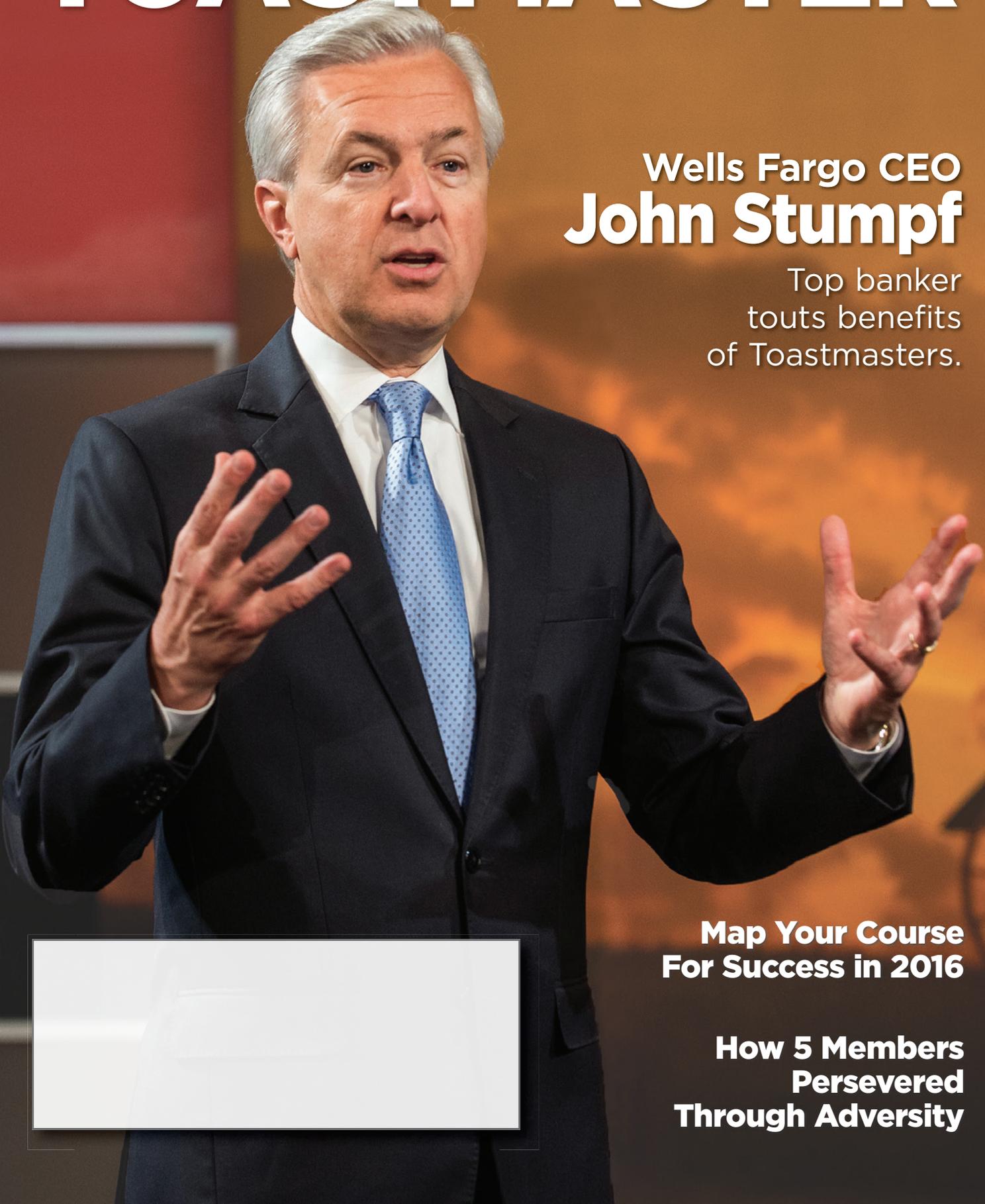


THE MAGAZINE FOR COMMUNICATORS & LEADERS | JANUARY 2016

TOASTMASTER®

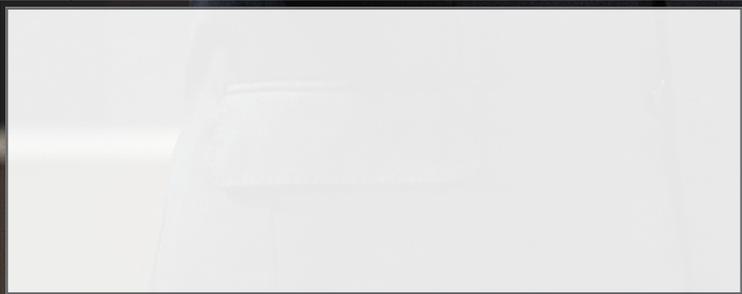
A photograph of John Stumpf, CEO of Wells Fargo, speaking. He is wearing a dark blue suit, a white shirt, and a blue patterned tie. He has his hands raised in a gesture of emphasis. The background is a warm, orange-toned wall with a blurred image of a horse-drawn carriage.

**Wells Fargo CEO
John Stumpf**

Top banker
touts benefits
of Toastmasters.

**Map Your Course
For Success in 2016**

**How 5 Members
Persevered
Through Adversity**





Leadership and Email

Some years ago I was working in the mobile phone business when text messaging was just becoming popular. A friend came to me and said with considerable passion: “Jim, you need to help me with my son’s huge text messaging charges. The worst thing is that most of the time he’s texting his girlfriend, who’s on the sofa right next to him!” Crazy, isn’t it?

But even today, we still often get the mix of messaging and talking wrong. It is difficult, and maybe impossible, to understand the emotional content of a text or an email response. It can be difficult enough when talking to someone sitting right across from you. However, when you talk to someone face-to-face, you get clues from the person’s tone of voice, facial expressions, eye contact and speed of verbal response, among other subtleties.

Organizations need more live conversations to occur and less trading of emails between neighbors. In Toastmasters clubs, too, we need more live conversations, whether that takes place face-to-face in meetings or on the phone outside of meeting times.

We need more live conversations in Toastmasters clubs.

Such conversations can help us read between the lines. When a new member preparing his Ice Breaker emails a message that he’s not ready to deliver his speech, in what way is he not ready? Is it that he hasn’t prepared his text or outline, or is it that he’s feeling too nervous to begin his Toastmasters journey?

When a member who has been making good progress emails that she can’t serve as the Toastmaster of a club meeting, in what way is she not ready? Is it concern over her content, or concern over other commitments, or is it nervousness? And could any or all of this be overcome with a mentoring conversation?

If you’re a club leader, or the Toastmaster who must confirm meeting assignments, please do not rely solely on email. Direct communication is much more effective in asking questions and clarifying concerns, not to mention in coaching and mentoring. Whether or not you’re in a formal club leadership position, you have the opportunity to exercise these leadership skills. And these skills will help you in other areas of your life.

The purpose of this column isn’t to dismiss the effectiveness of email. It’s very effective for communicating results, progress and assignments. It’s less effective for conveying sentiment and for coaching and mentoring. I hope as you explore the variety of opportunities in your club, you take the time to speak directly with other members, and to offer feedback and advice to those around you. You’ll benefit and your club will become stronger.

JIM KOKOCKI, DTM
International President

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We empower individuals to become more effective communicators and leaders.



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Member Pride

The members in our USDA (U.S. Department of Agriculture) Toastmasters club represent us with dignity and pride. These role models demonstrate their high capacity and commitment to the club by conducting weekly mentor meetings and enhancing new members' skills. In Table Topics, their ingenuity makes for an exciting and pleasant experience. And each evaluation is conducted with tact—they understand how important it is to provide someone with good feedback. There is no strategy more beneficial to a club than the one in which talented and committed people play a central role.

Gloria Anderson, ACB
 president of USDA Toastmasters
 Washington, D.C.

A Cultural Gap

I enjoyed David Livermore's article "Leading with Cultural Intelligence" (September). Our District 71 has a cultural blend, with members from Ireland, England, Scotland and Wales. We see examples of humorous speeches where some of the funniest lines fall into the gap between cultures. A shared language does not guarantee a shared culture, even between the closest of friendly neighbors.

The worst adjective we can ascribe to a speaker is "brash," or loud, arrogant or superficial. The line between confidence and arrogance is easily crossed. A raised voice invites mental resistance to the speaker's message. If you tell the audience you are wonderful, successful and great, you provoke the silent response of "Prove it."

It is a great compliment to say of a successful person that "he/she wears it lightly," with "it" referring to the person's success or scholarship. This compliment does not detract from one's success, but indicates that the person carries it with grace and dignity.

Anne Byrne, ATMS, CL
 Bray Toastmasters
 Bray, Wicklow, Ireland

Mother of the Bride

My daughter announced she was getting married last year, shortly following the death of her father. I was invited to give the "Mother of the Bride" speech. It was, of course, my most important speech ever.

Having been a Toastmaster for six years, I had a few speeches under my belt, but researching and preparing for this speech was very exciting, and I tried hard to keep it under wraps until the big day.

The wedding took place on a clifftop in Scotland and the theme was a watery one relating to Poseidon (the groom) and his wife Amphitrite (my daughter) and me, Amphitrite's mother, Doris. I have never enjoyed giving a speech so much! It was one of the most exhilarating moments of my life. I received lovely comments, with guests saying it was the best speech they had ever heard.

For those who are afraid to speak publicly, join a club. You won't look back.

Diane Wilkinson, ACB, ALB
 Newbury Speakers Club
 Newbury, England

My Son the Speaker

After reading "A Formula for Funny" by John Kinde (September), I thought about my son Martin's experience in Toastmasters. He joined the Murwillumbah Club, in New South Wales, Australia, mainly to help his mum, who was club president at the time.

His first Table Topics speech was seven seconds long—a record that to date remains unbeaten. A few months later, he entered the Humorous Speech Contest but couldn't come up with a topic. Eventually he put the speech together in his head while driving home from work the evening before the competition. He called it "An Insight into the Art of Public Speaking." It was all about the correct way to use a lectern.

