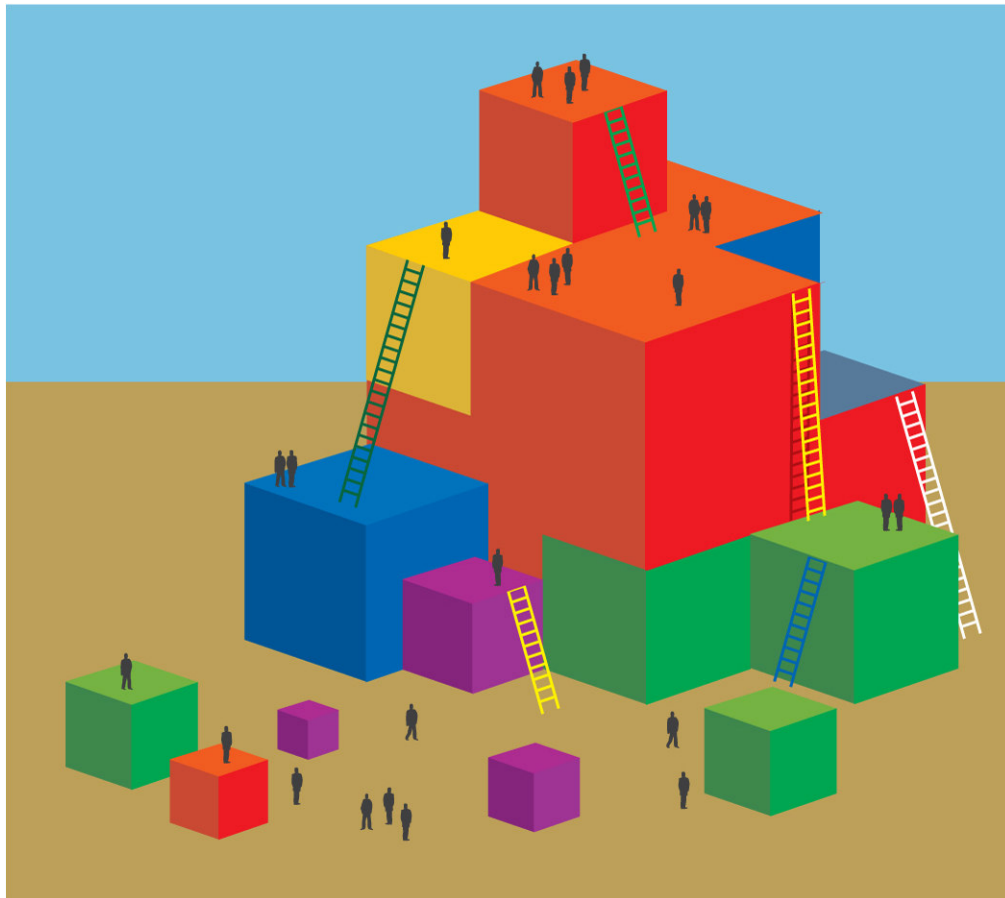


District ONE Toastmasters



Club Rebuilding Kit



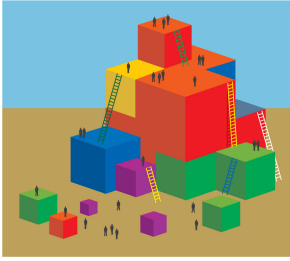
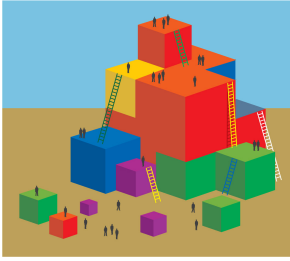


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Introduction

Do you remember why you joined Toastmasters? You wanted to become a better speaker, of course. But ultimately, you joined your particular club because you were attracted by its energy, professionalism, and welcoming spirit.

Over time, your club may have lost some of these attractive qualities, and with them, members. You recognize that something needs to be done to restore the club's vitality, but you may not be sure what needs to be done or where to begin.

