

THE MAGAZINE FOR COMMUNICATORS & LEADERS | MARCH 2014

TOASTMASTER®

Advances in

Technology

Choosing the best tools for the stage.

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Reach New Speaking
Heights with
12 Cool Apps

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A Special Type of Club



During last year's second-season conference, I had the privilege of visiting five districts (D2, D21, D23, D32 and D34) in three countries (the United States, Canada and Mexico) in 32 days. Although I have been a Toastmaster for 24 years, this was still an intensive education in the "unity in diversity" of our global organization.

During my travels, I visited a unique club: the Inspirational Toastmasters at Monroe Correctional Complex, a prison outside Seattle, Washington. The club has been President's

Distinguished for several years in a row.

Time has always been said to be Toastmasters' biggest competitor—people are so busy in their daily lives. In the Inspirational club, one thing that members have plenty of is time. The club president has been in prison since U.S. President Jimmy Carter was in office (1977-1981). The club meets

Giving speeches is a great way for the inmates to reflect deeply on their lives.

every Friday night for two hours, and the meetings are the focal point of the members' week. They take every opportunity to participate. Giving speeches is a great way for the inmates to reflect deeply on their lives.

One man in his 20s gave an inspirational speech about the "power to change" titled "This Is Not the End." A 36-year-old who grew up in abject poverty without running water, electricity or toilets gave a speech on "Taking Responsibility." Since he became a father a few years ago, the man said, he decided he couldn't spend the rest of his life blaming society for his problems. The club president is a strong advocate of sentencing reform for prisoners. "Toastmasters has enabled me to get up and speak for guys who are not able to speak for themselves," he said.

In such an environment one can easily witness how the Toastmasters program encourages members to gain self-awareness through reflection, which provides the basis for personal growth and change. It is another example of how Toastmasters helps to change lives, one at a time. **T**

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International President

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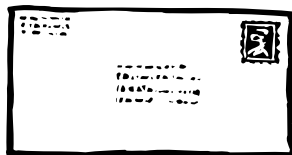
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Beyond the Club

I joined Toastmasters in April 2013 with a goal to complete my CC by year-end. The amazing opportunities afforded to me throughout the year allowed me to complete my CC, and my CL, by mid-November.

How did I succeed in meeting my goal and more? By going beyond my club. The primary reason I ventured outside my company-based club was to find another club—or two—to join after I retired at the end of the year. What I received were tiny but mighty treasures.

I met exciting people, listened to excellent speeches, and learned unique tips and ideas to incorporate into my projects. Best of all, I tested a few speeches of my own and received evaluations from seasoned Toastmasters who I could tell loved giving them.

Make it a priority to go beyond your club at least once a month. Treasures are awaiting you.

MARY ELLEN RESER, CC, CL
Polaris Toastmasters
Columbus, Ohio

Seeing Eye-to-Eye

I learned a lot from Ruth Nasrullah's article "The Eyes Have It" (December) about the importance of making eye contact with the audience. Now whenever I give a speech, I repeatedly make eye contact with audience members to ensure I connect with everyone and show my appreciation for their attendance.

No matter how many advances are made with technology, I believe the effective use of eye contact is one of the most important skills for a public speaker.

BRUCE YANG, DTM
Taichung Toastmasters Club
Taichung City, Taichung, Taiwan

Celebrating a Mentor

Gilly Cutts ("Meet My Mentor," November) is a shining example of an inspiring mentor. I am one of many lucky Toastmasters to be positively impacted by Gilly's gifts as a nurturing and giving mentor. Inspired by

her style, I have worked hard to become a mentor like her, who helps others transform themselves.

I have now mentored dozens of new and experienced members throughout the past seven years, and recently I was inspiring the next generation of mentors in my new home club, using Gilly's brilliance as our aspiration. The result is a ripple effect: Each new mentor will go on to inspire future members and mentors, creating more personal transformation, enhanced communication and outstanding leaders in our world.

AMY JACKSON, ACB, ALB
Young Achievers@QUT
Brisbane, Queensland, Australia

Happy Husband and Wife

I have long had a dream to become a public speaker, yet I stood on the sidelines saying, "I can do that." But I had no idea how to begin. A friend told me about Toastmasters, and my only regret is that I didn't find it sooner.

I now have my husband hooked, and English is his third language. He has never been confident of his English skills, yet he decided to give it a try. He won the Best Speaker award the first time he gave a speech, because his passion and effort overshadowed his language difficulties. I am so proud of him.

Toastmasters has brought us closer together as we pursue our common goal of self-improvement. Thank you, fellow Toastmasters.

MOLLY ASSAD, CC
Momentum Toastmasters
Guaynabo, Puerto Rico

Speeding Up the Process

Thank you to Michelle Guerin for your insightful and helpful article, "Speed Up Your Speech Preparation" (November). As someone who suffers from brain freeze more often than I would like, I really appreciated the tips. I look forward to taking the scary step of not writing out speeches in full, and practicing without memorizing!

CHRISTINA HESSION, ACG, ALB
Phoenix-Tara Toastmasters
Dunboyne, County Meath,
Republic of Ireland

Buffett's Inspiring Words

I found the article "Breaking Down the Numbers" by Carmine Gallo (December) compelling. It was fascinating to learn how one of the richest men in the world, Warren Buffett, "considers public speaking the most important skill for anyone who hopes to enjoy a successful career in finance and business." Another reason to work toward my DTM!

EVAN WAHL
Innovative Speakers
San Diego, California

Editor's Note: In the January issue, the Camulodunum Toastmasters club was listed as a club in Braintree, England. In fact, the club is in the city of Colchester, England. The photo of Robert Finch leading a tour by the Willy Lott house in Suffolk, England, is courtesy of Delia Carrington.

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.



Have you checked out the digital *Toastmaster* magazine yet?

If so, please send your feedback to letters@toastmasters.org. Your opinion matters!

To find the *Toastmaster* magazine app, visit the Apple App Store, Amazon Appstore and Google Play store.

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Enjoy the magazine on the go!

The September through March issues* are available for viewing on these tablets:

- iPad (second-generation iPad and newer)
- Android
- Kindle Fire

Simply download the Toastmasters International app for your tablet from the Apple, Google Play or Amazon App stores.

For more information, go to www.toastmasters.org/magazine.

**The March issue will be available soon.*



March Digital Content Highlights

- Listen to a U.S. National Public Radio (NPR) segment, where members of the BioToasters club in San Diego talk about the importance of speaking skills for scientists.
- Watch videos on specialty speeches, such as award acceptances, toasts, business presentations and more.

AROUND THE GLOBE

MEMBER MOMENT

Experimenting with Animation



Shahid Quadri, ACB, CL

Shahid Quadri, ACB, CL, is intrigued by the art of storytelling—both in the form of speeches and films. A member of Annex Toastmasters in Toronto, Ontario, Canada, Quadri works as a digital designer, creating websites, presentations and other content for clients. Last year, he was one of six people chosen by Canada's National Film Board to participate in a professional filmmaking program. The three-month apprenticeship in Montreal focused on animation.

Each participant produced a 60-second animated film, and Quadri's creation—titled *Liberation*—was about “tormented forms struggling to break their bonds.” After his film screened, Quadri faced a real-world Table Topics test: Without warning, he was called to speak in front of the audience. “I handled it like a pro,” he recalls happily, noting the benefit of his Toastmasters training.

What do you enjoy about animation?

I love that animation lets you build worlds from scratch. With computer-generated imagery (my main tool), you can make films that would cost millions in the real world or that would be impossible to shoot. With animation in general, you can express a world that exists only in your mind, and that's so appealing. In my career, I am trying to move more toward animation.

As a digital designer, you create PowerPoint presentations for your clients. What advice can you offer about presenting with PowerPoint?

Story, story, story! Your presentation should have more in common with a Hollywood film than an annual report. Even if you are talking about something as dry as compound interest, you have to make your audience feel like Luke Skywalker battling the dark side while you, as the presenter, are Yoda guiding them in the ways of the force to an ultimate defeat of Darth Vader.

Defining the story and finding the narrative arc is often difficult—i.e., getting it right for what you are talking about—but if something is truly worth presenting, it's in there.

How has Toastmasters helped your career?

I'm a better presenter of my design ideas, and now, because of Toastmasters, I'm confident not only doing visuals for [client] presentations, but also coaching the presenter and writing the presentation.

I've also led brainstorm and innovation workshops related to design challenges. That's new for me, and the confidence to do that comes from Toastmasters.

But Toastmasters also helps in less practical ways. For example, it gave me the confidence to try stand-up comedy last year. After that I decided every year I would try and pursue something more aligned with my passions. That led me to take something I had no confidence in—animation—more seriously.

For more information, visit www.shahq.com/liberation.html.

In Brief

ATTEND A DISTRICT CONFERENCE

Consider attending a conference to gain valuable tips and to network. Check your district's website at www.toastmasters.org/districtwebsites for the date of your next conference.

CULTURAL PROTOCOL

Do you have ideas for the International

Interpretations section (on page 7)? Email us at magazine@toastmasters.org and share the customs, common gestures or idiomatic phrases of your culture.

CONVENTION COUNTDOWN

The 2014 International Convention will be held August 20–23 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Visit

www.toastmasters.org/convention for travel information, registration and the schedule of events.

VIDEOS OFFER TIPS

Have you seen the Toastmasters video series of time-tested tips for improving communication? Watch the videos at www.toastmasters.org/videos.

SNAPSHOT



Steve Birch (center), ACB, ALB, president and founding member of Malvern Speakers in Malvern, Worcestershire, England, spent three days in October delivering a Speechcraft program to teachers and high school students at Genesis International School in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. Assisting him was fellow founding club member Caroline Bellhouse, ACB, CL, head of the Genesis preschool.

INTERNATIONAL INTERPRETATIONS

Do the Twist

Tongue twisters are popular in many languages for their difficulty to repeat verbally, especially quickly. These phrases often rely on alliteration (the repetition of the same sounds at the beginning of words) to cause speakers to stumble verbally.

A classic English tongue twister is: ***“Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers. A peck of pickled peppers Peter Piper picked. If Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers, where’s the peck of pickled peppers Peter Piper picked?”***

Virelangues (tongue twisters in French) provide insight into the French language, as well as a way to practice phrases that can be difficult—even for native speakers. One example is: ***“Je suis ce que je suis et si je suis ce que je suis, qu’est-ce que je suis?”*** (Translation: I am what I am and if I am what I am, what am I?)

Researchers studying the brain’s speech-planning process at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology recently declared they have developed what is perhaps the world’s most difficult tongue twister: ***“Pad kid poured curd pulled cod.”*** Test subjects gave up trying to say the verbal puzzle. Can you repeat it?



WHAT'S THE BUZZ?

Do you think it's helpful to record a member's speech on video?

