

# FUNDAMENTALS OF PUBLIC SPEAKING



**TOASTMASTERS**  
INTERNATIONAL

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

- INTRODUCTION TO THE TOASTMASTERS EDUCATION PROGRAM** ..... 2
- YOUR FIRST SPEECH—THE ICE BREAKER**
  - Assignment ..... 2
  - Competencies..... 2
  - Prepare and Present ..... 3
- YOUR SECOND SPEECH—ORGANIZE YOUR SPEECH**
  - Assignment ..... 3
  - Competencies..... 3
  - The Value of Organization ..... 4
  - Creating Your Speech..... 4
  - A Complete Outline ..... 4
  - Preparing Your Speech ..... 5
  - Your Evaluation ..... 6
- YOUR THIRD SPEECH—EVALUATION AND FEEDBACK**
  - Assignment ..... 6
  - Competencies..... 6
  - Preparing to Evaluate ..... 7
  - Supporting Speakers Through Evaluation ..... 7
- MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR TIME AS A CHARTER CLUB** ..... 7
- SPEECH OUTLINE WORKSHEET** ..... 8

# INTRODUCTION TO THE TOASTMASTERS EDUCATION PROGRAM

Toastmasters International has a long tradition of building communication and leadership skills. First and foremost, Toastmasters is about the club experience. The opportunities to learn through participation are great and many members build friendships that last a lifetime.

To support learning, Toastmasters has a comprehensive, personalized education program. The three projects included in this manual will introduce you and other club members to the style of learning as well as the types of projects in the current education program and the Toastmasters Pathways learning experience.

The program is self-paced. You are in control of scheduling your speeches and when you complete your projects. Some new members are ready to start speaking right away and others need time to feel comfortable enough to present at a club meeting. All members are invited and encouraged to participate in Table Topics® and to fulfill meeting roles when they feel ready to do so.

The following projects are based on Pathways projects designed for members of chartering clubs. You may do the projects in any order, though it is best to begin with the Ice Breaker because it is an opportunity to introduce yourself to members of your club.

As you launch your Toastmasters journey, you are taking an important step toward accomplishing your goals.



## COMPETENCIES:

The following are competencies you will practice in this project.

- ▶ Recognize the elements of basic speech structure.
- ▶ Balance preparation and spontaneity when delivering your speech.

**Speech Length:** Four to six minutes

## YOUR FIRST SPEECH— THE ICE BREAKER\*

### ASSIGNMENT

**Purpose:** The purpose of this project is to introduce yourself to the club and learn the basic structure of a public speech.

**Overview:** Write and deliver a speech about any topic to introduce yourself to your club. Your speech may be humorous, informational, or any other style that appeals to you.

## PREPARE AND PRESENT

Every person who ever joined a Toastmasters club gave an Ice Breaker speech. It is designed to provide you with a topic that is easy to remember, familiar, and comfortable. It has the added benefit of introducing you to your club members.

Your speech can cover any part of your life. Some members choose to explain the reasons they decided to join a Toastmasters club. Others share an important part of their lives, like their careers or hobbies. What you speak about is completely at your discretion.

Your speech will need an opening, a body, and a conclusion. As you consider what to include, keep in mind that the length of the speech is four to six minutes. Be sure to practice your speech in front of a mirror, present it to a family member or friend to get their feedback, and if possible, record your speech and watch it to help fine-tune your presentation.

You are welcome to complete the full Ice Breaker project online at [www.toastmasters.org/Pathways](http://www.toastmasters.org/Pathways). It includes resources and an evaluation resource that your evaluator can use to provide you with feedback. If you choose to complete the Ice Breaker online, you will receive credit for completing your first speech in Pathways!

**\*An important note about the Ice Breaker project:** If you choose to complete the full version of the project online, you will fulfill the Level 1 requirement for the Ice Breaker project when your club charter is complete and you have access to Pathways. Please submit the Ice Breaker Project Completion Request form found at [www.toastmasters.org/PathwaysForms](http://www.toastmasters.org/PathwaysForms) to your vice president education for verification prior to submitting to World Headquarters.

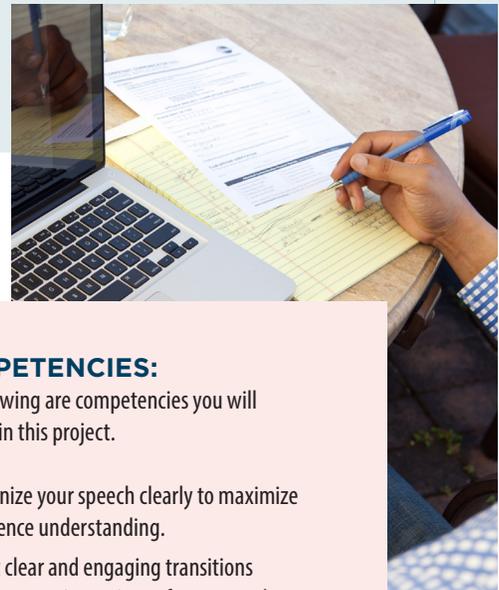
## YOUR SECOND SPEECH— ORGANIZE YOUR SPEECH

Having experienced what it is like to present to an audience by completing your first speech as well as contributing to Table Topics, you are ready to concentrate on the structure of an effective speech. It is time to focus on how to organize your ideas and follow an outline from beginning to end.