He won at the club, area and division levels and came in second in the district. He had the audience rolling in laughter. I was so proud of him, and so was my club.

Hazel Tree, ATMS, CL
 Murwillumbah Club
 Murwillumbah, New South Wales, Australia

Thoughts on Branding

Cathey Armillas's article "The Power of Branding" (August) was informative, but it emphasized consistency at the expense of originality. I was one of those who disdained, rather than praised, the new logo when it was introduced in 2011. I must now admit that it gives a modern, professional and worldwide look to the organization.

Although club websites are now more consistent, they tend to look identical to each other. It is great to know what you are expecting when visiting a club in another country, but it is also exciting to see the differences. And so, yes, let us be consistent but still have original ideas and, as they say in France, "Vive la difference."

Frank Thorogood, ACG
 Toastmasters NICE
 Nice, France

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.

Features

22



22

GOAL-SETTING

New Year, New Tune

Reach your 2016 goals
one step at a time.

By Maureen Zappala, DTM

16



16

PERSONAL GROWTH

Overcoming Obstacles

Five members share
the life-changing events
that shaped their lives.

By Toastmaster magazine staff

ON THE COVER: Photo of Wells Fargo
CEO John Stumpf courtesy of Wells Fargo

Articles

12

COVER: Q&A
**WELLS FARGO CEO
JOHN STUMPF**

Top banker touts benefits
of Toastmasters.

By Paul Serman

14

SPEECHWRITING
**LEARNING TO WRITE
FOR OTHERS**

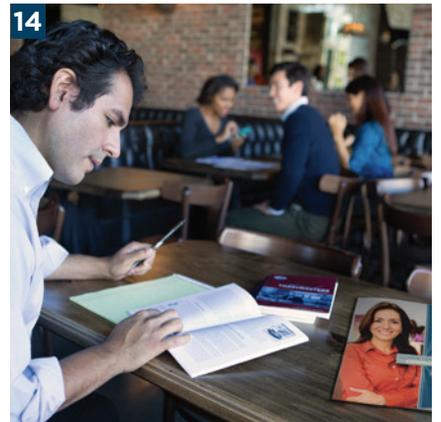
The CC manual is a great
place to start.

By Ian Griffin, ACS

12



14



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Articles

20

CLUB QUALITY
MAKE 2016 THE YEAR TO HAVE FUN WITH YOUR CLUB!



27

TIME MANAGEMENT
MAKE YOUR HOURS MORE MEANINGFUL IN 2016

How to make time for practice, meetings and everything else that's important in life.

By Laura Vanderkam



29

PUBLIC SPEAKING
HOW A QUIET WRITER LEARNED TO LOVE PUBLIC SPEAKING

Her approach can help you get comfortable with any audience.

By Laura Vanderkam

Columns

2

VIEWPOINT
 Leadership and Email
By Jim Kokocki, DTM International President

9

MY TURN
 Don't Put Off Your Dream
By Chaz Osburn, ACS, CL

30

FUNNY YOU SHOULD SAY THAT
 A New Me!
By John Cadley

Departments

3 MEMBERS' FORUM

6 QUICK TAKES

10 TRAVELING TOASTMASTER

▶ MEMBER MOMENT

Podcast Producer Shines



Oscar Santolalla, Helsinki, Finland



Oscar Santolalla, ACB, CL, hails from the largest city in the world that cannot be accessed by road: Iquitos, Peru. But nine years ago he decided to leave Peru and move to Helsinki, Finland, to study for a master's degree in technology with a major in mobile computing and security. He liked Finland so much, he decided to stay.

Santolalla is now host and producer of the "Time to Shine Podcast," on which he interviews accomplished public speakers around the world, including many Toastmasters. He's been a member of the Stadi Talkers club in Helsinki since 2011.

Why did you join?

As a nonnative English speaker living in a non-English-speaking country (Finland), it was challenging to find opportunities to practice public speaking in English. I was lucky to find an article about Toastmasters in a local newspaper, and I visited the Stadi Talkers club. I joined two months later.

How has Toastmasters affected your life?

Toastmasters helped me to polish my communication and speaking skills. I deliver superior presentations now and find more creative ways to do them. The other crucial thing I learned is the importance of leadership.

Being a club officer came naturally to me. I started as vice president membership, which is one of the nicest roles, as you meet and support a lot of new people. The club president role was the most challenging; being the public face of the club and the one who sets the tone forced me to aim for excellence in every word I uttered and every action I took. Now, as an area director, I like supporting club leaders and meeting motivated members in different locations.

How did you get into the technology field?

When I finished high school, I followed what my most ambitious classmates did—I applied for engineering school. Math was never hard for me. I chose to concentrate on electronic engineering in college. Through the years I've moved into telecommunications and then into software.

You're a big supporter of radio. Why do you think voices are so important?

Prior to starting the "Time to Shine Podcast" (www.timetoshinepodcast.com), I noticed that no one regularly interviewed public speakers from around the world to learn about their stories and experiences. Starting my own podcast felt like the natural thing to do.

Before the Internet era, radio was your companion anywhere you went, and the voice of a DJ always let your imagination fly. The good thing is that even if radio changes completely, each of us can use our own voice to create magical experiences for people. To do so, you must 1) use the most vivid words you can, and 2) add melody and emotion to those words. Practice and record over and over, until you feel touched by your own voice.

▶ IN BRIEF

PLAN A SUCCESSFUL SPEECH CONTEST

Make your event a success! Download the most up-to-date speech contest materials and ensure that contestants are eligible to compete by checking the *Speech Contest Rulebook*. Get free materials from the Toastmasters Online Store at www.toastmasters.org/DigitalSpeechContests.

ARE YOU ADVENTUROUS?

Do you travel the world or enjoy extreme sports? Send your photo submissions to the *Toastmaster* magazine! Visit www.toastmasters.org/Submissions to learn how to submit a photo.

HOW TO USE THOSE EXTRA MAGAZINES

Save them for guests when they visit your club, or leave them in office waiting rooms (first, place a sticker on the cover with your club's meeting location and contact information). To receive fewer copies, send us a request via email to membership@toastmasters.org.

DO YOU HAVE WHAT IT TAKES TO BE ACCREDITED?

The Accredited Speaker Program recognizes members who achieve such a high level of speaking proficiency that they often transition into careers as professional speakers. Apply for the 2016 program between **January 1 and February 1**. www.toastmasters.org/AccreditedSpeakers

▶ SNAPSHOT

Good Vibes

Members of the Gold Coast Toastmasters club in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida, celebrated the club's 55th anniversary in September 2015. The theme was rock 'n' roll of the 1960s, and members networked, shared intellectually stimulating speeches and evaluations, and enjoyed international food.



▶ TOASTMASTERS SUCCESS TIP

What's in a Word?

As Mohammed Qahtani, the 2015 Toastmasters World Champion of Public Speaking, says, "Words are power." His winning speech resonated with members everywhere. While clear purpose and organization are the foundations of any good speech, your success ultimately depends on the words you choose and how you say them. Clear, simple, descriptive and active words add excitement to your presentation and stimulate your audience. Follow these tips—from Project 4 in the *Competent Communication* manual—to tap into the power of words.

- **Use short words.** The most effective and memorable words are short. They are easier for listeners to follow and remember.
- **Keep your sentences short.** Shorter sentences are easier for you to say and easier for your audience to understand. You can use longer sentences periodically to add variety, but make sure your audience can easily follow along.
- **Be specific.** Use concrete, specific words that communicate exactly what you mean. For example, "Francois ate a nice dinner" is vague. "For dinner, Francois enjoyed fresh green beans, fluffy garlic mashed potatoes and a savory salmon" is better.



Mohammed Qahtani

- **Use descriptive words.** Appeal to the senses and stir your audience's imagination with words that help them see, feel, hear, smell and taste.
- **Use the active voice.** Choose verbs that convey action. In the active voice, the subject comes before the verb: "The bear ate the fish." In this sentence, the bear is performing the action. In the passive

voice, the subject comes after the verb, creating a longer, less concise sentence: "The fish was eaten by the bear." The active voice uses fewer words and is easier to follow.

It's important to remember that words can be powerful tools. With these tips, you can use them wisely to make your speeches shine.

QUICK TAKES

▶ MEET MY MENTOR

Patricia Sadoun, ACG, ALS

Cross-cultural mentoring is alive and well in Stuttgart, Germany.

Patricia Sadoun, ACG, ALS, grew up in North Africa and went to school in France. Although her native language is French, she moved to Germany for her job and taught herself to speak German. She has now lived there for more than 40 years.

Lu Xu is from Shanghai, China. Shanghainese and Mandarin are her native languages. She studied English literature in China and the German language in Germany, and she earned an MBA in finance from universities in Germany and the U.S.

Lu learned about Toastmasters from a university lecturer in the U.S. When she landed a job in Germany with a company that conducts business in China, she joined the Rednermanufaktur Stuttgart club to improve her German public speaking skills. That is where she met her mentor, Patricia.

Lu and Patricia are now members of the club they helped charter: Rhetorik im Gebrüder Schmid Zentrum club in Stuttgart.

What can you tell us about Patricia?

Patricia mastered German public speaking skills as a nonnative speaker. After holding several managerial positions at an international firm, she now works as a professional communication coach. She was impressed by the benefits of mentoring in Toastmasters, where she has mentored for years. She helps her mentees discover their full potential while feeling the joy of fulfilling it. She even mentored some of us on the night before she underwent surgery in 2013.

What makes her an exceptional mentor?

In addition to all the public speaking techniques she shares, she also inspires us with her motto, “We learn to help and we help to learn.” She made us realize that our improved speaking is

▶ LOOKING AT LANGUAGE

Don't Let These 5 Word Pairs Confuse You

We all use the wrong word from time to time. While it can be embarrassing, such a mistake can also be a great learning experience. Next time you are writing an email at work or preparing a speech for your club, take a few minutes to insure ... I mean, ensure that your word choices are correct! Here are a few common examples of confusing word pairs:

Affect and **effect**—*Affect* is a verb that means to influence: “His wide range of vocal variety positively affected his speech.” *Effect* is a noun that means a change that is a result or consequence of an action: “The effect of her speech on the audience was astounding.”