You will know it is time to rebuild if any of the following is true of your club:

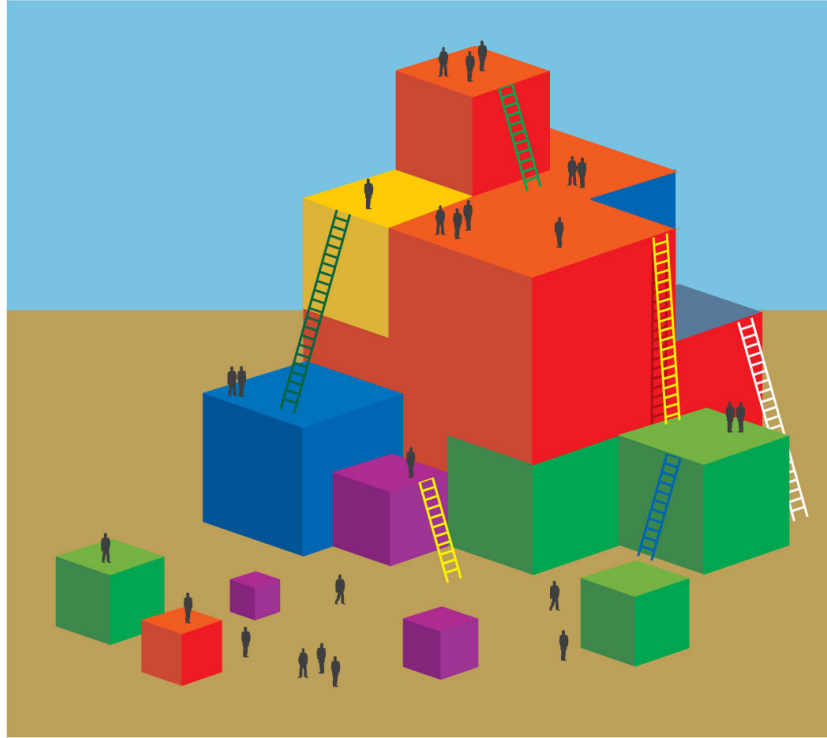
- Membership falls below 15 members
- The club rarely has guests
- Guests who do attend don't join
- Meetings are boring and lack excitement
- The club has difficulty meeting DCP goals

This **Club Rebuilding Kit** is designed to provide you with the information and resources you need to re-energize your club, increase member satisfaction, and attract new members. The Kit is based on information provided in several Toastmasters publications, as well as the experiences of Toastmasters who have been successful in helping clubs rebuild. The primary ingredient needed is a commitment of the Rebuilding Team to follow the steps that are outlined in the following pages. The Rebuilding Team is composed of the club officers, other club member volunteers, the Area Governor, and possibly other District resources.

The Kit is divided into two sections. **Section I, Planning for Club Success**, contains progressive steps necessary for rebuilding your club. **Section II, How to Get it Done**, provides recommendations and suggestions for strengthening your club through various programs and events.

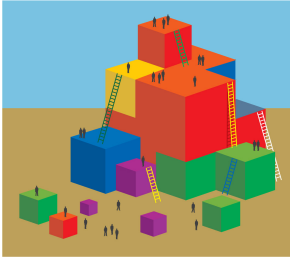
Before you launch your club rebuilding efforts, take the time to read this entire document. This will give you a clear understanding of the task before you and will aid your effectiveness.

For optimum success, your Rebuilding Team must commit to following **ALL** the steps in Section I and to completing them in the order presented. Once you get started, you will begin to see remarkable improvement and growth in your club.



Section I

Planning for Club Success



Four Steps to Rebuilding Your Club

Like all living things, Toastmasters clubs go through cycles of growth and decline. During periods of growth, guests visit and join the club, members set and reach educational goals, and the club reaches Distinguished status with ease. These productive periods result in a high level of enthusiasm and satisfaction among club members.

Quite the opposite is true of clubs that are in decline. In fact, a club that remains in decline for too long a period of time is in danger of dying. Stories abound, however, of clubs that have dwindled down to only two or three active members, yet still have managed to rebuild. These stories are not only true, but can be reproduced by other clubs in similar circumstances.

Following are steps to take to rebuild a Toastmasters club.

Step 1: Assemble a Rebuilding Team

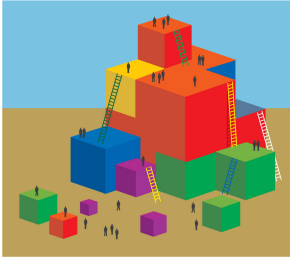
The first step in rebuilding your club is to assemble a Rebuilding Team. This team should include your officers, as well as any other club members who wish to contribute to the rebuilding effort.

You will need at least three members for your team, preferably more. If you do not have at least three members willing to commit to this effort, contact your Area Governor. The Area Governor will assist with District resources to put together a Rebuilding Team.

