

Distinguished Club Program

How to Be a Distinguished Club





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Item 1111 Rev. 01/2022

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Missions, Values, and Promises

Toastmasters International Mission

We empower individuals to become more effective communicators and leaders.

District Mission

We build new clubs and support all clubs in achieving excellence.

Club Mission

We provide a supportive and positive learning experience in which members are empowered to develop communication and leadership skills, resulting in greater self-confidence and personal growth.

Toastmasters International Core Values

- ▶ Integrity
- ▶ Respect
- ▶ Service
- ▶ Excellence

Toastmasters International Brand Promise

Empowering individuals through personal and professional development.

This is the promise Toastmasters International makes to club members. Once we have reached this goal consistently, through all clubs across the globe, we will have achieved club excellence.

A Toastmaster's Promise

As a member of Toastmasters International and my club, I promise

- ▶ To attend club meetings regularly
- ▶ To prepare all of my projects to the best of my ability, basing them on the Toastmasters education program
- ▶ To prepare for and fulfill meeting assignments
- ▶ To provide fellow members with helpful, constructive evaluations
- ▶ To help the club maintain the positive, friendly environment necessary for all members to learn and grow
- ▶ To serve my club as an officer when called upon to do so
- ▶ To treat my fellow club members and our guests with respect and courtesy
- ▶ To bring guests to club meetings so they can see the benefits Toastmasters membership offers
- ▶ To adhere to the guidelines and rules for all Toastmasters education and recognition programs
- ▶ To act within Toastmasters' core values of integrity, respect, service, and excellence during the conduct of all Toastmasters activities

Foundation for Success in the Distinguished Club Program

When your club possesses characteristics of quality, the member experience is enhanced. A high-quality club encourages and celebrates member achievement, provides a supportive and fun environment, and offers a professionally organized meeting with variety. In those clubs, officers are trained in all aspects of club quality to ensure that members have access to a formal mentoring program, are provided evaluations that help them grow, and are motivated to achieve their goals.

A primary objective of clubs is to provide the best possible member experience so that existing members are retained and new members join. How can you create the best possible member experience in your club? First impressions are crucial. Every new and prospective member's initial interaction with your club should be a positive one. Toastmasters defines these decisive times when initial impressions are being created as **Moments of Truth** (Item 290).

Moments of Truth	
First Impressions	Your club ensures that guests' experiences and observations become first impressions that encourage them to return.
Membership Orientation	Your club acquaints new members with the Toastmasters education and recognition programs, their responsibility to your club, and your club's responsibility to the member.
Fellowship, Variety, and Communication	Your club offers a warm, friendly, and supportive environment that encourages enjoyable learning.
Program Planning and Meeting Organization	Your club meetings are carefully planned, with well-prepared speakers and useful evaluations.
Membership Strength	Your club has a sufficient number of members to provide leadership and fill meeting and committee assignments. Your club participates in membership-building and retention practices.
Achievement Recognition	Your club monitors members' progress toward goals, submits completed award applications immediately, and consistently recognizes member achievement.

When put into action, **Moments of Truth** forms the roadmap to realizing Toastmasters' mission, envisioned future, and core values. It highlights critical elements for success and distinction that transform successful clubs into Distinguished ones. Distinguished clubs, in turn, are the basis for Distinguished Areas, Divisions, and Districts.

Let **Moments of Truth** be your guide to delivering quality service and outstanding member experiences.

If looking for additional support, reach out to your District leaders for guidance. If your club has met the requirements, you may be eligible for a club coach(es) that will work with the club to become Distinguished or higher. The Distinguished Club Program gives clubs the ability to shine and your District leaders are there to support your club on this journey.

The Distinguished Club Program

The Distinguished Club Program (DCP) includes 10 goals that your club should strive to achieve each year. When your club incorporates **Moments of Truth** into every meeting, it is already well on its way to reaching these annual goals.

For your convenience, the 10 goals have been grouped into four areas:

- Education** Members who have the opportunity to earn education awards are reaching their goals.
- Membership** When new, dual, and reinstating members join, everyone’s experience is enhanced because your club has enough members to provide leadership and fill meeting and committee assignments.
- Training** Trained club officers are better able to serve and support your club because they know how best to fulfill their roles.
- Administration** Submission of the dues renewals and the club officer list on time will help your club run more smoothly, benefiting your members.

