

# Toastmasters Clubs Best Practices

## Creating an Environment for Success

By Jack Schmidt, DTM

- **Have a Club website** that is updated with the club's latest information on when and where the club meets, contact information, etc..The club website serves as a central connecting link for guests, as well as members.
- **Make sure** your club's information is correct on club's website and also on Toastmasters International website.
- **Have local club dues** (working capital for open houses, awards, etc.) at least \$2 per month.
- **The club officers** should have an Executive Board meeting with an agenda once a month with standing reports (**Pres**: State of the Club Report, **VPE**: Status of Distinguish Club Program, Status of CL Signoffs, **VPM**: Status of Club Membership and Renewals, Status of Mentor Program, **VPPR**: VPPR activities Report (optional report), **Treasurer**: Treasurer's Report. Clubs that meet once a month should have their Executive Board meeting at least on a quarterly bases.
- **Have a Guest Package** with a welcome letter, an application to join the club, a Toastmasters magazine, Toastmasters brochures (#90, #101, #134, #1212) and a copy of \*Features, Benefits and Value. Place these components in a pocket file folder.
- **Have a New Member package.** It should at least contain a Welcome Letter, the \*Ice Breaker Speech, a Mentor Request Form, \*Distinguished Member Form,\* \*Distinguished Club Form,\* \*Membership Achievement Record,\* \*Map of Service to Members,\* \*10 Tips for Successful Public Speaking,\* \*A Toastmaster Wears Many Hats\*.
- **The VP of Membership** should orientate new members, using the New Member package
- **Vote New Members** into the club. A formal induction into the club can also be used along with the vote.
- **Warmly greet guests.** After the meeting, review club membership application with guests and show them what it costs to join the club, then invite them to join the club. Follow up with an email, telling them that it was great to meet them and ask them if they have any questions.
- **Give Awards** to members who achieve their next level on the Communication and/or Leadership Track. Minimum – Give them a pin appropriate to their new level in front of the whole club. Other recommended awards in addition to the pin include a magnetic badge with their name, their new level, club name and number and an advanced manual of their choice.
- **Have a Club Mentor Program.** Assign all new members a mentor for their first 3 (or more) speeches. Any club member should be able to request a mentor. The VP of Membership should maintain a tracking spreadsheet of club mentors and mentees that can be used as a report at the club's monthly Officers Executive Board Meeting. The VPE is a default mentor for new members until a mentor is assigned to the new member.
- **Have and maintain** a speech and leadership tracking spreadsheet and charts by the VP of Education. This will help you gage how your club is doing with its DCP/Club Success Plan and how the members are progressing with the DMP (Distinguished Member "Promise to Self"/Personal Contract.)
- **Hold open houses** on a regular schedule.



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- **Have an active, always-ongoing marketing program** to attract new club members.
- **Have fun** during the club meeting (Laugh and Learn).
- **Take advantage of the Distinguished Member Plan** and the **Distinguished Club Plan**.  
Download these helpful guidelines from *Foundersdistrict.org* (Select the Education tab.)
- **Lead by example**. Club officers set the example by delivering prepared speeches, using the CL manual, and working toward their next award on the Communication and Leadership track.
- **Club officers are trained every six months** at LACE Expos, presented twice a year.  
This vitalizes leadership competence and generates energy and enthusiasm.
- **Forge the club into a Team**. This will create ownership of the club by its members. When communicating via email to the club as a whole, or to the club officers as a group, address them with 'Hi Team'.
- **At the beginning of the meeting** ask the members who have a role at the meeting to exchange their CL manuals. Also put it on the agenda. Members on the Advanced Leadership track can also be working on another CL.
- **Send out promo emails** to the club members promoting the next meeting and reminding them to bring their CL manuals.
- **If a club meets in a restaurant**, members attending the meeting, in fairness to the restaurant, should order a meal.
- **The Club President, VP of Education** and **VP of Membership** are automatic members of the **Area Council** and should attend the monthly area council meetings. If for some reason they can't Attend, another club member should attend in their place. A least one club member should attend.
- **Hold the semiannual speech contests** at the club, conducted as close to the area contest format as possible. Go to *Foundersdistrict.org* for Contest Guidelines.
- **Members should always give manual prepared speeches** during regular meetings.

\* Downloadable from Toastmasters International website

\*\* Downloadable from the Founders District website (Public Relations Section)

### Recourses

- The Successful Club Series
  - Moments Of Truth (Item 290)
  - Finding New Members For Your Club (Item 291)
  - Evaluate To Motivate (Item 292)
  - Closing The Sale (Item 293)
  - Creating The Best Club Climate (Item 294)
  - Meeting Roles And Responsibilities (Item 295)
  - Mentoring (Item 296)
  - Keeping The Commitment (Item 297)
  - Going Beyond Our Club (Item 298)
  - How To Be A Distinguished Club (Item 299)
  - The Toastmasters Educational Program (Item 300)

