



Soaring Eagles Toastmasters Club

Vol. III, Issue 9 – March 2006 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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CHANGES AT TOASTMASTERS

Toastmasters International is making some exciting changes in its educational system and award designations. Here are answers to some common questions.

Question: Do I have to complete the Competent Communication and Competent Leadership (CL) manuals in any particular order?

Answer: No. You may work in both manuals at the same time if you wish, or work in one at a time. If you complete the CL manual first, you may apply for the CL award. If you complete the Competent Communication manual first, you may apply for the Competent Communicator award. If you finish both at the same time, you may apply for both awards at the same time.

Question: I am now a Competent Leader. After July 1, 2006, will my title be Advanced Leader Bronze?

Answer: You still will be a Competent Leader. Likewise, members who already have received the Advanced Leader award will retain that title.

Question: I am now a Competent Leader. Do I have to complete the new Competent Leadership manual?

Answer: No. However, we encourage you to do so because you'll enhance and refine your leadership skills by completing the projects in the manual.

CALENDAR

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



Mar 8th (SKY7: 1W38)
Club Meeting
1200-1300



Mar 22nd (SKY7: 1W38)
Club Meeting
1200-1300



Mar 30th
Club dues are DUE!!!



Apr 12th (SKY7: 1W38)
Club Meeting
1200-1300

CLUB LEADERSHIP

President..... Renee Cantave, ATM-B
VP Education *vacant*
VP Membership Wauleah Ellison
VP Public Relations Walter Kelley, CTM
Secretary/Treasurer..... Michael Duerksen, CTM
Serageant-at-Arms..... Tim Germer

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.



INSPIRATIONAL QUOTE

"Those who dream by day are cognizant of many things which escape those who dream only by night."

Edgar Allan Poe

MAKE NUMBERS WORK FOR YOU

Speakers can use numbers to support key points. But too often, speakers use their data in place of key points, piling on number after number and, in the end, driving their audience to despair. Here are a few tips on how to use numbers to good effect.

① Data does not speak for itself

Don't just deliver the data and leave it to the audience to figure out what it means. As a presenter, your job is to make a series of points. The data should merely support those points. If you don't state your conclusions, you're inviting your listeners to form their own. The distinction between an informational briefing and a persuasive presentation is critical.

② Be accurate

Accuracy is important whenever you use numbers. So double-check the numbers you use. Be sure that both the numbers and how you present them are not misleading. And be sure to use the most current and relevant numbers.

③ Focus your use of data

Your job is to be selective, not all-inclusive. This isn't always easy, since you may have more data than you need to support your points. But people don't process numbers as easily as they do other types of information, so drowning your listeners in numbers is a sure-fire way to weaken, or even sink, your presentation. Start with the main points you need to make to persuade your audience, and then determine which data you need to support those points. Many presenters start by designing their data slides and never get around to making their points. The result: many presentations are data-heavy and pointless, both figuratively and literally. If you're not making points, you're probably wasting time.

④ Round off the numbers and put them in context

There will be times when exact figures are called for, such as when presenting scientific data. But there's no need to be exact every time, especially when using lots of numbers or when you're trying to quantify large ideas. So try a little creativity. No one, for example, is likely to absorb or remember "8,956,401." "Almost nine million" is better. And, if it applies, try something like "40 percent," which for some audiences is not as good as "four out of every 10." And no one needs to know there are 278,058,995 people in the United States. Rounding off to 278 million is better and much more likely to stick with your listeners.

Numbers without context are not helpful. If a public official proposes tax cuts of \$522 billion over the next 10 years, how meaningful is that to the average taxpayer? On the other hand, if the speaker says that amounts to about \$155 per person per year, the full impact of that becomes clearer.

⑤ Help your listeners "see" what the numbers mean

Look for imaginative ways to present data. Create graphics and/or word pictures out of numbers to make them clear and memorable. Mentioning 134 million gallons of oil found in a reserve has little impact. Adding that it's enough oil to heat all of Chicago for six months is more effective. To illustrate size for some audiences, you might say, for example, "That's the equivalent of 10 football fields." Or, "That's long enough to reach from New York to Los Angeles."

Well-designed visuals are helpful. Use graphs and charts to show rather than only tell. This helps your listeners understand and retain the numbers you're using. Develop visuals that tell the most compelling story. For example, a graph can be far more compelling than a table. If you want to provide more detail in a table, save it for the handout.

⑥ Use numbers persuasively

Make sure you use data persuasively throughout your presentation. It's fine to have a data-driven presentation, as long as you use the data to drive in a clear direction. Make sure you're steering your audience toward an outcome, rather than just delivering data without meaning.

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