Step 2: Assess Club Strengths and Weaknesses

Your second step is to sit down with your team and perform an objective assessment of your club's strengths and weaknesses. The ideal tool for performing this assessment is the **District ONE Club Assessment Tool**, also known as the **CAT scan**.

The CAT Scan is a self-administered questionnaire that helps you to see how your club's practices compare to the practices of the most highly successful Toastmasters clubs. It helps you evaluate your club in eight critical areas:



Four Steps to Rebuilding Your Club

- Toastmasters Protocol
- Professional Meetings
- Membership Satisfaction
- Membership Growth
- Communication with Members
- Officer Competency
- Advancement Through the Toastmasters Educational Program
- Member Recognition.

Once you see clearly how your club measures up in these areas, you will be able to chart a course for improvement.

For a copy of the Club Assessment Tool, visit our District One web site at:

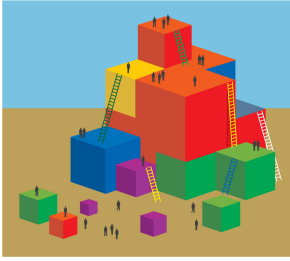
<http://www.tmdistrictone.org/clubassessment.asp>

Step 3: Write Your Action Plan

You've assessed your club's strengths and the areas where it needs to improve. Now it's time to write your Action Plan.

Your Action Plan should include:

- a description of each goal;
- a description of specific actions or programs needed to achieve the goal;
- a time table; and
- a listing of the persons responsible for the various actions or programs



Four Steps to Rebuilding Your Club

Below is a sample Action Plan:

Goal 1: Improve professionalism of meetings by 12/1/08

#	Description	Responsible Person	Target Date
1	Have written agendas for all meetings	VP Education	Immediately
2	Start and end all meetings on time	President	Immediately
3	Do presentation on Effective Evaluations	John Smith	10/10/08

Goal 2: Attract and recruit at least 4 new members by 3/1/09

#	Description	Responsible Person	Target Date
1	Prepare Guest Kits	VP Membership	9/10/08
2	Greet guests and make them feel welcome	All	Immediately
3	Hold club Open House	VP Publicity	11/15/08

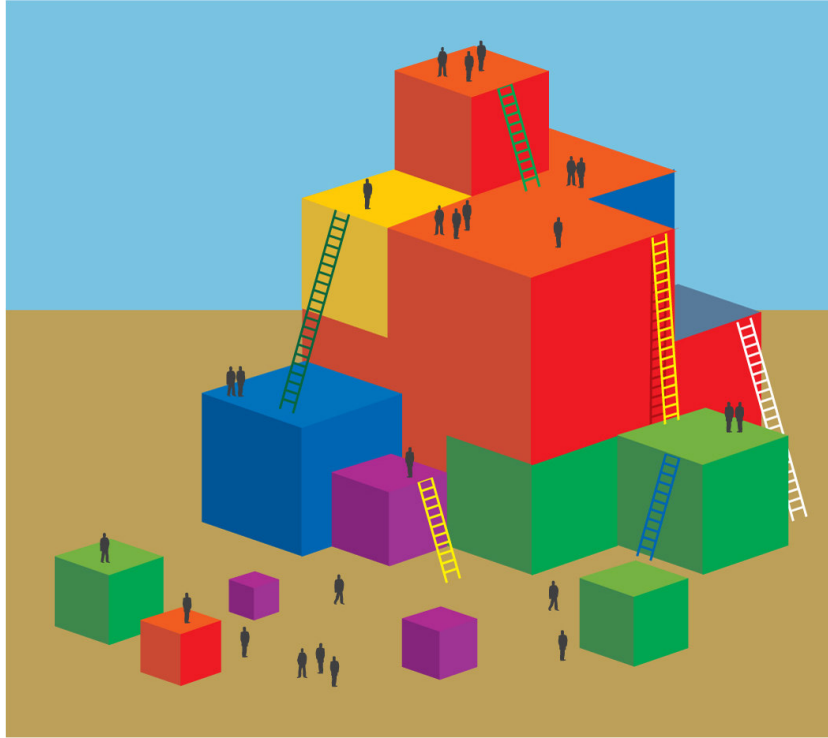
Your Action Plan may contain many goals that you wish to accomplish. To ensure the success of your plan, it is recommended that you prioritize your goals and select only 3-4 to tackle at a time, before moving on to the next set of goals.

