

Recommendations

The 6 recommendations below were highlighted in the club meeting on 11th April 2017 as considerations for the members and committee to discuss, adapt and adopt in relation to managing the growing club membership (43 members as of 3rd May 2017) vis-a-vis the limited speech slots available per month.

Please note that the number of speech slots available per year have been calculated in a spreadsheet with all assumptions documented. This spreadsheet can be shared on request.

Kindly have a think about the 6 recommendations below and let the club committee know your concerns or your suggestions to improve the management of the speech slot situation.

1) Mentor's Responsibility

Mentors need to go back to their mentees to fully understand the rationale behind choosing the speaking frequency selected in the survey (Monthly, Bimonthly, Quarterly) and support the member in understanding the goal behind such selection. Possible solutions might be to encourage the member to join a second TM club, do some guest speaker roles in sister clubs (with prior arrangement) and/or Mystery Speaker during Contest Season.

2) Other Meeting Roles

Some new and enthusiastic member make the mistake of assuming that public speaking improvement is limited to doing as many prepared speeches as possible. This is not true as the other meeting roles (Toastmaster of the Meeting, Speech Evaluator, Table Topics Master, Table Topic Speaker and even Timekeeper, Grammarian or Sergeant-At-Arms of the Meeting) offer the role take public speaker practice and stage time. Furthermore, the skills developed by taking on these roles are quite distinct from those of doing prepared speeches. Therefore, members need to be encouraged to take on as many of these roles as they want by registering for them in advance on Easy Speak and following the Competent Leadership Manual.

3) Attendance of Meetings

In that past, some members were happy to attend every couple of months just to do a prepared speech and then disappear until their next prepared speech. This behaviour needs to be discouraged and a firmer policy by the club committee needs to be enacted to make it fairer for everyone. Members can support each other by taking on roles in between speeches or even attending club meetings as table topics speakers or even audience members as a fully packed and energetic meeting is more enjoyable for all. Thus, the recommendation is to make regular club attendance one

of the criteria for granting speech slots based on the member's preferred speaking frequency indicated in the survey

4) Speech Cancellation

If a member cancels their prepared speech slot for a particular meeting regardless of the reason, then the member would lose the right to speak for the duration of that month. That does NOT affect their right to speak in future meetings if the future speech slots were booked in advance. For example, a member was booked to speak on 30th of the month and cancels. This means that the member can go ahead with their next speech slot in 5 weeks time or 9 weeks time unaffected if their preferred speaking frequency was monthly or bimonthly, but they would NOT receive any slots as reserve speaker status for the period in between. The member of course is welcome to find a speech slot as a guest in a sister club or Mystery Speaker during Contest Seasons. This way these freed up speech slots can go to members signed up as reserve speakers and to new joiners who are keen to get started with their icebreakers.

5) Other Toastmasters Clubs

One of the great things about Toastmasters being a huge network of clubs is that many clubs are keen to exchange speakers and the club can liaise with other clubs in London looking for guest speakers and for members within the ranks of Victorians who are keen to expand their comfort zone by speaking in front of new audiences and meeting their speaking frequency targets. There are several clubs in London that would benefit from having a full agenda for their meetings with 3 or 4 speakers be they corporate or community clubs, so it's a win-win solution.

6) Survey Frequency

It would be useful to measure and gauge members' desired speaking frequency twice a year (most likely in early October and early April after renewals) because club membership tends to change around that time and it would be helpful to the committee to plan out future meetings while ensuring that the members' desired speaking frequencies are satisfied to the greatest extent possible.