



Jay  
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Growing  
Your  
Toastmasters  
Club A Road  
Map for  
Public  
Toastmasters  
Clubs

# GROWING YOUR CLUB

## A ROAD MAP FOR SPECTACULAR RESULTS

This handbook is suitable for both Public and Corporate clubs. The difference is in how recruiting is performed, and corporate recruiting is not addressed in this handbook. The handbook is developed from real-world experience in using organizational development principles in a Toastmasters Club. The results were beyond what anyone expected, and the club documented what they did that created such dramatic and spectacular results.

The key findings are as follows:

- People join Toastmasters to grow. Showing progress charts stimulated healthy competition and showed the growth of every member, which encouraged first-time visitors to comprehend the actual level of growth being achieved. They saw that we practiced what we preached and joining OUR club gave guests the confidence that they would grow. This led to a high conversion rate among first-time guests.
- Defining the DCP awards program as a “Mission” enabled club members to operate as a cooperative, functional group, with a strong core of leaders and volunteers. The DCP program works when employed in this fashion.
- The Vision described the club at a future point of success. Every club in our area has 52 weeks, or meetings, to achieve something worthwhile. Leaders were committed to the DCP achievement of President’s Distinguished, and the vision was a lively, fun and vibrant club that would provide a safe environment for new and experienced speakers. The Mission & Vision worked together to motivate members to attend meetings and reach CC & CL goals. This improved member attendance and retention as compared to TM published statistics.
- Tactile “Best of” awards are more advertising than award. When a member or guest won Table Topics or some other “contest”, they were presented with something they could touch, wear or eat. While this was on its surface a minor event, the conversations about the experience are strong word of mouth advertising. Giving a tactile award, created a sense of accomplishment when discussed with others outside the club. Showing off a 30-cent plastic trophy created an opportunity for that person to invite a friend. We saw as many as 5 people join at a time because of a single guest who came once, won a trophy and brought his entire family business to join the club.
- Email campaigns using business cards and superpages.com were highly effective in attracting new members and required 2-3 hours per week to perform. Responses to an email invitation were overwhelmingly positive, even if the time/location or circumstances prevented joining. The general public has a high opinion of Toastmasters.

### We Didn't Know what We Didn't Know: Recruiting Comes Last

As new officers in the club, we did not know what methods of marketing or advertising would work to build our membership. We knew what our goal was (30 members) and the time frame we had to achieve it (52 weeks). This is the list of what we did for the first 90 days:

- **100 emails per week** to emails obtained from bulletin boards, store counters, retail and other vendors, etc. These are the “unknown/unknown” market. They’re not in your contacts list or even people you’ve ever met. I track responses at around 1.5% - it also brought in the most guests.
- **50 phone calls to my industry peers.** These are your “known/unknown” market. These may be people you’ve met at industry meetings, seminars, events, etc. Maybe you’ll remember one another, maybe not. Lots of HR, small business owners and sales people are at this level with me. Who matches your industry?
- **5 CEO meetings per week.** This is your “Unknown/Known” market. They don’t know you, and you only know them by contact info; Company, Title, etc. Market TM’s Communication & Leadership training and relate it to employees & supervisors. This is a development market and requires continued contact to result in cooperation.
- **Drop Flyers** – Twice a week I put 5 or 6 1/6<sup>th</sup> page printed flyers on fluorescent paper on windshields of cars parked in parking lots (get permission for small lots). You can also leave these in shopping carts – face up.
- **Full-color Flyers & Magazines** – Drop TMI literature with your club’s contact info in any waiting room you happen to be in. I have put the TM magazine in salons & barbershops, doctor & dentist’s offices, oil change shops, a church lobby... you get the point. All have our club’s contact information. Ask for copies of TM magazine from members. Label them and then have members drop them off at various locations in their circles of life.
- **Print Media** – Run ads appearing weekly in the local paper, the small town nearby newspapers and the major newspaper in the area. Pass out business cards to cashiers, waiters, salespeople and others. Post index cards in store community boards and leave them at your dry cleaner, on the table of guest passes at your gym, on gas pumps... I try to give out 10 a day.
- **Web / Internet** – When I began, we had an unused blog and no other web presence. We now have an official club website through Toastmasters, a Landing/Capture page for SEO purposes to capture visitor data, and a meetup.org website for file sharing, discussion, polling and intra-club-member communications. Superpages.com allows searches in specific towns, beginning with business name “a” through “Z”, and each company website has a minimum of one connection to a real person. If they list a team, email each of them individually with a cut & paste message.
- Our club was a member of the Snohomish **Chamber of Commerce.** This was a better speaking opportunity than a draw for new members. We did not continue our membership.
- **Craigslist** – every weekend, post another meeting on Craigslist’s web site.
- **Washington WorkSource** – work with a Washington WorkSource counselor. They often refer job seekers to Toastmasters. These people often get jobs and re-connect with Toastmasters.
- **Schools** – Communicate with the community colleges in the area and develop relationships with staff members.
- **Social media** – try to find someone who loves Facebook, Twitter, Pintrest, and the rest to help promote the club.

- **Toastmaster pins** –Wear them whenever you’re going to be in public. I wore mine on Thanksgiving and convinced a family relation to join a club when she went back home to Spokane.
- **Weekly Email plan** – Our meetings occur on Fridays. Our Secretary sends out minutes of the meeting to all members and guests (for 90 days) by Monday. Our VPE sends out a speaking or leadership role reminder email on Wednesdays to all members. The President sends out an invitation to the next meeting on Thursdays. Three different reminders works to increase attendance. One is for review, one is for accountability and the last is for encouragement. Keep them short.
- **Induction Ceremony** – We currently have members stand and we applaud the presentation of membership cards. We hold a formal induction ceremony whenever we have 3 or more new members.