Sympathy and **empathy**—*Sympathy* is having compassion for someone else's misfortune. If you say, “I am sorry that your car died on the way to the club meeting today,” that is expressing sympathy. *Empathy* is putting yourself in the other person's shoes and relating to how the person feels, at least in part because you've experienced those feelings yourself.



FROM LEFT: Patricia Sadoun and Lu Xu in Stuttgart, Germany

the result of an improved self, since a good speech must have a well-intended motivation. Therefore, we also learn to improve ourselves by opening our hearts.

What is your one favorite thing about Patricia?

It's how she has created an environment where we can learn and help each other improve our skills.

NOMINATE YOUR MARVELOUS MENTOR!

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

Don't Put Off Your Dream

It took me 30 years, but I finally wrote that novel.

BY CHAZ OSBURN, ACS, CL

How many times have you heard someone say, “One day I’m going to ...”?

Maybe you’ve said it to yourself. I have—many times. It’s too bad, really, because we often end up putting off things—stuff we really want to accomplish—for so long that we eventually convince ourselves they don’t matter.

To be clear, I’m not referring to tasks like cleaning out the garage or painting the backyard fence. Even though those tasks are important in their own way, I’m referring to taking the steps to make your dream a reality.

I’m proof that you can reach that dream. After 30 years of telling myself I was going to write a novel, I recently had my first book, *Incident At Jonesborough*, published. I credit Toastmasters for helping me to accomplish my dream.

Like many of you, there was a time when I absolutely hated—yes, *hated*—having to speak in front



Chaz Osburn

If I was to reach that long-held dream, I knew I had to take that first step—just like I did with Toastmasters.

of a group, especially a large gathering of people I did not know. My throat tightened. I began to perspire. And then, when I finally spoke, it felt as if I had marbles in my mouth.

I was aware of the Toastmasters program. I even had colleagues who attested to its effectiveness. Yet I kept putting off checking it out. Then, in the spring of 2012, I noticed an ad in the community newspaper about a Toastmasters club meeting. I gathered up the courage and attended my first meeting, held at the library a few blocks from my home. I actually participated in Table Topics that first night—and took home the best Table Topics speaker ribbon!

Once I joined, my confidence level increased. No longer did I fear speaking in front of a group—I actually *relished* it. As I

tackled more complicated speeches, I began to notice it was possible to evoke emotions such as laughter. I volunteered to emcee events at my workplace and to represent the company externally when an opportunity presented itself.

But how does all of this relate to becoming a published author?

In the early 1980s, while cleaning out a drawer, I came across a box containing the 1863–1864 American Civil War diaries of an ancestor who was killed during the Atlanta Campaign led by General William T. Sherman. I set them aside, and for years I told myself that someday I would write a fictional story based on the battles my ancestor had fought in. I eventually realized I had been telling myself that for 30 years. If I was to reach that long-held dream, I knew I had to take that first step—just like I did with Toastmasters.

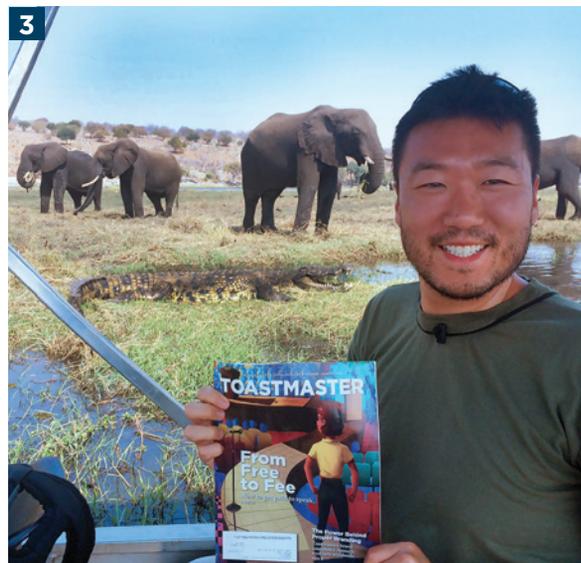
I took some time and outlined the story that was percolating in my subconscious all those years. And then, using the same discipline I learned to create speeches, I began the task of writing.

Yes, it meant getting up early, staying up late and writing on weekends, but I realized that the story I was creating would allow my ancestor—an ordinary soldier who gave his life for the service of his country—to live again, if only symbolically. The sacrifice of time I spent writing paled in comparison to his sacrifice. I think about that each time I hold a copy of *Incident At Jonesborough* in my hands.

So what dream have you been putting off? Take that first step, just like you did when you joined Toastmasters. And before you know it, your dream will become real. **T**

CHAZ OSBURN, ACS, CL, is a member of the Riverbend Club in Edmonton, Alberta. An American living in Canada, he recently had his first novel, *Incident At Jonesborough*, published by Pegasus Books.

TRAVELING TOASTMASTER



1 | UTTAM VAIDYA, FROM DOHA, QATAR, poses near the Statue of Liberty in New York, New York.

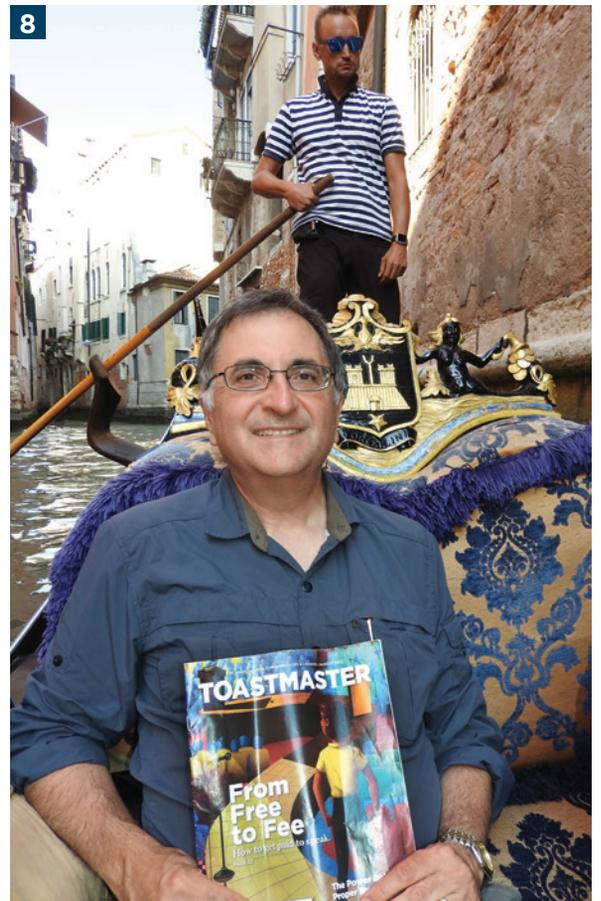
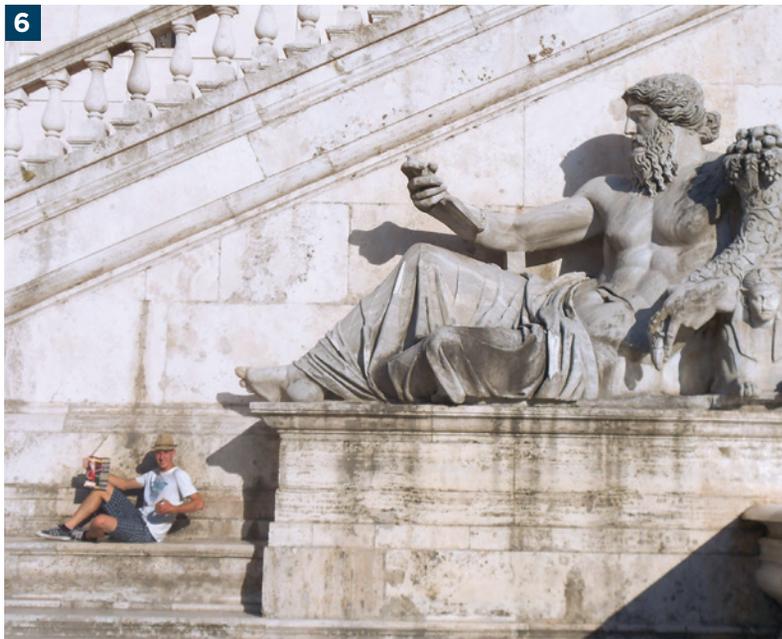
2 | ANN BAYLEY, CTM, FROM MONTREAL, CANADA, stops by the Mad Hatter's Tea Party at the Chester Cathedral in Cheshire, England.

3 | SAM KO, CTM, FROM LOMA LINDA, CALIFORNIA, sees elephants during a safari at the Chobe National Park in Botswana.

4 | ASHLEY KALAGIAN BLUNT, ACB, ALB, FROM SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA, overlooks Thimpu, the capital of Bhutan.

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



5 | JACYNTHÉ GAGNON, FROM GATINEAU, CANADA, poses like the Toastmaster cover image in front of the Hungarian Parliament Building in Budapest.

6 | ERYK PIETRAK, FROM MIEDZYBOROW, POLAND, poses like the statue at Capitoline Hill in Rome, Italy.

7 | CHRISTINA TSE, CC, FROM HONG KONG, hikes toward the top of Flam, a village located in Sognefjord, Norway.

8 | TOM COSCIA, DTM, FROM SAINT PETERS, MISSOURI, enjoys a gondola ride in Venice, Italy.

Wells Fargo CEO John Stumpf

Top banker touts benefits of Toastmasters.

BY PAUL STERMAN

As president and chief executive officer of Wells Fargo & Company, John Stumpf is one of the most powerful figures in the banking industry. But his intense fear of public speaking early in his career almost derailed his professional ascent.

As Stumpf wrote in a 2015 essay for *Fortune* magazine, his boss at the time picked up on that fear. “He said, ‘You’ve got to fix this. If you can’t, that’s a career disabler.’”

