



Soaring Eagles Toastmasters Club

Vol. II, Issue 9 – March 2005 Newsletter

Soaring Eagles Toastmasters Club (#9647)
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MISSION

To provide a mutually supportive and positive learning environment in which every member has the opportunity to develop communication and leadership skills, which in turn foster self-confidence and personal growth.

www.geocities.com/eagles_toastmaster/

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WELCOME

"Beware the Ides of March" has forever imbued that date with a sense of foreboding. However, you are empowered to change that philosophy. Toastmasters provides you the opportunity to better yourself and others through action. Get involved in Toastmasters, your neighborhood, and your community. Empower others to change the negative into the positive.

Please welcome Mr. Seth Cowand to the Soaring Eagles Toastmasters Club leadership team as the new V.P. of Education. Seth has achieved both his Competent Toastmaster (CTM) and his Competent Leader (CL) recognition. Welcome aboard. Seth will be instrumental in helping you develop a plan for success.

CLUB LEADERSHIP

President Mike Duerksen, CTM
VP Education Seth Cowand, CTM, CL
VP Membership .. Renee Cantave, ATM-B
VP Public Relations .. Walter Kelley, CTM
Secretary Cheryl Terry
Treasurer Cheryl Terry
Segeant-at-Arms Tim Germer

MAKING THE "UN-PRESENTATION"

It happens every day. The unsuspecting mark gets a request to "talk" at a meeting. It sounds informal, but it isn't. To dodge this hoax, learn the warning signs—and be ready with a few tricks of your own.

Here are some of the ways you may be led down this path—and some tips on turning things to your advantage:

CALENDAR

Please mark your calendars and try to attend the following activities:



9 Mar (SKY7: 1W38)
Club Meeting
1200-1300



23 Mar (SKY7: 1W38)
Club Meeting
1200-1300



13 Apr (SKY7: 1W38)
Club Meeting
1200-1300



27 Apr (SKY7: 1W38)
Club Meeting
1200-1300



11 May (SKY7: 1W38)
Club Meeting
1200-1300

"It's no big deal, just an information meeting."

This is another way you may be lulled into thinking the presentation is just a casual exchange, with no need to prepare yourself in advance. If there's any chance you'll end up pitching your ideas or selling yourself, your team, or your company, you need to be ready to make a persuasive presentation.

Prepare yourself. Know your audience, your goals, and the key points that will be persuasive to your listeners.

"The deal is set. The 'presentation' is just a formality."

Well, maybe. If you show up unprepared, you're putting yourself at risk. Very often, this final meeting is very important and worthy of a full preparation for a presentation and whatever questions may arise. Expect to be challenged.

"We'll just be sitting around the table. No one needs to get up to speak."

This lulls you into believing you'll be attending a purely casual gathering.

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KNOW WHERE YOU'RE GOING

Persuasive speaking is all about achieving a specific outcome. It's aimed at getting an audience to take certain action. But to succeed, you must first either change their attitudes and beliefs or reinforce attitudes and beliefs they already hold. There are elements common to all successful presentations.

▲ Plan towards a specific goal

It's even more important to be clear about your objective when you're setting out to lead people to a specific outcome.

When your goal is to motivate people to take certain action, focus on what exactly you want them to do. Do your listeners have the resources they need to do what you're asking? Will they need help or guidance? What help are you ready to provide?

▲ Articulate your objective

Write down your objective as concisely as you can in one sentence or at most in a few sentences. In that summary, state what you want your listeners to feel, think, and/or do as a result of your presentation.

Defining your goal in this way provides you with a starting point for a strategy to achieve it. Your objective should also be measurable, so that you can check back to make sure you achieved it.

▲ Facts and emotions

When your purpose is to persuade, you should use only data and visuals that support your messages, and no more.

Persuasive speaking, remember, is about changing or reinforcing people's attitudes and beliefs and even their values and behavior. Your listeners will respond as you want them to only if you can convince them that they will benefit from the action you're proposing. You're dealing with people on the level of their needs, and that means dealing with emotions more than facts.

To prepare for your next presentation, begin with a clear goal and develop a compelling argument built to persuade your listeners based on your audience analysis.

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INSPIRATIONAL QUOTE

"Each person must live their life as a model for others."

Rosa Parks

MAKING THE "UN-PRESENTATION"

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It implies you won't have to leave the security of your seat. In most cases, you should get up in front of the group to make your case. That gives you a few advantages right off the bat. For one, your listeners are better able to see you and to see your full body language. Standing up also gives you quicker access to flipcharts, marker boards, and other off-the-cuff visual aids. Sketch out "spontaneous" visual aids in advance so you're ready when that "impromptu" moment arises.

Should you get up to speak in every instance when you're presenting "informally?"

Use your judgment. You may sense the setting does not warrant a stand-up presentation. If you decide it's best to remain seated, then do what you can to keep control of the room and to maximize your impact as a speaker. In either case, go into the meeting well prepared.

Effective Body Language for the Seated Presenter

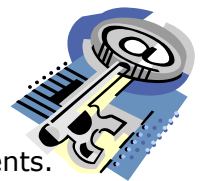
If you must remain seated for the duration, then follow best practices for a seated presentation. Sit up straight with your feet flat on the floor. Your body should form right angles at your pelvis and knees so that your upper body is upright. Your arms should be relaxed (unless gesturing); if you're at a table, rest your hands gently on the table (don't lean on the table at all—this can impede your gestures).

Remember: A presentation is always a presentation, no matter how it's disguised. And a presentation is always an opportunity for you to showcase your ability, persuade your audience, or advance your career. Don't be lulled into a false sense of security. Make certain you take advantage of every opportunity.

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WEBSITE UPDATE

Have you visited the Soaring Eagles website lately? The website is updated several times a month and has schedule items and announcements. Check back regularly to find out what's happening in the Soaring Eagles Club.



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