as well as students is gratifying. Everyone likes the Glovico concept and enjoys the lessons, and some students and teachers have even visited one another and collaborated on projects together.”

Bolstered by the confidence and communication skills he gained in


Toastmasters, Lorenz is now working in Chile on a project to encourage entrepreneurship there. Start-Up Chile, sponsored by the Chilean government, offers early-stage entrepreneurs like Lorenz, who have built their own bootstrap businesses, \$40,000 in exchange for living in the country for six months and sharing their experiences and advice with potential Chilean entrepreneurs.

“I’ve spoken to a variety of audiences, including university students, where I’ve shared what it’s like to start an organization ... and I’ve shared a variety of ideas for businesses that the students might want to pursue,” says Lorenz.

He adds that he has been speaking to audiences in English, but recently gave his first speech in Spanish, to a group of students in the Chilean city of Puerto Montt. To learn how to speak most effectively to Chilean audiences, Lorenz visits the Santiago Toastmasters club in Santiago, Chile, where he is a regular guest at the club’s meetings. “The members of the club have been very welcoming,” says

Lorenz. “I’ve challenged myself and plan to give a speech at the club in Spanish soon.”

Lorenz’s work in Chile is benefiting Glovico, as well. “We’re looking to increase the number of students we serve, as well as add new languages,” he says. Lorenz is considering expanding into more remote areas to seek potential teachers. He also wants to make it easier for instructors to obtain the necessary electronic devices and supplies, such as a webcam, to get started in teaching for Glovico.

“Now that we have a firm foundation in place, the sky’s the limit,” says Lorenz. 

For more information about Glovico, contact Tobias Lorenz at [tobias.lorenz@glovico.org](mailto:tobias.lorenz@glovico.org).

**Julie Bawden-Davis** is a freelance writer based in Southern California and a longtime contributor to the *Toastmaster*.



# WHAT GETS SCHEDULED GETS DONE

Take tangible steps to meet your goals.

By Cheryl Pinto

*"When it is obvious that the goals cannot be reached, don't adjust the goals, adjust the action steps."*

— Confucius

**D**ream big" is a phrase we are all familiar with. It is a dogma preached by many at self-help seminars. Volumes have been written about it. However, the hoopla surrounding dreams has overshadowed an equally, if not more important, factor—*action*. It has been said that "an ounce of action is worth a ton of theory." It is understandable why action is

not everyone's favorite topic of discussion—it involves work!

We dislike work because it pushes us out of our state of comfort and into a zone where questions are many, answers are sparse, mistakes are likely and results are not guaranteed. This is probably not anyone's idea of fun.

Ganesh Raman, ACS, ALB, of Sharjah, United Arab Emirates, says, "Often people—including me—procrastinate until the consequences of their *in-action* forces a *re-action*."

Without waiting for a reaction or a setback to jolt us out of our inertia, let us start moving!

The following are a few simple yet effective tools that will prove instrumental in helping you get things done. These tools may be applied to any facet of life—professional or personal.

## Get Started

▶ **Identify and Document:** The first step is to identify your goal—whether it's amassing wealth or achieving the fitness levels of an athlete or the concentration of Albert Einstein.

The next step is to write it down. Ideas can soon be lost in the barrage of everyday activity, so write down



goals and place them where you can see them to remind yourself of their importance.

► **Break It Down:** Understand that your goals are the ultimate end result. Achieving them may require consistent, seemingly small, incremental tasks. Take a hint from organizations worldwide. In the beginning of the year, a budget is set according to the ultimate forecasted profit or bottom line. The bottom line is then targeted by setting quarterly goals. Set quarterly milestones for each dream *you* have.

**"A goal is a dream with a deadline."**

—Napoleon Hill, author of *Think and Grow Rich*

Christine Coombe, DTM, of Dubai, United Arab Emirates, is president of the worldwide organization Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL). When discussing goals and how to achieve them, she says, "Break the 'boulders' into 'pebbles.' Many people can't accomplish things because the task at hand seems too enormous. If they break it into smaller, more manageable parts, they can get started."

### Set a Deadline

The importance of deadlines cannot be stressed enough. Napoleon Hill, author of the book *Think and Grow Rich*, wrote, "A goal is a dream with a deadline." Greg Pogonowski, ACB, of Dubai Internet City Toastmasters, says, "Deadlines are always productive. Procrastination is the downfall of man—a bad decision is better than no decision."

We have all heard of the saying "Get on the right track." Pogonowski says, "If you get on the right track and stay put, the next train will still run you over. So I say: Get on the right track and move! If you move in the wrong direction, you can still switch tracks."

### Scheduling

Now it's time to schedule broken-down tasks into your daily routine. Set aside specific times and days of the week for these important tasks. Nothing worthwhile was ever created without persistent effort and discipline.

Bala Subramanian, CC, CL, of Karama Toastmasters in Dubai, was faced with a difficult situation when working on his master's degree. The frequency of his business travel soared to unprecedented levels. To schedule more time for his studies, Subramanian selected extended

in-flight routes, which allowed him additional time to study while flying.

### Tools

The following are three practical tools that can assist you in retaining an unwavering commitment to achieving your goals.


► **Focus:** We live in a world of distractions (cellphones, email, Facebook and Twitter). Saying no to distractions is essential to achieving your goals. Raman says, "When a free climber is up a steep flat rock face without safety gear, his only focus is on what he must do next: the next hold, the next step, the next leap. One step at a time, he conquers the mightiest mountain."

► **Vision Board:** Select a place, such as a wall or even a bathroom mirror, where you can post images or text to remind you of a holiday destination, a dream home or a car—whatever your dream may be. This will keep your senses engaged and keep you working toward achieving your goal.

► **Mark Your Victory:** Mark a "V" (denoting victory) on a calendar each time you complete a task scheduled for that day. Soon, marking your victories will become part of your daily routine.

### Monitor Your Progress

Every weekend, take stock of your progress and make changes to your schedule, if necessary. If you are behind schedule on a task, set a taller objective for the coming week to make up for lost time. This will ensure that progress is being made as intended. It also allows you to identify deviations and rectify them promptly. The key is to continually remind yourself of why you set out to achieve the goals you identified.

As Raman says, "Start somewhere—you'll learn along the way." 

**Cheryl Pinto**, a member of Karama Toastmasters in Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE), is assistant vice president of Abu Dhabi Commercial Bank. Follow her on Twitter @cherylpinto or visit [facebook.com/cherylpinto](https://facebook.com/cherylpinto).

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# THE '3P' APPROACH

How to gain new club members and maintain existing ones.