"I think recording members' speeches is an excellent idea. For clubs considering investing in a camera: Get one that uses mini DVDs or SD cards. It provides members the opportunity to bring their own storage device to the meeting, have their speech recorded on it, and then take it home. Just make sure the storage device is viewable on members' equipment at home."

Larry Coulter, DTM
Fair Oaks club
Sunnyvale, California

"It definitely helps members improve their speaking skills, if they review the video and think about how to improve. Other than the video recording itself, an educational workshop on how to effectively review a video would be helpful. Mark Brown, the 1995 World Champion of Public Speaking, gave this advice to watch the video in three rounds:

- First: Watch the video in your usual means.
- Second: Fast forward while observing the gestures.
- Third: Listen to the audio only.

I follow Mark Brown's advice. It really helps!"

Yingying Zhang
Marin club
Greenbrae, California

"I think recording speeches on video is a great idea, provided there are very specific objectives being evaluated, such as gestures, speaking rate, body movements and other speaking elements."

Douglas Wilks, ACB
Plainly Speaking club
Plains, Montana

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"One machine can do the work of 50 ordinary men. No machine can do the work of one extraordinary man."

— Elbert Hubbard

TECHNOLOGY TIP

Candid Camera

With the growing popularity of image-sharing websites and apps like Instagram and Snapchat, knowing how to take a good photo can increase your online presence. Use the following tips to boost your digital photography skills:

- **Get to know your program modes.** Most camera newbies set their digital cameras on the green "automatic" button, but preset modes can vastly improve the quality of your photos. For example, the "macro" mode (usually indicated by a flower icon) lets you capture fine details such as eyelashes or petals on a rose. The "landscape" mode (usually indicated by a mountain icon) makes nature shots pop; it also automatically increases the blue in skies. If you're taking photos in a poorly lit area, use the built-in flash.
- **Customize your settings.** Features found on the main menu will determine the overall functionality of your camera. Set your image size to the largest file size and/or the highest resolution to take high-quality pictures. (Note: If you



want your photos to be published in print, most publications, including the *Toastmaster*, require them to be high-resolution.) Additionally, you can mute the sound your camera makes when you take pictures.

- **Be still.** No matter how well-composed or creative the pose, a blurry photo is worthless. Try setting the camera on a tripod or a steady surface, or at least tuck your elbows against your body while taking the shot.

LEARNING FROM OUR PAST INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENTS



DILIP R. ABAYASEKARA, DTM, ACCREDITED SPEAKER

*Past International President
2005–2006
Camp Hill, Pennsylvania*

A Memorable Moment

When I was new to my first club in Saint Louis, Missouri, our area governor came to visit. Dick Weber was professionally dressed, wore a gold DTM badge and seemed delighted to be with us. Toward the end of the club meeting, he gave a short but eloquent speech commending us for the things we were doing well. He reminded us of the many opportunities the Toastmasters program gives members, and he encouraged us to press on to achieve our goals.

Dick created a positive feeling in me, reinforcing my impression that Toastmasters International is a top-quality organization and that its leaders care about their clubs and members. I wanted to be like him. He showed me, by the power of personal example, that ours is an organization that brings out the best in people.

MEET MY MENTOR



Dana Simone Stovall, CC, ALB

No one has the potential to influence a member's experience like a mentor. Dwana Jones Washington, CC, member of the Articulators of the Windy City club in Chicago, Illinois, and lead legal secretary at Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC), shares how her mentor, Dana Simone Stovall, CC, ALB (who goes by "Simone"), has helped her.

Why did you join Toastmasters?

FDIC, my employer for 20 years, has a mentoring program, and in 2009 I chose Simone, a review examiner for the company, to be my mentor. She introduced me to Toastmasters. I joined to become a better communicator and to learn how to engage an audience. I used to be petrified when speaking in front of a crowd.

What can you tell us about Simone?

Simone has more than 20 years of experience working within the FDIC. She enjoys her work and contributing to the success of the organization's goals. Simone has also held numerous positions in our club, sometimes serving in multiple positions simultaneously. Under her leadership as president, our club obtained an award for being Distinguished, we moved from private to public membership, and the number of members achieving education awards increased. She is positive and patient, and a phenomenal Toastmaster, leader and mentor. She is also author of the 60-minute time management and fitness book for women, *What's In Your 24? How to Get It Done Without Getting Outdone*.

What goals have you reached with Simone's help?

I serve my club as sergeant at arms. I've also gained confidence, improved my presentation skills and earned my CC award. I could not have done this without Simone's guidance.

What kind of feedback does Simone give you?

I get immediate feedback. Her listening skills are exceptional, and I value her honest and excellent advice, whether it's complimentary or not. Honesty is important to both of us, and I trust her judgment.

How does she help you with your speeches?

Simone does not help me with speechwriting, nor does she listen to me when I practice my speeches, but she listens to me when I'm frustrated and gives me advice whenever I need it.

What characteristics do you like most in Simone?

My favorite thing about her is how she seems to always be happy—her mood is contagious. She's also energetic and uplifting, positive and patient. Simone builds people's self-confidence and empowers them to want more out of life, including in their career and personal life. Despite her overwhelming job duties, Simone is an amazing mother and a dependable friend. She has never failed to be fabulous!

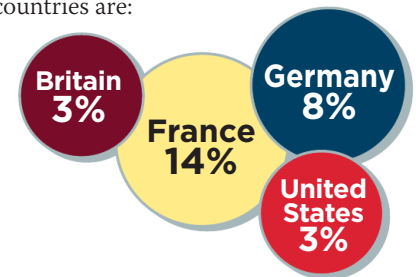


FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: Dwana Jones Washington, CC, and her mentor Dana Simone Stovall, CC, ALB.

FACTS WORTH KNOWING

Found in Translation

Readers often rely on translations to enjoy their choice of foreign literature (novels, poems or plays). Some countries have access to more translated literature than others. According to Literature Across Frontiers, a translation advocacy network, English-language readers have fewer translated books to choose from compared to readers in continental Europe. For example, the percentages of translated literary works available in the following countries are:



In Europe, two in three translations are from English. In France, about 40 percent of all novels published originated in English.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) maintains a database called the *Index Translationum* that counts translations of individual works. According to the index, as of January 2014 the following are some of the most translated authors:

Sample of author rankings:



TRAVELING TOASTMASTER



1 | CHERYL SAYANI FROM EDMONTON, ALBERTA, CANADA, visits the Arc de Triomphe in Paris, France.

2 | HEATHER GUTHERLESS (LEFT) AND BARBARA PECK (RIGHT), with next-generation Toastmaster Taylor Gutherless, all from Colorado, enjoy winter in Granby, Colorado.

3 | MIKE HOANG FROM OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA, smiles near the Berlin Wall at the East Side Gallery in Berlin, Germany.

4 | GEF B. SAGALA FROM RIYADH, SAUDI ARABIA, hikes in the rocky mountains of Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.



View more photos on your Tablet or on our Facebook page: [Toastmasters International Official Fan Page](https://www.facebook.com/toastmastersinternational).



PICTURE YOURSELF HERE! Pose with the *Toastmaster* magazine in your exciting surroundings. Email your high-resolution image (at least one megabyte) to photos@toastmasters.org. Bon voyage!



Communicating in Court

Sharp skills help forensic expert present clear analysis.

BY ELIZABETH TRENDOWSKI, ACS, ALS

I am a forensic expert with Robson Forensic Inc., a national company headquartered in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. When I tell people what I do for a living, they say, “Oooh, is it like the CSI on TV?” (The popular American TV show *CSI* stands for “crime scene investigation.”) My answer is “yes and no.” Ninety percent of my cases deal with drunk-driving accidents where someone is injured or killed. The simplest way to explain what I do is to say, “I am CSI Liquor.”

However, my CSI is not crime scene investigation—it’s civil scene investigation. My work starts when the crime scene investigation is over. My job is to conclude whether someone was visibly intoxicated, based on what witnesses say or the results of a medical test. I must determine liability when an injured party or the estate of the deceased party sues a bar or restaurant claiming that an employee served the driver too much alcohol.

Toastmasters has been vital to my career. I have cases in 30 U.S. states and need to be an expert in all of them; my science and business background is essential to that, but so is the ability to communicate effectively. A jury in Connecticut is much different from a jury in Texas or a jury in Alaska, so I must have excellent communication skills to ensure that jurors understand my analysis. Toastmasters has improved my skills to a level where attorneys, judges and juries all understand my testimony, because it is clear, memorable and convincing.

Table Topics, Ah-Counter, grammarian and evaluator: These are much more than just meeting roles. They are skills training for everything we do in our lives. In my career, I must have sharp listening skills to hear exactly what the opposing attorney is saying; be able to respond to the attorney’s question without a single *um*, *ah*, *so*, or *ya know*; and quickly evaluate the questions, and decide how they apply to the facts.

I am familiar with the alcohol industry from many different angles. I managed bars, restaurants, hotels and nightclubs; created a national certification program to teach the responsible service of alcohol; and owned 13 bartending schools and a wine-beer-and-spirits wholesale business. In 2007 I sold all the schools and the business. I wanted to try something new.



Elizabeth Trendowski must be clear, memorable and convincing in court when delivering findings of her investigations.

I had been invited to give many presentations to business groups, women’s groups and other organizations, but I never thought my communication skills were well developed. Everything changed when I discovered Toastmasters by reading a newspaper article about a local man named Frank Kane, who had won a speech contest. I immediately got goose bumps and thought, Yes, this is for me!

The monetary value attached to the cases I work on ranges from \$1 million to \$60 million. So it’s important I get everything right. I choose my words and phrases carefully. In one trial, I was on the stand for almost three hours, testifying for the plaintiff. The verdict? Twenty-eight million dollars for the plaintiff. There were two dead victims and two severely injured ones. Afterward, I sat down at the airport and cried.

For me, “finding my own voice” means being prepared and confident

when testifying as a forensic expert. Toastmasters helped me find my voice. The leadership roles I have taken on—area governor, club president, vice president membership—have also contributed to my confidence.

Recently I gave a presentation to the Florida Defense Lawyers Association. The attorney who introduced me mentioned my usual background material—but with a twist. His last sentence was: “Ms. Trendowski is a skilled expert, but the most impressive and exciting part is that she is involved with, and is an active member of, Toastmasters International.”

That says it all. **T**

ELIZABETH TRENDOWSKI, ACS, ALS, is a member of the Air Line Trail Toastmasters in Colchester, Connecticut.

HOW HAS THE TOASTMASTERS PROGRAM HELPED YOU? Do you have a story about overcoming obstacles and lessons learned? Please share it in this column using 700 words or less. State your name, member number and home club, and send it to submissions@toastmasters.org with “My Turn” in the subject line. For more information, visit www.toastmasters.org/WriterGuidelines.

Experimenting with Success

BioToasters helps scientists overcome fear of public speaking.