How It Works

The Distinguished Club Program is an annual program, running from July 1 through June 30. The program consists of 10 goals for your club to obtain, using the **Club Success Plan** as your guide. To help keep track of your progress toward these goals throughout the year, updated reports are posted daily on the Toastmasters International website at www.toastmasters.org/DistinguishedPerformanceReports. At year-end, the number of goals the club achieved is calculated. Based on the goals met and whether or not the qualifying requirements have been met, the club may be recognized as Distinguished, Select Distinguished, or President’s Distinguished.

Qualifying Requirements

A qualifying requirement is a prerequisite or prior condition for participation in the program. If either qualifying requirement is not met, your club will not earn Distinguished recognition even if all of its goals are met.

To be eligible for recognition, a club must be in good standing according to **Policy 2.0: Club and Membership Eligibility**, Section 4: Good Standing of Clubs and **must meet the qualifying requirement of having either 20 members or a net growth of at least five new, dual, or reinstating members as of June 30**. Transfer and honorary members do not count toward the qualifying requirements.

The Membership to Date number is reflective of the number of members that have paid dues to an individual club. This number matches the number of members on the club roster with exception to when members transfer out of one club and into another. If a member transfers to a different club, their original club will still retain credit for their membership until the next renewal cycle.

Although your club may gain several new members throughout the year, if the amount of nonrenewing members is greater, then your club may not be eligible for recognition. Using the two examples below as a reference, your club must have the required number, or higher, on June 30.

Membership		Membership	
Base 13	To Date 9	Base 20	To Date 19
Required 18 20 members or a net growth of 5 new members		Required 20 20 members or a net growth of 5 new members	

Goals to Achieve

Following are the goals your club should strive to achieve during the year:

Distinguished Club Program Goals

Education

1. Four Level 1 awards achieved
2. Two Level 2 awards achieved
3. Two more Level 2 awards achieved
4. Two Level 3 awards achieved
5. One Level 4, Path Completion, or DTM award achieved
6. One more Level 4, Path Completion, or DTM award achieved

Membership

7. Four new, dual, or reinstating members
8. Four more new, dual, or reinstating members

Training

9. A minimum of four club officer roles trained during each of the two training periods

Administration

10. On-time payment of membership dues accompanied by the names of eight members (at least three of whom must be renewing members) for one period and on-time submission of one club officer list

A simple one-page summary of the program is at the end of this manual.

Following is detailed information about how your club can achieve the Distinguished Club Program goals.

Education

Goals 1 through 6 focus on education awards. When members have the opportunity to reach their education goals, they are benefiting from the Toastmasters experience, and becoming better speakers and leaders.

1. Four Level 1 awards achieved
2. Two Level 2 awards achieved
3. Two more Level 2 awards achieved
4. Two Level 3 awards achieved
5. One Level 4, Path Completion, or DTM award achieved
6. One more Level 4, Path Completion, or DTM award achieved

Only members in good standing are eligible to earn education awards. A member in good standing is one whose dues have been paid and received by World Headquarters for the current dues period (i.e., dues must be paid on or before April 1 for the April–September period and October 1 for the October–March period). See **Policy 2.0: Club and Membership Eligibility**, Section 5: Good Standing of Individual Members. All award applications must be complete and received by World Headquarters on or before **June 30**.

Your club receives credit for only one type of education award per member, per year. This encourages all members to progress in the education program, not just a few.

Example: Pat Smith receives a Level 1 award in Presentation Mastery in July. The club receives credit toward Goal 1. Later in the year, Pat earns a Level 2 in Presentation Mastery. Their club receives credit toward Goal 2 for this award, also. However, in the same Toastmasters program year, Pat earns a second Level 1 in Dynamic Leadership and a second Level 2 in Dynamic Leadership; for these awards, their club does not receive credit toward Distinguished Club goals as the club has already received credit for Pat's Level 1 and Level 2 in Presentation Mastery.

Credit for an award may be given to only one club. Members who belong to more than one club must choose which club receives credit for any one of their awards prior to the award being submitted to World Headquarters.

Membership

Goals 7 and 8 deal with membership. Quality clubs have enough members to make meetings diverse and engaging. When new members join, meetings have more variety and natural attrition is offset. This results in an enhanced experience for all club members.

7. Four new, dual, or reinstating members
8. Four more new, dual, or reinstating members

When four new, dual, or reinstating members join the club during the Toastmasters year, your club achieves Goal 7. It achieves Goal 8 when an additional four new, dual, or reinstating members join during the year.