By Ryan Avery, ACB, CL

**F**ellow Toastmasters! Do you want to add more members to your club? Use the "3P" approach: prioritize, publicize and practice.

## Prioritize

When setting goals, think of the SMART acronym: Make your goals Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Timely. If your goal is to gain more members, frame it more specifically: "I want our club to have five new members by July 2013."

In my club, Portland Toastmasters in Portland, Oregon, we recently developed four goals that fit the SMART criteria:

- ▶ **Have more members than any other club in the district.** According to the Google Keyword tool, every month 500 people search online for Toastmasters in Portland. Since our club defaults to the number one spot when people type in "Portland Toastmasters," we should have more members than any club in the city—but we don't! This is because we have been doing the same thing with membership efforts for years ... until now.
- ▶ **Become a President's Distinguished Club.**
- ▶ **Have 80 percent of our members pay their dues before March 1.** Members requested alternative options to paying dues by cash or check, so now our club accepts online and credit card payments.
- ▶ **Fill club roles four weeks out.** Guests are more likely to come back if meetings are well-organized.

## Publicize

- ▶ **Online:** For an example of how to publicize goals online, visit **Portland Toastmasters.org** and click on "goals."
- ▶ **On-site:** Call a meeting with club officers and create three or four SMART goals for your club. Post them during every meeting.

If you don't put your goals in writing for others to see, you don't declare publicly what you are trying to accomplish. Those who record their goals gain internal accountability and often become more successful than they were the previous year.

## Practice, Practice, Practice!

Results are achieved through practice. If you lift five-pound weights every day at the gym, you won't get stronger—you need to practice by lifting progressively heavier weights. If you, or your club, have been doing the same thing for the past two or three years, it is time for a change. Albert Einstein said it best when he described insanity as doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results. Incorporate new things into your club and change it up a bit.

How you practice is how you play. Are you taking advantage of the technology that's available to you? Are you promoting your club on social media sites, which is free of charge? Are you visiting other clubs locally to see what they are doing and how they are run?

Here are two things you can do to gain and maintain club membership, and create a foundation that will keep members interested week after week:

- ▶ **Update your website.** Are you using the new Toastmasters branding on your website? Take advantage of the free branding resources Toastmasters provides ([www.toastmasters.org/brandportal](http://www.toastmasters.org/brandportal)). More than 500 people each month are looking to be part of Toastmasters in Portland alone. People want to know what Toastmasters is about. Give them a sample of what a meeting looks like. We updated our club's website with 12 new videos, including a welcome video in which we say "Come join us." Our newest member said, "I came to your club because I watched the videos and said to myself, Oh wow, these are real people like me! If they can do it, I can too."
- ▶ **Visit another club.** Each club has its own culture. By visiting another club you discover new ideas for keeping your members interested. You are also networking for yourself *and* for your district. The sum is greater than all the parts. Plan on visiting another club within the next two weeks.

You now know how the 3P approach will help your club gain and maintain membership. The method is working for my club—we're on target to meet our goals for the program year. Use this model to be more successful and productive in any area of your life. **T**

**Ryan Avery, ACB, CL**, a member of Portland Toastmasters in Portland, Oregon, won the 2012 Toastmasters World Championship of Public Speaking. Reach him at [AveryToday.com](http://AveryToday.com).



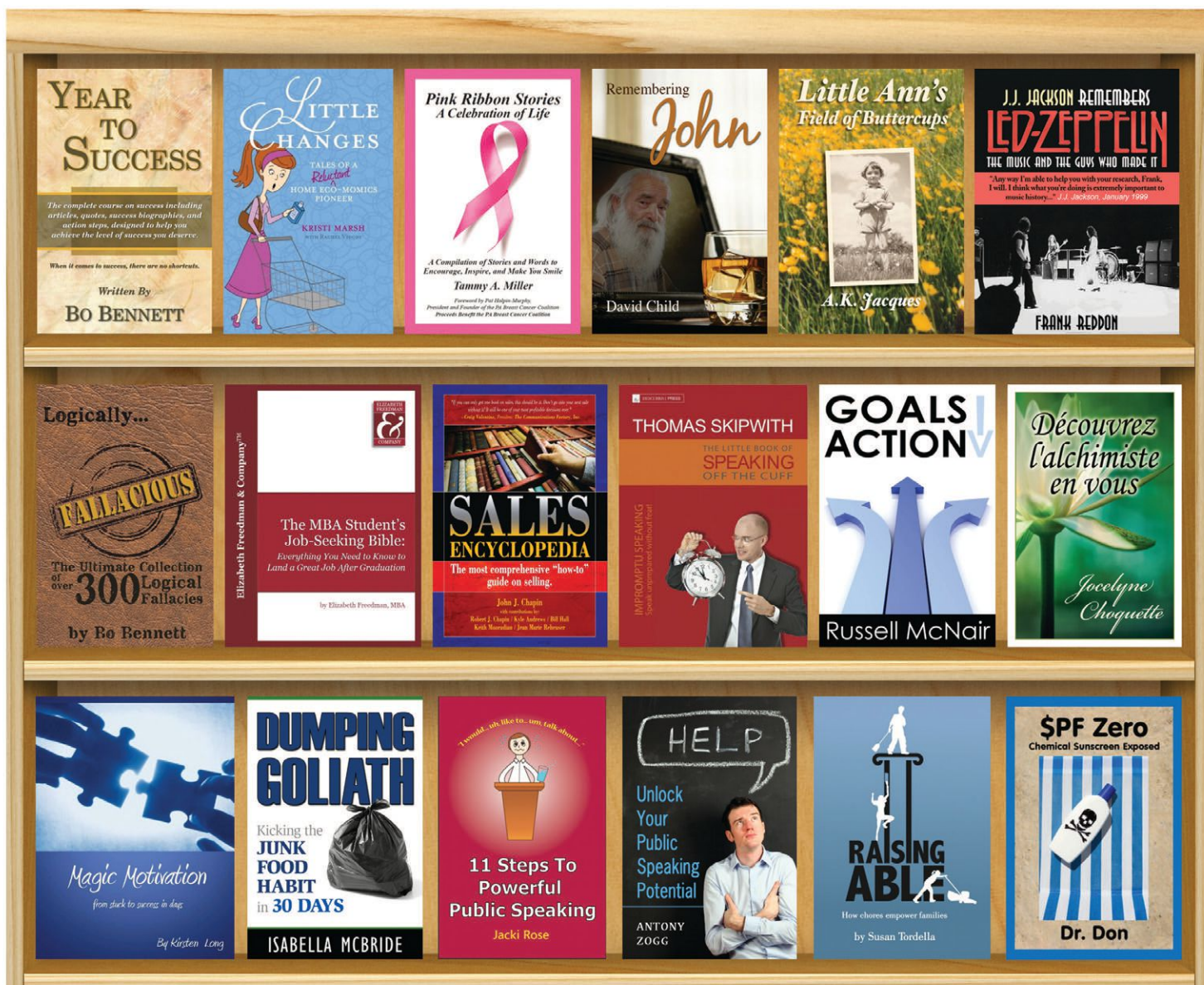
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# POSITIVE THINKING DEBUNKED

Focus on **realistic** thinking to motivate others and achieve goals in 2013.