BY PETER A. BALASKAS

Being a scientist is more than just exploring the unknown and making calculations. A scientist must harness data and present it in a way that a diverse audience will not only understand, but will also appreciate and act upon. Which is where BioToasters comes in. The San Diego, California, club has gained widespread attention for helping scientists come out of their proverbial shells, share their findings and experience the joy of public speaking.

In November, the club was featured on NPR (National Public Radio), as part of the program *Weekend Edition Saturday*. Reporter Claire Trageser visited the club and interviewed members for the segment, titled “From Lab to Lectern, Scientists Learn to Turn on the Charm.”

“In today’s highly competitive world, solely focusing on lab work is no longer enough.”

— Zhihong O’Brien, CC

Members spoke of how they are working to improve their communication skills, both in academic arenas and social settings. It’s valuable practice, because scientists often toil in isolation, club president Zackary Prag told Trageser.

“For a typical scientist, they will spend a lot of time at the bench, doing calculations or lab work where they’re not interacting directly, from person to person,” said Prag, a lab-equipment sales representative.

Another one of the members, Gina Salazar, has a Ph.D. in biomedical engineering and is seeking a job. She knows that job-interview and communication skills are key. Salazar has been practicing her speaking in the club, including practicing a eulogy she would give at her mother’s funeral.

“Salazar’s newfound confidence and poise shows just what the group can do,” said the reporter as she ended the NPR segment. “While she’s still looking for a job, Salazar has become a better speaking scientist.”

Good Move

BioToasters draws members from the biotech, high-tech and finance industries. Last year the club relocated to the headquarters of Proven Inc., an employment staffing firm—a move that proved



Zackary Prag, club president of BioToasters, is a sales associate at BioSurplus, a San Diego provider of lab equipment.



The BioToasters club helps science professionals learn to relax when communicating with an audience.

to be a boon for the group. Notices posted about the club meetings caught the attention of a steady flow of scientists visiting the firm to seek employment and career guidance. Sometimes these scientists caught a glimpse of a club meeting in session, and many eventually visited the club and became members.

In interviews with the *Toastmaster* magazine, members sang the praises of BioToasters, which meets at lunchtime. The club “helps propel those who are already in the lab to develop leadership and discover their voice,” says club president Prag.

Scientists face the same obstacles as other professionals when it comes to communication and public speaking, but they often face the additional challenge of having to present complex data to a non-technical audience. A lack of experience and training in communication can damage a scientist’s career, says Zhihong O’Brien, CC, club treasurer. A non-native English speaker from China, O’Brien excelled in her technical abilities but her lack of communication and presentation skills endangered career promotions.

"I think having excellent communication skills is a very important part of being a great scientist," she says. "In today's highly competitive world, solely focusing on lab work is no longer enough."

Prag says his fear of public speaking grew when he went from being a lab analyst to a sales associate at BioSurplus, a provider of used lab equipment. He felt comfortable communicating one-on-one with customers, but when it came to speaking in front of a group or giving a presentation, Prag's fear intensified with each passing second.

"For me, the obstacles were comfort and confidence," he says. "I realized my own niche—my ability to communicate with scientists and also with people of various backgrounds—but I needed to hone my skill of public speaking through practice and feedback, and that is what brought me to Toastmasters."

Making Connections

BioToasters has helped members learn to relax and to connect with their audience. Of special value to the group is learning to adapt and use impromptu techniques to engage the audience, especially when these scientists speak "too technically" and the information goes over the heads of their audience members. Octavio Espinosa, ACB, CL, says this skill has helped him in his role as senior director of marketing and sales at BioSurplus.

For example, a boss may ask for an impromptu opinion on a subject or an interviewer may ask the classic question "Where do you see yourself in five years?"

"In the end, the growth is measured by a higher degree of comfort and confidence in tackling such situations," says Espinosa, the club's vice president membership.

O'Brien not only boosted her communication skills, she also developed newfound leadership skills that resulted in her being promoted to supervisor and project team representative at a biopharmaceutical company. She now provides impromptu project-status updates at departmental meetings, manages project activities and hosts group meetings. "I truly gained confidence as a scientist to lead scientific projects and lead task force members to successfully tackle many issues," she says.

Other club successes include a scientist who was painfully shy but was able to tap into his talent as a humorous speaker and become a speech contest winner. Courtesy of the rising achievements displayed by its members, as well as the club's increased market exposure on the radio, BioToasters is proving itself to be a successful experiment for scientific speakers. ■

For more information about the BioToasters club, visit www.BioToasters.org.

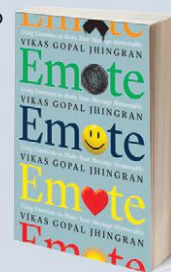
To listen to the NPR segment about the club, go to <http://ow.ly/sOvh3>.

PETER A. BALASKAS is an author, voiceover artist and former chemist. Learn more about him at www.peterabalaskas.com.

SPEAKING CHAMP OFFERS TIPS IN NEW BOOK

In the book *Emote: Using Emotions to Make Your Message Memorable*, Vikas Jhingran, the 2007 World Champion of Public Speaking, explores an emotion-based approach to verbal communication. The workshops he often hosts involve this style of speaking. But more than 10 years ago, the concept of public speaking frightened Jhingran. And as a scientist, that was a handicap he knew he had to conquer.

In 2002, he joined Sysco Toastmasters in Houston, Texas. He gained confidence and improved his speech organization. Jhingran,



Vikas Jhingran, Ph.D.

who earned his Ph.D. in ocean engineering from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), then developed techniques to harness his emotions to enhance his presentations even more, making his messages more memorable.

"I sometimes feel that scientists hide behind equations during presentations," he says. "I am worried about the opposite. I am worried that my audience will not be able

to look beyond the equations and truly understand the crux of my research findings."

Jhingran became such a compelling speaker that, after years of practice and participating in speech contests, he won the 2007 Toastmasters World Championship of Public Speaking. He was the first East Indian and the second Asian to win the annual competition.

Jhingran now works for Shell Oil Company in Houston and has been a member of Speaking of Shell Toastmasters. As the company's team lead in the Deepwater Projects Organization, Jhingran has benefitted from his communication skills in many ways. As a researcher, he clearly explains abstract concepts to fellow engineers. As a designer, he successfully communicates technical information to nontechnical audiences. As a team leader, Jhingran manages his colleagues and the operations of his division with ease, as well as creates a communication protocol for projects worth hundreds of millions of dollars.

Jhingran's book *Emote* was published by Career Press in January. He hopes that what he learned from Toastmasters will be passed on to fellow scientists.

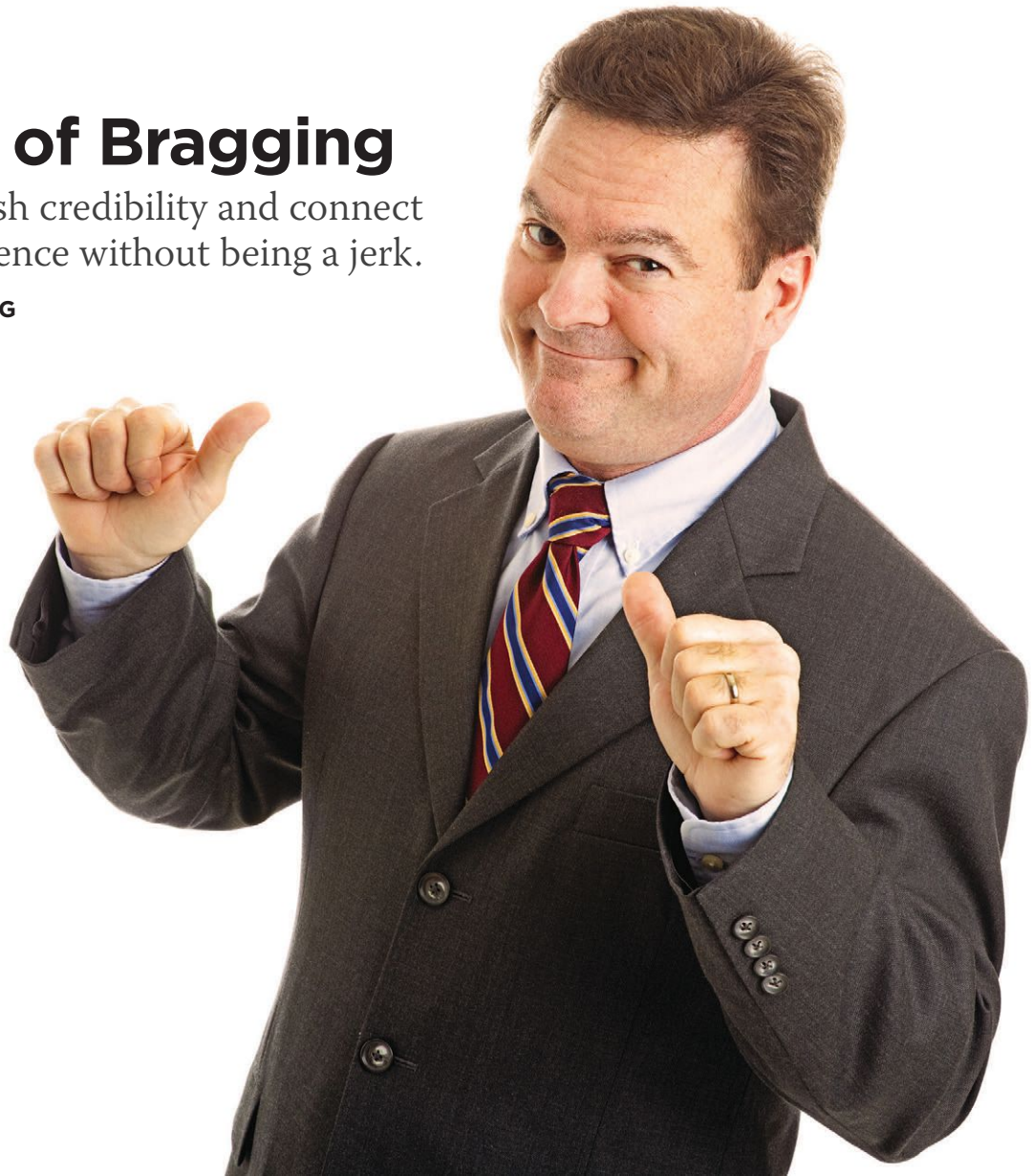
"Technical professionals and researchers will greatly benefit from working on their verbal communication skills," he says. "It will help them find a job, promote their ideas and stand out [among] a crowd of very smart people."

For more information about Jhingran, visit www.vikasjhingran.com.

The Art of Bragging

How to establish credibility and connect with your audience without being a jerk.

BY JOHN SPAITH, ACG



The Toastmasters party line goes something like this: We're a supportive group where members are guaranteed to have listeners who always give them their undivided attention. Um ... not *always*. And if you can't hold the attention of a bunch of supportive public-speaking geeks, what happens when you're in the real world? A boring opening is not the only way to lose your audience. What can you do? Try bragging.