Per the **Club Constitution, Article II: Membership**, Section 2. Admission to Membership, your club must submit a completed and signed **Membership Application** to World Headquarters, along with corresponding membership dues for each new, dual, and reinstated member who joins during the Toastmasters year. For your club to receive credit in the Distinguished Club Program for the current Toastmasters year, Membership Applications and membership dues must be received by World Headquarters no later than **June 30**. (**Transfer and honorary members do not count toward your club's membership goals.**)

Training

Goal 9 focuses on training. When club officers are well trained to perform their duties, club members are better served. This makes the member experience more positive, which leads to increased member retention.

9. A minimum of four club officer roles trained during each of the two training periods

Your club achieves Goal 9 when at least four of its officer roles—Club President, Vice President Education, Vice President Membership, Vice President Public Relations, Club Secretary, Club Treasurer, and Sergeant at Arms—are trained in their responsibilities. Officers must attend and fully participate in two District-sponsored training sessions. Credit is not given for non-officers attending in place of elected officers, and credit is given only for one person per officer role. Officers must be trained for the position to which they were elected.

The first training session occurs between June 1 and August 31, and the second is held between November 1 and February 28 (or February 29 in leap years). Districts are encouraged to submit training reports online through District Central no later than September 30 and March 31, respectively.

For newly chartered clubs, the following training requirements apply for Goal 9:

Charter Date	Training Session 1 (June 1–August 31)	Training Session 2 (November 1–February 28/29)
July 1–August 31	A minimum of four club officer roles must attend the first District-sponsored training session	A minimum of four club officer roles must attend the second District-sponsored training session
September 1–February 28/29	Refer to Training Session 2 column →	When a minimum of four club officer roles attend the second District-sponsored training session, the club receives credit for the first and second training sessions
March 1–June 30	Refer to Training Session 2 column →	When a minimum of four club officer roles attend a charter training session by an authorized District representative between the charter date and June 30, the club will receive credit for the first and second training sessions in the current program year

All charter training opportunities should be scheduled through and approved by the Program Quality Director.

Training reports submitted directly to World Headquarters by clubs will not be accepted. Club officers attending a training session are responsible for giving the person conducting the training session their names, offices, and club numbers.

Officers must be trained by authorized District representatives in a live training session. Audiovisual aids may be used to enhance training, but they may not be the sole method of training. Therefore, club officers who simply view a video that describes their responsibilities are not considered trained, even if the video was provided by a District leader.

Administration

Goal 10 is administrative. When your club fulfills its administrative duties on time, members and your club as a whole receive recognition for their accomplishments. Please refer to **Policy 8.0: Dues and Fees** for more information on the dues structure and guidelines pertaining to payment.

10. On-time payment of membership dues accompanied by the names of eight members (at least three of whom must be renewing members) for one period and on-time submission of one club officer list

For the membership dues portion of Goal 10, your club receives credit when:

- ▶ Your club's October–March membership dues accompanied by the names of eight members (at least three of whom must be renewing members) are received by World Headquarters on or before **October 1**

OR

- ▶ Your club's April–September membership dues and names of eight members (at least three of whom must be renewing members) are received by World Headquarters on or before **April 1**

For the portion of Goal 10 that addresses club officer lists, keep in mind that while some clubs elect officers annually, clubs that meet at least weekly may hold semiannual elections. If your club holds annual elections, your club officer list must be received by World Headquarters on or before **June 30** to earn credit toward Goal 10 for the upcoming program year. If your club holds semiannual elections, your club officer list must be received by World Headquarters on or before **June 30** of the previous Toastmasters year and/or **December 31** of the current Toastmasters year.

Annual terms are from July 1 through June 30. Semiannual terms run from July 1 through December 31 and January 1 through June 30. Clubs that elect officers contrary to this schedule are operating in violation of the **Club Constitution for Clubs of Toastmasters International** and are not eligible for credit in the Distinguished Club Program for submitting club officer lists.

New clubs that charter between July 1 and September 30 automatically receive full credit for an on-time officer list and have two opportunities—October 1 and April 1—to submit renewal dues on time to fully achieve Goal 10. New clubs that charter between October 1 and June 30 will receive full credit for this goal in the current program year. In either case, the charter submission fulfills the DCP requirement for the on-time officer list.