By Judith C. Tingley, DTM

**A**re you staring 2013 with an upbeat outlook? Do you have a goal to become a better speaker, evaluator, listener or leader? If so, I have great advice for you: Think positively, and you will magically achieve all your dreams.

Wait a minute, you say. What's going on here? Yes, I'm putting

been mistakenly transposed into the conviction that positive thinking is the antidote to negative thinking and the pathway to success.

From the early days of *Think and Grow Rich* and *The Power of Positive Thinking*, to the 2006 best-seller *The Secret*, the following messages have been repeated:

## Back to the Basics

American author Napoleon Hill believed that desire and autosuggestion (the repetitive affirmation of goals) influenced the subconscious mind toward positive outcomes. He also knew that erasing negativity and focusing on the positive wasn't enough. His most famous work, *Think and Grow Rich*, included chapters on organization and planning, quick and definitive decision-making, persistence, determination and the power of mastermind groups (a support group for reinforcing growth and success). Hill's point about affirmations often is taken out of context, especially when considering these other important principles.

The power of positive thinking has lost its luster. Although there were whispered rumors previously, Barbara Ehrenreich's 2009 book, *Bright-Sided: How the Relentless Promotion of Positive Thinking Has Undermined America*, heralded the beginning of the end. She took on a gamut of positivity purveyors, and concluded it's all "inescapable pseudoscientific flabdoodle."

Even the father of positive psychology, Martin Seligman, Ph.D., backed away from his early theories about positive thinking. His 2012 book,

**"The faith we place in positive thinking is not merely naive but fails to capture the complexities of human motivation."**

—writer Annie Murphy Paul

you on because, of course, you know that positive thinking is not the solution to all challenges, even though its powers have been widely promoted for decades. Realistic, practical thinking is much more effective in motivating you and others to plan, take action, and achieve a successful outcome.

How did so many of us become influenced by the power of positive self-talk, to the point where many believe it is the right and only way to overcome problems? Slowly but surely, the psychological understanding that negative, self-critical thinking crushes confidence and obstructs success has

- ▶ Whatever the mind can conceive and believe, it can achieve.
- ▶ Affirm the positive, visualize the positive and expect the positive, and your life will change accordingly.
- ▶ We tend to become what we think about most of the time, so fill your mind with positive thoughts and affirmations.

For years, smart and experienced Toastmasters (as well as professional speakers) have given motivational speeches touting messages like the ones mentioned above. But we all know that success requires more than simply positive thinking.

## WHAT IS REALISTIC THINKING?

"I talk to myself inside all the time. That's how I know what I'm thinking. That's how I know how I'm feeling," commented a friend during a recent discussion. He's right. Our conscious mind has a voice. We can talk to ourselves negatively, positively or realistically.

Most of us are familiar with negative self-talk and have learned to dismiss it as unproductive, e.g., "I really messed up that speech. What an idiot. I'm so disorganized." Positive self-talk is just as unproductive because it's also inaccurate: "I wowed them with my speech. I know they were impressed. Way to go, Joe."

Realistic self-talk, also called neutral or instructional self-talk, is the basis of conscious problem-solving and action-planning. "My speech could have been better. Next time I'll work on it for a short time every day instead of the night before. That may lead to a smoother delivery."

The late Dr. O. Simonton, an oncologist who pioneered the idea of positive visualizations and thoughts for cancer patients, ultimately changed his view. Judith Acosta, a social worker and psychotherapist, wrote in *The Huffington Post* about how Simonton began to advocate realistic thinking in later years. She commented, "When a person could believably say to him or herself that everything was being done to help and they were doing everything they could to be better and healthier every day, they seemed to cross a threshold—from the fanciful, into the possible, which is where real hope exists."

Realistic thinking is also where real action and results are produced. Pennsylvania psychologist Tamar E. Chansky, Ph.D., said also in a *Huffington Post* article, "Thinking real or true thoughts (whether joyous or sorrowful) is good for you. Tampering with the truth in our thinking in any direction—whether making it either more positive or more negative—is not. Bottom line: We shouldn't try to say anything to ourselves that would require us to cross our fingers behind our back."

*Flourish: A Visionary New Understanding of Happiness and Well-being*, acknowledges the oversimplification of his original thesis that positive thinking answered all concerns and solved issues. Annie Murphy Paul, a journalist for *Psychology Today*, comments in her Brilliant Blog webpage, "The faith we place in positive thinking is not merely naive but fails to capture the complexities of human motivation."

That leaves us all asking the same question Ehrenreich poses at the end of her book: "If not positive, what are

we to be?" I'm suggesting the same answer Ehrenreich provides: We can be realistic thinkers.

As speakers and leaders, we all have desires and dreams, but we need specific goals, an organized action plan, timely decision-making and persistence. I'm suggesting Toastmasters go back to the basics of persuasion and motivation. Focus on realistic thinking, rather than positive thinking. For example, consider giving a motivational speech to your club about members taking responsibility for

bringing in one new member during 2013. A realistic presentation about effort, persistence and action would work more effectively than leading a group affirmation such as, "Yes, we can. We're the best Toastmasters club in our area. Bring 'em on in."

### ► As with any motivational speech, start with enthusiasm.

Catch people's attention quickly, and make a clear proposal based on realistic thinking. For example:

"New members recharge a Toastmasters club. They bring novel ideas and styles, new knowledge and skills, fresh energy and fun. We have a good club right now, and we can have a better club with more members. I'm proposing that each of us think of one person who we will bring in as a guest and later as a member in the first six months of 2013. I'd like you to write that person's name on a piece of paper, with the date you'll invite him or her to our meeting, and give that piece of paper to the membership chair, Sheila, right now."

With a spot of exaggeration, here's what an opening based on positive thinking might sound like: "We all agree. We have the best Toastmasters club in the world right here in Happyland, Planet Earth. I'm proposing that we start spending money on ads in newspapers and magazines inviting everyone to join our outstanding, special club."