I've given the speech this article is based on many times and I always get mean looks

when I say the "b" word. Bad bragging has a bad rap, and rightly so. But bragging done right establishes credibility and creates an audience connection. I once visited a club where the speaker told us about the need for vitamin supplements. Two-thirds into her speech she said, as an aside, "This reminds me of when I was finishing medical school ..." Huh? Because the woman didn't do any bragging, I had thought she was an amateur rehashing the encyclopedia, not a professional I should have been taking notes from.

Professional speakers don't make this mistake. Pros appreciate having competition, and so should you. You're competing against the stray thoughts of audience members, if nothing else. By bragging about your internship at the Mayo Clinic or about seeing every *Golden Girls* episode 15 times, your audience is more likely to pay attention to you and more importantly, your message. You're absolutely awesome at *something*—even if it's only *Golden Girls* trivia. Let the audience know by telling them early on.

DBAJ

The principle I follow when bragging is “DBAJ.” DBAJ means: “Don’t be a jerk.” Most of us are so afraid of violating DBAJ that we go to the other extreme of not bragging at all. You probably understand intellectually the need for self-promotion, but at a gut level you may be terrified by the possibility of appearing to be snotty. DBAJ helps serve as a self-check.

First ask: Is what you’re saying relevant? Consider the speaker who starts with: “Hello everyone! I can speak six languages, and I am a French chef and a concert pianist. Today I’m going to talk about improving your tennis game.” None of Mr. Perfect’s skills is related in any way to

No matter how good you are at it, you need to get it over with quickly. The length of time you should spend bragging is analogous to how long a miniskirt should be: short enough to be interesting, but long enough to cover the essentials.

Implementation Details

When I give the “Art of Bragging” talk, I have the audience act as a speaking coach for a hypothetical tennis player on the lecture circuit. In the first introduction (A), the tennis player very dramatically tells how he was losing a match badly until his competitor made a vulgar remark that inspired him to come back, even though it almost killed him. The second

writing nice things about yourself, seeing it on a page or hearing it from someone else gives listeners a degree of removal. This also remedies the problem of getting into trouble through impromptu bragging. The same general rules of DBAJ apply regardless of who is praising you, but it’s easier to get away with the “I’m your French chef/tennis instructor/ ...” bullet-point list on paper than to have it come out of your mouth.

Don’t “Establish Credibility”

Why am I saying “brag” all over the place rather than something more palatable, like “establish credibility”? It’s because I’ve found it’s much easier to begin by thinking about bragging and then root out the jerk parts rather than starting by “establishing my credibility” and then build it up so it’s not wishy-washy.

I’m sure someone is angry at the dumb American Spaith right now. You’ll complain that your speech content should do all the bragging for you. Fine. In a fair world, you’d be guaranteed to have everyone always listen to your speech. Just think about the doctor and the vitamins. Take a bragging pill, not for yourself, but for your audience. **T**

This article was originally published in the February 2009 issue of the Toastmaster.

JOHN SPAITH, ACG, is a French chef, concert pianist, tennis pro ... Never mind. John is just a Toastmaster [he’s a member of Redmond 2828 Toastmasters, in Redmond, Washington] who tries real hard.

The principle I follow when bragging is “DBAJ,” meaning, “Don’t be a jerk.”

teaching me tennis. Instead, it feels like he wants to teach me about how great he is.

The next check is whether the audience can possibly relate to any aspect of the achievements you’re bragging about. Consider tennis great Andre Agassi. He has a lot of God-given talent, and I can’t relate to the level of game he plays. I can relate to the fact that Andre has overcome a lot to get where he is. That’s enough. Even if you’re talking about the time you won the Wimbledon Championships, a reasonable audience won’t resent you if you talk about how you screwed up along the way—how you’re human like them. What an audience won’t put up with is a jerk who says, “I’m a natural at tennis, I’ve won too many tournaments to count, and I don’t remember learning, so it’s always interesting trying to teach people.”

The final DBAJ check is to make sure you don’t spend too much time bragging.

introduction (B) has some decent, but dry bragging (no DBAJ violations) about various tennis tournaments he won. No one ever said that B was better. You should brag sooner in your speech than later, but it doesn’t have to be your lead.

It’s important to put as much thought into your bragging as you would the opening and conclusion of your speech, even if you skip on the body. Your bragging can’t be during Table Topics or you’ll risk getting into trouble. Either you’ll be too self-deprecating, à la “I have a DTM but, well, you know that’s not so big a deal really, oh never mind,” or you’ll say something that makes you look like a jerk. You’ll catch yourself, and then lamely back-track. Your bragging needs to be to the point—as in pushing the play button on your DVD player.

A great way to brag is to have the Toastmaster, emcee, or printed agenda do it for you. Even though you’re the one



Download the Toastmasters International app for your tablet from the Apple, Google Play or Amazon App stores.

Beyond PowerPoint

Taking visual aids to the next level.

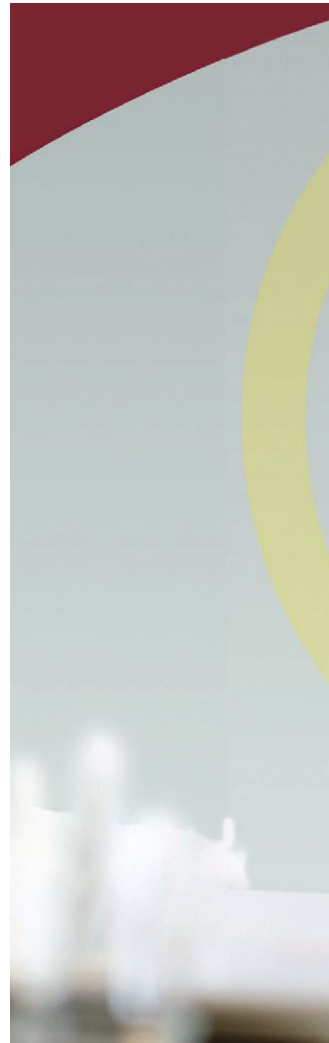
BY DAVE ZIELINSKI

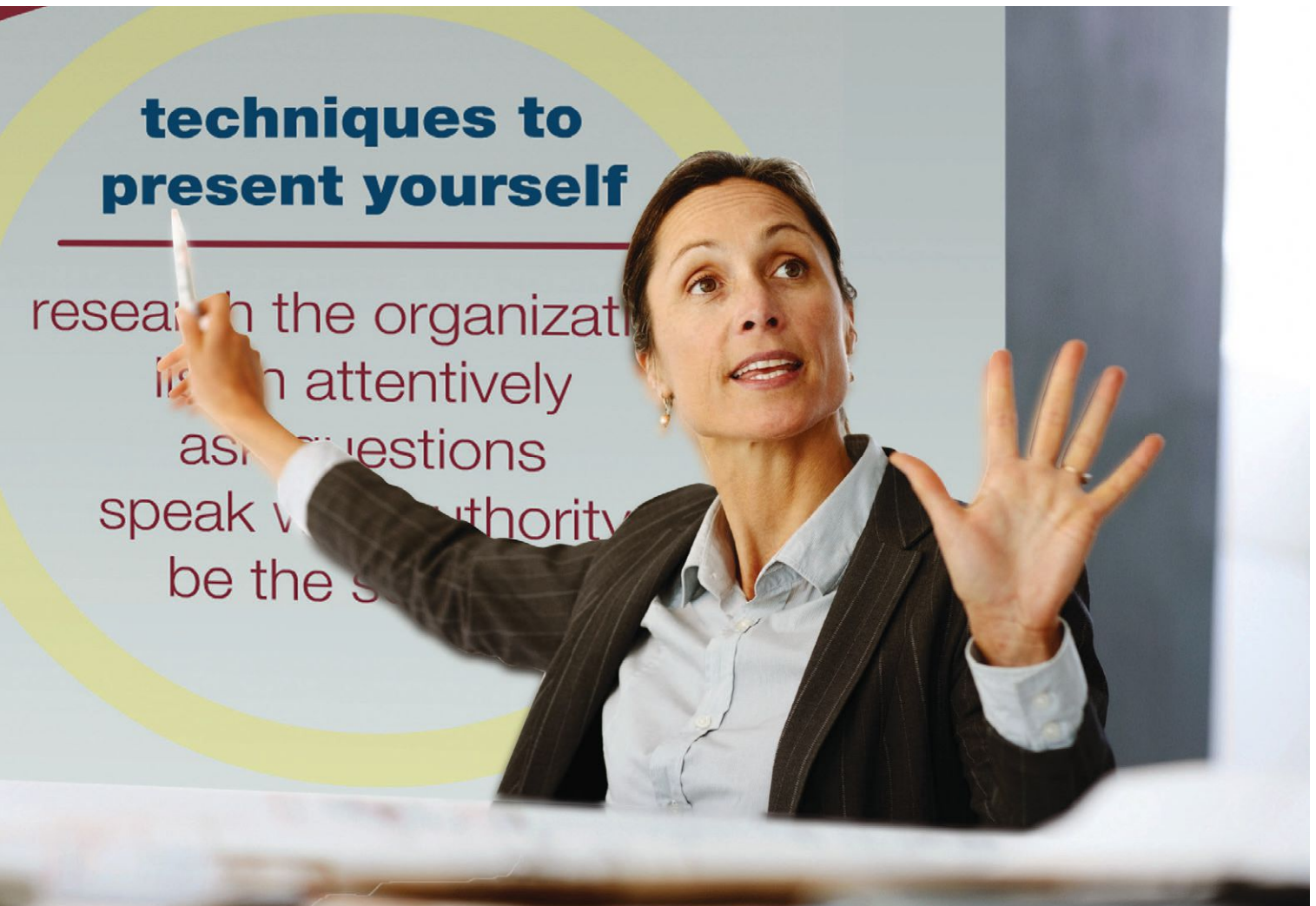
When employees at the Turner Broadcasting System are asked to give an internal presentation, their first instinct often is to turn to PowerPoint, Microsoft's ubiquitous software, to create slides in support of their speeches. It's a reaction shared by millions of businesspeople around the globe who are as comfortable with PowerPoint as they are with an old pair of slippers.

But at Turner, the American news and entertainment company in Atlanta, Georgia, which includes brands like CNN, TBS and TruTV, PowerPoint represents just one arrow in the design-tool quiver. The company's in-house presentation team has a range of innovative software-design tools at its disposal when counseling employees on using visual aids in support of their speech goals, says Danielle Jotham, the senior production manager who heads that internal team.

As new presentation-design tools go mainstream, organizations like Turner have more options for how they design, edit and store slideware (another term for presentation programs), ensuring they can match the right application to varied speaking scenarios. That includes software for designing and delivering small-group presentations on iPads or other tablets, storing and editing slideware online or "in the cloud," and creating more conceptual presentations in nonlinear ways.