So in the mid-1980s, Stumpf joined Toastmasters. As a member of a club in Minneapolis, Minnesota, he transformed over a couple of years from a terrified speaker to a polished and confident one. He’s effusive when describing the experience.

“Toastmasters was the vehicle that saved me,” he says in a recent interview.

“I think about my Toastmasters experiences every time I get up on a stage to speak, every time I’m in front of a camera, every time I’m on TV.”

—John Stumpf

Wells Fargo, headquartered in San Francisco, is a global banking and financial-services holding company. Stumpf, 62, has been with the company for 33 years and was named CEO in 2007 and then chairman in 2010. Under his stewardship, Wells Fargo has soared to new heights. In July, the *Wall Street Journal* reported that it is now the world’s most valuable bank. As of press time, Wells Fargo was worth approximately \$280 billion.

Stumpf grew up poor on a small Minnesota farm. He was one of 11 children. There was one bathroom, and siblings shared beds. But the affable CEO credits his parents, Herb and Elvira, with instilling in him the basic values that ground his personal and professional success.

“Tell the truth, be responsible, give people a break. Trust people and they’ll rise to a level that you probably wouldn’t even have thought they could get to,” he says.

“Not all that much has changed with human nature over time.”

How do your employees’ communication skills impact their customer service?

Customers want to hear, clearly, how a relationship with whomever they do business with, whether it be someone in technology, someone in telecommunications or someone in financial services, how that company will help their lives. And communicating that in a clear and compelling way is paramount.

In fact, I hold companies in the highest regard—no matter what industry they’re in—that take complexity and make it simple.

You’ve talked about your early fear of public speaking. How bad was it?

Well, I would say that next to the fear of heights and death, it was right up there. I just didn’t have the tools. I didn’t have the experience. So I found every excuse in the book to avoid public speaking.

How did Toastmasters help you?

You know, Toastmasters was not only a safe place to learn how to speak, it was a collaborative place where people genuinely wanted to help each other get better. So the critical support and the mentorship from the more experienced members to the new members was very reassuring. I went from dreading going to club meetings to wanting the next meeting to happen the next day, because I could start to see some improvement.

The feedback I received on my speeches wasn’t always feedback I enjoyed getting—let me be honest about that. But it was real stuff. It was a life-changing experience for me.

I think about my Toastmasters experiences every time I get up on a stage to speak, every time I’m in front of a camera, every time I’m on TV.

How often do you give speeches these days?

Well, I give three talks tomorrow. I give a speech at 9 o’clock, then one at 10:30, and then one at 1:30. That’s not a typical day but not totally unusual either. I would say in a week I probably give 10 speeches. I did one yesterday, and I made three videos today.

So as you move up in an organization and become a leader, whether you are a leader on the organizational chart or a leader because of the inspiration others draw from you, you’re going to be talking a lot.

Wells Fargo is one of Toastmasters’ biggest corporate sponsors, with 40 on-site clubs. How do your employees benefit from this experience?

I think careers are three-legged stools: First, work for a company that shares your values; second, work for a boss who cares about you; and third, invest in yourself. Participating in Toastmasters is not unlike getting a degree or getting some accounting experience. It’s another important way to invest in yourself.

And today, our young people coming into the organization don’t have as many opportunities to hone their speaking skills because of the other ways of communicating through technology.

What traits do you look for when hiring new employees?

First of all, we like to say—and this is true—we don’t care how



Wells Fargo CEO John Stumpf credits Toastmasters with helping him overcome his intense fear of public speaking. The bank was started in 1854 during the California Gold Rush—its symbol (seen behind Stumpf) is the horse-drawn stagecoach.

much people know until we know how much they care. Since we play team ball here, caring and sharing are very important attributes. We also say we hire for attitude and we teach aptitude. If you're the smartest person on the planet, but you can't communicate and you don't have a sense of caring and empathy, and you don't like working with other people, then you're probably not going to be very happy here.

You talk often about the importance of personal growth—it's clearly something you feel strongly about.

I find that even at my ripe old age of 62, I'm still just as busy learning about life as I can be. Two years ago, I took up the challenge of learning a second language, German. I learned through that experience how hard it must be for nonnative English speakers to come to this country and assimilate into our culture. It was a real eye-opener. I also learned a lot about the English language by studying German.

If I ever moved to Germany, I would join a Toastmasters club there.

Growing up, you experienced poverty and hardship. What qualities helped you overcome this adversity?

In our family, even though we were very short on things that the world would consider success—money, land, vacations, cars, all the things that would show up on a balance sheet—we were rich in the

things that really matter: values, hard work, no complaining, working as a team, giving something back, the sense of a greater being, all of those life lessons that are really the foundational things for success in life.

You know what? When I had hardship later in life and in my career, it was minor compared to what happened when I was on the farm, and I knew I had the skills built up to deal with that. Failure was not failure—failure was a learning lesson. The goal in life is not necessarily knowledge, it's wisdom, and you learn a lot of wisdom through hardship.

What part of your job do you enjoy the most?

The time I spend with customers and team members. One thing I try to do is to speak with a team member unannounced every day and with a customer or a prospect unannounced every day. That way I get some of the real feedback. And the part of the job that I miss most about where I am today is having customer relationships—because I grew up [professionally] doing that, and that's really what I enjoy the most.

Now, this is a great job, don't get me wrong. I love what I'm doing. But the people part of it is the best by far. ■

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



Learning to Write for Others

The CC manual is a great place to start.

BY IAN GRIFFIN, ACS

The lessons you gain by speaking in your club is a great first step in learning to write for others. In fact, the speech assignments in the *Competent Communication* (CC) manual cover many of the same things a professional speechwriter needs to know to succeed, from Researching Your Topic, Getting To The Point and Organizing Your Speech to deciding How To Say It, Persuading With Power and Inspiring Your Audience.

Writing for others doesn't just mean writing for politicians or corporate executives. Many professional speechwriters started their careers by volunteering to create a presentation for a supervisor at work or for the leader of a neighborhood association, or by crafting a wedding speech for a future brother- or sister-in-law.

What are the differences between writing speeches for yourself and writing them for others? To start, professional speechwriters have to write in the voice of the presenter, synthesize information from a variety of sources and adhere to strict deadlines.

Toastmasters is a perfect "sandbox" and safe place to develop such skills. I have more than 20 years of speechwriting experience

in the high-tech industry, and Toastmasters has helped me hone my professional skills.

Let's look at the CC manual and how its speech assignments tie in to speechwriting success.

Research Your Topic: Jack of All Trades, Master of None

Speeches are more effective if their main points are supported by statistics, testimony, stories, anecdotes, examples, visual aids and facts. Speechwriters spend a lot of time researching a range of topics. They can't possibly be an expert on everything they are called to write about, so effective research techniques are a key part of the job description. Professionals must learn how to skillfully sift through the material that an organization's subject-matter experts supply so they can find speechworthy nuggets. They must know how to turn facts and statistics into compelling content.

There was a time when writers would head to the library when researching a speech. Today we often head for search engines like

Google and Wikipedia. But limiting searches in this way ignores the value of personal anecdotes and first-hand information. Speechwriters need a way to contact subject-matter experts, potential audience members and key influencers to understand which topics will resonate. Social media is a great way to hold virtual conversations with people who can bring a unique point of view to a speech.

Look at LinkedIn, for instance. Anyone can visit multiple groups for any subject and review current discussions, find influencers, participate in professional conversations and use the up-to-date information in a speech. I've connected with experts in many fields

I have more than 20 years of speech-writing experience in the high-tech industry, and Toastmasters has helped me hone my professional skills.

who've helped me understand the nuances of their professions so the speaker I was writing for was well informed. In fact, contacts I've made on LinkedIn while pursuing content for speeches have led to productive long-term professional relationships.

Now, imagine being able to take the temperature of an audience before an event to discover which issues are "hot." Searching the millions of daily messages posted to Twitter allows a speechwriter to tap into any discussion between potential audience members and the writer's clients. It's just #therightthingtodo! It gives them an important advantage in being able to write speeches that directly address audience issues, not just policy abstractions. I've used social media to track audience sentiment in both Europe and the United States among MBA students, financial professionals and high-tech users.

Twitter's advanced search function allows anyone to keep track of what's being said without having to read every single tweet, even without a Twitter account. I'm amazed by how it gives me the almost uncanny ability to selectively listen in on important and relevant issues to see if the message I'm crafting resonates with trending topics that are being tweeted and re-tweeted.

Once briefed by me, I've heard speakers say, "I see local residents have tweeted their displeasure with the new regulations ..." and, to address the members of an association, "I see that your clients are mostly concerned about ..."

Get to the Point: Where Do You Want to Take the Audience?

In Toastmasters you learn how to deliver a speech with a general and a specific purpose. You can think of the point of your speech in the same way you think of the point of a summer road trip you might take: Know your origin and destination. In other words, take the audience on a journey and know where they are in terms of attitudes and beliefs when they enter the auditorium and where you want them to land when the speech ends.

I'm often surprised by how few speakers consider the reason they are stepping in front of an audience. Ask yourself before you write your next speech: "What's the destination?" Then organize the speech so that the audience arrives there.

Organize Your Speech: The Rule of Three

A well-organized speech is essential if the audience is to follow along. Speechwriters use simple, time-tested techniques to quickly and efficiently structure a speech.

The rule of three combines both brevity and rhythm while using the smallest amount of information to create a pattern.

continued on page 26



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Overcoming Obstacles

Five members share the life-changing events that shaped their lives.

BY TOASTMASTER MAGAZINE STAFF

Everyone struggles with obstacles and setbacks. A loved one dies, your health deteriorates, your marriage is no longer what it once was.

Whether you're wrestling with fears, a physical ailment, mental roadblocks or emotional battles—you are not alone. Life is full of unexpected hurdles, and as Toastmasters, you not only have an outlet to share these stories in your speeches, you have a room full of people who become your biggest supporters.

The five members profiled in this article encountered life-changing experiences. Toastmasters helped them overcome their obstacles—and inspire others in the process.

