



District 77 Officers 2007-2008

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District 77 includes Alabama, Southeast Mississippi and the Panhandle of Florida

District 77, thank you so much for helping to make our 2007 Fall Conference a complete success! The conference was one of the highest attended and rated as one of the best conferences ever hosted by our District. Division E, you all did a fantastic job as our host!

If you missed this conference, you missed a great opportunity to meet present and past leaders from our district. You missed educational presentations. You missed meeting our International Director, Lee Holliday. Perhaps, worst of all, you missed the beautiful warm weather and the emerald coast in Florida. Needless to say, if you were there, we had a blast!

Now that our Fall Conference is over, we need to direct our focus back to meeting our Distinguished Club Program goals. **It is the District's goal to accomplish Distinguished status by April 2008.** The month of April is only six months away. I made the announcement in both the District Executive Committee Meeting and the District Council Business Meeting that it is the District's goal to achieve at least 50% of our goals in the areas of the four critical success factors (New Clubs, Membership Payments, CCs and ACs) by December 31. **We can only accomplish this goal if our clubs will commit to achieving at least half (five out of ten) of their DCP goals!**

Now is the time that we all **"Turn Up the Heat!"** District 77 for the next six months we have got to give it all we have got! Every member should make a contribution and commitment to help achieve at least one educational goal



or sponsor one new member before April 2008.

Club Presidents, you must take charge and lead your club to your success! Don't wait until June 30, 2008 for the final report to reveal that your club has earned Distinguished status or better. Put in the work today to KNOW that YOU ARE DISTINGUISHED!

Let's **"Turn Up the Heat!"**, District 77!

Serving You,

Sonja Bell, DTM

District 77 Governor 2007-2008

P.S. Check the progress of your club at www.toastmasters.org > under the article "A Funny Thing Happened..." , click on members.toastmasters.org > on the left side of your screen click on the tab Club Officer> at the bottom of the box in blue, click on Club Officer Resources > click on Distinguished Club Reports > Enter Club #.



10 Biggest Public Speaking Mistakes



Top executives often fall flat on their faces as **speakers**.

How come intelligent, business-savvy people end up boring their audiences? They fail to recognize that public speaking is an acquired skill that improves with practice and honest feedback. Speaking for 20 minutes before the right group of people can do more for your career than spending a year behind a desk!

Rob Sherman, an attorney and public speaker in Columbus, Ohio, says in an article in the *Toastmaster* magazine to avoid these mistakes:

- **Starting with a whimper.** Don't start with "Thank you for that kind introduction." Start with a bang! Give the audience a startling statistic, an interesting quote, a news headline – something powerful that will get their attention immediately.
- **Attempting to imitate other speakers.** Authenticity is lost when you aren't yourself.
- **Failing to "work" the room.** Your audience wants to meet you. If you don't take time to mingle before the presentation, you lose an opportunity to enhance your credibility with your listeners.
- **Failing to use relaxation techniques.** Do whatever it takes – listening to music, breathing deeply, shrugging your shoulders – to relieve nervous tension.
- **Reading a speech word for word.** This will put the audience to sleep. Instead use a "keyword" outline: Look at the keyword to prompt your thoughts. Look into the eyes of the audience, then speak.
- **Using someone else's stories.** It's okay to use brief quotes from other sources, but to connect with the audience, you must illustrate your most profound thoughts from your own life experiences. If you think you don't have any interesting stories to tell, you are not looking hard enough.
- **Speaking without passion.** The more passionate you are about your topic, the more likely your audience will act on your suggestions.
- **Ending a speech with questions and answers.** Instead, tell the audience that you will take questions and then say, "We will move to our closing point." After the Q and A, tell a story that ties in with your main theme, or summarize your key points. Conclude with a quote or call to action.
- **Failing to prepare.** Your reputation is at stake every time you face an audience – so rehearse well enough to ensure you'll leave a good impression!
- **Failing to recognize that speaking is an acquired skill.** Effective executives learn how to present in the same way they learn to use other tools to operate their businesses.

Thought Chocolate

**By: Donna J. Berkley
Division E Governor**



"If you want to build a ship, don't drum up people together to collect wood and don't assign them tasks and work, but rather teach them to long for the sea." – Antoine de Saint-Exupery



When I first read this quote it was featured as "thought chocolate" on the bottom of the Toastmasters of Cordova Club agenda one Friday. I thought it was so striking that I incorporated it into the presentation that I was making as Division Governor at our Area Club Officer Make-up Training sessions. I asked first myself and then later our club officers, Do we sometimes, as Toastmasters, teach people to collect the wood and do tasks, ie. to do meeting roles, come to meetings and present speeches without teaching them "to long for the sea" ? Do we teach them to do the busy work without teaching them to love speaking ?