In addition, when PowerPoint is used today, it's more often employed for purposes beyond its original slide-design-and-projection function. Owing to advances in PowerPoint's latest versions, 2010 and 2013, more now use the software as a full "creative suite" for tasks like editing video or enhancing photographs, as well as for creating printed documents like sales proposals or white papers.





The upshot is that change has buffeted the presentations-software market, and if you're not keeping pace, you can miss out on opportunities to take your visual aids to another level.

Design Tool 'Decision Tree'

When Turner Broadcasting employees come to Jotham's team for help with presentations, they're asked a series of "discovery" questions to determine the best design tool for their needs. If a presentation will be used repeatedly internally, for example, the team might suggest the old standby, PowerPoint. But if the presentation will be delivered more selectively and there's a compelling need for video or complex graphics, the team might opt for Apple's Keynote design software.

"PowerPoint has made strides in its newer versions, but we still like Keynote

for its ability to hold high-resolution video and create transitions, and for its text-editing capability," Jotham says. "In particular the Magic Move feature in Keynote, if used well, is an amazing tool for creating transitions between slides and motion effects. I'm a designer by trade, so it's more geared to my sensibilities."

Turner employees also have other presentation-design tools they can employ, depending on their speaking needs. Included in that toolkit are:

SlideRocket. This cloud-based application is a good fit for Turner employees on the go, Jotham says, such as salespeople or executives. SlideRocket enables users to import existing PowerPoint or Google presentations online for quick-sharing or editing by peers.

"We like it because it is platform agnostic, meaning it works across different operating systems and you don't have to worry about things you normally would concerning video formats or embedded fonts," Jotham says. "Any employee around the world can sign in to www.sliderocket.com and work collaboratively on presentations. If someone makes a change to a sales presentation in Atlanta, it's immediately accessible to someone in London or Hong Kong."

That gives Turner's sales force the "essential" ability to go out on sales calls with only the most updated presentation content, Jotham says. SlideRocket also has an iPad application that enables salespeople to make presentations from their tablets. "Our sales force can download presentation updates quickly and present them to prospects or clients on iPads in a

more informal setting, which has become extremely popular here,” she says.

Haiku Deck. This free iPad app is well-suited for simple presentations but also provides access to a large collection of copyright-cleared images on Flickr, Jotham says. “You can create simple charts with it now, but it’s generally a tool for text and images,” she says. “It’s not designed for more robust presentations that might require animation or sophisticated transitions.”

Jotham says she might suggest Haiku Deck to employees for “more emotion-driven presentations, like speaking on the value of happiness in the workplace” that don’t require complex visual support.

“PowerPoint has made strides in its newer versions, but we still like Keynote for its ability to hold high-resolution video and create transitions, and for its text-editing capability.” — Danielle Jotham

Prezi. This software enables designers to go beyond static PowerPoint slides to build nonlinear presentations with features like zooming and an enhanced ability to show visual relationships between ideas. “Prezi gives you a big canvas to work from and allows you to zoom from area to area,” Jotham says. “We’ve only used it in instances when a speaker wanted to present a broad overview, then drill down into more granular content. I think it’s best used in the hands of strong conceptual thinkers.”

PowerPoint: More Than a Slide Design Tool

Organizations like Turner also are catching on to the fact they can get more bang for their PowerPoint buck by using that venerable software for purposes beyond slide design. PowerPoint is a versatile tool that also can be employed to create visually dynamic print documents as a better option to Microsoft Word and, in some cases, Microsoft Publisher, as well as a lower-cost alternative for basic video- or photo-editing needs.

Because of its massive user base, easy-to-use interface and ability to import and export many different file formats, PowerPoint’s latest versions—2010 and 2013—make it the Swiss army knife of communication tools, says Troy Chollar, the head of TLC Creative Services, a Murrieta, California-based company specializing in presentation design.

“PowerPoint has evolved, and part of that evolution has allowed more wide-ranged uses for the software,” says Chollar.

Here are some ways Chollar says PowerPoint 2010 or 2013 can be used beyond traditional slide design:

As a video editor. Despite having high-end, video-editing tools in his office,

Chollar regularly turns to PowerPoint for smaller, less complex video-editing projects. For example, say your task is editing video of a company executive speaking about a new initiative or quarterly results. “If you have a longer clip of your CEO talking, but you need to edit it into a 30-minute news show, you can tell the video where to start and stop in PowerPoint by creating in-points and out-points,” Chollar says.

You also can create your own videos or convert existing PowerPoint presentations to video format for uploading to sites like YouTube or the company intranet. “You can create slides, set them up with auto transitions, build pictures like a slideshow, and then export it all to a video file,” Chollar says.

As a photo or graphics editor. Chollar uses PowerPoint to edit or enhance photographs used in presentations, as well as to modify images like vector graphics. “You can crop photos, change colors, use different backgrounds and more with PowerPoint’s tools,” he says.

To create printed documents. More organizations have awakened to the fact that PowerPoint also is a simple but powerful tool for creating printed documents. Designers regularly use PowerPoint’s “custom layouts” feature to create pitch books—marketing documents used by investment banks that are chock-full of financial data—as well as white papers, sales proposals and other text-heavy documents, often saving them as PDFs.

While Microsoft Word might seem the natural choice here, experts say it has limitations in the use of graphics, photographs or illustrations essential to many print documents.

“Text is king in Word, and you only place photos in Word in deference to how you want text handled,” says Ric Bretschneider, a presentation skills consultant in San Jose, California, who spent 17 years on the Microsoft team that builds PowerPoint. “In PowerPoint there are no such rules. If you want the text in front of photos, you simply bring it forward. If you want the picture on top of the text, you just overlay the box. PowerPoint wins for designing print documents on the basis of flexibility and ease of use.”

No Visual Support Needed

As most Toastmasters know, there also are cases when PowerPoint or other slideware can do more to distract from rather than enhance spoken messages. “The first question we ask someone who comes to us for help with presentation design is, ‘Are you sure you need slides or graphical support for the presentation?’ ” says Jotham, the senior production manager at Turner.

Some executives at Turner Broadcasting are comfortable delivering presentations without slides, Jotham says, typically when their messages are motivational in nature or about topics like mentoring, when the focus is more on the speaker’s own story and connecting with an audience.

“It takes a lot of practice, but we think it’s the ultimate sophistication to be able to deliver a good speech without slides,” she says.

Technology Resources

Toastmasters often have their antennae up for online resources that can help them design or deliver more memorable presentations. Here are a few such favorite websites of sources interviewed for this story.

NoteandPoint.com. This vast gallery of compelling PowerPoint and Keynote presentations is designed to provide designers inspiration in the creative use of layouts, graphics, photographs, fonts and more.

Shutterstock.com. Choose from millions of stock photographs, illustrations and videos on this site without concerns of violating copyright. Subscribers may download up to 25 images per day. Those with a need for fewer images can choose On Demand plans.

Visual.ly. This two-pronged site showcases some of the world's best infographics, visuals that convert complex data and

analysis into appealing graphics to tell stories or promote brands, and connects organizations with top infographic designers around the globe.

Indezine.com. Based in India, this is one of the largest and most-respected presentation-related sites worldwide. It includes thousands of free PowerPoint templates; sample PowerPoint slides showing layouts, animations and more for download; reviews of PowerPoint add-ins; PowerPoint tutorials and more. It is run by Geetesh Bajaj, one of a select group of PowerPoint Most Valuable Professionals (MVPs) around the world.

The 44 Safe Fonts for PowerPoint guide.

Using novel fonts can be risky when designing presentations that need to be shared beyond your organization's walls. That's because most fonts can't be embedded in templates. What are the "safe"

fonts most commonly installed in different PowerPoint versions?

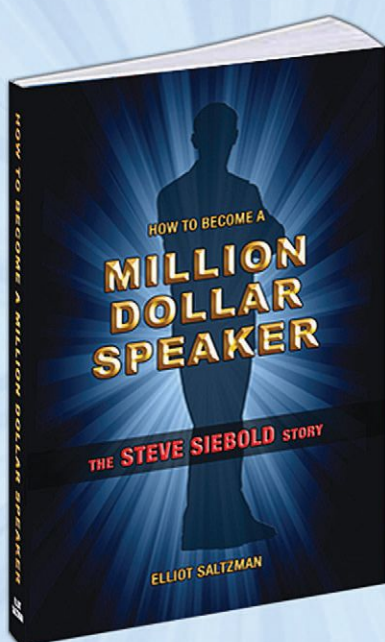
Johanna Rehnvall, founder and CEO of Presentitude, a presentation design agency, created an interactive reference tool for that purpose, called *The Periodic Table of PowerPoint Fonts*, a guide to the 44 standard fonts found on most personal computers. Find the guide at <http://2013.presentitude.com/fonts/>. **T**

DAVE ZIELINSKI is a freelance writer based in Minnesota and a frequent contributor to the Toastmaster.



Find the *Toastmaster* magazine app on the Apple App store, Google Play store and Amazon Appstore.

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Best Apps for Speakers

12 cool presentation tools for your phone or tablet.

BY DAVE ZIELINSKI

A wave of mobile devices has washed over the planet, and it's the rare Toastmaster today who doesn't use a smartphone or tablet for personal or business needs. As a result, developers of mobile software applications—or apps—continue to create new software tools for use by speakers on their “pocket computers.” Here are some of the best apps for a variety of speaking purposes and scenarios.



SlideShark. This popular app, from the company Brainshark, lets speakers with iPads or iPhones view or show PowerPoint slides from their mobile devices, freeing them from having to tote around laptops for presentations. Presenters can use SlideShark to show slides on their iPads for small audiences or connect the tablet to a projector for bigger audiences. A chief benefit of the app: It keeps fonts, graphics, videos, animations or hyperlinks from PowerPoint intact when used on mobile devices.

SlideShark also allows you to distribute, manage and track presentations in “cloud” or online locations, which expands the reach of your messages and gauges audience viewing behavior. For more information, visit www.brainshark.com.



Quickoffice. If you have a need to create, edit or review PowerPoint presentations from an Android smartphone or tablet while on the go, Quickoffice from Google may be for you. It contains basic formatting tools for creating presentations and allows you to add text boxes, edit or reorder slides, add or resize photos, use a presentations mode and more. When your work is done, place the presentation in an online file-sharing site like Google Drive or Dropbox for review by colleagues or



A timing app is an ideal tool for the timer role in club meetings.

for access from any computer. The app is available free from the Google Play store.



Presentation Clock. This app keeps time with oversized, easy-to-read numbers that make good use of screen sizes on mobile devices. Speakers can set numbers to change color at different intervals (from green to yellow to red) to keep track of time; subtle audio and vibration alerts also can be used when time thresholds are hit. Available from the iTunes store for 99 cents.