\_\_\_ **Contest Awards** – we have ribbons from past awards and members donate award ribbons to the club flag. This is not required, but members who win are encouraged to loan their ribbons and awards to be displayed on our flag for all to see. (a replacement can be purchased from TM)

\_\_\_ **Internet tools** - Meetup, FreeToastHost, WordPress sites and central Gmail account created

Notice that we didn’t do any Open Houses, Speech Craft events or other “traditional” TM membership drive techniques. This was initially more due to the small number of members in the club. We didn’t feel we could do it well, so we chose not to. Later, our results were strong, so we had no need. I can’t tell you whether these traditional techniques work, only that we didn’t do them. If you can make them work, go ahead and use them. My overall philosophy is that if it works, do it, if it doesn’t, find out why and then decide to do it differently or dump it. That’s how we determined which activities we would continue using.

## **Club Development Checklist**

Conduct a Moments of Truth Survey

Encourage every member to participate by a set deadline

Set MOT Meeting with Senior Toastmaster on the Education or Development Committee for your District

Officer "Big Why" discussion (reasons for joining, volunteering)

Recognize that what gets rewarded gets done well and/or more often

Progress Charts are maintained and posted for members to review

Recognition is given for manual completions, competitions, etc.

"Best Of" for speeches, evaluations & table topics get something they can feel, eat or wear

Recognize that whatever gets measured gets improved

DCP program points are your mission objectives. Plan to meet your objectives

Membership roster; when you lose 1 member, you must gain 2 more. Approximately 50% of members will attend any given meetings.

Number of meeting attendees (Track by month)

The personal value for each individual must exceed the burden imposed by the requirements of membership (writing, practicing & presenting speeches) and even just showing up

Culture (enthusiasm level, fun, spontaneity) - Meeting should be THE MOST, supportive, enjoyable and uplifting meeting of the week

Arrivals (on-time, welcome late arrivals in front of the membership)

Departures (ask to join, visit again, bid goodbye) Never let them disappear!

Clarity, communication and Consistency don't happen by accident. You must build a system that is easy to learn, easy to teach and easy to maintain when officers change

### **Weekly communication to all members and guests for the last 4 weeks**

Meeting Summary email- Secretary within 2 days of meeting

Educational notice email- VP Education within 4 days of meeting

Agenda for next meeting - Toastmaster within 2 days before next meeting

Presidential Invitation email- President day before meeting

Recognize that officers are servants of the members. The President is the servant of the officers AND the members

### **De-mystify the roles of officers for members**

Weekly VP Introductions - 2 minute speech:

- What VP has done since last report?
- What VP is learning/gaining by performing role?
- How much time VP is dedicating to role? (Max should be 2 hrs per wk)

President's Address to the club (Goals, Achievements, Project updates, etc.)

Club Visits

- Visit other clubs to bring fresh ideas to your club

Contests

- Attend, volunteer and/or compete during both competition seasons (Spring/Fall)
- District and Area incentive contests

Training

- All officers attend training early
- Make up sessions for officers unable to make initial training events
- President's Breakfast
- Other club events
- Area/District events

Value people's time. Follow an agenda, allow for flexibility

If using FreeToastHost or EasySpeak set deadline for sign ups

VP Education assigns non-filled roles based on member need

Toastmaster (or other designee) brings printed agendas to meeting

Create a Mission - Use the DCP Program

Set overall goal of President's Distinguished

Break goal into 12 months/52 meetings (minus holidays)

Create a Vision - What will the club look like when you succeed?

Describe what your meetings will look like when you succeed

Anticipate how many members will be on roster

Determine how many speakers will be able to speak at a meeting

Adjust how long your meeting will need to be to accommodate

Determine which contests the club plans to win

Note~ Re-state the Mission and Vision frequently. Talk about it before, during and after meetings. Send out emails ... Keep it "top of mind" among your members.

Give people something they can touch, eat or wear:

- Best speaker
- Best Evaluator
- Best Table topics
- completed manuals

Set Club Dues Amount & Schedule

Set up Bank Account

Set up Pay Pal Account to make payments easier

Inform Members of Dues; begin to remind members of upcoming dues 2-3 months early

### **Consider your Guest Services Process**

- Arrival to the venue - What do they see when they drive up?
- Walking to the meeting - What is the walk to the venue like?
- Greeting - Do you have someone assigned to greet guests? How?
- Seating - Do you have an officer designated to sit with guests?
- During the meeting - Seat with an Officer or Experienced Member
- Immediately After the meeting - The Invitation to join
- Departure - Affirm their departure. Don't let them just disappear.
- Post-meeting Follow up plan - First Contact, 3x Weekly

Weekly Reminders: Summary, VP agenda, President Invite

Develop the Proper Mindset

Recruiting members is EVERYONE's Responsibility

Every member should bring in business cards for the VP Membership

Email campaign is effective sometimes; don't limit recruiting to one method

Start a Mentorship System Every new member for

- Ice Breaker
- Next 2 speeches

Toastmasters Credit for Mentorships

Pay it forward - Teach others this system

- Next Year's Officers in Your club
- Other clubs in your Area

### **NOW - BEGIN to Recruit**

Develop your marketing plan: Answer the Questions:

What tools will be utilized?

When will recruiting duties be conducted?

How will recruiting duties be distributed?

#### ***Suggestion for division of duties:***

VP Membership: 1 to 1 contact (individual email, meeting, etc.)

VP Public Relations: 1 to many contact (Newspapers, Press releases, notices, public presentations, etc.)

**Suggested Tools** (add any to this list as you find working for your club)

- **Business Cards & Email**
- Internet tools - Superpages.com & Company Websites
- Business Visitations
- Local print publications & Inserts
- Member resources (anyone in marketing, media or other in the club?)
- Web Sites: designate a person or team to update

## Words of Wisdom

Toastmasters has a very good reputation. When you speak to people about the club, you'll hear that they knew someone who was a member, they have thought about joining, or they would like to join but your club's meeting time is not good for them. Don't be afraid to reach out to people.