### ► Mention potential obstacles and possible member concerns that you anticipate. Humor can be a big help here.

"I can hear your inner thinking way up here from the lectern. 'No, no. Don't make me. I like the club the way it is.' We can solve some of your concerns with the help of our membership chair. Sheila will help us become confident with bringing in guests by using some role playing. The good news is you don't have to do anything until after the next



meeting, except write down one name and one date to bring a guest.”

► **Show the advantages of your proposal.** This is the time to tell your fellow Toastmasters what’s in it for them by growing the membership. As always, a light-hearted touch helps.

“The more members we have, the fewer speeches you’ll have to give if you’re still a turtle in the race to become a Competent Communicator. New members will move us out of some of our comfortable ruts because they’ll see and hear, talk and listen, with fresh eyes and ears. We’ll acquire knowledge of their unusual lives, travels and interests. We’ll become more flexible and even smarter as we adapt to people with new thinking. Plus, we’ll have more dues and more money so we can have more parties.”

► **Conclude with an enthusiastic summary.** “The membership chair

and I have gathered information from other clubs. They’ve had success with the approach we’re suggesting. Even without a plan, Bev brought in two new members in 2012, and I think we all agree Sam and Griselle have created new energy and ideas in our club. Write down just one name, but no one would object if you brought more guests! We’ll get started on a recharge for our club in 2013. As a proud member and president of XYZ Toastmasters, I feel upbeat about each of our 12 members bringing in one new member in the next six months. I hope all of you will share the effort and enthusiasm and the resulting proud feelings and fun.”

As you can see, positive thinking doesn’t have to disappear from motivational and persuasive speaking. It can be reflected in enthusiasm, determination and an action plan. It

can be demonstrated through some of your own positive experiences. Positive thinking is an additive to realistic thinking, but not a substitute when problems need to be solved, goals achieved or dreams acquired. Positive thinking and feeling are good experiences to have, but on their own, without effort and action, they won’t bring in new members, help you win the International Speech Contest or help you become the CEO of your company. Let’s get back to basics. **T**

**Judith C. Tingley, DTM**, is a member of U Speak Easy Toastmasters on Bainbridge Island, Washington. She is a psychologist, author and freelance writer. She was the keynote speaker at the District 32 First Conference last year. Visit her blog at [intelligentwomenonly.com](http://intelligentwomenonly.com).

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# A DIFFERENT PATH TO A NEW YOU

Lessons from an ostrich and other thoughts on goal-setting.

By Ernest R. Stair

**I**t's that time again. The new year. Time to mark the beginning of another rotation of the earth around the sun by blowing the dust off your "goals" file. Time to make the usual additions, deletions and revisions to your annual narrative of good intentions. If you are like most people, you have been around this same track before, many times, and with the same results. The ardor that first warmed your mind and heart as you charted the new horizons in your life cooled considerably after a few months, if not sooner.

Before composing yet another set of goals and guidelines for a new year, take time to go off somewhere and think. Where can you go to sort

through these perplexities that plague you every time you hang up a new wall calendar? You might try visiting the popular horse-racing venue known as Ellis Park, on a little sliver of land in Henderson, Kentucky. There you stand a chance of discovering things about yourself that will, once and for all, breathe new life into the idea of setting goals.

Sitting in the grandstand at Ellis Park and watching horses race can be exhilarating. There is something about horses racing around a track that mirrors the drama of life. The starting gate, the home stretch, the finish line, the winner's circle—don't these all represent places in anyone's life story? As you pull away from the

starting gate of another year, reflect on the way you are traveling the course of your life. You'll find yourself *resolved* to making things better this time around.

Watching the horses run is invigorating because it awakens a sense that life itself is meant to move like that—forward, from a starting point, toward a goal. But at Ellis Park, after the horses run, a stunning change of pace takes place at the track. It's time for the *ostriches* to make *their* run! This gives the horses a rest while the jockeys have fun in a wild, crazy race, and fans enjoy fits of laughter. It's a 1/16-mile run, but what it lacks in length, it makes up in a zany, unpredictable contest. Such chaos is similar

to life itself. It may be that everything you need to know about setting goals can be learned from these ostriches.

### The Case of Ben Franklin

What is your method for goal-setting? When selecting your goals, how high are your expectations? Consider the soaring aims of Benjamin Franklin, the famous inventor and one of the Founding Fathers of the United States. Franklin wrote in his autobiography that he conceived “the bold and arduous project of arriving at moral perfection. I wish’d to live without committing any fault at any time.”

**It may be that everything you need to know about setting goals can be learned from these ostriches.**

With goals like that, he had better have a system! Did he ever.

First, Franklin targeted 13 virtues to achieve, including temperance, frugality, sincerity and humility. Next, he created a report-card system for himself by making one page for each virtue he wished to achieve. He divided each page into rows and columns, enabling him to record a mark whenever he caught himself in any moral failings. Serious about his quest, Franklin wanted to control every aspect that he could. One has to wonder when he had time for all this! After all, he did have other interests he pursued on the side: He was a printer, essayist, editor and publisher, researcher and diplomat, and a creator of a university, a post office, bifocals and the lightning rod—to name a few. Needless to say, he took goal-setting to the limits.

At the risk of seeming irreverent, it is tempting to suggest that Franklin could learn something from the ostriches at Ellis Park. When they run, anything can happen. It’s not certain

where they will end up or how they will get there—their races are more entertainment than sport. So what do chaos, pandemonium and craziness mean for the business of selecting goals? These may be just the ingredients needed to transform the *serious business* of goal-setting into something pleasurable and surprising.

Have a tolerance for loose ends. Let yourself have some flexibility and enjoyment, as well as a sense of humor. If your goal is to be more patient with others, you might write: *I’ll try not to roll my eyes every time I disapprove of something!* If your

goal is to be more attentive to others, you might say: *When I am in conversation with others, my phone will be neither seen nor heard!* Loosen up! Have fun with your goals.

### Shortening the Track

A poll of people who set beginning-of-the-year goals would probably show that many lose steam not long after they leave the starting gate. Consequently, they give up on their goals prematurely, maybe with the idea of trying again next year. But consider this thought: A year may be too long to stay on course. The beginning of a new year is a wonderful time to set goals, but why not shorten the time that you keep them in effect? The calendar already provides a finish line just waiting to be called into service: *April Fools’ Day!*

Arriving just three months after the beginning of the year, April 1 is a perfect time to sit down and appraise your progress in meeting goals that are still fresh in your mind. And if you have trouble taking pride in that progress,

well, what better time is there than April Fools’ Day for giving yourself a scolding and having a good laugh?

With your imagination, you may conjure up other goal-examining times to sprinkle across the pages of your calendar.