Presenter remote control. There's no need to carry a separate clicker with this app, which allows you to view and control PowerPoint presentations from

an Android smartphone. Use your phone to wirelessly advance slides and control volume on your “host” computer with the app, which works using Bluetooth technology. Another benefit of Presenter is that it works across Windows, Mac or Linux operating systems. Available from the Google Play store for \$2.99.



Quotebook. How often have you stumbled on a great quote and wanted an easy way to store it for future use in a speech or document? Rather than providing stock quotes, this app offers a way to collect your own and organize them by author, source, category and more. You can copy quote text into the app from

your computer's clipboard or simply type it in. Add proverbs, lyrics, tweets or other compelling scraps of language you come across online as well.

Bonus: A synching feature with Wikipedia allows you to access pop-up biographies of authors and view their other quotable quotes. Available in iTunes for \$2.99.



Breathing Zone. This app can be an oasis for Toastmasters whose anxiety runs high before speeches. It's a doctor-recommended, guided breathing exercise

Breathing Zone employs your phone or tablet microphone to assess your breathing, and then guides you to breathe in and out along with easy-to-follow voice instructions and in sync with pulsating images.

designed to decrease heart rates and help you relax prior to stressful events or as a regular routine. Breathing Zone employs your phone or tablet microphone to assess your breathing, and then guides you to breathe in and out along with easy-to-follow voice instructions and in sync with pulsating images. Create timed sessions anywhere from five to 60 minutes. Available in iTunes for \$3.99.



Evernote. You won't need a photographic memory with Evernote in tow. The app makes it easy to save in one place anything you might use for an upcoming speech: data, quotes, images and more. Take a photo of something you see online, record quick audio to describe it and save it for later use. Save entire webpages—text, images and links—to your Evernote account with a “web clipper.” There's also an Evernote application for broader business use, designed to make ideas, research or expertise of individuals

or work teams accessible to all. For more information, visit www.evernote.com.



PhatPad. Phatpad turns your tablet into a small-group brainstorming tool as well as allows users to deliver presentations from an iPad. You can draw, write or type ideas on-screen using PhatPad's digital ink technology and handwriting recognition tools, which automatically convert notes scribbled on screen into digital text. The technology also translates rough drawings into perfectly formed shapes. Give work colleagues access to your brainstorming results

whiteboard lets you draw on the blank tablet screen or annotate existing slides. Display webpages or download files with a built-in web browser. A remote app sold separately allows you to switch slides or move a laser pointer by remote control with Bluetooth. Available in iTunes for \$4.99.



HT Professional Recorder. This voice-recording tool allows you to record your speeches, perform dictation or capture audio of business meetings from a smartphone or tablet. Record presentations or conversations even when speakers are three to four feet from your mobile device. A bookmarking feature lets you skip to, and replay, important segments, and you can use an overwriting function to correct any dictation errors. Available in iTunes for \$6.99.

Presenter Pro. This app, from presentation skills training company Rexi Media, is designed to help you build or refine your speaking skills. Presentation skills techniques are offered in six categories—such as speech structure, visuals and gestures—with supporting graphics and audio and video clips. The app also has a “tip shaker” for accessing hundreds of quick tips for your presentations—simply shake your device while viewing any of the sections to receive a tip. The basic app is free from the iTunes store. **T**



via email, iTunes, Dropbox, SkyDrive or Google Drive. Available in iTunes for \$4.99.

Promptster Pro. This venerable teleprompter app was updated in 2013 and has everything you need for podcasts, video narration or any other speaking scenarios that require scripts. The app's features let you scroll text at varied speeds, format or highlight script text in multiple ways, track elapsed speech time and more. A digital audio recorder allows you to practice and then hear your speech the way others do. You also can use Promptster to create or edit speech scripts. Available for \$9.99 from iTunes.



2Screens - Presentation Expert. Use this app to help stream presentations right from your tablet to a TV or other display with wireless data transmission. You can show presentation content like PowerPoint, Keynote, Excel, PDFs or videos stored in local folders on your iPad. An integrated

DAVE ZIELINSKI is a freelance writer based in Minnesota and a frequent contributor to the Toastmaster.

Editor's note: These apps may not be available in all countries.



Find the *Toastmaster* magazine app on the Apple App store, Google Play store and Amazon Appstore.

Which Type of Speaking Will You Try Next?

A tour through your options as a speaker.

BY DENISE GRAVELINE

Once you get past the initial challenge of speaking in public, you have choices to make. Which types of public speaking will you try? A business presentation, a TEDx talk, or maybe a contest speech?

All types of public speaking share common qualities. Speaking requires preparation and practice, confidence on stage or in front of a room, and an effort to ensure the audience can see and hear you. You can practice all types of public speaking in a Toastmasters club meeting—everything from TED talks to acceptance speeches. Whether you aim to entertain, persuade or educate, your speech must meet some basic goals: staying within the time allotted, engaging the audience and conveying information clearly.

But once you move past the basics, there's a wide variety of speech types you can try. The one you choose may be driven by your role at a special occasion or business meeting, by the audience, or by a format, venue or time restriction. As a Toastmaster, you'll want to stretch yourself to learn about, and practice, one or more of the many types of public speaking.

Here's a comparison of some of the different kinds of speeches:

Acceptance Speeches

This speech signals something good: You're publicly accepting an honor, award or commendation. The purpose of an acceptance speech is to give gracious thanks to the organization bestowing an honor upon you.

After addressing the organization, you have the option of thanking friends and family who helped you along the way, and sharing why the recognition is meaningful to you. In many cases, organizations bestow awards to draw attention to particular issues or actions they wish to encourage, so speaking about your connection to that issue is another option.

Find more ideas for acceptance speeches in Toastmasters' *Special Occasion Speeches* manual (Item 226N).





Toasts & Roasts



TED Talks



Business Presentations



Panel Discussions



Contests

As a speaker, your opportunities to practice different presentation formats include toasts, storytelling, business presentations and panel discussions.

Toasts and Roasts

Toasts and roasts are twin sides of the same kind of short speech. Both draw attention to and salute an individual or a group and encourage the audience to join in. But toasts generally stay on the celebratory side, whereas roasts cross into humorous and sometimes pointed ribbing—best done in a harmless manner.

You might use either one when you're the master of ceremonies for an awards night, at a wedding or anniversary reception, or at a company celebration. For both toasts and roasts, you need to research in advance the person whom you are saluting or pretending to scorn. You must consider

how far your humor can and should go. The role you are playing is one guide. For example, a best man's toast at a wedding is one in which we expect roast-like humor about the groom. The father of the bride will likely reflect emotion rather than humor. Here again, *Special Occasion Speeches* offers guidance on both toasts and roasts, as well as speaking in praise of others.

TED Talks

TED-talk speakers (www.ted.com) must meet many parameters. Speeches need to be no more than 18 minutes long, delivered without a lectern and often with few or no slides, and they rely heavily on sto-

rytelling. TED talks are given before high-powered audiences to share "ideas worth spreading." They are also live-streamed to an even larger, remote audience, and later shared freely online where they can be viewed by millions. If you want to try out this format, watch TED talks online for examples of how it's done, and explore the option of speaking at a local TEDx first.

In addition to the time limits, TED speakers get specific guidance, known as "The TED Commandments." The guidance aims to ensure the audience will hear new ideas that are presented with passion and a unique point of view. The "commandments" also remind TED speakers to

be human, approachable and funny, and avoid self-promotion. Reading a speech and going overtime? Not acceptable.

While Toastmasters doesn't provide specific training for TED talks, Toastmasters' 2013 Golden Gavel recipient

California. In an interview for the May 2013 issue of the *Toastmaster* magazine, Cain says, "Because of all the practice I got by delivering speeches in front of the supportive members of my Toastmasters club, I had the confidence to do it."

As a Toastmaster, you'll want to stretch yourself to learn about, and practice, one or more of the many types of public speaking.

Susan Cain prepared for her TED talk, "The Power of Introverts," in a Toastmasters club. Her speech has been viewed more than 5 million times on www.ted.com, making it the most-viewed of all talks at the TED2012 conference in Long Beach,

Storytelling

Telling a story is the oldest form of public speaking. It predates written language. Your entire speech might tell a single story, or one story can be incorporated into a broader speech to illustrate a point, teach

a lesson, connect with your audience, or make history come alive. Distinct elements of storytelling include building and releasing dramatic tension, incorporating surprise elements, and engaging the listener's imagination.

In the book *The Seven Basic Plots: Why We Tell Stories*, author Christopher Booker details the most common storytelling plots, from rags-to-riches and quest stories to tales of tragedy, comedy and rebirth. He also shares the core elements of stories, explains how to get to the essential "happy ending," and details what happens when your story misses the mark and loses the plot.

The Toastmasters *Storytelling* advanced manual (Item 226 K) shares advice on how to effectively tell folk tales, personal stories, stories with morals, emotional stories and stories about historical events or people.

Business Presentations

Unlike most other kinds of speeches, business presentations hinge on at least one audience member: the decision-maker. Your goal as the speaker is to influence that executive's decision, so a vital part of your business presentation involves knowing who the decision-maker is.

Getting to the point quickly and clearly is another way that business presentations differ from other public speaking styles. In these types of speeches, you must be able to defend your arguments against challenges. One way to do this is to practice answering the question, "So what?" after each of your major persuasive points.

Many business presentations involve presenting technical information to decision-makers who are not technical experts. *Technical Presentations* (Item 226H) includes guidance on presenting a proposal and talking to non-technical audiences about complex subject matter.

Panel Discussions

As a panelist: When you speak as part of a panel discussion, you must take into account at least two other speakers. Learning how to take—and give up—your turn at the microphone is essential if you want



The Shortest Speech?

When considering the next type of public speaking to master, don't overlook what may be the shortest kind of all: introducing another speaker. Successful introductions set the tone for an event. They also tell listeners why they want to hear from the featured speaker, and why the speaker was invited to speak.

Thinking about the introduction as a short speech isn't simply a way of inflating your role as an introducer. Introductions have the same structure as speeches. They have an opening, a body and a closing—even if that structure encompasses only a few sentences. Learning to give a good introduction is an important step in building your skills.

Often, you'll begin preparing an introduction with biographical material provided in advance by the speaker, but don't limit yourself to only reading the summary. Rather than give the audience a chronological recitation of the speaker's resume, seek out background material that relates to, or underscores, the theme of the speaker's message, or helps the audience relate to her as a person.

Don't neglect the speech itself in your introduction. Instead of merely introducing the speaker, you might also share thoughts on the topic itself and how it is significant to the audience.

Finally, think about your introduction as a red carpet—one that you're laying down to lead the speaker to the audience. Can you get the audience thinking, laughing and feeling excited about hearing the speaker? Take time to include grace notes (small embellishments) in your introduction to prepare the audience for the speaker—you'll have her undying gratitude if you do.