With projects such as an Open House or Speechcraft, one person may be responsible, but it will require the efforts of several people to make the event successful. If your club does not have adequate resources to put on such an event, contact your Area Governor for support.

Step 4: Implement Your Plan

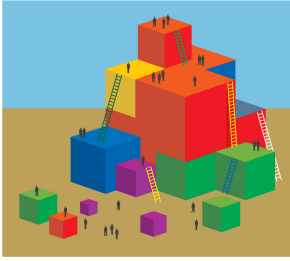
The fourth and most rewarding step is to implement your plan. The club President, as Team Leader, is responsible for monitoring the activities of team members, ensuring that they complete their assignments within the time allotted, and providing the support and encouragement they need to complete their assignments successfully.

As you complete activities and programs, you will begin to see the growth you seek!



Section II

How to Get it Done

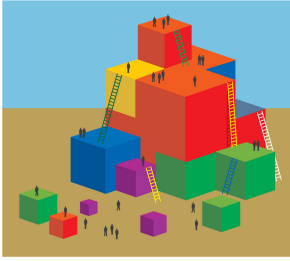


How to Hold Productive Meetings

The Toastmasters meeting serves as the heart of the club. When planned and carried out well, these meetings help to inspire, encourage and educate members, as well as attract new members.

To hold productive meetings and encourage club growth, be sure to emphasize the following:

- **Encourage members to arrive early.** This enables them to mingle amongst themselves and greet guests before the meeting.
- **Start the meeting on time and end it on time.**
- **Provide a written agenda to all participants.**
- **Make guests feel at home.** Allow them to introduce themselves at the beginning of the meeting and make comments at the end of the meeting. Provide them with a guest packet. Make sure they sign your guest book or sign-in sheet.
- **Infuse meetings with fun and excitement.** Hold themed meetings. Encourage Table Topics questions that are creative, playful and thought-provoking.
- **Ensure that speakers and functionaries are prepared.** Contact them before the meeting to remind them of their meeting responsibilities.
- **Provide an oral and written evaluation for all prepared speeches.** Evaluations should be helpful, pointing out what the speaker did well and providing suggestions about what the speaker could do better.
- **Keep improvement of communications and leadership skills at the forefront.** Recognize members' progress in completing manual assignments. Keep club informed of its progress in meeting Distinguished Club Program goals.
- **Ask guests to join immediately following the meeting.** Follow-up on guests with a phone call, e-mail or note thanking them for attending your meeting and offering to answer any questions.

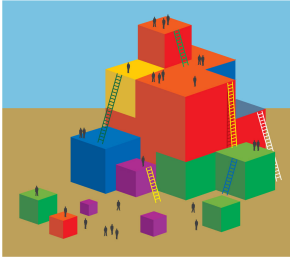


How to Hold a Spectacular Event

Would you like to be able to recruit several new members at one fell swoop? One of the most effective ways to accomplish this is to hold an Open House, Demonstration Meeting, Club Anniversary Celebration, or similar event. These events are simply demonstration meetings to which you invite the public and put on a spectacular event.

Here are some tips for a successful event:

- **Set a date.** It should be far enough in advance to allow adequate publicity of your event.
- **Establish a budget.** Will you need to pay for flyers, refreshments, or prizes for an opportunity drawing? Get things donated if possible.
- **Publicize your event.** Utilize various media (flyers, email, local press, cable TV, bulletin boards) to target the audience you wish to reach. Don't forget the power of the personal invitation.
- **Plan an outstanding program and have a printed agenda.** Place experienced members in the functions of Toastmaster, Table Topics Master and General Evaluator. Include both advanced and beginning members as speakers, so guests can see the range in skills. Include willing guests in Table Topics.
- **Provide take-home packets for all guests.** Some items to place in the packet include brochures, the Toastmasters magazine, newsletters, and membership application.
- **Greet guests warmly.** Have them sign the guest book, guest cards, or sign-in sheet so that you can contact them later.
- **Consider holding an opportunity drawing for guests.**
- **Invite guests to join.** Point out officers who can answer questions and assist them in completing their application.



How to Turn Prospects Into Guests and Guests Into Members

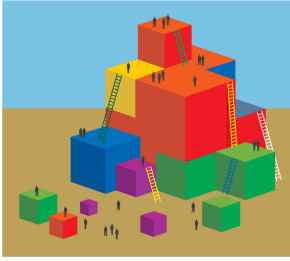
Who can benefit from Toastmasters? Anyone who is interested in personal growth! You know many of these people from your workplace, civic and social groups, your neighborhood and your friends and relatives. But how do you get them to attend your club meeting, and even better, to join your club?