A Poet Regains Her Voice

As a teenager in 1963, Karen “K” Locke found her poet’s voice, and she dedicated her life to writing and reciting poetry until a tragic day in 2003, when she was debilitated by a stroke. An advocate for racial equality through her poetry for many decades, she became silenced for the next six years.

“It was as though the password to my mind had been lost—I had information stored but could not access it,” Locke says. “I could not speak, I could not write. I became a prisoner looking out through eyes that could see, I was locked inside a body that could barely move.”

One late afternoon in 2010, the phone rang. It was her ex-husband, Patrick. After 25 years of separation, the two came together again. Patrick was a Toastmaster, and he told Locke



that joining a club might help her regain the ability to recite her poetry. She was scared, but hopeful.

At the first few meetings of the Early Words Club in Longview, Washington, Locke struggled with broken speech and filler words. But the club members waited patiently until she completed a word. When applause erupted, Locke found encouragement to keep going. She was scheduled to give her Ice Breaker just a few weeks later.

"I did not expect the Ice Breaker to come up so fast," she says. "I didn't feel ready, but everyone assured me I could do it. We recorded a video of the speech, which I later used to secure an invitation to recite my poetry at the dedication of the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial in Washington, D.C., in 2011."

In 2015, Locke entered the International Speech Contest and earned second place at the division level. A few months later she



Karen "K" Locke, ACS, CL

attended the International Convention in Las Vegas, where she says she experienced an encounter unlike any other, connecting with members of various nationalities and all walks of life.

"We all have challenges in our lives," she says. "We can choose whether or not to pick up the tools that are out there. Thanks to Toastmasters, I'm getting well, and I have my poet's voice back!" Karen's experience has led her to produce the illustrated book *How Did You Choose the Colors, Lord*, which will be available through Amazon.com early in 2016.



Ken Bevers, CC

A Stutterer's Journey

For Ken Bevers, ordering food at a restaurant used to involve an exhausting inner battle. He would think to himself, *I think I can say salad, but that doesn't sound very good. Should I order pasta instead?*

Bevers' stutter was mild until he started college. He often experienced a "silent block," where his diaphragm tightened from fear, preventing him from speaking. He could say some words without stuttering and sometimes hide the disorder.

"Imagine every day as a chess game where if you make the perfect move, then you can get by without too many blocks, but one wrong move and you may lose your confidence and spiral down into a depression," says Bevers. "At the end of the day, I was exhausted.

"I experienced a lot of guilt, shame and fear from avoiding certain words and situations. My stutter definitely brought me to very low moments. But that was then."

He recounts the most awkward thing he ever did: In college, he had to introduce himself at his fraternity's recruitment event and welcome guests, but he froze. After a long delay he finally said, "A... and I... I'm Ken." He was embarrassed, but determined to find help.

Bevers explored many venues, including Toastmasters. The Bluejacket Toastmasters club in Shawnee, Kansas, welcomed him and he realized he could be a successful speaker, but he believed he still needed additional help.

He then joined the McGuire Program, an intensive three-day course that teaches people who stutter to speak from their costal diaphragm and to voluntarily stutter. The program also encouraged him to confront his fear head-on—by going to busy public places like shopping centers and introducing himself to strangers. His introductions included telling people that he stutters. *The Kansas City Star* newspaper published an article last July about his brave strategy.

After finding his voice in the McGuire Program, Bevers returned to the Bluejacket Toastmasters to shape it. Now president of the club, he has grown into an effective, articulate speaker. His latest accomplishments include delivering toasts at two weddings, one for his sister and the other for his best friend. Bevers also serves as a certified coach for the McGuire Program, providing support to new graduates. He even was promoted to senior auditor at the accounting firm he works for.

"The idea that someone who stutters can be inspired by my story," says Bevers, "means a great deal to me."

A PIP's Inspiring Path

These days, George Yen is a happy, accomplished and fulfilled man. He has a beautiful family and is a highly successful businessman in Taipei, Taiwan. In Toastmasters, he climbed the ladder of leadership to the organization's highest position, serving as International President in 2013–14.

But it wasn't always that way.

In 1988, Yen was, by his own admission, at the lowest point in his life. The import business he had founded eight years earlier in New York City was floundering. His marriage of 17 years was collapsing. He felt adrift, suddenly without "the two pillars of family and business success on which I built my sense of self."



George Yen, DTM

"The confidence that comes from speaking in front of an audience is magical—it permeates our whole being."
— George Yen

Yen knew he needed to start over, so he returned to his homeland, Taiwan. He faced daunting obstacles. "I had to regain my footing and re-establish a sense of who I was," he says. A pivotal step in that journey was joining Toastmasters. Practicing public speaking in the safe environment of club meetings, he felt good about himself again. His downward spiral was reversed.

"The confidence that comes from speaking in front of an audience is magical—it permeates our whole being," says Yen, now a member for 26 years.

That new confidence, he adds, transferred over to his social and professional life. His "crowning achievement" was meeting and marrying fellow Toastmaster Jorie Wu, DTM. The couple has a daughter, Keli Yen, also a DTM.

After joining Toastmasters, George says, he learned leadership lessons that, combined with his business experience, formed the cornerstone of his subsequent success. He is now chairman of the board of Great Sequoia Corporation, an international management and trading company based in Taipei. In addition, he serves as the chief executive officer of five international joint ventures in the fields of machinery and industrial products.

Yen, a member of Leadership Village Toastmasters in Taipei City, says Toastmasters not only helped him with communication and leadership skills, but also served as a "practice field for life," giving him the self-awareness to overcome obstacles.

"It is a given that adversity is part of life," he says. "How we deal with adversity is the name of the game."

Learning to Live Differently-Abled

In August 2015, Prabhu Kandasamy walked on stage at the International Convention in Las Vegas and began singing the words of a song by R&B performer R. Kelly, “I believe I can fly. I believe I can touch the sky.” With his speech, “Differently-Abled,” he placed third in Semifinal 4 of the Toastmasters International Speech Contest Semifinals.

Walking *anywhere* defies what Kandasamy’s doctors said before he reached the age of 2. He was a child with post-polio paralysis, and they believed he might never walk. As the boy grew older, he believed it too. His mother’s words stayed with him: “Face life with courage.” There is no cure for polio. But after three years of physical therapy, Kandasamy finally walked—on his own—out of a hospital in Bengaluru, India.



Prabhu Kandasamy, CC

Next he was placed in a boarding school in Tamil Nadu, India, where the principal recognized

Kandasamy’s talent and said that he would be a great orator. Kandasamy shared his stories and developed friendships—and the ability to accept himself for who he was.

But walking remained difficult, and by age 16 he had undergone four surgeries. While he was recovering from one of them, a woman in the hospital told him he had a beautiful smile. That’s when he realized he was “differently-abled.”

“I was no longer restricted by limited beliefs,” he says. He became a communication engineer and worked with a range of technologies. His employer in India sent him to Dallas, Texas, as a consultant. “I met a lot of people from various countries and had amazing new experiences,” he says. “So later when I got an opportunity to move back [to the U.S.], I took it.”

He accepted a position at Qualcomm in Southern California. He began dating and met Polina, his future wife. He joined Toastmasters of La Jolla, near San Diego, California, after Polina encouraged him to speak about his experiences. “I never thought anybody other than friends and family would be interested in hearing me speak,” he says.

Kandasamy’s courage and confidence has brought him to San Diego, far from India, where he was born, and far from the self-imposed belief that a physical condition could control his fate. His message applies to anyone: “Never let your body control your mind. Don’t be restricted by limited beliefs. Always remember: You are defined not by what you cannot do, but by what you can do.” And in Toastmasters he is doing more and more to spread his message of encouragement.

Finding a Will and a Way

While attending the 2006 International Convention in Washington, D.C., Val Albert went back to her hotel room after a full day of sessions, speakers and member interaction to find it stocked full of watermelon.

Watermelon, she says, was all she could eat due to the chemotherapy treatment she was undergoing to battle her cancer. Her Toastmasters friends had quietly gathered plates of the food and put it there, knowing it might help.

Ten years ago, Albert was at the top of her Toastmasters game as a member of North Country Club in Glenn Fall, New York. Already a 15-year member, she was in the middle of fulfilling her aspirations in leadership



Val Albert, DTM, PID

“I felt even more empowered to get out of my hospital bed, pull myself up by the ‘boot straps’ and re-engage in life and my Toastmasters journey.”

— Val Albert

by running for a spot on the Board of Directors. Then the news came: Cancer. Stage 1.

However, within three weeks of her diagnosis, her cancer had metastasized and she found herself facing stage 3 of the disease.

“I could have, and was very tempted to, curl up and shut the world out,” she says. “But once I realized how important it was for me to serve my organization and the members I love so much, it changed my life. I felt even more empowered to get out of my hospital bed, pull myself up by the ‘boot straps’ and re-engage in life and my Toastmasters journey.”

Part of running for the Board includes traveling to the International Convention to engage with members face-to-face—but only Val’s campaign team knew she had cancer at the time. Every morning, a Toastmasters friend helped her dress, including ensuring that her wig was secured so her “hair” looked good. Throughout the day, her team kept her hydrated. And every evening, another friendly member took her by the arm and walked her to her room.

“Those Toastmasters probably never realized that their compassion, and yes, servant leadership, were part of a process that ultimately saved my life,” Albert says.

Her advice to others who struggle with an obstacle is to keep an open perspective. “When you are suffering, make sure that you expand your optics and don’t gaze inward, because you may miss an opportunity of a lifetime,” she says. “Reach out to fellow Toastmasters, because this organization is far greater than speaking and leading, it is humanity making a difference in everyday challenges and changing attitudes and outcomes for individuals across the globe.” ■

Make 2016 the year to



Members of the **Solar Speak** club in Broomfield, Colorado, celebrated Toastmasters' 90th anniversary with speeches, food, dancing and fun photos.