### Starting Over

In their panic at the finish line at Ellis Park, the ostriches shoot back in the opposite direction, toward the starting gates. Their antics spark laughter, but that doesn’t prevent them from teaching you something. While the horses stir you to sense life’s forward movement, from start to finish, the ostriches remind you that life does not always move that way. Reverses are not at all uncommon. Instead of always moving forward, onward and upward, you are required by your experiences to sometimes go in another direction altogether, perhaps even back to one of your many starting points.

Starting over is not a sign of weakness. Starting over takes determination of an exceptional kind. Nowhere is your character more magnificent than when you are back at a starting point, writing new goals for your life.

In the story *The Red Pony*, by the late American writer John Steinbeck, it is the second of February when young Jody wakes up crying in the night. His mother calls to him, “Jody, you’re dreaming. Wake up and start over again.”

Like everything in the course of life, even your dreams can start over. **T**

**Ernest R. Stair** is a minister in the United Methodist Church who has a lifelong love for writing. He graduated from Yale University’s Divinity School.





# MAKING THE GRADE

Students and teachers hone skills and prepare for job market in college clubs.

By Ruth Nasrullah, CC, CL

**T**extbooks, laptop and a syllabus—these are essentials on the college checklist. Polished communication skills? Not usually on the list. But for students preparing for job interviews, and professors hoping to maximize presentation skills, Toastmasters offers an extracurricular program for

## **“Master” the Art of Speaking**

Eboni Barnes is president of a club at Texas Southern University, in Houston, Texas. The TSU-MPA Toastmasters, chartered in February 2012, is aimed at students in the university’s master’s program in public administration (MPA). Barnes credits Toastmasters with helping her complete her MPA degree with a higher level of confidence

Michael Adams, director of the school’s MPA program and the club’s advisor, finds the Toastmasters program, especially the leadership component, to be “career-building.”

“It’s an excellent experience because it has team-building aspects such as mentoring and bringing in new members,” he says. “We’re building students’ skills so they can go out and succeed in their public service careers.”

The TSU-MPA Toastmasters started with 30 members, but membership continues to grow. Adams says students and faculty across the campus have been asking about the Toastmasters program. He recommends it for students pursuing any career path.

Barnes agrees that the opportunity to practice leadership in Toastmasters is key to career development. “You’re able to practice time management, how to organize teams, how to delegate responsibilities. Those are skills you need as a manager, and as you go forward in your career,” she says.

## **Communicating Technical Information**

Jeremy Goh is vice president public relations of the Ngee Ann Polytechnic Student Toastmasters in Singapore.

**“The skills I have learned through Toastmasters are very applicable to what I’m going to be doing as a school administrator. You have to have a vision, and communicate that to the people who follow you.” — Brian Corey**

speaking and leadership success at all levels of the college experience.

Toastmasters has about 400 clubs located on colleges and universities around the world, from the Chinese University of Hong Kong to Dubai Men’s College in Dubai to McGill University in Montreal. Across academic fields, students and professors say Toastmasters has boosted their classroom performance, made them more confident in leadership roles, provided support and camaraderie, and helped prepare them for post-graduate professional endeavors.

and skill, and she knows her fellow students in the club have benefited as well.

That was made clear in a seminar-type class required of MPA students. “We have to do most of our assignments as presentations, so at that stage we should be able to speak eloquently and master the art of public speaking,” says Barnes. “This year [2012] I know the professors felt there was a difference in how the students presented.”

Barnes’ own improvement came rapidly. Shortly after joining Toastmasters, she won first place at the area level of the International Speech Contest.





Officers of the Texas Southern University-MPA Toastmasters club, including president Eboni Barnes (pictured in bottom row on left).

Ngee Ann Polytechnic offers degrees in technical areas such as economics and engineering. Goh, who is studying information technology sales and marketing, has found in Toastmasters a tool for making even the driest information exciting.

“Being in Toastmasters allows me to engage and bring out the spark, enthusiasm and inner spirit of every member in the audience,” he says, even when presenting “content-heavy details that are full of graphs, information and facts.”

Club adviser Elizabeth Thorarajoo, CTM, says the value of collaborative learning is shown through the feedback that students give each other in speech evaluations. Such evaluations, she says, “motivate students to overcome the fear of public speaking and learn as a group.”

“Being in Toastmasters has given me a wholesome experience on how to become a better communicator and at the same time built up my confidence,” says club president Amanda Lim. “It has presented an opportunity to lead as well as to build and foster friendships.”

### Trumpeting Success

Elisa Koehler, a college music professor and an orchestra conductor, says Toastmasters has helped her with communicating about music. As a music

director and conductor of the Frederick Symphony Orchestra in Frederick, Maryland, Koehler speaks to audiences before the concerts begin. She gives a half-hour talk highlighting the history of the piece the orchestra is performing.

When Koehler was invited several years ago to give a lecture at a prestigious music school about the history of trumpets and older instruments, a colleague recommended she join Toastmasters. She became a member of the Kritikos Toastmasters club in Odenton, Maryland, achieved a CTM and served as a club officer.

“I enjoyed my Toastmasters experience, and it really helped me in my career, especially with pre-concert lectures for my orchestra,” she says.

An associate music professor at Goucher College in Baltimore, Maryland, Koehler is currently a member of the college’s Strategic Planning Group and credits Toastmasters with making her feel comfortable in the meeting environment. “It helped me with meeting structure,” she says, “and thinking and speaking on my feet.”

### Success in Speaking—and Literature, Too

Dawlat Yassin, a native of Lebanon and mother of three, is a soft-spoken woman who is pursuing a doctorate in English literature at the University of Houston.

Although her background in English literature has afforded her excellent skills in written language, as a non-native speaker of English she has long been hesitant about her speaking abilities. She found a cure in Table Topics.

“Table Topics really helps me think in English,” she says, “and keep calm while speaking on my feet.”

She found her voice as a member of the prospective club Light of Islam Toastmasters, in Webster, Texas. Yassin took advantage of the club setting to practice a presentation she was to give at an academic conference, and found the feedback invaluable. Her academic presentations improved markedly, she says. “Before Toastmasters I always ended up just reading my [academic] papers. After Toastmasters, instead of just highlighting notes, I really could summarize and not just read.”

### A Champion Student

In 2008, Brian Corey, ACB, joined the Greenville Toastmasters, which meets at Pitt Community College in Greenville, North Carolina. Four years later, he was a finalist in Toastmasters’ 2012 World Championship of Public Speaking.

Competing in the championship was an experience unlike any other, he says. “Being in front of that audience was life-changing—to have that many people listen to what you have to say.” Corey adds that speech evaluations he received in his club—and other clubs he visited—helped him prepare for the international contest.