Here are some tips for turning prospects into guests and guests into members:

- **Give prospects a Toastmasters brochure and invite them to a meeting.** Invite them for a specific date—the next meeting, not just for a possible visit sometime in the future.
- **Treat all guests at your club exactly as you would treat guests in your home.** Introduce them to each member, acknowledge them at the beginning of the meeting, and give them a chance to make comments at the end of the meeting. Give them a chance to respond during Table Topics, but don't force them to participate or make them feel uncomfortable.
- **Provide guests with a take-home packet of materials.** Suggested items to include in the packet include a brochure, Toastmasters magazine, newsletter, application for membership, and a club welcome letter with contact numbers.
- **Show guests how specific segments of the Toastmasters program can help them fulfill their goals for personal and professional growth.** For example:

Goal	Solution
Confidence when speaking in front of a group	Communication Program
Impromptu speaking	Table Topics
Conducting meetings	Toastmaster of the Day, Leadership Program
Personnel review	Evaluator
Management skills	Participation as a club officer
Leadership development	Leadership Program

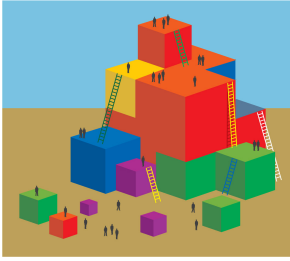
- **Speak with guests after the meeting and let them know you enjoyed their visit.** This is a good time to ask them to join and to answer their questions.
- **Follow-up guest visits with a phone call or e-mail thanking them for the visit and inviting them to return.**



Sixteen Tips for Building Club Membership

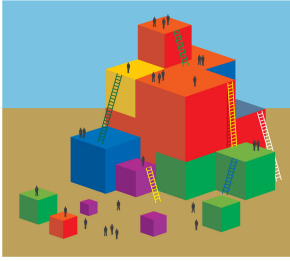
Building membership is a year-round activity, as new members will always be needed to replace those that leave. Here are some tips to help build your club's membership:

- Plan a special Showcase meeting, an Open House, Model Meeting or Demonstration Meeting. Invite members from around the district to present a special program. Invite guests and be ready to sign them up on the spot. Invite past members to come back and join the fun again, and remind them there is no new member fee!
- Conduct a Speechcraft on a yearly basis. This is a proven great membership-building program. Involve the whole club. Publicize BIG and at least 4-6 weeks in advance, which means planning needs to start several months in advance. Consider titling the Speechcraft a "Public Speaking Workshop." Charge a fee for the workshop. Let successful participants know that the full amount of their fee will apply towards their Toastmasters dues, should they decide to join.
- Make sure you have plenty of guest packets and membership applications available at every meeting. Invite every guest to join. Many people are just waiting to be asked.
- Plan a club membership-building contest. Consider challenging another club, or all the other clubs in your area, to a membership contest. As a prize, the losing club buys pizza for the winning club.
- Have a secret greeter at your meeting to make sure everyone receives a warm and welcoming greeting.
- Make a list of all the people you know who would benefit from Toastmasters. Invite one person from the list to each meeting. Be sure to ask them to join.
- Sponsor a Toastmaster booth at community events. Call attention to your booth with balloons, and set out dishes of candy. Have a guest book to sign, and follow up with people who express an interest.
- Have a recognition program to acknowledge all members who have brought in guests.
- Make a list of the best things about your club. You now have a list of selling points to use when talking to prospective guests.
- Develop a mentor program. This will help encourage new members to keep involved with the program, and will help long-term members renew their enthusiasm.
- Read your Toastmaster magazine each monthly. There are good membership ideas in it.
- Celebrate your club charter date/club anniversary annually. Also, if you are not at charter strength, make plans to increase your membership so you will be on your charter date.



Sixteen Tips for Building Club Membership

- Make a point not to discuss membership problems or other problems your club may be having when you have guest visiting. No one wants to join a club that has problems.
- Have an induction ceremony for new members. It makes them feel important and part of the organization. It's impressive for guests at your meeting.
- Plan a club membership-building contest around the number of guests a member brings to club meetings for a month or two months.
- Even if there is low attendance at a meeting, still have the meeting. Continuity matters. Don't give up hope. There are lots of success stories about 3-4 people showing up for meeting after meeting. Keep doing that, and you can turn things around. Yes, you and the team can make it happen!