Photo courtesy of VERTE Photography



Members of the **Thuthuka Toastmasters**, **Soaring Eagles** club and **Nelson Mandela Metro University (NMMU) Toastmasters** joined together for a speech contest, hosted by **Rhodes Toastmasters** club in Grahamstown, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa. The annual event is hosted by different South African university clubs each year.



The **GDUFS (Guangdong University of Foreign Studies) Toastmasters** club in Guangzhou, China, has a distinctly international character, with members from different universities and countries.

have fun with your club!

Eleven mountain-loving members from the **Yamanote Toastmasters** club in Tokyo, Japan, enjoy bonding outdoors at Nishizawa Valley near Mount Fuji, Japan.



Seven members of **City of London Toastmasters** club left the city to scale Pen y Fan, the highest peak in South Wales, located in the Brecon Beacons National Park.



New New

Ginger Taddeo glows as she tells me about her son, an aspiring jazz musician. The young man wanted badly to be a standout entertainer, but he was turned down by several music schools—including his dream choice, the prestigious New School for Jazz and Contemporary Music in New York City.

He applied there a second time but still wasn't accepted. "We were so discouraged," says Taddeo, a recent member of the Crossroads Toastmasters club in Strongsville, Ohio.

Then her son made a radical decision: He committed to practicing 10 hours a day for 40 straight days. After this intense period, he auditioned for the New School a third time—and was accepted. "I couldn't believe the difference!" boasts his mom. "He was phenomenal!"

Setting goals, and working hard to achieve them, is something many Toastmasters can relate to, especially as we start the new year. Many of us have goals for 2016—to earn a Competent Communicator award, perhaps, or run for a different club officer position. When it comes to meeting goals, few members are better examples than Fran Okeson, DTM, from Staten Island, New York. You probably know members who have earned their Distinguished Toastmaster award. You may even know someone who has done it twice. Well, Okeson is working on her 19th DTM award.

In fact, she has made it a goal to complete 20. Despite physical setbacks and obstacles, including a car accident and a stroke, she bubbles with enthusiasm. "My body may be broken, but my

Year, Tune

Reach your 2016 goals
one step at a time.

BY MAUREEN ZAPPALA, DTM

brain's not!" says Okeson, a member since 1988. "I'm an officer in six clubs. Every Sunday night, I plan out all my roles and speeches for the week. I'm determined to get to 20."

I'm sure she will.

Goal-Setting Fuels Success

Setting goals works. It drives behavior and boosts performance. Successful corporations like Nike and Intel set goals. At a personal level, your goals can create an exhilarating script for your life. J.C. Penney Jr., the American businessman and entrepreneur who founded the JCPenney stores in 1902, said, "Give me a stock clerk with a goal and I'll give you a man who will make history. Give me a man with no goals and I'll give you a stock clerk."

In her research on goal-setting, Gail Matthews, a psychology professor at Dominican University in California, found that people who *write down* their goals, create action plans and track their progress accomplish significantly more goals than people who just *think* of them. She says there are three elements to productive goal-setting: accountability, commitment and writing down goals.



The Toastmasters program embraces all three of these elements, so why not use your club involvement to harness the value of setting goals? Why not use it to become a “Goal Master”?

SMART Goals

You may be familiar with the phrase “Good goals are SMART.” Here’s what this acronym stands for (and there are many variations as well):

S= Specific: Define your goals clearly. Don’t be vague.

M= Measurable: Develop a tangible measure of progress. You cannot measure “kindness.” You can measure “I will compliment every sales clerk I meet this week.”

A= Attainable: Your goals must be manageable. They must align with your skills and resources. It’s too ambitious to write a book in a month if you haven’t researched for it.

R= Relevant: Is your goal relevant to your life’s principles or some bigger picture? The best goals clearly answer the question, “Why am I doing this?”

T= Time-bound: A goal without a deadline is just a dream. A timeline, with milestones and an end date, will keep you accountable and on task.

A goal needs an action plan—the steps required to achieve the goal. Beware of confusing a goal with a wish, or failing to realize what you can and cannot control. I wish for a lush green lawn, but I can’t control the rainfall or the truck driver who missed my driveway and gouged my lawn. I can control, however, things like watering with a hose and installing driveway markers. A goal and the action plan should be completely in your control, not dependent on anyone or anything else.

Learning Goal-Setting in Toastmasters

Reflect on *why* you joined Toastmasters. You probably joined for one reason but stayed for another. Many join to get better at speaking but find terrific leadership training. Learning to set goals helps lead to success, and the educational program is perfectly structured to facilitate goal-setting. The path from new member

GOAL-SETTING



Above, from left to right, Allan Carr, William Crabb and John McLean, members of the Townsville City Council club in Queensland, Australia, man the Toastmasters stand at an employee exposition in Townsville.



The Art Talkers club in Kyiv, Ukraine, was founded to reach the local art community.

to Competent Communicator or Competent Leader is clear and logical. Objectives and instructions are specific; resources, guidance and recognition along the way help a member advance. The steps are tied to a bigger picture, the bigger “Why?” of the Distinguished Club Program (DCP). It’s a wonderful path to follow.

Does your Toastmasters goal-setting reach beyond the *Competent Communication* (CC) manual? John McLean, DTM, of Townsville City Council club in Queensland, Australia, says he

Break your goal into small tasks and set a deadline for each task. It’s not so overwhelming when you do it in small steps.

finds the greatest meaning in personal growth. “I look at who I am, and then imagine who I want to be. I find my highest inner motivation by asking myself, *Why is this important?*”

A compelling “Why?” that reaches beyond your club is energizing. What’s your “Why?”

Turn the Why into Wow!

For 15 consecutive years, the Grosvenor Toastmasters club in Toronto, Ontario, Canada, has earned President’s Distinguished recognition, the highest level in the DCP. Getting to this level is a big deal, but doing it year after year is remarkable. This club has turned its “Why?” into “Wow.”

Jaze Bordeaux, ACG, ALB, immediate past president of the club, says a key to the streak is that the club is a place “where members achieve their personal goals of self-discovery and growth. This creates a very exciting environment in our club, which then creates momentum. Carrying that momentum forward every year is a major component of our success, and we plan accordingly.”

When planning goals, successful clubs are creative and flexible, and they gain the buy-in of their members. It starts with club leadership. Roastmasters in Seoul, South Korea, is a fairly new club committed to the DCP to shape club and member goals. Club member Bob Kienzle, DTM, explains, “We survey each member to identify

their goals, and have them make a plan for speeches and leadership roles.” The club keeps an online sign-up sheet that extends out a few months, so a member can sign up at least once for each role for the next two to three months. The club also keeps blank manuals on hand, so if a member is without theirs, they can still record their work. Roastmasters also encourages its members to give speeches outside of Toastmasters (the limit is two per manual).

“We’ve had quite a few people finish an award by doing one or two final speeches at private events or dinners,” says Kienzle. That’s creative and flexible.

Feeling Overwhelmed?

You may look at some Toastmasters goals and think, *I can’t do that!* Yes you can.

Break your goal into small tasks, then set a deadline for each task. If a goal has a final deadline, like the end of the year, then work backward from that date. Without a detailed schedule, you’ll sabotage your efforts to finish. The time spent mapping your course is well worth it because it will provide clarity, focus and a way to measure your progress.

I was in Toastmasters a full year before I looked at the *Competent Leadership* (CL) manual. I thought, *Wow! All those roles I’ve filled this year, and I could have counted them toward these projects!* I set a goal to complete the CL manual in a year. I created and diligently followed a schedule for each project, and within one year I finished. I thought, *Anyone can do this!*

Later, as president of my club, I championed the CL manual at every club meeting. We assigned a “leadership evaluator” to fill out members’ CL manuals. We made the process visible and fun, helping members to see that the goal was attainable. That year, we earned a record number of Competent Leader awards for the club and earned President’s Distinguished recognition. Reaching your goal is not so overwhelming when you do it in small steps.

If you’re a new member, you may feel overwhelmed with setting Toastmasters goals because everything seems unfamiliar. Stay connected. You’ll be propelled forward by the infectious enthusiasm of your club mates, even if you don’t understand all the program details yet.



Peter Punwani poses with his Toastmaster of the Year Award at District 10's conference in October 2015. Celebrating with Punwani is Division Governor of the Year Vicky Nann (middle) and Area Governor of the Year Janet Wassermann.

Khalil Kreidieh joined the Pro-Toast club in Beirut, Lebanon, in June 2015. He is setting a goal of earning his CC based on the club's needs. He attends meetings every Thursday. "I tell my friends and family I am busy on Thursdays, so don't make any plans," he says. "I am encouraging my friends to join so they can know about the experience I am living and enjoying."

Team-Building Goals

Club culture and camaraderie are fun and rewarding aspects of the Toastmasters experience, a gift to members. Setting goals to enjoy social activities together fosters this.

The Art Talkers in Kyiv, Ukraine, is a club originally founded to reach the local art community. Its members cultivate a festive spirit and have a tradition of eating dinner together after club meetings. The club's other goals include hosting picnics, debates, contests, birthday celebrations and other team-building activities. "We have a special section of our meeting called Art News, where our members can tell about upcoming cultural events," notes Immediate Past President Polina Karabach, ACB, ALB.

Pete Punwani, DTM, of Stow Toastmasters in Stow, Ohio, says his club's biggest goal is to have 12 different members earn an education award this year. "We think if half the club earned awards we would have more exciting meetings and contests," he says. Every club member is asked to determine which award would help them outside of Toastmasters, and then club members encourage each other all year as they strive to reach their goals. "Veteran members set the example," Punwani says. "And when a member earns an award, we celebrate with great food."

Other clubs have goals such as zero meeting cancellations, having an officer commit to earning an award during their term, connecting with members who drop out, or hitting a target number with club-member attendance at a district conference. What's nice is that these goals help propel members and clubs along their journeys of pursuing excellence *and* progressing in the DCP plan. Win-win!

So, you may not want to be a jazz musician. But what *do* you want? Choose your goal and get to work to achieve it. Use your



Bob Kienzle of Roastmasters club in Seoul, South Korea, shows off his trophy after winning 1st place in his district in the 2013 International Speech Contest. Roastmasters surveys all club members to identify their goals.