**Business cards are advertisements. Collect them.** Anytime you see a bulletin board or stacks of business cards, take one of each. Leave the last card though for real customers. Nobody will ever stop you from taking business cards - That's what they're there for! Give them to your VP Membership.

Always invite people to a meeting. Ask them to join at the end of their first visit, but don't press the issue. Have someone contact all new visitors after the meeting to thank them for coming and encourage them to return.

At your meetings, have a plan for who will greet and sit by new visitors. Knowing 3-4 deep who is going to greet and sit with new members helps the member feel welcomed and comfortable during the meeting.

Remember to apply Toastmasters to the world of work. Communication & Leadership skills are in use everywhere! Share stories of how you used what you've learned. Have a "Toastmaster's Moment" in your meetings.

Be a "Lifer". There is so much more than club meetings in Toastmasters. Get involved. Have fun.

If you want to reduce the amount of time wasted on ineffective recruiting efforts, you need to know what works and what doesn't. It helps if you keep track of what is being done to recruit members.

Track how many magazines you leave, how many emails you send, etc. Do this for 4 weeks and analyze your results.

Remember that not all recruiting is equal. Passive activities, like leaving a magazine are hit and miss and will have a lower return rate. Active activities, like making a phone call or sending an email have a higher likelihood of successfully inviting a guest.

Passive activities are the long-term investments in your club. They don't bring in a large number of members immediately, but they do serve to raise awareness of your club. For example, if you leave a magazine with a label on it at a doctor's office, it may stay there for months. Dozens of people may see it, activating their Reticular Activation system. If you've never heard of the reticular activator, imagine you just bought a car. Prior to buying your car, you'd rarely, if ever seen one just like it. Then as you drive it home, you see five of them. They were there all along, but now you notice them. That's what your reticular action does. Advertisers say it takes 5-7 exposures to activate, so don't stop your passive activities.

You'll also notice that our process doesn't include things like Open Houses, Speech craft events, or some of the other traditional Toastmasters events. I also don't include community activities like parades, socials, and the like. My reason for this is that this process is self-sufficient, and meant to provide a framework. How you "flesh in" the framework is up to you. Do what works and keep your Mission in mind in all of your decisions. If you see your attendance numbers falling, rather than considering adding an event, you might want to reexamine either your guest services process or your recruiting efforts or both. Knowing your numbers is the most important part of running a club, so the Secretary and the VP Education are among the most important positions on your team. Use reports to guide your activities. A speech craft may work just fine, but it may or may not be the correct option at that time. Measure any actions against your mission.

Charge members club dues. It may be true that a club will lose members if they are not currently charging dues and decide to do so. But without "Skin in the game" members have no vested interest in whether the club succeeds or fails. You'll also need funds to purchase membership items, awards, etc. So it's necessary, though at times unfortunate, but you owe it to your membership to charge a fee for the value they receive from Toastmasters.

One other note about dues; if you contact a stranger and invite them to Toastmasters, they may ask what it costs to join your club. If you say it's free, you create an impression that there is little or no value. Once in a while when I'm asked this question, I say, "It costs \$25,000 - or at least that's what my last company paid for managers to get this kind of training. For you, about a hundred bucks a year! How's that for a deal?"

I hope you find this handbook useful and that your club generates the results you hope for. A rising tide raises all boats, so all I ask in return is that you pass this information on to other Toastmasters clubs.

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## **Sample Email Program**

One important thing that anyone doing the recruiting for your club needs to understand:

Nearly everyone has an interest in improving their communication & leadership skills. Therefore, it is not an intrusion to send an email, or to call on someone to offer them an opportunity to do that. Toastmasters enjoys a very positive reputation because it works, and many people who've joined our club said they were simply waiting for an invitation to get the ball rolling. Don't hesitate to invite people – you're not selling anything, so don't feel as if your contact is a sales call. It is an invitation to visit a club that specializes in developing people's communication & leadership skills.

### **Sample Email Campaign Process**

Collect business cards from your club's area and email each with an invitation

Visit Superpages.com and enter the city and surrounding towns for your club; Enter "A" to search for companies. When completed, enter "B" and so forth.

Visit the websites of the companies that come up as a result; If they are listed, email individuals of the company; if not, email the "Contact us" or Info @ email – somebody reads them.

Whenever you receive a positive response, Blind copy the VP Membership who is typically responsible for membership and guest materials

Whenever you receive a negative response due to a time conflict, geographic conflict, etc. Refer them to Toastmasters.org to find a club that works for them.

Keep your email brief – people receive lots of emails. Don't be a prolific writer.

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### **Sample Email for Cut & Paste**

**Subject line:** Please be my guest

**Body:** Greetings! My name is \_\_\_\_, I am the \_\_\_\_ (your position in the club) of the \_\_\_\_ (your club's name) and I would like to invite you to attend a meeting as my personal guest!

We meet (time & location of club meeting)

If you would like to attend, simply let me know and I'll save you a seat!