When you love to do something it ceases to be work and becomes fun. You don't have to be made to do it, coerced to do it or convinced. No, instead of being dragged up to the front of the room for your turn, you might have to be prevented from hogging the lectern! When you love something it also becomes easier - you don't have to work as hard at it and the results are usually better. You feel so excited about it that you can't help but want other people to



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Steps for preparing a speech

1. Select or tailor a topic based on your purpose, your audience, and the details of your speaking situation.
2. Limit the topic to one central theme.
3. Collect data about the subject.
4. Select a method of organization.
5. Outline the main points; use three main points to support your central theme.
6. Gather supporting information such as stories to support your main theme.
7. Check for accuracy.
8. Design a catchy, energetic introduction.
9. Write a strong conclusion.
10. Put together your final draft.
11. Practice.
12. Practice.
13. Practice.

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enjoy it as much as you do.



Can you imagine what our meetings would be like if we taught our fellow club members to love speaking ? If we all loved Toastmasters ? We'd be talking about it all the time and our eyes would shine and people hearing us would say to themselves, I need to go to one of those meetings and find out what's so great about it. Our clubs would be strong and always full of new members and Presidential status would become a given. Maybe we're focused on the wrong things ? Maybe we're too focused on the "wood" collecting and the tasks ?



Last year when World Champion of Public Speaking, Jim Key, came to the District 77 Fall Conference for a workshop, he offered our Toastmasters an opportunity to give 3 minute speeches from their own repertoire for him to critique. I was surprised at the enthusiastic participation. There were many Toastmasters anxious to take him up on his offer. It was obvious that they all longed to speak and had a love for it. It was one of the best sessions at that conference. While we all enjoyed Jim's presentation on excellence and were all excited about seeing his re-enactment of his own winning contest speech - it wasn't our love of listening that made the day's workshops great. It was our own moment of participation when we, ourselves, could fill that longing to speak. That's what made the weekend - a chance to shine and do what we love.



I think that the question begs to be asked again. Are we teaching people to long for a chance to speak ? Or are we teaching them to just do the busy work of speaking ?

How close are you to earning your Competent Communicator Award?

District 77 is hosting a CC Contest

Beginning: Monday, November 12, 2007 through Friday, January 11, 2008!

The CLUB with the most members earning a CC during the contest will receive a trophy and a \$25.00 gift card to a local store. A second place trophy will be awarded to the club with the second highest number of CCs earned.

EVERY MEMBER earning a CC during the contest will receive the "Toastmasters.. Find your voice." Soft Touch Mousepad Item# 6626 from the TI bookstore!

All trophies and gifts will be awarded at the Winter TLI on January 26, 2008!

Now is the time to **"Turn Up the Heat!"** and earn your CC!

Got an article, poem or educational topic to submit? Send to us here at the District Newsletter to have your submission's placed into upcoming newsletter.

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District 77

Includes Alabama, Southeast Mississippi and Panhandle of Florida

To submit articles or for questions, contact:

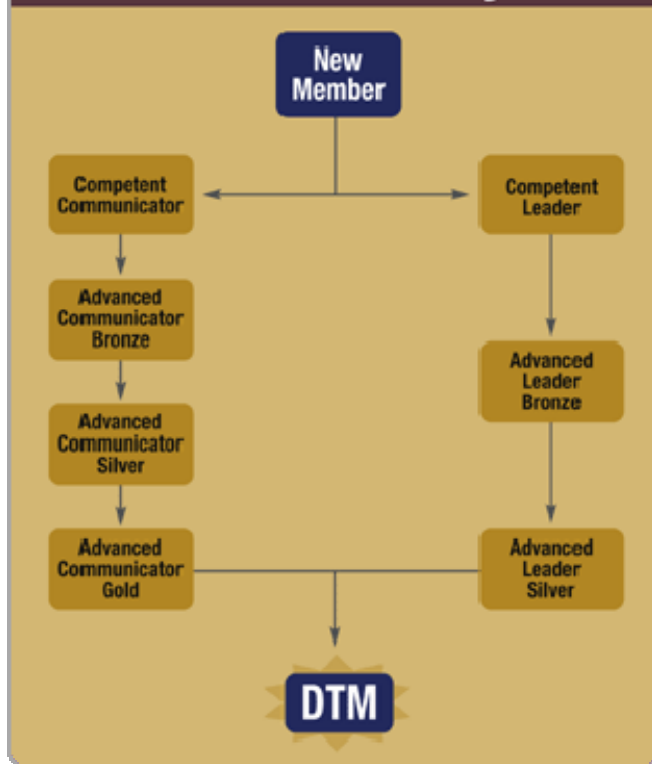
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Visit our District's Website at

www.toastmasters77.org

TI's Educational System



Are You On

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