His Toastmasters journey started when he took a communications class as a college senior. “I went to my professor to find out if there was any way I could continue my development with communications, and he recommended Toastmasters,” Corey recalls. After joining the Greenville Toastmasters, he realized he had an opportunity to maximize his speaking skills. The leadership track would also prove invaluable to his scholastic and professional life.



"I can honestly say that the skills that I have learned through Toastmasters are very applicable to what I'm going to be doing as a school administrator," says Corey, currently a graduate student at East Carolina University in Greenville. "You have to have a vision, and communicate that to the people who follow you."

He applied those skills in the summer of 2010, when he conducted a workshop to help teachers reach students who have low performance records or social challenges. He received great feedback, and credits that success to his Toastmasters experience. "Being able to stand up in front of a group and articulate your message or idea—anything—is so valuable," he says.

Corey has also relied on his Toastmasters training as he works toward his master's degree, which he's on track to earn in May. He says his classmates joke with him about his speaking abilities.

"When there's a presentation to be made, they say, 'You do it. You're a Toastmaster.'"

**Ruth Nasrullah, CC, CL**, a member of the Boeing Toastmasters club in Houston, Texas, is a freelance writer and blogger.



## SPOTLIGHT ON GEORGETOWN ANNIVERSARY

Georgetown Toastmasters, the campus club at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., is receiving positive attention. The campus newspaper recently spotlighted the club, which celebrated its 10th anniversary in October. Georgetown Toastmasters is open to university students, faculty and staff, and people who live or work in the area.

Jennifer Blanck, DTM, is the founder of the club. She is the assistant dean of career and alumni services at the university's Georgetown Public Policy Institute. Blanck says Georgetown Toastmasters has thrived because of its diverse membership and stimulating learning environment, among other things.

"The Toastmasters program is a natural fit in a university environment," she says, "and Georgetown Toastmasters is thrilled to celebrate its 10th anniversary."

— Editorial Staff

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# FIVE STEPS TO A SUCCESSFUL INTERVIEW

How speaking with power can land you a job.

By Leo Novsky, ACS, ALB

**L**arisa's eyes filled with tears of frustration as she sat at the kitchen table. This senior project manager, unemployed for six months after working for the same company for more than 20 years, was holding her fifth employment rejection letter. After a series of interviews for positions that fit her qualifications, Larisa suspected her interview skills were letting her down.

She saw the need to speak with a more powerful voice and wondered what she could do differently to convince interviewers that she was the right person for the job. Larisa's struggles are not unique. What is unique is that she is my mother.

Speaking with power makes a huge difference during a speaking engagement, and no speaking opportunity carries higher stakes than a job interview. The following five-step process offers strategies for speaking with power. I have used it to successfully train job seekers—including my mother!

To speak with power you must first tell a *story*, one that has a *purpose*. To share *knowledge*, you must also *engage an audience*. *Story, purpose, engagement, audience and knowledge*—**SPEAK**, for short. By keeping these five points in mind, you will create a better connection with your audience, allowing you to get your point across more effectively.

**1 Share a story rather than statistics.** During interviews, too many people—including my mother—try to convince the interviewer of their superior knowledge instead of focusing on ways to engage the interviewer's heart and mind. In her first five interviews, my mother proudly presented facts and statistics demonstrating her previous successes, but her interviewers failed to connect with the information she gave.

A more powerful approach is to tell an engaging story to illustrate your expertise. To get that job offer, you need to gain your interviewer's empathy.



The author, Leo Novsky,  
and his mother, Larisa.



Interview stories should describe your key professional challenges, and demonstrate how you overcame these challenges. In one to two minutes, convey your story in a way that is vivid, concrete and suspenseful.

**2 Have a purpose.** No story is ever complete without a purpose. The purpose of an interview story is to demonstrate to your interviewer that *you* have the ability to solve company problems better than anyone else. Stating your purpose outright can sound arrogant, but failing to demonstrate why you are the best job candidate will make you appear uncertain. Sharing your purpose through a story helps the interviewer visualize how you will fit in at the company. My mother's job experience would have been seen as more relevant if she had done this.

**3 Engage Your Interviewer.** Think of Martin Luther King Jr.'s famous "I Have a Dream" speech. Visualize the 200,000 civil rights supporters gathered in front of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C. as King engaged the audience with his impassioned words. Next, imagine the same words spoken with an arrogant tone of voice—"I have a dream"—or in a more timid tone. How effective would this same message have been?

Think about the tone issue as you prepare for a job interview. *How* you tell your story is essential to engaging your interviewer. Like many before her, my mother was nervous in this situation, even though she is a true professional. She tended to shift in her seat, which made her seem unsure of herself. During an interview, remember that eye contact, vocal variety, body language and props (your resume, portfolio or presentation) are your tools of engagement. Use them effectively, and your interviewers will want to give *you* the job.

## 4 Know Your Audience.

Remember, you are not the only one in the room who has an important goal—your interviewer does, too. His or her goal to find the best person—one who will solve problems, earn the company money and make the interviewer look good. That is why it's essential to understand the needs of your audience.

When my mother interviewed at Chase Bank, she was quick to point out her expertise but did not seem to have a strong understanding of the bank's structure or culture. As you prepare for an interview, learn the company's vision, mission, objectives and culture. When you find areas where the objectives of your audience match your own, tailor your message so that this synergy becomes evident.

**5 Use Your Knowledge Effectively.** Imagine the purpose of your story as a race car, the act of engaging your audience as the gas pedal and your knowledge as the driver. Your knowledge, after all, is what the interviewer seeks. My mother, like most people, presented her knowledge in its unadulterated form, hoping the interviewer would magically translate her previous job experience into actions that would fulfill the duties of the current position.

But therein lies the curse of knowledge—the human tendency to speak in abstract on subjects we are familiar with, while the uninitiated audience is hungering for a story to use as a framework. Sharing knowledge without telling a story is why so many crash and burn at an interview. If, on the other hand, your knowledge is conveyed with purpose and fueled by the engagement of your audience, you will rally the heart and mind of your interviewer.

## Practice Pays Off

Practice is also key to the interview process. My mother joined Toastmasters. She learned the power of the five-step SPEAK process. She prepared five short stories about her job experience, and she later used three of these to answer questions about teamwork, overcoming challenges and creating innovation. Her *purpose* was to demonstrate she is a team player—one who loves solving complex challenges.

She *engaged* her audience through eye contact, vocal variety and body language, and surprised her interviewers by displaying three testimonials from former colleagues praising her skills and professionalism. She even went to LinkedIn to interview a current employee at the company she was interviewing with about the challenges of the job she was applying for. This helped my mother gain an understanding of her audience, and gave her confidence and a powerful platform on which to share her knowledge.