Sincerely,

### **GET MORE GUESTS USING IDEAS OTHER MEMBERS HAVE GLEANED OVER THE YEARS**

1. Place Flyers, Brochures, Newsletters and Magazines: Bulletin boards, Library, Coffee shops, College, Churches, Retirement Centers, Apartment Bulletin Boards, Utility Company Bulletin Boards, Grocery stores, Restaurants, Recreational center, Doctor's office, Dentist's office, Movie Theater, Company internal websites, Airport, City Hall, Police Station, Banks, Post Office, Bookstores, Chamber of Commerce, Beauty Saloon, Hair Stylists, Colleges and Tech/Vocational Schools.
2. Tear-Off Flyers – Consider having tear-off tabs on the bottom of your flyers so that potential guest can take your club's website address and/or contact number home with them. TIP: Tear off at least one tab, since no one likes to be the first one to rip a flyer and it already looks like someone else is going.
3. Pop-Up Banners – For under \$150, many companies create highly visible, full-color, 7 foot tall easy-to-carry banners that you can use to show photos of members having fun, while adding bullet statements of what membership includes. World Headquarters is happy to review and approve your design before you have it printed. The banner shown here was approved for District 84 and is well received wherever it is displayed.
4. Get into the "Spirit" of things...Invite congregation members from your church to a meeting, letting them know that in order to share their spiritual message, nothing beats improving their communication skills!
5. Give the "Gift of Confidence" to someone you know. Create your own gift certificate that members can purchase to pre-pay dues as a gift for whomever they choose. This works well for graduates, family members, friends or someone low on funds. After six months, when they fall in love with the value of Toastmasters, they'll continue their membership from there, but they'll thank you for a lifetime for the door you've opened!
6. Recycle Magazines. If members belong to more than one club, ask them to bring their extra copies of the Toastmaster magazine to your club meetings. Just put a label with your club's website and meeting time/place over the member's personal address. Prepare a binder with these copies, and have it available for review by guests. Plan a club membership building contest.
7. Create a 30 second video commercial for your website, showing members having fun. This is easily done with today's smartphones. Someone in your club already knows how to do this and videos draw more Internet traffic your way.
8. Hall of Fame: Post photos of your weekly ribbon winners on your website and encourage your members to have their family and friends see the photos. You can make a Hall Of Fame area on your site to archive meetings.
9. Does your club have a "Meetup" website? Meetup is becoming a huge source of visitors seeking something fun and/or educational to do with their days or nights. Some districts even cover the expenses. See [www.meetup.com](http://www.meetup.com) for details.

10. Become a spy and encourage your members to do so as well! If your District does not already have one, suggest implementing a Club Ambassador Program where members receive recognition for visiting other clubs to glean new ideas! This also applies to visiting other clubs during your travels.
11. Invite a member from another club (look for one who you believe is especially motivational in their speaking ability) to do an education module at one of your club meetings. Create a guest list to invite prospective members who can benefit from the topic. Choose from the Successful Club or Successful Speaker series. (Note: the evaluation and listening modules work particularly well.)
12. Design a club brochure and distribute it to prospective members. You can find plenty of free formats on [toastmasters.org](http://toastmasters.org)
13. Make It Personal! Send personal notes to members that you haven't seen for a while or go "old school" and place a phone call. Let them know that you've missed them, and are anxious to have them back. Don't wait until renewals time. No one likes to feel that the only thing missed is their money.
14. Meeting AFTER the Meeting – Some clubs just can't get enough speaking for the evening. If you're in one of those speak-till-you-drop clubs, see if there's a local restaurant or pub nearby where anyone who's interested, can stop by for more camaraderie and bonding time. That's what several clubs in our district do. Cheers!
15. Develop a web site listing your club information. Make it visually appealing and interesting. (NOTE: Toastmasters has specific guidelines regarding web sites. Be sure to check this information on [toastmasters.org](http://toastmasters.org)).
16. Keep it Fresh – Be sure your contact information is CURRENT on the TI website and your own club's webpage. Ensure the contact person gives the friendliest representation possible when someone tries to contact them. Give them a call out of the blue to see how they respond.
17. Invite your Area or Division Directors to present your members' educational awards to them. This makes for a great photo op as well as a press release to your community.
18. In corporate clubs, invite a member's supervisor to present any educational awards to the member. Again, take photos and send them for posting in your corporate newsletter.
19. Create a holiday invitation (St. Pat's, Halloween, Thanksgiving, spring, etc.) and ask each member to hand out invitations to friends and co-workers. Plan your agenda around a holiday theme.
20. Road Trip! Schedule your meeting in a new location where it will get new visibility. Suggestions: community center, library, retirement community, book store, etc. Get the facility to help promote your special appearance. Invite guests.
21. Play Hooky Once in a While – When is the last time your club got together outside the club for something fun. Party, bowling night, night at the movies or more? You can still do Table Topics or even a speech or two in a tailgate party in the parking lot!

22. Appreciation night: Honor a community member at a special meeting. Ask the guest to say a few words promoting Toastmasters. Be sure to have lots of guests to help express your appreciation.
23. Flash Mob at Work! Believe it or not, the Wyndham Club in Orlando went so far as to begin singing "You've lost that nervous feeling" to the Righteous Brother's tune, in the company cafeteria, having other "planted" TM's in the room joining in. At the end, they flipped over their food trays to display messages of "JOIN TOASTMASTERS!" on the bottom. They signed TEN new members that day!
24. Plan a special showcase meeting. Invite members from around the district to present a special program. Invite guests and be ready to sign them up on the spot.
25. Generate Press Releases for everything exciting your club does. Don't be discouraged if it takes a while to be noticed. (NOTE: Small community newspapers are likely to give you the best coverage.) You can get a free press release account at [www.prlog.org](http://www.prlog.org)
26. Press release announcing your clubs anniversary
27. Press release announcing the induction of new club officers
28. Press release announcing your local Mayor's Toastmasters Week Proclamation
29. Press release about your club's open house meeting
30. Press release about a special guest speaker coming to your club
31. Press release about a your club's speech contest winner at the Area, Division, District or International level
32. Press release about your major club and member awards
33. Press release on your club's speaker bureau
34. Press release on Toastmasters anniversary
35. Press release on a new club demonstration meeting
36. Press release on a new club charter night
37. Press release on your club's youth leadership program
38. Press release on your club's SpeechCraft program
39. Press release tying Toastmasters and new self-improvement goals people set at the beginning of the new year
40. Press release on your Distinguished Club awards or even District recognition ribbons.
41. Conduct a SpeechCraft. If you do not have enough members to successfully launch the program, call on members from other clubs to help out. Warning: don't expect someone else to do all the work,

though. This is an excellent 4-8 week tool to introduce potential members into the program, with secondary benefits of re-charging current members.