For all recently chartered clubs, please be aware that separate from the DCP requirements, a club is considered paid and in good standing when its dues have been received by World Headquarters. Dues are required for a minimum of eight members—at least three of whom were members of the original club charter. The first renewals will be prorated for all charter members and will be due on April 1 or October 1, depending on the month of charter. Club officers will receive an email reminder of the prorated renewals, to help ensure that the club will submit the dues on time, and remain in good standing.

Recognition

When your club meets all the **qualifying requirements** and also does the following, it is eligible for Distinguished recognition at year-end:

Achievement	Recognition Earned
Five of 10 goals	Distinguished
Seven of 10 goals	Select Distinguished
Nine of 10 goals	President's Distinguished

If your club earns recognition as Distinguished, Select Distinguished, or President's Distinguished, World Headquarters will send an award ribbon for display and a congratulatory letter.

Some Toastmasters clubs do not belong to Districts. If that is the case for your club, recognition may be earned by achieving one goal less than listed above for each of the three recognition levels.

Terminology and Program Specifications

Membership Base

Your club's membership base is calculated at the beginning of the Toastmasters year (July 1). The membership base equals the number of paid members the club had on June 30 of the previous Toastmasters year. These payments may come from renewing, new, charter, dual, and reinstated members.

Payment of membership-renewal dues received by World Headquarters after July 1 of the previous Toastmasters year counts toward the membership base. Therefore, the membership base may be revised at any time during the year to reflect late membership payments for the previous Toastmasters year.

The following is an example of how a club's membership base may be affected throughout the year:

Example: In April, your club submits payment of membership-renewal dues for 17 members. In June, it submits two Membership Applications and new membership dues to World Headquarters. This brings your club's total membership to 19 on June 30 and your club then begins the new Toastmasters year with 19 members. In August, your club submits membership-renewal dues for three members for the April–September period. These people had been members for several years, but did not pay their membership-renewal dues on time. Your club's membership base is adjusted for these late-paying members. The three additional members raise your club's membership base to 22.

Membership at Year-end

The total number of members (renewing, dual, new, charter, and reinstated) in your club whose membership dues payments were received by World Headquarters is your club's membership at year-end. Year-end membership counts may not be adjusted. April membership dues payments received after June 30 are not added to the membership at year-end. However, these late membership dues payments do increase the membership base for the current Toastmasters year.

Net Growth

Net growth occurs when the total members at year-end (June 30) exceed the membership base.

Following are examples illustrating how a club's accomplishments and membership affect its eligibility for recognition:

Example 1: A club had 14 members on July 1. Four members earned Level 1 awards, three earned Level 2 awards, and two earned Level 3 awards. Five new members joined. Four club officers were trained in each period. Membership-renewal dues with the names of renewing members were submitted on time twice, but no club officer list. The club had 19 members on June 30. It achieved goals 1, 3, 4, 7 and 9—a total of five goals. Since it had 19 members on June 30 (a net growth of five members), it is recognized as Distinguished.

Example 2: A club had 24 members on July 1. Five members earned Level 1 awards, four members earned Level 2 awards, and one member earned the DTM award. Eight new members joined. Four club officers were trained in each period. Membership-renewal dues with the names of renewing members and a club officer list were submitted on time. The club had 18 members on June 30. It achieved goals 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9 and 10—a total of eight goals. However, since it did not have 20 members at year-end or a net growth of five new members, it is not eligible for recognition.

Example 3: A club had 19 members on July 1. Two members earned Level 3 awards and one member earned a Level 4 award. Membership-renewal dues with the names of renewing members and a club officer list were submitted on time. The club had 23 members on June 30. It achieved goals 2, 5, 7 and 10—a total of four goals. Even though it had more than 20 members at year-end, the club did not achieve enough goals to earn recognition.

Submitting Information to World Headquarters

Documents must be received by World Headquarters no later than 11:59 p.m., Mountain Time, on the deadline date even if the deadline falls on a weekend or holiday. As true for all deadlines throughout the year, club officers should be careful to submit accurate information since no changes may be made after documents are received, such as corrections to join dates, officer election dates, and award submissions.

Be aware that it is your responsibility as the sender to ensure the successful transmission of any document. Toastmasters International is not responsible for any illegible or incomplete documents it receives, for fax machine failures, lost or delayed mail, or website downtime. If your club is having difficulty submitting documents on a deadline date, there are alternate submission methods such as email or phone. Please use the **Contact Us** page for the appropriate contact details and our hours of operation.

Newly Chartered Clubs

In the current Distinguished Club Program year, newly chartered clubs will be assigned a minimum membership base of 20 for reporting purposes. For clubs that charter with more than 20 members, reports will reflect the actual paid membership count as the base—please note: transfer memberships will not be counted.