She now has a job that is more rewarding than the one she previously had—and it pays more.

Now it is your turn. SPEAK with power by telling stories with purpose that engage your audience, so you can share your knowledge—and *get* that job! **T**

**Leo Novsky, ACS, ALB**, a member of Redmond 2828 Toastmasters in Redmond, Washington, is a professional speech coach and entrepreneur.



# ZAPPOS CEO SHARES PATH TO SUCCESS

Online retail innovator leads with core values.

By Dave Zielinski

**T**ony Hsieh believes that the meteoric success of Zappos, the billion-dollar-a-year online shoe retailer he founded, can be traced largely to one factor: working diligently to get the workplace culture right. Build the right culture,

Among Zappos' 10 core values are tenets such as "create fun and a little weirdness," "build open and honest relationships with communication" and "deliver WOW through customer service." What separates the company from others

The CEO's anxiety was so acute that he wrote out his entire speech beforehand and spent a month memorizing and rehearsing it.

Over time his presentation skills gradually improved, but Hsieh was still uncomfortable with the speaking process. Then one day he had a realization—no one in the audience knew what he wrote in his scripts, and no one would know if he skipped a sentence or paragraph. As a result, he scrapped the memorization and started relying on telling personal stories—many about the Zappos culture and the company's zeal for customer service.

He soon found his audiences more engaged than in previous presentations and noticed that his time on stage zipped by. Today, Hsieh says his speeches are usually well received if he sticks to a three-point formula: Be passionate, tell personal stories and be real.

As Zappos received more speaking requests, it started to send people from other departments out to speak at events as well. Most are encouraged to tell their own stories and offer personal perspectives about the culture and company. To this day, Hsieh says, Zappos doesn't have a standard PowerPoint presentation that all employees are expected to give.

If you know your material really well, and are passionate about it, then you can just approach it the same way you would tell a story to a group of friends at a bar.

Hsieh says, and other key factors—developing a great brand, having passionate employees or delivering great customer service—will fall into place. Anyone who's been on the receiving end of Zappos' policies, such as its 365-day shoe-return policy or free "surprise" overnight shipping, would likely attest to Hsieh's belief.

As the CEO of Zappos, which was acquired by Amazon.com in 2009, Hsieh has become an evangelist for building strong workplace cultures, a mission detailed in his best-selling book, *Delivering Happiness*, and carried out through the consulting arm that Zappos created to help other organizations build healthy and happy cultures.

that simply mouth such platitudes is its commitment to hiring—and when necessary, firing—people based on those values. For example, Zappos conducts two sets of hiring interviews with job candidates. In the first, a hiring manager assesses for relevant skill or experience. In the second, a human resource manager seeks to determine if the candidate is a good cultural fit. Applicants have to pass both tests to be hired.

Hsieh was far from a natural speaker when he first began receiving requests to speak at industry events as Zappos' success grew. (In addition to shoes, the company sells clothes, bags and other products.) In his book, Hsieh recalls being a "nervous wreck" before a big speech to footwear vendors in 2005.



Zappos founder and CEO Tony Hsieh is a passionate advocate of building strong workplace cultures.

**Q:** What is the key to creating and sustaining the kind of strong corporate culture you built at Zappos?

**A:** Figure out your own personal values (which is harder than it sounds), make those your corporate values and be uncompromising in implementing them.

**Which leadership traits have been most essential to the success of Zappos?**

I think it's less about leadership and more about "followership." Ask yourself this: Who in your organization would choose to follow you if you didn't have your title or your position? Who might follow you if only out of curiosity?

**Why turn down speaking opportunities for topics you know well just because you're not passionate about them?**

If you're going to give a talk or do anything in life, you might as well do something you're passionate about. For talks specifically, the passion will be infectious and rub off on your audience, and you'll be able to tell your stories better. Having the discipline to say "no" to speech topics or to change the topic isn't usually that hard.

**How has your speech preparation changed from when you first began speaking for Zappos?**

I like walking the stage now beforehand, so when I am finally onstage to give a talk it's not a new setup. But other than that, I generally don't do any preparation.

**Why did you decide to start using personal stories in your speeches?**

People love hearing stories. It's built into our DNA. I think in the new Steve Jobs book [*Steve Jobs* by Walter Isaacson] they recommend starting off a speech with "Let me tell you a story."

**In your book you talk about the value of "just winging" speeches. But in leaning heavily on personal stories, aren't you really just relying on content you've used and fine-tuned before?**


Over time a lot of [your speech] can be things that you've said before so you have a better timing for certain jokes. But I've found that if you know your material really well, and are passionate about it, then you can just approach it the same way

you would tell a story to a group of friends at a bar. There are certain elements that are repetitive, but at the same time, because you are so passionate about it, it still comes across as authentic.

**You've described yourself as shy. Are there any techniques you've used to become more comfortable with the "goldfish" nature of public speaking?**

I've learned that being shy in general has nothing to do with whether or not you're good onstage. The two are completely different skill sets that don't correlate with each other. A lot of comedians I know, for example, are outrageous on stage but [they are] actually really shy in person. It's always interesting to see the contrast.

**What is the most challenging public speaking situation you've encountered?**

Speaking [through an interpreter] to a foreign-language-speaking audience. The speech takes twice as long, the laughs are delayed and a lot gets lost in translation. 

**Dave Zielinski** is a freelance writer and frequent contributor to the *Toastmaster*.

# BON APPÉTIT!

Eat, drink and be confused.

By John Cadley

**L**ast year I made a New Year's resolution to get more exercise, and I did—sort of. Instead of using the drive-thru at McDonald's, I parked and actually *walked* in to get my Big Mac. Not exactly hiking the Appalachian Trail but hey, it's a start. This year I've resolved to eat better, which has led me to reading food labels. I've learned a lot—like not to read food labels. At the least, you'll be confused; at the most, you'll be thinking, *This stuff could kill me.*

If I were allergic to tuna fish, I don't imagine I'd buy a can labeled "tuna fish."

For instance, whole grains are good for you, right? All you hear is "eat whole wheat bread." So what if it tastes like cardboard. *It's good for you!* But then I read all these food labels that trumpet "Gluten-Free!" Where do you find gluten? In wheat! Apparently, if you have sensitivity to gluten, it can cause anything from gas to schizophrenia. I've developed a facial tic lately but I thought that was because my teenage son is dating a girl with a ring through her nose. Maybe it's gluten. If it is, I'll have to switch to foods like amaranth, arrowroot, millet, Montina, lupin, quinoa, taro, teff, chia seed and yam. That's not eating. That's foraging.