42. Your club can sponsor a booth at a food festival, job fair or any other event open to businesses or non-profits. Check your community calendars, chambers of commerce and more for upcoming events. Have a plan to follow up with interested individuals and groups.

43. Participate in a parade in your local community.

44. Ask your Chamber of Commerce to list your Toastmaster meeting information in their newsletter.

45. Become involved in your local Chamber of Commerce

46. Speak at your city's Chamber of Commerce meetings.

47. Host a Chamber of Commerce social hour

48. Send club information to your local merchants via the Chamber of Commerce. Ask them to distribute it to their customers. This would include flyers.

49. Contact your city's various cultural centers. They may be interested in starting a SpeechCraft for their members or perhaps a club. (NOTE: Many of these individuals will have English as a second language. It may be helpful to work with someone who is associated with the specific cultural community.)

50. Do you live in a non-English speaking community? Ask someone to write out a poster in that language. Parents will read it and encourage their children to join so that someone in their family can communicate fluently and effectively, and so that their children can "get ahead".

51. Invite your family and friends to attend a speech contest. Even if you're only going to support other Toastmasters who are competing.

52. Develop a silent seller award in your club. A silent seller is an award that is given to a person who has 10 straight weeks of perfect attendance. Their prize can be any item from the Toastmasters catalog such as a bumper sticker, mug, paperweight, pen, sun visor, clothing, tie, mouse pad, trophy, or a magazine holder. Ask your winners to display these items at their home or at work. They make excellent conversation starters.

53. Set up a silent salesman at a grocery store. A "silent salesman" is simply a small stand which holds promotional materials.

54. Have your club, organize or judge, speech contests or debates for High School students.

55. Give seminars to High School students regarding career planning and the importance of communication

56. Develop a custom made bumper sticker that has your club's website and put it on your car.

57. Take all Toastmasters ribbons, awards, and trophies that you win and display them at work.

58. Slap a Toastmaster bumper sticker or license plate frame on your car and use a TM coffee mug and mouse pad at work. Little things get noticed!

59. Develop and Set up Highway signs that promote your club. Many states allow signs for adopting sections of highways. Caution: there are normally a minimal amount of maintenance required for the section you adopt.

60. Distribute flyers to Condo and Apartment Managers and ask them to give it to their tenants.

61. Wear Toastmasters buttons or clothing

62. Wear funny hats with the name of your Toastmasters club on them. People love clubs with a sense of humor!

63. Hand out balloons with your clubs name on them and how to contact you.

64. Offer a symposium or class on a topic that one of your club members is an expert on.

65. Offer classes or lectures on leadership and/or communication

66. Develop and distribute bookmarks that promote your club

67. Do a communication or leadership class at work to let them know about your club.

68. Do a workshop on communication and leadership at your club

69. Do a formal presentation on Toastmasters at a civic group like the Rotary

70. Provide leadership seminars for the unemployed.

71. Invite the media to your club. Make sure to give them a reason for coming such as putting on a debate, doing famous speeches, induction of new club officers, or speech contest

72. Form a community outreach team that presents 30-minute Toastmasters programs before business, educational, community and government groups, social and service clubs, professional and trade associations and civic organizations.

73. Have club business cards made with your meeting date, location, time, and a contact number. Pass them out everywhere. Templates are on the toastmasters.org website

74. Run a Toastmaster ad in your company newsletter. Invite your boss to a club meeting.

75. Ask your company to place a simple plug about your club on the weekly pay stubs

76. Make a list of all the people you know who would benefit from Toastmasters. Invite one person from the list to each meeting. Offer them a ride to the meeting, then ASK them to join.

77. Wear your Toastmaster pin on a regular basis, not just at Toastmaster meetings.

78. Encourage your members to join your district's Speakers Bureau. Make sure your speakers promote Toastmasters at their engagements.
79. When someone compliments you on a presentation or a speech, be sure to mention that you developed your skills in Toastmasters. Ask if they would be interested in doing the same.
80. Have a Table Topics session that is based on membership ideas. Make sure someone writes down all the ideas and then plan a follow up strategy.
81. Challenge other clubs in your area to a membership contests. Loser buys pizza for the winning club.
82. If you belong to other organizations which schedule speakers (Kiwanis, Rotary, Knights of Columbus, Lions, etc.), be sure to get a fellow Toastmaster on the program.
83. Write articles for your local newspaper. Make sure your biographical information includes your Toastmaster membership.
84. Read your Toastmaster magazine each month. There are good membership ideas in it.
85. Plan an executive committee meeting and brainstorm for ideas about how to reach prospective members. Attend officer training and talk to officers from other clubs about how they prospect for members.
86. List your Toastmaster membership and achievements on your resume, as appropriate.
87. Become active in your community. This puts you in touch with other people who may be interested in Toastmasters.
88. If you meet in a public location, ask to post Toastmaster's "Club Meets Here" placard or other sign which announces your meeting location, date and time.
89. If you meet at a church or other community location where you pay a small token as a meeting room fee, discuss the possibility of trading a new membership and six month dues payment as your fee. The out of pocket expense to the club would be comparable, the benefit to the church would be that a member would be sponsored to a Toastmaster membership, and hopefully this would encourage other people to join. Sponsor a new member for each period of time that you make a payment. After the initial six months, the member becomes responsible for their own dues payment.
90. Contact a women's shelter about sponsoring a SpeechCraft. Since these are generally women in transition, make sure they have information about where to join a club after the SpeechCraft ends. Check with the agency that sponsors the shelter. They may be willing to have the SpeechCraft as a regular part of their program.
91. Membership is the responsibility of every Toastmaster, not just the Vice President of Membership.
92. Leaflet a neighborhood with flyers about your club. (NOTE: This works well in apartment or condominium complexes.)

93. Time to Split? Is your club so large that members aren't getting speaking opportunities? If this is your challenge, consider splitting into two clubs with at least 20 members in each club. (NOTE: This option is viable, but may cause other challenges to develop.)