### ASSIGNMENT

**Purpose:** The purpose of this project is to practice organizing and presenting a speech.

**Overview:** You may choose any topic. Be sure it is specific enough to present in a five- to seven-minute speech. Organize your speech and present it to your club. Your speech may be humorous, informational, or any other style that appeals to you.



### COMPETENCIES:

The following are competencies you will practice in this project.

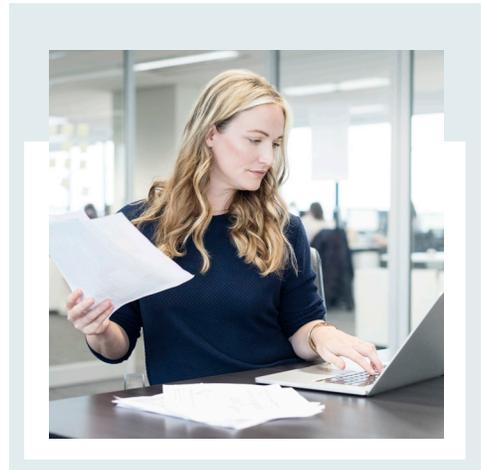
- ▶ Organize your speech clearly to maximize audience understanding.
- ▶ Craft clear and engaging transitions between main sections of your speech.

**Speech Length:** Five to seven minutes

## THE VALUE OF ORGANIZATION

An organized speech will help your audience follow your thoughts and ideas from the opening line through to your concluding statement. A well-organized speech contains ideas that link together in a cohesive way to ensure your content supports your topic.

As you create your outline and design your speech, think of your audience members' points of view. Most people are highly motivated by their personal needs, not necessarily by the needs of others. Analyze how you can encourage audience members to see your point of view, understand what you are asking or communicating, and take action if necessary. Let your understanding of your audience guide the creation of your speech.



## CREATING YOUR SPEECH

Every speech needs a road map. In planning any kind of a trip, the first step is to determine your destination and plot your route. This is also an effective way to prepare a speech. Choose your destination, the objective or purpose of your speech and plan your route, the points you want to make along the way that will help accomplish your purpose.

Your first task in creating a speech is to decide what to talk about. Select a subject of interest to you and your audience, and identify a single aspect that appeals to you and will appeal to audience members. You will speak for only a few minutes and will need all of that time to fully develop a single aspect of the larger subject. Be sure your topic is timely and relevant to your audience and a topic on which you can speak with authority, enthusiasm, and conviction.

Next, determine the exact purpose of this speech. Select a specific point you want to impress on your audience. Decide if you intend to explain, persuade, entertain, or inspire. This decision will determine the tenor of your speech and how you will open and close your presentation.

Finally, arrange your ideas into a logical sequence that will help you achieve your goal. The best way to do this is to build an outline.

## A COMPLETE OUTLINE

An effective speech is logically organized into an opening, a body, and a conclusion. There are many variations on this basic structure. Experienced speakers rarely think consciously about these parts, but all three are present in every good speech. After you have mentally organized your presentation, write out your outline to make sure you have included all three parts in your speech. You may choose to use the outline provided at the end of this manual. Using an outline will help you remember each sub-point.

The opening of your speech is designed to catch audience members' attention. It must spark interest in your topic and lead into the subject of the speech. You will achieve a memorable opening by shocking audience members, but it may not necessarily support the purpose of your speech.

**Examples of an effective opening are:**

- ▶ A startling question or a challenging statement
- ▶ An appropriate quotation, illustration, or story
- ▶ A display of some appropriate object or picture
- ▶ An attention-getting generalization that connects to your subject

**When preparing your opening, common mistakes to avoid include:**

- ▶ An apologetic statement
- ▶ General or obvious observations
- ▶ A long or tedious statement
- ▶ A trite question, such as, “Did you ever stop to think ...?”

**The body of your speech contains the factual support for your purpose. You may want to include:**

- ▶ Statements of fact
- ▶ Statements that support your main idea
- ▶ Any rebuttal you might have to contrary points of view

The conclusion of your speech is the climax; the destination you were reaching for when you started. Always connect your opening to your conclusion and finish with confidence. An inconclusive or apologetic closing can undermine even the best speech.