Then there's all this business of "partially hydrogenated oil." Why partially? Because if it were fully hydrogenated, you'd be eating a lump of fat. You see it on everything. It's a cheap butter substitute that food

producers use to add flavor and texture. They steam it to get rid of the odor, because if they didn't, it would smell like rancid butter, only worse. It also contains trans fats that can kill you. So there you go. Grab just about anything from your food cabinet and get your minimum daily requirement of rancid poison.

And everything is "fat-free," even though I distinctly remember from my high school biology class that our bodies need essential fatty acids.

Without them we'd die. That's pretty essential. But you have to get them in the right form. I have no idea what that is, but apparently they're not in saturated fats, polyunsaturated fats and monounsaturated fats, which is what we get in our food. This stuff—the aforementioned fats—is liquid at room temperature and solid when it gets cold. For example, avocados have monounsaturated fats, so don't try to eat your guacamole dip outside in winter or you'll break a tooth.

What *is* good for you? Fish! I read my tuna can, which proudly proclaims "No HVP." Great! (What's HVP?) Under "Allergens" it says "contains fish—tuna." Well, yes ... it's a can of tuna fish. If I were allergic to tuna fish, I don't imagine I'd buy a can labeled "tuna fish."

What else? Beans! They come from the legume family, which also includes lentils, those tiny pods that taste like

lima beans with an attitude. So they must be good for you! Let's see, what have I got here in my food cabinet ... Ah, a can of refried beans! I thought beans were supposed to be baked. And if they're refried, where were they fried the first time? I think when the can says "refried beans" it really means you're eating someone else's leftovers. This particular can also says "spicy fat-free." In other words, it won't kill you, but it will give you debilitating heartburn.

This is why supplements are so popular. They supply the nutrients we're not getting in our processed foods. Recently, I went out and bought some whey protein powder, which I can put into a blender with milk and fruit for a delicious, nutritious protein shake. Then I read the label. I was feeling pretty good reading all the healthy stuff I'd be ingesting—until I got to the part that said: *Warning—Keep out of the reach of children. If you are pregnant, nursing, taking any medications or have any medical condition, consult your doctor before use.* Excuse me? If my kids can't eat this stuff, why should I, especially when I have to consult my doctor first? That's like saying: *This stuff could be very good for you OR very bad for you. Take your chances and best of luck.*

Well, that's it for this column. Time for lunch. Only for some reason I seem to have lost my appetite. **T**

**John Cadley**, a former advertising copywriter, is a freelance writer and musician living in Fayetteville, New York.



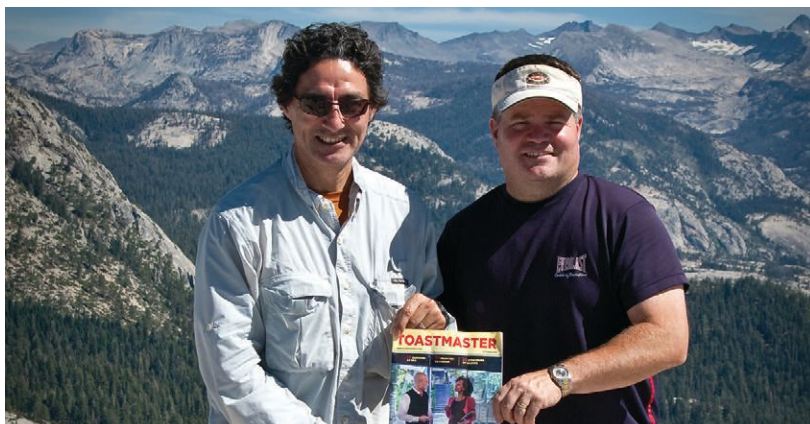
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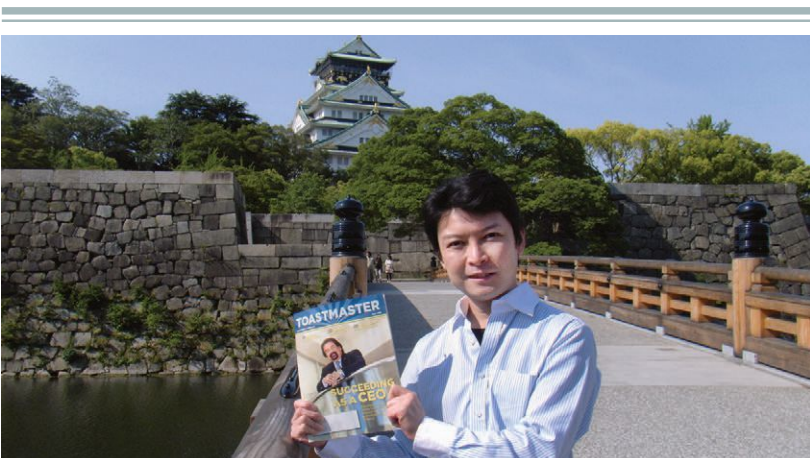
**Shaun McCrea** from Eugene, Oregon, smiles in front of Ha Long Bay in Vietnam after a morning rainstorm.



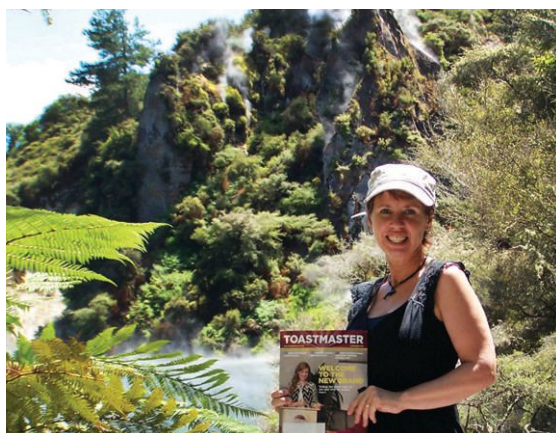
**Alberto Rivas-Plata** (left) from Claremont, California, and **Mark Valentine** from Arcadia, California, pose in front of Yosemite Valley, California.



**Barbara Jordan** from The Woodlands, Texas, tours the ancient Greek city of Ephesus, now in Turkey.



**Takuto Kawasaki** from Tennoji-ku, Japan, stands in front of Osaka Castle in Osaka, Japan.



**Karen Ruhl** from Annandale, New South Wales, Australia, takes in the splendor of the Waimangu Volcanic Valley in New Zealand.



**Jeffrey Blutstein** from Ridgefield, Connecticut, smiles outside the Parliament Building in Budapest, Hungary.



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