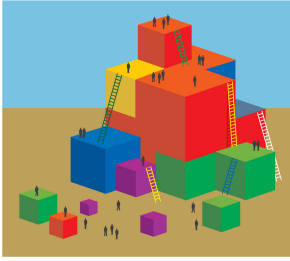


How to Publicize Your Club

To attract new members, you will need to continually market, promote and publicize your club. How you go about this task will depend, in part, on whether you are a corporate or community club, the groups you wish to market to, and the resources you have available within your club.

Listed below are some ideas for publicizing your club:

- Develop a club flyer listing the benefits of Toastmasters and your club's meeting location and time. Post the flyer on company and community bulletin boards and distribute at libraries, the Chamber of Commerce, adult schools and colleges.
- Insert a Toastmasters brochure and club flyer into new hire orientation packets at your company.
- Print a supply of Toastmasters business cards to hand out to prospective guests. The template is available at the TI website, www.members.toastmasters.org.
- As a conversation opener, wear your Toastmasters pin or other Toastmasters clothing. Be prepared to summarize the benefits of Toastmasters in 30 seconds or less. Hand the prospect your Toastmasters business card and invite him or her to your next meeting.
- List your club's meeting time and location in local newspapers and company newsletters or websites.
- Set up your own club website. Visit <http://freetoasthost.org> to see how it can be done.
- Plan and publicize an event such as an officer installation, Open House, recognition ceremony or club anniversary party. Publicize the event in the calendar section of your local newspaper or write a full press release. Take pictures of the event and forward a photo and press release to the local newspaper following the event.
- Set up an information booth at community or company fairs.
- Book a guest speaker to speak at your meeting on a subject of interest. Publicize the event widely.



How to Measure Your Club's Progress

At some point after you begin to implement your plan and incorporate some of the other recommendations in this document, you will see measurable progress in your club. You may observe that attendance is improved, that you have added new members to your roster, or that meetings are conducted in a more professional and productive way. These and other positive changes are signals that you are on the right track towards rebuilding your club.

Another and very proven way to measure your club's progress is the Distinguished Club Program. This is a program through which World Headquarters tracks the progress of your club and recognizes your club based on the number of goals achieved and the number of members it has.

Goals to Achieve:

To be eligible for recognition, your club must meet a membership requirement. At year end (June 30) it must have at least 20 members OR a net growth of five new members.

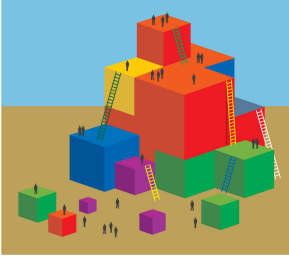
The club must also achieve at least five of the following goals:

1. Two CCs
2. Two more CCs
3. One ACB, ACS or ACG
4. One more ACB, ACS or ACG
5. One CL, ALB, ALS or DTM
6. One more CL, ALB, ALS or DTM
7. Four new members
8. Four more new members
9. Minimum of four club officers trained during each of two training periods
10. One dues renewal report and one club officer list submitted on time.

Recognition:

Clubs that meet the membership requirement and also achieve the aforementioned goals during the period July 1 through June 30 are eligible for Toastmasters International's Distinguished Club Program recognition (a congratulatory letter, ribbon to display on club banner, and recognition at the international convention) at year-end:

Achieve 5 of 10 goals	Distinguished Club
Achieve 7 of 10 goals	Select Distinguished Club
Achieve 9 of 10 goals	President's Distinguished Club



Conclusion

Whether your club is five years old or 50 years old, it has experienced its ups and downs, its cycles of growth and decline. These changes are a natural part of the development of any Toastmasters club. To put these cycles into perspective, it is important to remember the Club Mission:

The mission of a Toastmasters club is to provide a mutually supportive and positive learning environment in which every member has the opportunity to develop and practice communication and leadership skills, which in turn foster self-confidence and personal growth.

Those of us who inherit the leadership of a club are responsible for creating an environment that will enable the club to fulfill its mission. If we inherit a club that is at its peak, we have only to maintain the status quo. But if we inherit a club that is on the decline, we have a wonderful opportunity to explore and develop our capabilities as leaders. Hopefully, this document will assist you in creating the environment necessary for your personal development, as well as that of your club.