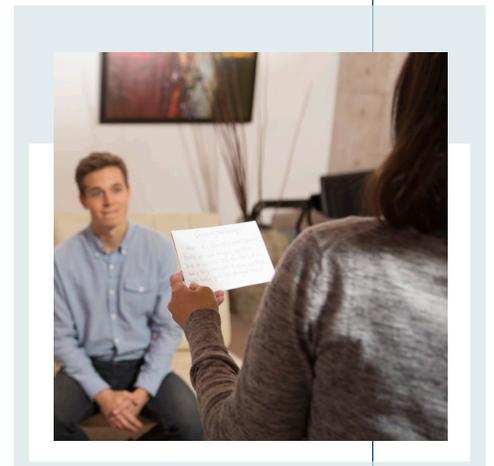
Your closing can include a summary of your main points or a specific call to action. You might choose to end on a powerful story, quotation, or illustration that emphasizes your primary purpose.

**PREPARING YOUR SPEECH**

Once you have prepared an effective opening, closing, and the primary points in the body of your speech, you may choose to memorize your opening and closing. It can be especially beneficial to memorize your first sentence. Feeling confident in how you will begin and end will make it easier to find your way if you lose your train of thought as you present.

Once you have developed the three main parts of your speech, you need to consider the transitions between those parts. High-quality transitions smooth the shift from one section or thought to another. Transitions act like bridges, connecting your thoughts and ideas and supporting audience members in understanding your message. Well-designed transitions are needed when you move from:

- ▶ The speech introduction to the body
- ▶ A main point to a sub-point
- ▶ A sub-point to support material
- ▶ Support material to another main point
- ▶ The final support material to the conclusion



## YOUR EVALUATION

The primary focus of this project is to effectively organize your speech. While you speak, your evaluator will consider your presentation skills. To be effective, your outline must help you organize your thoughts, and your organization must be clear to your listeners. When they understand exactly what you are trying to accomplish, you have organized and presented an effective speech.



### COMPETENCIES:

The following are competencies you will practice in this project.

- ▶ Deliver tactful and constructive feedback.
- ▶ Use positive language when delivering feedback.

**Speech Length:** Two to three minutes

## YOUR THIRD SPEECH— EVALUATION AND FEEDBACK

Evaluation is fundamental and foundational to the Toastmasters experience. The goal of evaluation is to provide feedback and feedback is an essential element in improving your speaking abilities. Constructive, supportive feedback helps you identify and build your strengths and develop the skills you need to overcome challenges. Providing feedback to others is also an important part of developing your abilities. As you watch and listen to other speakers and identify the places they excel, as well as the areas they need to improve, you develop your skills, too.

### ASSIGNMENT

**Purpose:** Gain experience evaluating a speaker and presenting an overview of your evaluation.

**Overview:** Serve as an evaluator for another member of your club. Present an impromptu evaluation speech covering your observations, positive comments, and supportive feedback. (Depending on your club, you may have a few minutes to prepare your remarks.)

## **PREPARING TO EVALUATE**

Whenever possible, talk to the person whose speech you will evaluate prior to the meeting. Discuss the project purpose and review the speaker's needs and goals. Carefully read through the evaluation resource for the project. If you have any questions, ask your club sponsor or the speaker for clarification.

Pay close attention during the speech. Refer to the evaluation criteria page of the resource if you are not sure how to score a particular competency on the evaluation form. Make written notes as necessary.

After the speech you will present a brief verbal evaluation, usually about two minutes long. This is not intended for you to read the evaluation resource aloud, but a designated time for you to share your thoughts and practice impromptu speaking. Be sure to return the completed written evaluation to the speaker at the end of the meeting.

## **SUPPORTING SPEAKERS THROUGH EVALUATION**

Begin your verbal evaluation by describing the strong points of the speech. Your goal is not to judge, but to share your reaction while you point out the positive points of the speaker's presentation and delivery. Though well-intentioned, it isn't helpful to speak only to the positives. Every meaningful evaluation needs specific suggestions for improvement. Respectfully identify problems and point them out in a friendly, helpful manner. Every comment in which you reveal a weakness should also include a suggestion for overcoming that weakness.

The evaluation resource is designed to give you a place to rate the speech and the speaker on various criteria. It also provides space for you to comment. Be direct and honest in your scores and comments. You do not read your written comments during your speech, so these notes give you an opportunity to add specific, helpful comments that may make the speaker uncomfortable if read aloud.

## **MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR TIME AS A CHARTER CLUB**

Chartering a new Toastmasters club is an exciting time. Making use of all the resources available to you by communicating with your club sponsor and by perusing the Toastmasters website for more information will support you and your fellow club members. Toastmasters International and Pathways are here to help you reach your goals.

## SPEECH OUTLINE WORKSHEET

Use this outline to help you organize the information you want to include in your speech.

### OPENING

- A. Greeting
- B. Capture audience interest
- C. Introduce yourself
- D. Transition

### BODY

- A. Main point 1  
Transition
- B. Main point 2  
Transition
- C. Main point 3  
Transition

### CONCLUSION

- A. Restate the main points of your speech
- B. Close with impact

For a full interactive outline, visit [www.toastmasters.org/Pathways](http://www.toastmasters.org/Pathways).



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