



SOUTH SHORE SOLILOQUY NEWSLETTER

District 31 – Area F2 – Club 5541

DECEMBER 2004

WE ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.

GUESTS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME TO ATTEND ANY OF OUR MEETINGS!

Please join us! We meet Tuesday evenings from 7:30 pm to 9:30 pm at the Kingston Public Library 6 Green Street Kingston, MA 02364

Feel free to share this newsletter with family, friends, colleagues and neighbors.

Many thanks to the contributors of this volume:

- Bob Bergman
- Joe Kelley
- Jim McCormack
- Marie Peeler

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Happy Holidays!

PRESIDENT'S FORUM

By Joe Kelley, CTM

"You gain strength, courage and confidence by every experience in which you stop to look fear in the face."

Does this powerful statement from Eleanor Roosevelt resonate with you? It did for me. In fact, I believe it is safe to say that everyone who has actively participated in Toastmasters has had to confront a bit of stage fright. To put a finer edge to this point, polls have shown that speaking in front of an audience is one of the greatest sources of anxiety for Americans. Like you, I had compelling reasons to confront my fears and do something to improve my public speaking and communication skills.

We all come to the South Shore Soliloquy Toastmasters club not only to expose our skill set to the constructive eyes and ears of our audience, but also to purchase the self-confidence that is paramount for success as a communicator. With each time you get in front of a group, your confidence grows and your emotions are buoyed by the sense of accomplishment that comes from conceiving, writing and delivering a well-constructed speech. This is not to say that every opus we render is a masterpiece. Instead our presentations are a public announcement to our friends, colleagues, family members and ourselves that we are committed to improving our communication skills.

Finally, strong communicators know that they must practice regularly in order to improve. I look forward to hearing from all of you during the coming months.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR



South Shore Soliloquy Upcoming Meeting Schedule

We will meet on the following Tuesday evenings

- December 2004: 7, 14 (No meetings on Dec 21 and Dec 28)
- January 2005: 4, 11, 18, 25

South Shore Advanced Club

The advanced club meets monthly (on the 3rd Thursday) at the Kingston Public Library from 7:30 pm to 9:30 pm. Upcoming meetings include:

- December 16, 2004
- January 20, 2005
- February 17, 2005

16 SECONDS TO THE TOP

By Jim McCormack

Imagine that you are riding the elevator up to the office with your morning cup of coffee clutched in your hand when the company president steps into the elevator. You nod and greet each other. Before you know it, the company president asks you, "How is everything going?". This is your chance to impress your boss' boss, a chance for you to make a statement that will make him remember you. Your heart races, your palms are sweaty, you stumble and say, "uhm, good, thank you. We are working on an inventory control project and it is going well." The president smiles and turns away to watch the elevator doors until the doors open onto his floor and he steps out. Not very memorable was it? Not the impression you wanted to make?

Would you like to have that moment back, a do-over, a mulligan? If you had your Elevator Speech ready, the encounter might have gone like this: "Great, we are finishing an inventory control project that will reduce overhead costs and save the company 5% on this year's inventory expenses. We are in final revisions and will roll it out in the next quarter. I can email you an executive summary of the project when I get back to my desk".

You have 15-30 seconds to make your pitch, to get your idea, service or product across in a simple and quick format to your target audience. This "mini-speech" or personal commercial is often called your Elevator Speech because it is delivered in the time it takes for an elevator ride. With some preparation, planning and practice you can have an effective elevator speech ready for any situation in work, at Toastmasters or whenever!

PREPARATION

You should have several elevator speeches prepared for various projects or plans. There are three parts of an elevator speech for you to develop and prepare.

- **What's my line?:** Quickly summarize who you are and what you do.
- **WIIFM?:** What's In It For Me? What are the benefits of what you are doing, providing, saying to your targeted audience.
- **Action Statement:** Have an action statement ready and finish your elevator speech with it. , "I'll email you more information today", "We can meet for lunch tomorrow and learn more", etc. It is best to make the action statement as an action question to end on and leave your audience with a desire to act. Try saying, "Would you like to set up a meeting next week to look at the benefits?"