94. Always let your friends know how much fun you have belonging to Toastmasters.

95. Write an article for the Toastmaster magazine. Circulate it at your work. If you own your own business, have you encouraged your employees to join Toastmasters?

96. Ask the people you do business with on a regular basis to come with you to a meeting. Some ideas: banker, grocery clerk, gardener, veterinarian, postal clerk, real estate agent, clergy, retail store clerk, etc. Do you use the services of a department store personal shopper? These people come in contact with hundreds of people a day, and need strong communication skills. Ask yours to accompany you to a club meeting.

97. Ask a district officer to come to a membership-building meeting and give an inspirational address.

98. Talk with your area director about membership problems you are facing. Sometimes getting an outsider's opinion will give you a new way of looking at things. They are your liaison to all district marketing resources.

99. Participate in career day at school where you can tell students about Toastmasters. Don't forget, many high school seniors are eighteen and eligible to join a club.

100. If your club meets at a church, request that your meeting location be published in the church newsletter or bulletin.

101. If you have children over 18, remember that they can join Toastmasters. While you may not want them in your own club, encourage them to find a club that will work for them. And don't forget their friends!

102. Buy a Toastmaster T-shirt from the catalogue. Wear it when you work out, exercise, to the grocery store. Be prepared to answer questions.

103. Personally donate a conference registration for your district's conference. Arrange to meet with the successful bidder at the conference, and convince them to visit a club.

104. Post club flyers at local business school and vocational schools. Develop contacts and local business and vocational schools. Ask to give a presentation to classes regarding communication skills and how valuable they are in the job market. Have Toastmaster club information available to pass out and encourage students to attend a meeting. (NOTE: If the instructor permits, get names and addresses of students who would like someone to follow up with them.)

105. Get some fellow Toastmasters to donate time for a television fundraising campaign like PBS, telethons, etc. Wear Toastmaster T-shirts. If you get a group together the station will give the organization a plug. If it's a large enough group, you may be able to arrange an on camera interview about the organization.

106. Develop a list of potential members who have e-mail access. Forward to these people, information about Toastmaster events. Keep people on the e-mail list as long as there is interest. Don't SPAM! Only e-mail people that you've had contact with. Remove people from your mailing list, if requested.
107. Look for ways to get publicity for Toastmasters in general and your club in particular. Pay attention to your District website to find out what upcoming events your club can get involved with.
108. Let members know of the TM award pins they can earn for recruiting five or more new members.
109. Once a quarter have a "Guest Night." Each member should bring at least one guest. Break club members into teams and have a one month membership contest. The team that signs up the most new members is served a special dessert, provided by members of the other team(s). Have a guest evening that is totally devoted to guests. Have a speaker explain what Toastmasters is all about, how much it costs, meeting frequency and time, etc.
110. Ask a Toastmaster who is working in the Discussion Leader advanced manual to do a session to lead the club in a membership building idea session.
111. Ask TI for a list of all your club's former members. Plan a special event and invite them all. Include them in the program, if possible. Send out a press release, and if any of your former members are high profile in the community, be sure to mention this in the press release.
112. Consider scheduling a social event that can showcase what Toastmasters can offer. Make sure you follow up on all new member leads.
113. Have a monthly drawing for a Toastmaster prize. Every time a member brings a guest to a meeting, their name is put into a basket for a drawing. At the last meeting of the month a name is drawn out and a prize is awarded. Have a duplicate prize to give the guest if they became a member.
114. Contact local businesses to see if they will allow your club to have a counter display at their location. Have and use a club web page.
115. Research the possibility of running an ad (even better if you can get an interview or article) in Company newsletters of businesses in your area.
116. Place an ad in local church newsletters or programs.
117. Develop club talking points that can be used when talking to prospective members.
118. Develop a public relations campaign to keep your club name in the public eye.
119. If you have a good membership idea, forward it on to your District Officers for inclusion in the District Newsletter. Hopefully other clubs can benefit from your idea as well.
120. Break down your annual goal for new members into a monthly goal. It will seem much easier to meet that way.

121. Prepare a two sided flyer. One side tells all about Toastmasters; the other side gives testimonials about the organization, along with the profession of the individual. Distribute to local businesses.
122. If members have membership in multiple clubs, collect the extra Toastmaster magazines and distribute to local businesses. Have a card stapled to the front with CURRENT information about who to call for more information.
123. Prepare a flyer listing clubs in your geographical area, rather than just an individual club.
124. Organize an Area advertisement in local papers listing all the clubs. It makes us seem more organized and implies that you can call one and get referred to others.
125. Survey your members to find why people joined your club. Then focus on those benefits in your PR and in your meetings.
126. Ask people like you to come to Toastmasters. You joined, so people like you will too.
127. Say, "I'll pick you up on my way". The hardest step for a guest is often coming to the meeting; it's harder to have a change of heart when you are on their doorstep. It's easier for a guest when they already know someone at the meeting who will escort them in and get over those first nervous introductions. Remember 85% of people self-classify themselves as "shy". Make it easy for them to make the first step.
128. Ask older members of the club what advertising campaign worked best and repeat it. After a year, most campaigns are very repeatable.
129. Local Government: Contact your city hall for information on how to get your message displayed on the city's cable TV programming.
130. Get your club listed in the city's community services calendar published through the Parks and Recreation Dept.
131. Put small cards in all the public speaking books in your local library.
132. Poster rounds: Posters get taken down often on community bulletin boards. Have a supply of replacement posters. Create a club team to keep an eye out and replace the missing posters. Always keep the information current.
133. Employee orientation. Give orientation staff packets about Toastmasters to give to new employees and stories about successes to share with them.
134. Testimonials; Ask the boss for a testimonial on the importance of good communication. (He/she can hardly refuse!)
135. Speech communication classes at Universities. Arrange to have a TM give a guest lecture.
136. Orientation week at Universities... have a booth, spread promo flyers. Get some lecturers to write a note about the importance of good communication skills in their classes.