For more information, consult *Creating an Introduction* (Item 277). It includes an outline and a PowerPoint presentation that will help you craft a great speaker introduction.

to be a good panelist. Panel speakers often are called upon to react to what other panelists have said, in addition to what they came prepared to say. Answering audience questions is also a part of panel speaking, and the area in which many speakers find it difficult to give up the floor.

Learning how to take—and give up—your turn at the microphone is essential if you want to be a good panelist.

Some panelists use slide presentations, although it's increasingly common to find organizers who forbid the use of slides to allow more time for audience questions and to better engage the listeners. Speakers may want to avoid panels of more than three people, since one's time to speak is limited further with each person added to the group.

As a moderator: Moderating a panel brings specific responsibilities. For one thing, it's the moderator's job to ensure the panel starts and ends on time. The moderator also must introduce each speaker and provide adequate time for each one to speak. Finally, the moderator selects ques-

tions from the audience and moves the discussion along, bringing it to a close at the specified time.

The most valued moderators keep the speakers on time. You'll want to make your on-time goals known to speakers. You'll also want to keep all introductions

the same length. Let the speakers know in advance how much time they have to speak, and how much time is devoted to questions. You must stick to your schedule. You'll need to practice firm but kind ways to say, "There's much more we could say here, but let's move on to another question," or "We're a little over time right now, and I want to be sure we can hear from George, so let's thank Fred now." If you can interrupt gracefully, and keep the panel on time, you'll be a sought-after moderator.

Facilitating Discussion (Item 226D) provides instruction on moderating a panel. Also, see Christine Clapp's June 2012 article "When You Are a Panel Moderator" for more tips.

Contest speaking is a great way to practice and sharpen your skills. Club contests include challenges for delivering evaluations, humorous speeches, Table Topics and tall tales. Once you feel confident about your skills, try your hand at the International Speech Contest, which culminates at the Toastmasters World Championship of Public Speaking at the International Convention every August.

Many speakers start with the briefest speaking roles, such as introducing a speaker (see the sidebar "The Shortest Speech?" on page 24), giving a short toast or presiding as a moderator. Consider those speaking tasks as stepping stones to help you gain practice and confidence for tackling more challenging roles. You can use your Toastmasters club as a place to learn, practice and master the full range of public speaking opportunities. Which type of speaking will you try next? **T**

DENISE GRAVELINE is a Washington, D.C.-based speaker coach and communications consultant who writes about women and public speaking on *The Eloquent Woman* blog at eloquentwoman.blogspot.com.

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What's in a Word?

For some it's the definition; for Scrabble players it's the competition.

BY PATRICK MOTT

English poet and literary critic Samuel Taylor Coleridge defined poetry as “the best words in the best order.” Ewart Adams, DTM, would say that is the definition of a Scrabble win.

Adams, 51, is so good at putting the best words in the best order that he's among the elite players who participate in international Scrabble tournaments. He says that being an articulate Toastmaster and a fierce competitor at the Scrabble board are, happily, complementary activities.

Adams, the District 81 governor and a member of Georgetown Toastmasters in Guyana, credits the Word of the Day feature in club meetings with helping him improve his Scrabble game. For many members, this simple vocabulary-building tradition is an easy way to improve language skills. But competitive Scrabble players like Adams take this exercise to a whole other level.

“If the [Word of the Day] is a seven- or eight-letter word, for example, I will try to find the anagram for it, if it exists, or I will try to determine if the word carries a front or a back hook.”

In other words, while others are busy pondering word definitions, Adams is considering ways to rearrange its letters to form another word (for example, the anagram for “orchestra” is “carthorse”). In



determining a front or a back hook (in Scrabble parlance), Adams mentally adds a letter to either the front or the back of the word to see if he can form another word.

The History of Scrabble

The game that would come to be called Scrabble was invented in the 1940s during the Great Depression and trademarked with its current name in 1948. Since then, it has become one of the most popular games in the world. It has spawned

hundreds of competitions, tournaments, clubs and associations. As of 2008—the 60th anniversary of the game—more than 150 million Scrabble games have been sold in 121 countries around the world. It is produced in nearly 30 languages, with one of the most recent being Welsh.

The British newspaper *The Daily Telegraph* estimated that more than half of the homes in Great Britain have a Scrabble set, and at least 30,000 games of Scrabble are started every hour worldwide. Other

estimates indicate there is a Scrabble set in one-third of all American households. Scrabble devotees include celebrities such as Madonna, Keanu Reeves, Sharon Stone and Queen Elizabeth II.

The game's beginnings were modest. During the 1930s, the out-of-work American architect Alfred Mosher Butts invented an early version of the board game. He combined the challenge of solving a crossword puzzle with that of identifying anagrams, and added the element of chance. Butts named the game Lexico. He later revised it and renamed it Criss-Cross Words after studying the front

Then, as the story goes, in the early 1950s the president of Macy's department stores played the game while on vacation. This prompted him to sell the Scrabble games in his stores—creating a national mania.

Passionate about a Pastime

The number of amateur Scrabble players who love the game is huge, but competitive devotees such as Adams are uncommonly passionate.

"I started playing Scrabble as a pastime after work, as a means of relaxation, and one day I was advised that there would be a Scrabble competition the follow-

"In Toastmasters, having a good vocabulary can help," he says. "We are expected to eliminate jargon from our speeches, but sometimes a certain word can help the audience get into the right mindset. The same is also true in Scrabble, when a word that needs to begin or end with certain letters may be the key to hitting the [bonus] squares."

Yip doesn't play Scrabble competitively, but he has played online at www.games.com and now plays with friends on his mobile device. (Scrabble apps can be found in the respective app stores for Android or iPhone devices, he says.)

"If the [Word of the Day] is a seven- or eight-letter word, for example, I will try to find the anagram for it, if it exists, or I will try to determine if the word carries a front or a back hook."

— Ewart Adams, DTM, competitive Scrabble player

page of *The New York Times* and calculating how often each of the 26 letters of the English alphabet appeared.

Butts assigned point values to each letter and decided how many letters would be included in the game. He found that the letter "e" was the most frequently used vowel, but the letter "s" presented a problem: Include too many "s" tiles and the game could become a simple exercise of forming plural words. He limited the "s" tiles to four. This original distribution of letters remains the same to this day.

At first, Butts' creation was a failure; he couldn't capture the interest of game manufacturers. He then took on a partner, the entrepreneur James Brunot, refined the rules and renamed the game Scrabble, which was trademarked in 1948. During the first four years, Brunot and some friends assembled 12 Scrabble games per hour in an abandoned schoolhouse in Dodginton, Connecticut. By 1949, 2,400 sets had been manufactured and the operation had lost \$450.

ing Sunday," he says. "A co-worker and I attended, and I won three out of six games. My co-worker, and members of the Guyana Association of Scrabble Players, felt I had potential, and they encouraged me to keep playing. At the end of the year I was voted the most-improved player."

Adams, the Finance Director and Company Secretary of Insurance Brokers Guyana Ltd., quickly became a ranked player. He practiced online from 8 p.m. to 2 or 3 a.m. daily and his game improved dramatically. "I was constantly in winner's row, placing either first, second or third," he notes, "and I was selected to represent Guyana in the Caribbean Championships."

A Toastmaster since 2003 who has served in many leadership roles, Adams went on to become the alternate representative from Guyana at the World Scrabble Championship in India.

Wang Yip, ACG, ALB, a seven-year member of the Dawnbreakers club in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, also finds Toastmasters and Scrabble "mutually supportive."

A Greater Challenge

It was the rigors of Scrabble competition that eventually forced Adams—whose involvement with Toastmasters and competitive Scrabble career were beginning to clash—into making a choice.

"I always look forward to a challenge," Adams says, "so I aspire to give my very best to whatever I am a part of. When I became a district officer, I could not have adequately dealt with the demands of remaining a competitive Scrabble player while serving my district."

He says he will likely return to the world of competitive Scrabble, where winning words can transcend anything a Toastmasters grammarian might present as the Word of the Day. For skeptics, Adams offers a handful of high-octane words that he's encountered in tournament play: *lazulis*, *zoochory*, *qabalah*, *qindars* and *xylogen*.

And yes, they're all real words. Grammarians, to your dictionaries! **T**

PATRICK MOTT is a Southern California-based writer and regular contributor to the *Toastmaster magazine*.

Becoming the Grammarian

The often-feared meeting role offers members big rewards.

BY LYNN MACKABEN BROWN



If you were asked to perform the grammarian role in your next club meeting, would you feel enthusiastic or would you rather swim with piranhas or jump from a plane? If you would hesitate to take on this role, you're in good company. Many members share this apprehension. But it doesn't have to be that way.

Many Toastmasters fear the grammarian role because they use poor grammar themselves. Perhaps they picked up bad habits from friends or family members, or left school at a young age to help support a family. I earned a master's degree, yet during all my years of school I was exposed to only six weeks of grammar instruction. Rome was not built in a day, and neither was the exceptional grammarian. The goal is improvement, not perfection.

Be realistic. Each time you improve, pat yourself on the back. You're on your way to acquiring an exceptional skill.

It's worth taking the time to improve grammar skills, even if it's bit by bit. Dennis E. Hensley, a motivational speaker and author of the book *Alpha Teach Yourself Grammar and Style in 24 Hours*, notes that if a speaker consistently uses incorrect grammar, it can be a distraction for "listeners who flag oral mistakes and then lose the speaker's message or mentally stray from the topic at hand."

The tips below can help you effectively navigate the grammarian role.

Be sensitive to others.

Some members are apprehensive about the role because they fear their fellow

members will be offended when evaluated on their grammar. But this doesn't need to be a problem. The grammarian is there to helpfully point out trouble spots, not to scold the speaker for making mistakes. "Remember, the goal isn't to criticize. It isn't even to correct," says Kim Krajci, DTM, of the Towpath Talkers in Masillon, Ohio. "The goal is to bring attention to a problem area."

Nevertheless, it's always best to consider the sensitivity of the speaker before deciding what, or how much, to say about the member in the grammarian's report. Marcia Roberts, DTM, of Eyeopeners club in Tucson, Arizona, puts it this way: "We want people to speak again and improve, not hide in shame."

Focus on progress.

It's also important that praise outweigh suggestions for improvement. Matthew Goldberg, ACB, CL, says, "One thing that may help members in the grammarian role is knowing they can be the good cop as well as the bad cop." A member of the Voorhees club in Voorhees, New Jersey, Goldberg suggests pointing out examples of proper grammar that a speaker uses, in addition to mentioning words that may detract from the presentation.

Members appreciate praise and recognition of their improvement in specific areas, especially those who struggle to master a skill. In one of my evaluations, I praised a

presentations? Do you need more confidence during job interviews? Perhaps you plan to expand your career by offering workshops. Filling the grammarian role will make you more aware of your grammatical shortcomings. Your increased awareness will help you to improve and meet your goals.