Reports

Regular feedback is an important part of any recognition program. When you are working toward recognition, you need to know your current progress. An online report shows your club's membership base, current membership, and progress toward the 10 goals. Updates are available daily on the Toastmasters International website at www.toastmasters.org/DistinguishedPerformanceReports. At the beginning of each month, while World Headquarters completes processing of the previous month, the Dashboards will reflect business from the prior month. Our month-end closing dates can be found www.toastmasters.org/MonthEnd.

Club Success Plan

The Club Executive Committee—which includes all seven officers and the Immediate Past Club President—develops a **Club Success Plan** based on the needs and goals of club members. First, club officers determine how they will communicate, address conflict, and hold themselves accountable. Secondly, club officers evaluate current situations, establish specific goals, and develop strategies that can be used to achieve success. To help club officers in that effort, the plan identifies helpful resources that can be used. Finally, the plan calls for club officers to identify assignments, develop a timetable, and track accomplishments.

Earning recognition for a club is not something anyone accomplishes alone. It takes a team of people who are dedicated to a common goal, have a plan, and execute it well. They share responsibility for their tasks and depend on one another to achieve them. These teams do not only include club officers; clubs may also form other committees to help carry out specific aspects of the Club Success Plan.

The Club Executive Committee determines what the club will accomplish this year and in years to come. The vision should be both attainable and inspiring so that other club members are motivated to get involved and help the committee's efforts.

Once the vision is recorded, club officers determine who will take which roles and the responsibilities of each member. Are the skills and talents of some members a great fit for certain tasks? By assessing questions like these, club officers can assign tasks to the best-suited members.

The Club Success Plan includes all elements necessary to achieve your club's goals: what, how, who, and when. Determining in advance what should be done, when and how it will be accomplished, and who is responsible for doing it, makes achieving success much easier. To that end, the Club Executive Committee should begin the term with the following agenda:

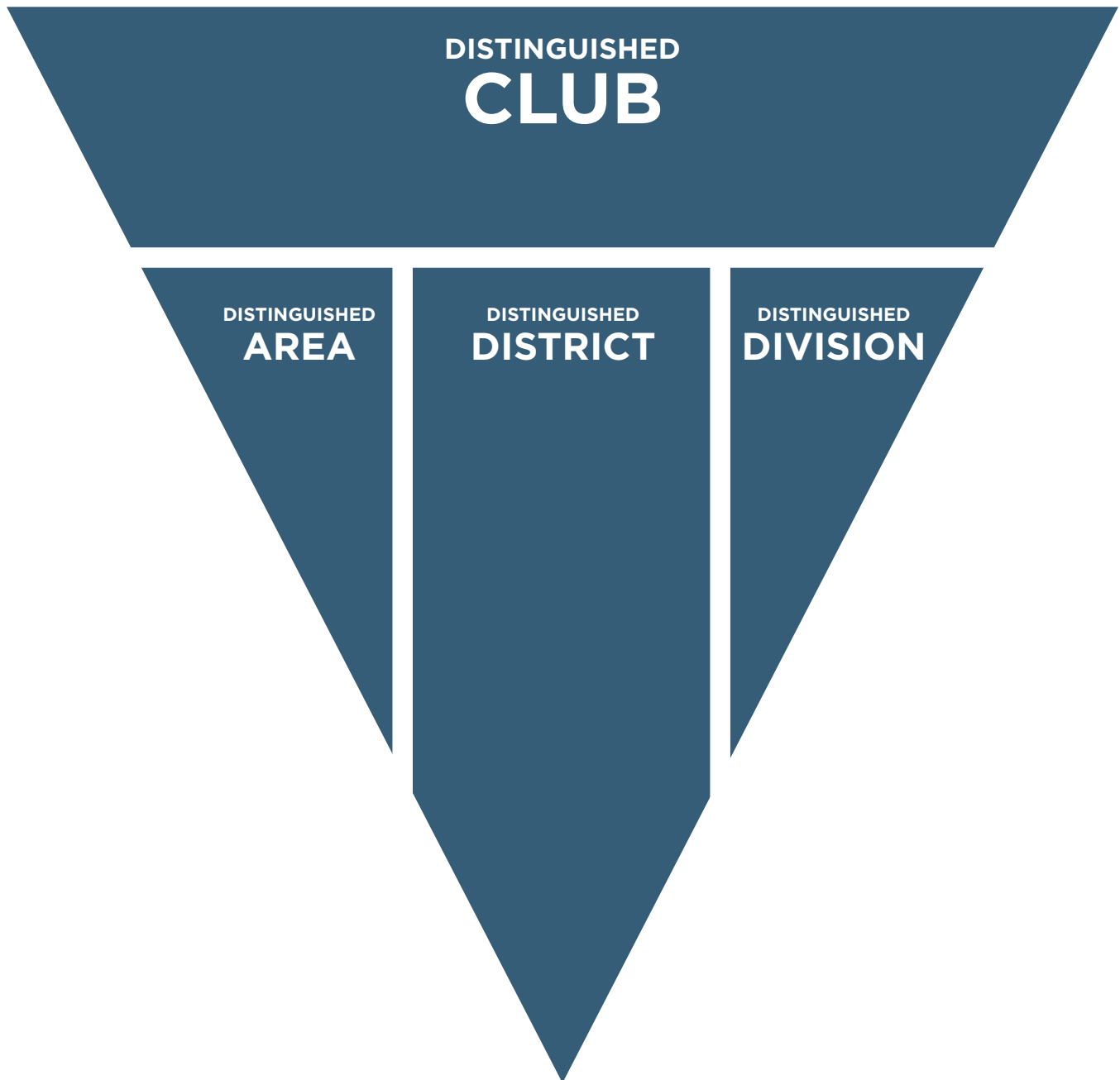
1. Set specific goals.
2. Establish strategies to achieve the goals.
3. Develop a framework to help carry out the plan and produce results.