137. Student leadership classes: Offer to run one at your local school. Have a big splash to finish the course with parents invited. That way you get the parents as possible members as well as parental encouragement for the students to join when they turn 18.

138. Billboards; Billboard owners will put on public service announcements at no cost apart from printing the material. Get pre-approval from WHO for any graphics you wish to use.

139. Write human interest stories for local papers. One TM got 11 stories published over about 12 months, each one approximately 500 words with a photo about one club member and how they came to be living in that locality.

140. Make sure your website is on all club literature.

141. Challenge your members to use the word "Toastmasters" at least once each week with someone they have not talked about Toastmasters with before. (E.g. when picking up photocopying, "for a public speaking club like Toastmasters, there seems to be a lot of reading!") Give out prizes for the most creative lines at your meetings.

142. PR is an on-going process. Marketing wisdom says most people need to be offered something 5 times before they actually buy it. Many of those 5 times for your guests will be from PR from previous executives. Leave a legacy for future executives and schedule PR as a regular component of your club activities.

#### GUESTS TO MEMBERS

143. Get your stories. Have your own personal favorite success story (OPFSS) for nervous and fearful guests. Have your OPFSS for confident guests. Share the stories at a success story meeting.

144. Use the videos from Toastmasters at a specially designed recruiting meeting. (NOTE: Your Club Growth Director and Division Director should have these videos.)

145. Start every meeting with an ENTHUSIASTIC Sgt-At-Arms and NEVER make excuses for your meeting even if only four members show up. For all a guest knows...that's all you expected to show up!

146. Develop procedures to follow up on new member leads. (Email, phone calls, etc.)

147. Keep business to a minimum at meetings when you have guests. Guests don't care about the business any way. If you don't have business to conduct, skip the business meeting all together.

148. Order membership supplies from the Toastmaster catalog. Make sure you reorder before you run out. Have these available for guests.

149. Invite a prospective member to attend a conference with you.

150. If a guest visits your club, but the meeting time or location doesn't work out for them, make sure you refer them to another club. Contact a district officer if you need help in doing this.

151. Be nice to your guests. Sometimes we focus too much on getting someone to sign an application, and forget basic courtesy.

152. If you are experiencing membership problems, make sure you don't discuss them when you have a guest visiting. No one wants to join a club that has problems.

153. Treat all guests warmly and make sure they are introduced to club officers and members.

154. Have a guest book, and ask guests to sign. Make sure you get their name, address, phone, email, for follow up. Then be sure to follow up by sending a thank you note and inviting them back to another meeting. Offer to pick up a guest so you know that they will make the meeting.

155. Make sure that all members wear their name tags, and have them available for guests as well. Don't make people guess at remembering names.

156. Be sure to use your guests name when talking with them.

157. Make sure that your meeting location is conveniently located, accessible and user friendly.

158. Encourage guests to participate, if they are interested.

159. Ask for guest comments at the end of the meeting. This may give you a specific hook to use in asking the member to join. Or, it may give you information that indicates that you need to change your ways to make your club attractive to prospective members.

160. Form a Guest Committee under your Sergeant at Arms. Ensure that every guest receives a follow up call and/or note. Be sure to invite the guest to come to another meeting.

161. Invite every guest to join. Many people are waiting simply to be asked.

162. Have a secret greeter at your meeting to make sure everyone is warm and welcoming to members and guests.

163. Know how to fill out the membership form. Make sure all club members know how to do it. Maybe this could be used as an educational moment in the club. Have membership forms filled out with standard club information. Then all you have to do is add in information specific to the new member. This may help cut down on the time and confusion of the forms.

164. Don't forget to send the membership form and a check to TI. A person is not a member until TI knows about it.

165. Challenge your greeter or Sgt-At-Arms to find the best person to buddy a guest up with. Someone like them! It means the greeter has to ask a few questions for a start about the guest to make the best decision.

166. Listen to your guests talk about their interests and reasons for visiting your club. Then match them up with a club member who has similar interests. Ask them to join. Make sure you have lots of membership applications readily available at every meeting.

167. Take a photograph of all your members and give it to guests with names and responsibilities so they find it easy to talk to the right person and to not be embarrassed remembering names.

168. Remember Zig Ziglar: "You can get everything you want in life if you just help enough other people get what they want"

### **BETTER RETENTION**

169. Keep in touch with absentee members by sending out a review of each meeting by e-mail.

170. Develop a mentor program. This will help encourage new members to keep involved with the program, and will help long term members renew their enthusiasm.

171. Make your meetings fun. People will want to invite guests to share in the fun.

172. If a member announces that they will be moving or have accepted a new position that doesn't allow them to continue with club meetings, have a going away gift for them --- a list of the Toastmaster clubs that meet where they will live or work. Let them know that they can transfer their membership.

173. Have a recognition meeting to acknowledge all members who have sponsored a new member. Have an induction ceremony for new members. It makes them feel important and a part of the organization. It's almost impressive for other guest in attendance.

174. Take a look in the mirror. Do you smile enough? Guests want to see a smiling face welcoming them to a meeting.

175. If your meeting attendance is dropping, take a look at your meeting location. It may be time to move. Consider parking, safety, seating, fees, food availability and more, based on your members' needs.

176. Celebrate your charter date annually. If you are not at charter strength, make plans to increase your membership so you will be on your charter date. Shoot for 30 and you'll always get your 20!

177. As you reach the end of the Toastmaster year, make sure your membership is over 20 so you qualify to receive your Distinguished, Select and Presidents Distinguished ribbons. Nothing is worse than missing out on this recognition because your club is not at charter strength.

178. How many clubs do you belong to? If the answer is one, consider joining another club (at work or home) or maybe an advanced club.

179. Have a time during the meeting when members can announce promotions or special assignment that they attribute to their Toastmaster membership.

180. Set a good example at your club meetings. Encourage excellence. Have at least one meeting each month where the speakers and educational program focus on membership and club building topics.