Toastmasters experience to help develop your goal-setting and goal-achieving muscles. You *can* become a "Goal Master"! **T**

MAUREEN ZAPPALA, DTM, is a former NASA propulsion engineer. Today she's a professional speaker, author and presentation skills coach, as well as founder of High Altitude Strategies, a coaching and speaking service. She belongs to the Aerospace Toastmasters Club in Cleveland, Ohio. Visit her website at www.MaureenZ.com.

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SPEECHWRITING

Learning to Write for Others

continued from page 15

It draws on the concept that things that come in threes are inherently funnier, more satisfying or more effective. There's a reason for having three bears, three wise men and three blind mice—not two or four.

You can start by grouping the content of your speech into three sections—for example, past, present and future, or land, sea and air. Take a blank sheet of paper and draw a simple triangle, and then pencil in three topics. Try it! Next, look for places in the speech where you can use phrases that exploit the power of three.

If you want to try your hand at professional speechwriting, you have the advantage of already knowing what it's like to stand in front of an audience.

For example, use the same word (“location, location, location”), three different words (“faith, hope and charity”) or three phrases (“Government of the people, by the people, for the people”).

Consider making the last item longer than the others (“life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness”). This gives an implicit emphasis on the importance of that item, and allows you to finish with a flourish (or maybe three flourishes).

How to Say It: Show, Don't Tell

Professional speechwriters exploit the power of stories to hold the audience's attention by appealing to their emotions. The compelling part of any story is how people deal with conflict.

Start your speech with a conflict, and then intensify the human interest element by adding descriptions of time, place and emotions.

Specificity is key. “I woke up and went to work” is not as effective as “One cold Wednesday morning in December I shivered as I stepped into the shower to get ready for my last day at the office.”

People remember stories. Research has shown that, in longer presentations, audiences need to re-engage every 10 minutes with the help of a story. They learn through metaphors and stories that are deep and rich with meaning.

I've found that in the corporate world the speechwriter must think of creative ways to highlight a speech's main message. They do this by telling stories about the company's history via product demos, personal anecdotes and customer testimonials.

Many of the speeches I wrote for Silicon Valley executives were enlivened by product demos and customer testimonials. I'd work with the engineering team to bring the product to life. At Sun Microsystems, we designed a stage set for the ‘thin client’ computer to show it being used in the living room as well as the office. Allowing the audience to see the system in use in the home was more inspiring than just showing it in the corporate setting.

If you want to try your hand at professional speechwriting, you have the advantage of already knowing what it's like to stand in front of an audience. You know what it takes to deliver a speech at your club, be evaluated and strive to improve. These experiences will serve you well should you want to take the next step and write speeches for others.

Writing for others will, in turn, make you a better speaker. **T**

IAN GRIFFIN, ACS, has more than 20 years of speechwriting experience in the high-tech industry and is the owner of Executive Communications. You can learn more about him at www.exec-comms.com/blog/.



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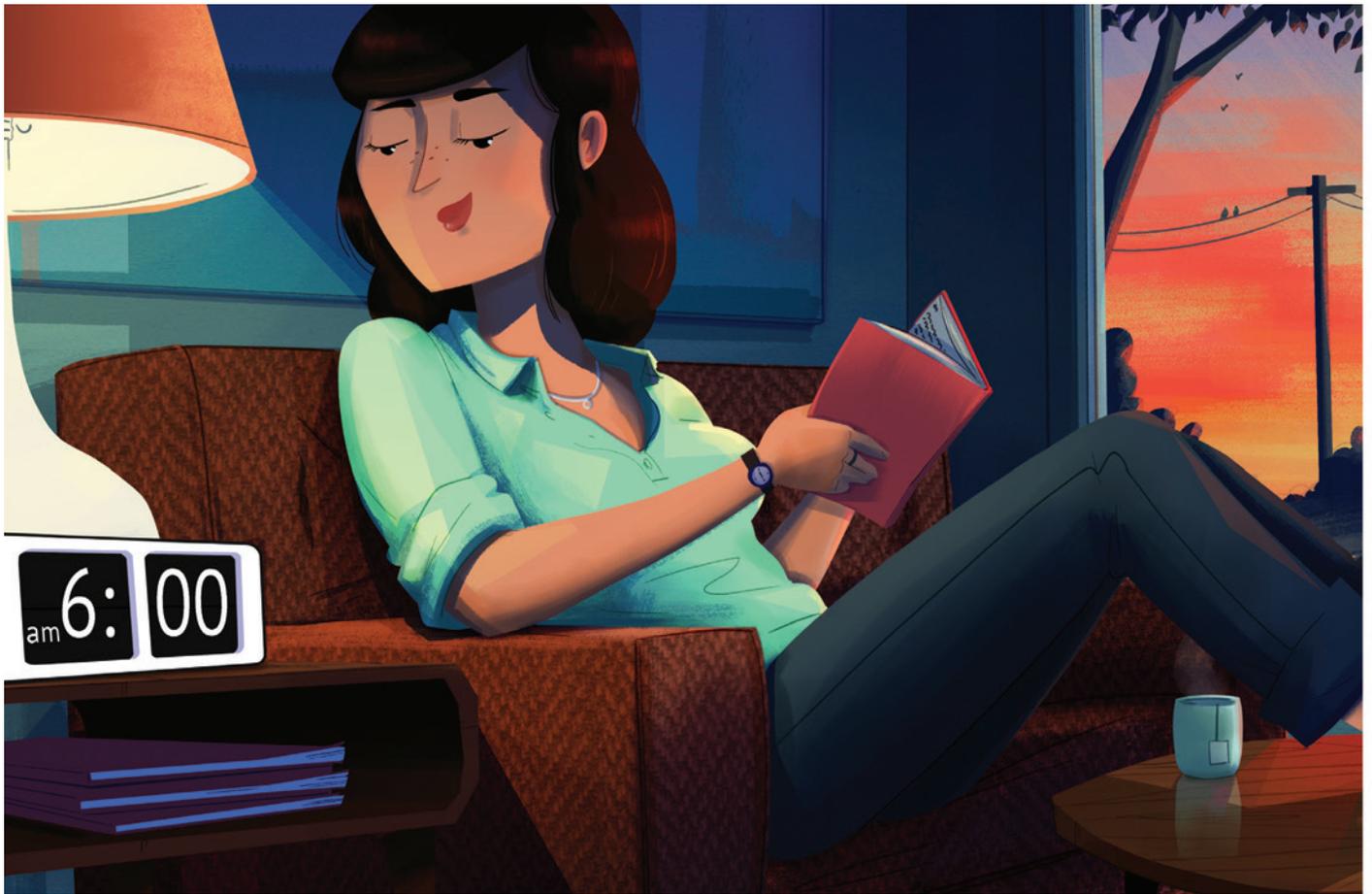
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Make Your Hours More Meaningful in 2016

How to make time for practice, meetings and everything else that's important in life.

BY LAURA VANDERKAM

A life is lived in hours, so living a better life means figuring out how to use those hours wisely. What makes this tricky is that time keeps passing, whether or not you think about how to spend it. Fortunately, a few strategies can help anyone be more mindful of time. Try these tips for managing the 8,784 hours of 2016, and you'll spend more time on what matters and less on what doesn't.

Track Your Time

If you want to lose weight, nutritionists will tell you to keep a food journal. That's because tracking what you eat makes you more aware and leads to weight loss. Likewise, if you

want to use your time better, you need to figure out how you use it now. You can track your time, and how you spend it, in a simple spreadsheet or journal, or use a time-tracking app such as Toggl. The exact tool doesn't matter, as long as you use it.

Try keeping track of your time for one week (168 hours). Record what you're doing as often as you remember and in as much detail as you think will be helpful. Then add it up. How much time do you spend working? Sleeping? Doing housework? Watching TV? Interacting with your family? The point is not to see how much time you're wasting (everyone wastes time to some degree),

it's to see if any of your time is spent on activities that are neither meaningful nor enjoyable. That time can be redeployed to other things.

Make a 'List of 100 Dreams'

We'd all like to figure out how to spend fewer of our precious minutes on annoying tasks. But it's even more productive to ask ourselves what we want to spend more time doing. Several years ago, a career coach named Caroline Ceniza-Levine shared an exercise with me called the "List of 100 Dreams." This is a completely unedited list of the things you want to do or have more of in your life.

Do you want to give a TED Talk? Write a book? Run a 5k race? Tour wineries in France? It's hard to get all the way to 100, but you'll learn a lot about yourself and what you might like by trying.

Look Forward

Try two more exercises to make the big goals on your "List of 100 Dreams" attainable. Many people get professional performance reviews toward the end of the year. It's all well and good to review your work of the previous months, but what's done is done. It's more productive to think about next year. To achieve your best results this year, try writing

It's all well and good to review your work of the previous months, but what's done is done. It's more productive to think about next year.

your 2016 performance review now. Think about three to five things that you would like to say you've done in your professional life by the end of 2016.

As for your personal life, try writing your family holiday letter—those notes that many people send to friends and family in December—now. Writing them can be a bit tedious, but they serve a purpose: They describe what you did throughout the year that mattered to you. What three to five things would make this year memorable for you?

Now, because of the performance review and holiday letter, you have six to 10 goals to focus on. Break each one down into doable steps. If you want to run a 5k race, schedule two to three runs per week. If you want to become a better speaker, set aside time for Toastmasters meetings and for practicing speeches a few times a week. Write everything on your 2016 calendar.

Put First Things First

The phrase "first things first" was highlighted in the classic productivity book *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*. The idea is that time is highly elastic. We don't build the lives we want by saving time. We build the lives we want and then *time saves itself*. When life is full of the important stuff, the unimportant stuff naturally takes less space.

A good way to put this concept into practice is to plan your upcoming week on Friday afternoon. Take a half hour or so and look at what's on your calendar for the next week. Make a short priority list with three categories: career,

relationships and self. What two or three things in each category would you like to accomplish next week? Look over your calendar and block them in.