PLAN

You will need to plan around these problems that most speakers tend to make.



- **It's Not About You:** Take the focus off of the speaker and put the focus on the audience.
- **ID the Benefits:** Make sure you ID the beneficiary of the benefits or what the benefits to the user are.
- **ID the Problem Solved:** Make sure the problem or the solution is clearly defined.

Lets try an example of a Toastmaster Elevator Speech. Suppose you met someone and they inquired about your membership in Toastmasters International, how would you respond? Perhaps you could say, "I am a member of Toastmasters, I joined last year to improve my public presentation skills and my ability to think, listen and speak on my feet. It is a supportive group and a lot of fun! Guests are always welcome and there is no pressure to speak. We meet at the Kingston Library on Tuesday nights if you would like to visit."

PRACTICE

You can't just rehearse your elevator speech, or any speech for that matter. You have to practice it, try to practice with a cohort or friend that can give you feedback. Remember these simple rules when practicing:

- **Be Brief:** Time is short so get to your point quickly.
- **Be Informal:** Use an informal, conversational tone.
- **Be Memorable:** Make your elevator speech memorable, both in content and delivery. Be positive and upbeat.
- **Be Specific:** Don't elaborate now, get to the point and elaborate in the follow up meeting.
- **Be Yourself:** Most importantly, don't try to be something you are not, be yourself.

If you have an **Elevator Speech** prepared, planned and practiced then you will be ready when the opportunity presents itself to broadcast your personal commercial and get your message across quickly and memorably. You will be able to get that job interview, add that new client or recruit that new Toastmaster!

Resources:

www.craigspeaks.com

www.deg.com/TipsArticles/elevatorspeech.htm

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

We are pleased to welcome the following new members to the South Shore Soliloquy

Dennis MacLeod
John MacLeod

IMPROMPTU SPEAKING

How To Succeed At Table Topics...

By Marie Peeler, ATM-S, CL

On Thursday, November 18, 2004 the South Shore Advanced Toastmasters held its 4th meeting. The theme was "Impromptu Speaking" and how we can all improve our extemporaneous speaking skills. Our Toastmaster and Table Topics Master wove this theme throughout the meeting and provided an opportunity for all attendees to participate.

Listed below are some tips and tactics to keep in mind when you are called upon to deliver an extemporaneous presentation. You will also find some Web sites providing valuable information on this topic of "impromptu speaking".

HELPFUL TACTICS

Repeat the question

This gives you additional time before answering and helps to ensure that you understand the question being asked of you.

Give yourself time

Don't "speak without thinking". Give yourself a few seconds to gather your thoughts and formulate a response.

Decline to speak

While it's not a good idea to always decline responding, if you truly have no response on the topic then it may be best to decline to speak. As Abraham Lincoln once said, "It is better to keep one's mouth shut and be thought a fool than to open it and resolve all doubt".

Redirect the question

If you are unfamiliar with the question being asked then elegantly "redirect the question". For example, suppose you are asked your opinion on an 18th century painter. The problem is that you're not familiar with that particular artist. If the situation was appropriate you may respond by saying: "I'm not familiar with that artist but if you want to talk about 18th century composers then there's a subject I could discuss for hours!".

Decide quickly on your main point

When asked to speak extemporaneously, time is short. You need to quickly decide on your main point. Your ensuing response should focus on that main point and not drift off into a variety of tangents.

Opening, Body, Close

As with every "presentation", your response should always include an Opening, Body and Conclusion.

Begin with Confidence

The audience wants you to succeed. If you start off strong then you will "hook" them in and they will be more at ease with the remainder of your response.

Keep your Focus

Remember, decide your main point and stick to it.

CONTENT - BE PREPARED!

When it comes to content, being prepared is your best offense. Don't wait until you're faced with an impromptu situation, begin educating and preparing yourself now.

- **"Write your spiel"** – prepare your "elevator speech"! See *page 2 for more information*
- **Mentally prepare** – visualize success
- **Know your "world"** – stay informed about current events
- **Be culturally literate** – know a little bit about a lot of things such as art, music, etc.
- **Ask questions** – continually learn by asking questions and listening to the responses

ACRONYMS

Here are some help acronyms to keep in mind when formulating your response to an impromptu question.