181. Does your club stop meeting during the summer months? Continue on instead. Even though attendance may be low, you can keep your momentum going instead of stopping and then trying to build back up all over again.
182. Meet weekly instead of semi-monthly. Even if there is a low attendance at a meeting, still have the meeting. Continuity matters.
183. Don't give up hope. There are lots of success stories about 3-4 people showing up for meeting after meeting. Keep doing that, and you can turn things around.
184. Don't let internal strife destroy your club. Address your problem, resolve it, and move on.
185. Make a list of the best things about your club. You now have a list of selling points to use when recruiting new members.
186. Make sure that every speech given at your club is a manual speech. As members see growth in others, it will encourage them to stick with it. And guests will want to join, so they can start achieving this success as well.
187. Start on time...End on time. Everybody's schedule is important. It's just another way of showing respect to your members.
188. Mail dues reminders to unpaid members. If they are temporarily unable to make a meeting, at least let them know they can keep their dues current.
189. Have a secret pal program within your club. Outside of the meeting times, the secret pal will send encouraging notes, ideas, evaluations, etc. to the person who is their secret pal. Reveal after six months. This keeps people coming to meetings as they try to figure out who is their secret pal.
190. Don't let a new member drop out after their icebreaker speech. Make sure they are put on the schedule again as soon as possible.
191. Enhance membership retention by ensuring that every member is a stakeholder in the success of the club. Put every member on a committee, and make sure that they have a specific job to do. There are many benefits to this besides membership retention, including an opportunity for leadership experience.
192. Build morale internally within your club. Thank and praise your members for a job well done or an outstanding performance. A few kind words can keep members coming back for more.
193. Stay on task. Keep focused on the important success factors within the club. People join Toastmasters as an educational organization.  
  
Don't lose them because you lose sight of your goals.
194. Share pride in the accomplishments of your members. Celebrate the success of reaching a goal. Make the club a place that members want to come to share the successes outside of Toastmasters as well

195. Don't lose members after they complete their Competent Communicator award. Make sure all members are aware of the outstanding advanced manuals available. Explain and talk about the advanced manuals early on, and create an expectation of continued membership.

196. Remember to submit semiannual dues on time. If you don't pay the dues, you don't have any members.

197. Build membership, and retain current members, by having an excellent product: dynamic meetings.

198. Have a member present a module from the Successful Club Series. These are designed to be 10-15 presentations that can be given within the club. They offer great information on attracting and maintaining members. Some examples: Finding New Members for Your Club and Closing the Sale.

199. Have a formal induction ceremony to present the new member with their pin. Ensure all members recite the Toastmaster Promise as often as possible.

200. Have an awards night where everyone in the club gets a certificate with an award or a poem showing that their fellow club members recognize their contribution.

201. Stop the "CC, then out-the-door" syndrome by encouraging advanced mentoring and goal setting.

202. Get CC'ers underway on AC goals by making the acceptance of their CC award a credited speech from the Special Occasions advanced manual. They are now 1/5 of the way to their first Advanced Manual!

## NEW CLUBS

203. Consider starting an advanced club that focuses on in-depth evaluations. Suggestion: each speaker should have three evaluators, in addition to the manual evaluator. These evaluators would concentrate on a specific area, such as: visual presentation (gestures, body language, use of space, etc.); verbal presentation (verbal crutches, creative language, variety, pitch, tone, etc.); and content (organization of thought, opening, body, close, impact on audience, etc.).

204. Advanced Club idea: Start an advanced club that focuses on club building ideas. Have all educational presentations and speeches concentrate on the topic of club leads, strengthening weak clubs, prospecting for members, etc.

205. Start an Advanced Club that does television work. Contact your cable access channel or a vocational school that does this training.

206. Does the company where you work have a Toastmaster club? If not, start one. Contact a district officer for assistance.

207. If you have a strong club, consider being a "big brother" to a struggling club. Help out with speakers, evaluators, and just being an audience member.

208. Start an advanced club that focuses on storytelling.

209. New club ideas: Consider the existing clubs in your community. Is there a day of the week that is not served by Toastmasters? Is there a time of day missing (no morning or lunch hour meetings)? How about a weekend club in a metropolitan area?

210. At all areas within the district (club, area, division and district) have workshops on how to start a new club.

211. Think about groups that may not yet be served by Toastmasters in the community: seniors, physically challenged, unemployed, non-English speaking communities, etc. Can you start a club for them? Invite them to a club meeting?

212. Start a club with mid-day meetings for stay-at-home Moms. The club may choose to have a parenting focus. Suggest a meeting time of 3-4:30 that might meet at a local school. They might even find students to help out with child care during the meeting.

## **FINALLY**

You can help others by submitting your experiences, products, or recommendations for inclusion to your district's Club Growth Director (Formerly known as the Lt. Governor Marketing). They LOVE new ideas to share with all members!

Keep the ideas flowing, talk about your successes and failures. Try and decide why some worked and some didn't. It's all about learning.

Plan and do. You have just read a couple of hundred ideas. It is absolutely guaranteed that merely reading them will not change a thing. Choose one, gather the resources and people you need together...and do it!

Questions?

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A special note of thanks to Scott Hoehn, DTM – Past District 84 Governor District 84 Education Chair 2015-2016 for his help in developing this list of marketing ideas.

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Jay is a 35-year veteran in Human Resources and Organizational Development. His consulting firm, the JKL Consulting Group, specializes in improving the performance and profitability of companies by analyzing their current "People Practices" and devising unique interventions aimed at creating happy, healthy and productive employees.

After leaving Washington Mutual, where he was VP of HR for the entire West Coast, Jay formed the JKL Consulting Group. Over the next 8 years, the company grew to 33 employees. As CEO, Jay and his team helped 3 companies go public, reduced turnover in client companies by as much as 76%, and helped several companies grow to the point that they were able to sell their companies for substantial gains.

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