Use Your Mornings

Whenever people tell me they don't have time for something in their lives, I share a little equation. There are 168 hours in a week. If you spend 40 of them at work, and sleep eight hours a night (56 per week), that leaves 72 hours for other things. If you work 50 hours, that leaves 62, and so forth. In 62 hours, I imagine you can find two for practicing your speeches and two for attending a Toastmasters meeting. You can allocate three hours to exercise and three for a date with your spouse. But if you're really unsure of how things will fit, look at your mornings.

Mornings are a great time for getting things done. This is time you can have to yourself before the rest of the world's priorities invade. You can go to a quiet part of the house to read, or go for a quick run on the treadmill. You could have a

family breakfast or a coffee date with your spouse. Try turning off the TV 30 minutes earlier and waking 30 minutes earlier to see what else you can fit into your days.

Plan Your Weekends

Weekends are the key to a full life. They offer time to recharge our batteries so we can handle all our responsibilities. Unfortunately, it's easy to lose weekend time to chores, errands and children's activities. If you have priorities that don't easily fit into the workweek, try planning out your weekends by Wednesday. That way, you'll find space for rejuvenating activities that you *want* to do, not just the things you *have* to do.

Minimize the Musts

Certain activities expand to fill the available space. At work, it's often checking email. At home, it's often housework. Managing time better means choosing to spend limited blocks of time on certain activities. At work, try to check your email once an hour (or less frequently, if you can!) By not constantly toggling back and forth, you'll have longer blocks of time for focused work. At home, try ordering more items online so you don't lose your weekends to errands. Likewise, try to create a short block of time on weekends for chores. Resolve yourself to the mindset that if it doesn't happen between 9 and 11 a.m. on Saturday, it's not going to happen, and the rest of the weekend will be yours.

Try these various time-management tips to get the most out of your year. Make it a productive, fun and meaningful 2016! 

LAURA VANDERKAM is the author of several time-management books, including *168 Hours* and *I Know How She Does It: How Successful Women Make the Most of Their Time*. She lives outside Philadelphia and blogs at www.LauraVanderkam.com.

How a Quiet Writer Learned to Love Public Speaking

Try this approach to get comfortable with any audience.

BY LAURA VANDERKAM

I didn't set out to make my living as a speaker. Like many people, I had some past deer-in-the-headlights moments when forced to present.

In college, I got angry during a debate on sweatshops (1998's hot campus topic), stepped up to the microphone—and realized I had absolutely no idea how to convey what I thought.

I'm a writer, first and foremost, and my introverted self is happiest when I'm squirreled away with a manuscript, editing it to be closer to my ultimate vision.

... book writing is all about book *speaking*.

But as I learned soon after writing my first time-management book, *168 Hours*, in 2010, these days writers don't get to let their written words speak for themselves. Books must be promoted, which means that book writing is all about book *speaking*. If I want to keep writing books, I need my books to sell, and that means getting up in front of all kinds of audiences to talk about my ideas.

So I did, at first out of duty (and the paycheck). Then a funny thing happened. Over time, and in the course of writing several more books, I came to enjoy speaking. I realized that if I was drawn to an idea, other people would be too.

Here are a couple of speaking strategies that can help anyone, even quiet sorts.

Put Allies in the Audience

I realized that, as an introvert, it's a lot easier to speak with people I know than people I don't. I am more comfortable speaking to an audience of friends, and

I can turn an audience I don't know into one with at least a few friendly faces. I came to this realization by accident. I write and speak about time management, and in order to make my talk more relevant to audiences, I started asking a few volunteers to keep track of their time beforehand. They would send me their schedules. We'd chat by phone and email about their challenges, and we'd brainstorm strategies for them to try.

These volunteers would then share their discoveries with the group. It made my talks

interactive and, I hoped, enlightening, but it also served another purpose. In the course of our conversations, these volunteers and I got to know each other. When they'd introduce themselves to me before the presentation, and would sit near the front, they became allies, smiling and nodding.

While not all topics lend themselves to such preparation, you can achieve the same result by arriving early at the event where you are speaking and introducing yourself to people. Even standing by the door of the room where you'll be presenting and introducing yourself to people as they come in humanizes you and makes you feel like you're not among strangers.

Improve the Energy!

I also realized that a lethargic audience is a lot harder to speak to than an energetic one. Fortunately, you can alter the energy in the room. Every veteran has her tricks. I try to get people standing up in the first few



Laura Vanderkam

minutes as part of a humorous quiz aimed at finding the person in the room with the busiest schedule. This simple act of moving (and laughing) does wonders to make people happier, especially if I've drawn the otherwise nap-inducing post-lunch speaking slot.

These strategies have helped my talks go better than when I was first starting out. I also feel more confident in my speaking capabilities. To be sure, things can still go awry. I try out some new material each time in an attempt to stay fresh, and sometimes the new material bombs. Sometimes audiences are simply not open to persuasion. Sometimes there are other things going on that are not within the speaker's control. Accountants smack dab in the middle of tax season are just going to be tired, no matter what you do.

The good news about speaking frequently, though, is that you learn to take any one speech in context. Your message may resonate with a few people, if not the whole group, and focusing on the positive feedback you get from those who are receptive will keep you energized to do it all again. **T**

LAURA VANDERKAM is the author of several time-management books, including *168 Hours* and *I Know How She Does It: How Successful Women Make the Most of Their Time*. She lives outside Philadelphia and blogs at www.Laura-Vanderkam.com.



A New Me!

This is the year I will definitely transform my faults into virtues.
Isn't that right, Mingyu?

BY JOHN CADLEY

It's a new year. A fresh start. Three-hundred sixty-five pristine days, unsullied by mistakes, excuses and procrastination, stretching out like stepping stones to a better me. I must tread carefully. I can't let them slip out from underneath me or I will trip, fall and lose my way—as I have so many times before. *This* is the year I will stay on track, follow my path and walk confidently in the direction of my dreams.

And if you think I'm doing all that alone, you're crazy. I'm the one who got me into this mess in the first place. No, this year I'm hiring a life coach. That's right—after 69 years of parents, siblings, aunts, uncles, teachers, bosses, pastors, friends and former wives telling me how to live my life, I've decided it's more efficient to let one person do the job.

In the Chinese culture they believe in respecting old people and honoring the dead, which is the general direction I'm heading in.

Her name is Mingyu. I chose her for several reasons. First, she is certified by the International Coach Federation (ICF), which is important. Just about anybody can call themselves a life coach in this unregulated field, and I wanted to make sure I didn't get stuck with my brother-in-law. Second, Mingyu is Chinese. Nothing against the rest of the world but I've never met a Chinese person who isn't smarter than I am. In a few short decades they've built their country into one of the strongest economies in the world—and they can speak Chinese! You've got to be a genius to speak that language. I can't even order from a Chinese menu. I also like Chinese culture. They believe in respecting old people and honoring the dead, which is the general direction I'm heading in.

Mingyu describes life coaching as a “designed alliance” in which I tell her what I want and she helps me get it. I told her that I want to be universally loved, spectacularly wealthy, internationally famous and six inches taller. Mingyu respectfully suggested that my designs, while admirably ambitious, were perhaps not so

much life goals as indications of psychopathology. (She didn't say it quite that way—the Chinese are much more polite, which is why I love them.)

What Mingyu did do was bring a different perspective to my life, to the point where I am now confident I can become the man I've always wanted to be. For instance, I have a problem with punctuality. I'm always late. Well, in China you can't really be late. “Late” implies some failure on your part, which the Chinese would never want you to feel. They're too polite. If the meeting is scheduled for 3 p.m. and you get there at 4 p.m., no one would ever think of saying, “You're fired.” This is why Donald Trump isn't Chinese.

I waste time, too. If there's a job to do I'll shoot the breeze with everybody until there's five minutes left to get it done. Little did I know I'm actually practicing *guanxi*. That's the Chinese word for socializing or networking, which always precedes any talk of business. They want to know about your personal life first, and I mean personal—your marriage, your income, your health. We call that gossip—and in China it's *required*! What's not to love?

I also avoid confrontation. I'd rather be quiet—and then think of all the clever things I should have said *afterward*. Mingyu says this is actually a form of etiquette. In China, challenging someone publicly is an insult, an affront to their honor. So when I do something dumb and my wife says, “What do you have to say for yourself?” I can reply, “I would tell you, dear, but I have too much respect for your honor.” We'll see how that goes over.

Mingyu has already helped me achieve one of my life goals. I love table tennis—and hate being routinely defeated by 7-year-olds. Under Mingyu's tutelage (the Chinese are excellent players), I recently swept through the seniors Ping-Pong tournament at the YMCA like the Visigoths sacking Rome. The 7-year-olds are next.

So I'm hopeful for 2016. Thanks to Mingyu, my prospects for self-improvement seem more promising than ever. And I don't even have to change. I just have to move to China. ■

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

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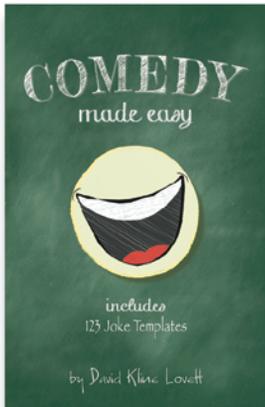
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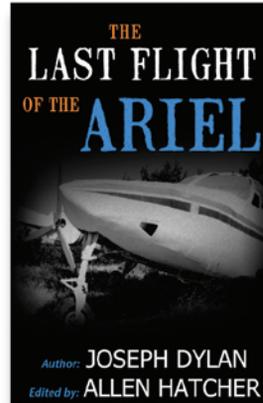
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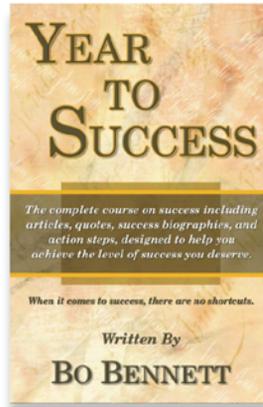
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