Club officers review online reports and meet regularly to evaluate progress in the Club Success Plan; they then make adjustments as needed. The Club Success Plan can be completed in **Club Central** so that all of the officers can access it at any time. Good communication among the Club Executive Committee is important. Club officers should follow up as often as necessary and offer assistance to resolve any conflicts and challenges that arise.

In order to reach goals outside the scope of one year, outgoing club officers should complete the Club Success Plan in **Club Central** so that it can be shared with incoming officers toward year-end. This way, each new team of club officers can build on the successes achieved in preceding terms.

District Recognition Program

The Distinguished Club Program serves as the starting point for the District Recognition Program, which encompasses the Distinguished Area, Division, and District programs. This means that clubs' success is critical to the success of Areas, Divisions, and Districts. The chart below illustrates the relationship between club, Area, Division, and District:



Area Director's Club Visits

The Area Director, in particular, serves as a liaison between your club and the District. Twice each year, the Area Director visits your club. During these visits, they may ask to review your **Club Success Plan**. You should be prepared to show and discuss the plan and your club's progress in it. The Area Director may be able to assist your club with District support or have valuable tips for incorporating **Moments of Truth** into your meetings.

Distinguished Club Program Goals

Toastmasters Program Year: _____

Qualifying Requirements

To be considered for recognition, your club must either have 20 members or a **net growth** of at least five new members as of June 30. Transfer members do not count toward this total until their membership has been paid and is current in their new club, at which point they will be considered a renewing member.

Goals to Achieve

Following are the goals your club should strive to achieve during the year:

Distinguished Club Program Goals

Education

1. Four Level 1 awards achieved
2. Two Level 2 awards achieved
3. Two more Level 2 awards achieved
4. Two Level 3 awards achieved
5. One Level 4, Path Completion, or DTM award achieved
6. One more Level 4, Path Completion, or DTM award achieved

Membership

7. Four new, dual, or reinstating members
8. Four more new, dual, or reinstating members

Recognition

When your club meets the **qualifying requirement** and also does the following, it is eligible for Distinguished recognition at year-end:

Achievement	Recognition Earned
Five of 10 goals	Distinguished
Seven of 10 goals	Select Distinguished
Nine of 10 goals	President’s Distinguished

Check your progress at www.toastmasters.org/DistinguishedPerformanceReports.

Club Resources

Membership Applications

Moments of Truth (Item 290)

Brand Portal

Master Your Meetings (Item 1312)

Membership Growth (Item 1159)

Put on a Good Show (Item 220)

Finding New Members for Your Club (Item 291)

District Websites

Toastmaster magazine

Open House PowerPoint

Open House News Release Template

Open House Resources

Club Meeting Invitations

Let the World Know: Publicity and Promotion

membership@toastmasters.org

clubofficers@toastmasters.org



www.toastmasters.org