Be prepared.

Now comes the scary part: accepting the role. If you wonder how you will achieve success in your new role, the answer, of course, is by being prepared. Get a book on basic grammar and practice, practice, practice.

Mike Diggins, DTM, of Maungakiekie club in Auckland, New Zealand, suggests

of your club members. If your fellow club members seem more advanced than you in this area, choose a rule at your level. Members can always benefit from reviewing a rule they already know.

Once you have a thorough understanding of the rule, practice evaluating both formal presentations and informal conversations as they occur on TV, or elsewhere, to prepare for critiquing speeches and Table Topics in meetings.

List the rule in advance by notifying the member responsible for the meeting agenda. (Some clubs email their agendas before the meeting occurs.) This gives members some time to think about the rule, which is especially helpful to those giving speeches. Once you have a thorough understanding of this particular grammar principle, practice evaluating both formal presentations and informal conversations as they occur on TV, or elsewhere, to prepare for critiquing speeches and Table Topics in meetings.

Showtime.

In your first meeting as grammarian, it is crucial that you feel knowledgeable and prepared. Be thoroughly familiar with the grammar rule you chose, and be conscientious of your use of that rule in your introduction of the word of the day.

In your grammarian's report, address only the rule you came prepared to use in your critiques. Club members will enjoy greater success when they concentrate on just one rule, and this will give you the opportunity to praise the speakers. Additionally, take note of those who used the word of the day properly or described something in an interesting way.

You may be so flushed with success that you'll feel eager to be the grammarian again! **T**

LYNN MACKABEN BROWN *is a member of the Warsaw Noon club in Warsaw, Indiana. She is a freelance writer and the author of Furs and Fevers, a historical novel. For more information, including an excerpt from her book, visit www.lynnbrownwriter.com.*

Rome was not built in a day, and neither was the exceptional grammarian. The goal is improvement, not perfection.

member who was struggling valiantly with English as a second language. I commented on how he had mastered his prepared speeches, and suggested he concentrate on Table Topics. Instead of focusing only on the errors he made, I mentioned how his hard work and determination had triumphed, and his face lit up with pride and joy.

Learn from ESL members.

Those who try to master English as a second language have great challenges; yet on several occasions, I have seen non-native speakers take note of sloppy diction and grammatical errors that sometimes go unnoticed by native speakers. John Niles, DTM, of Akron Toastmasters in Akron, Ohio, is cognizant of the skills non-native speakers develop as they learn a new language. "In many of my visits as area and division governor, [I noticed that] the members with the best grasp of grammar were those who learned English as a second language."

Create goals.

Why do you attend meetings? Consider your goals for the next year or the next five years or 10 years. Do you want to make more

consulting your mentor. If your mentor feels unable to help you navigate the grammarian role, says Diggins, then seek out a mentor who can help with that particular role.

Focus on one grammar rule.

Sometimes a new, inexperienced grammarian can feel overwhelmed. It is important to realize you don't have to cite every rule of grammar to critique a speech. Everyone can learn to apply one rule—so just choose one and get started.

Adrian Melia, president of the Kildare club in County Kildare, Ireland, says his club opted to follow this advice. Initially, the club did not have a grammarian. Melia elicited suggestions on the LinkedIn Official Toastmasters International Members Group, and an online discussion ensued. "Everyone agreed, as I did, that the suggestion of the grammarian learning a single rule of grammar, presenting it at the meeting, and saying he or she would be looking at that, was the best idea of the lot, and the one they all took away with them to implement in their clubs," says Melia.

But how do you choose just one rule? Consider your level of expertise and the level



Knock Your Socks Off

Don't just use advanced technology. Wear it.

BY JOHN CADLEY

Socks. How, well, pedestrian. Yet in the Technological Age, where there is computer technology, automobile technology and even, God help us, beer technology, would it surprise you to know there is sock technology? I'm wearing it right now. And not just sock technology but advanced sock technology (technology has to be advanced; if it's not, it's junk, technically speaking). Yes, folks, I'm sitting here with my feet wrapped in thermal socks that have a TOG rating of 2.3. You may not know what that is, but I can assure you it beats whatever you slipped on *your* dogs this morning. That's because my socks haven't been knitted or woven. They've been *engineered*. Someone with taped eye glasses and a pocket protector made these things.

I hope the socks don't advance with me in them or I could end up running into a wall.

How much effort was put into the packaging of your socks? Just some wispy paper band holding them together? Mine came encased in flaming red and orange wrapping with enough technical information to launch a rocket. In fact, it isn't packaging at all. It's an *owner's manual*. And the first thing I learned is that TOG stands for Thermal Overall Grade. You might think that's marketing gobbledygook but it is not. It is a "recognized measure of a textile's thermal ability." Recognized by whom? Eskimos? Ice fishermen? Sergeant Preston of the Yukon? It doesn't say, but let's not quibble, not when I can rest assured that these socks are warmer than "heated, electric or battery operated socks." Thank goodness for that. Who wants electric socks? You probably have to plug them in and then tell your friends, "I can't go bowling tonight. My socks won't reach." Or battery operated. Imagine the embarrassment when you have to interrupt a meeting with, "My socks have died. Does somebody have a couple of spare double A's I could borrow?"

No, these babies make all that unnecessary. For starters, they have advanced insulating yarn that is made of advanced fibers. That's a lot of advancing. I hope the socks don't advance with

me in them or I could end up running into a wall. They also have "long looped thermal pile." This is "innovative knitting technology" that produces an "extra-long looping cushion pile to hold in more warm air." There's an illustration next to the copy and sure enough, these fibers do a loopy-loop all over the sock. How do you loop microscopic fibers? Either they have a heck of a looping department or someone in that place has really good eyes. And really tiny fingers.

Finally, there's a "soft brushed inner layer" produced by an "intense brushing process that maximizes the amount of warm air held inside the sock." I don't know how you brush the inside of a sock but, hey, these have a 2.3 TOG rating. Who cares? There's also "superior moisture wicking capability," so if I fall through the ice in February my feet will be the last to know.

The product's website gives even more information on how these socks were invented. Apparently a chap in Northern England went to a soccer match and had to go inside because his feet were freezing. Or, as the copy puts it, "A few minutes into the game David's feet started getting cold. It was like a frost creeping up into his legs through the tips of his toes. Soon, he couldn't feel his feet, only excruciating pain when he moved them." Sounds like a Dickens character with peripheral neuropathy.

Anyway, this guy got ticked off enough to call his connections in the hosiery business and come up with a sock that wouldn't make him feel like Ernest Shackleton stranded on an ice floe at the South Pole. "Now," the copy ends, "David doesn't have to go back inside while watching a game. He sits in the stand proudly cheering his team onwards," with socks that are like "sweaters for your feet." I like that. If they ever sell out of these things I can just stuff sweaters into my shoes.

Ultimately, the packaging promises you'll never have cold feet again. Really? Not even the day before you have to give a speech to 2,000 people? Or the night before your wedding? Now *that* would be advanced technology. **T**

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

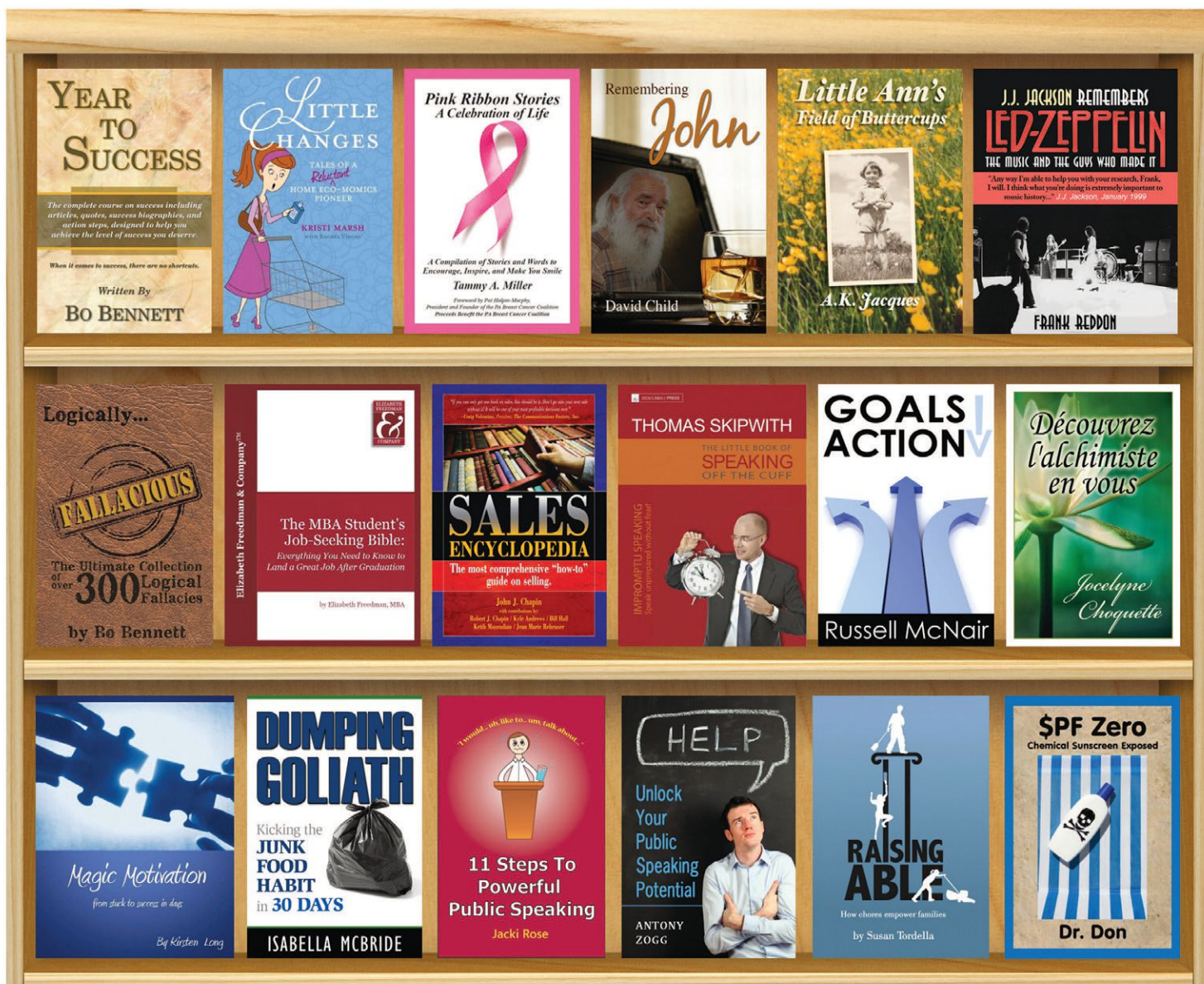
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