PREP

- State your **P**oint of view.
- Give supporting **R**easons for your point of view.
- **E**xplain how your point of view came about by providing your experience or beliefs.
- Summarize what you said and repeat **P**oint of view.

PPF (Past, Present, Future)

Discuss the topic using a past, present and future comparison.

- Start with "There was a time when...".
- Develop your next point with "But now we find that...".
- And close out your point with "In the future I expect...".

PMI (Plus, Minus, Interesting)

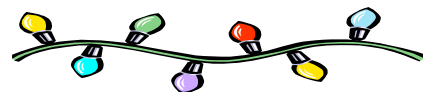
Discuss the following facets of the topic:

- Advantages or Benefits
- Limitations or drawbacks
- Creative Possibilities

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Valuable Websites for more Information

- http://www1.tpg.com.au/users/schleter/tie_impr.htm
- <http://webuser.bus.umich.edu/Organizations/umbstoastmasters/file/members/prepare/ImpromptuSpeakingHints.pdf>
- <http://www.nosweatspeaking.com/speaker/Six%20Keys%20for%20a%20Winning%20Impromptu%20Presentation.pdf>
- http://www.chicagjobresource.com/career_coach27.htm



BEYOND WORDS

By Bob Bergman, ATM-B, CL

On the page, our words are flat
Lonely symbols seeking C P R,
Waiting for artistic respiration.

On the stage, our words revive,
Aroused by other languages,
And, non-verbal punctuation.

Beyond words, our voice informs
Through volume, pitch, and tone
Providing precise articulation.

Beyond words, our pace conveys
A varied cadence and a rhythm
Infusing music and orchestration.

Beyond words, our body speaks:
With gestures, stance, and actions
Augmenting the verbal conversation.

Beyond words, our face expresses
Our smiles, our brow, and our gaze
Complementing every communication.

Beyond words, and all of the above
A silent, potent tool: the pause:
Reserving room for interpretation.

Our Voice, and Body, and Face
Our Pitch, and Pause, and Pace
Reviving words for inspiration.



A NEW BABY!

Congratulations to fellow member, Bob Symes and his wife, Janine. They are expecting their second child in April 2005.



GOT NEWS?

Do you have an article, poem, news or a Toastmasters success story that you would like to share with our membership? If yes, then please email all submissions to the Newsletter Editor, Mary MacKinnon, at mary_mackinnon@hotmail.com

MENTORS...

Guiding New Members To Success

By Mary MacKinnon, CTM, CL

Dictionary.com defines a mentor as a trusted teacher or counselor. Toastmasters International defines a mentor as someone who helps a fellow Club member develop communication and leadership skills. I define a mentor as a vital part of the Toastmaster experience!

Can you remember back to when you were a new member? As you sat through your first few meetings you wondered how you'd ever be able to deliver a speech, prepare an effective evaluation or get up to participate in Table Topics? It seemed so intimidating to be presenting on the same stage as a seasoned Toastmaster. Wouldn't it be nice to know that there was someone you could go to for help; someone dedicated to **you** and **your** success?

A new Toastmaster is like a ship without a rudder. While the ship will one day reach its destination, the journey would have been a long and arduous one. The rudder allows the ship to stay on course. It helps to navigate around and through the challenges of the journey. Your mentor is your rudder, guiding you through the Toastmaster program.

A mentor, or seasoned Toastmaster, will know what it is like to give that first speech. They know the gamut of emotions (fear, anxiety, confidence, and relief) that you experience. They can share these experiences and help you to develop your communication and leadership skills too. Your mentor not only guides you through your first few speeches but also assists you in setting goals, developing your strengths and answering any questions you may have. Your mentor is your teacher -- your guide -- your friend.

Our club's mentoring program is active and successful! If you are interested in becoming a mentor or if you need a mentor then please contact **Bob Symes** via email at SymesnMarshfield@aol.com.

SOUTH SHORE SOLILOQUY TOASTMASTERS A non-profit Toastmasters International organization

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