



Founder's District Marketing

Keeping Clubs Strong

"Maybe it will get better-" Five dangerous words to say when your health is at stake. Ignore the problem, and it gets worse; regular health check ups keep you in shape. It's the same for your club.

Below are a series of questions clubs can ask to determine the health of the club:

Meetings

- Are all speeches from the Basic or Advanced manuals?
- Do you have a printed agenda for every meeting?
- Are all meeting roles assigned prior to the start of the meeting?
- Does your meetings start and end on time without stopping to "get organized"?
- Do evaluations and reports contain points for improvement as well as positive comments?
- Are members always well prepared for the roles they are fulfilling?

People

- Do the number of members attending meetings hold steady or increase, over the course of four weeks?
- At any given meeting are more than one-third of your membership *and* more than nine members attending?
- Do you have guests attending your meetings at least twice a month? Do members regularly invite guests?
- Are guests greeted at the door, encouraged to participate throughout the meeting, *and* invited to join?
- Does your club have an active membership building program?
- For company clubs: Does the company demonstrate its commitment to training and educating its workforce?
- Does the club have a permanent, regular meeting location and time?
- Do your club officers, especially the president, regularly attend club meetings?
- Do your club officers regularly conduct Executive Committee meetings and attend Area Council meetings?

Outside Business

- Do all the clubs officers attend Founder's District-sponsored officer training?
- Are all officer positions filled at regular annual or semi-annual elections - especially the top offices?
- Does your club have members competing at every Area Speech Contest; helping and participating?
- Does your club stick to a "one person, one club officer" policy, particularly for president and vice presidents?
- Does your club send a representative to every District Conference business meeting?
- Are the semi-annual dues and officer list reports always filed on time?
- Does the club always have plenty of supplies such as ballots, evaluation forms, etc., on hand?

If you can answer *yes* to these questions, your club is in fine shape. But if your club health is in jeopardy - call your Area Governor. If you need more help than your Area Governor can provide, contact Gregg Van Citters, DTM, Lt. Governor Marketing.

From an online chat between Eric Matto, DTM, Dan Durishan, AbleTM, CL and John Fleming, ATM-B; with Rick Clements, AbleTM-S



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Retaining Members

Review club programming. Find out what club members want to get out of their Toastmasters experience and design meetings that entice, entertain and educate. A great resource for ideas is the *Patterns in Programming* document (catalogue # 1314,) available through Toastmasters International, www.toastmasters.org. Another idea: try searching the term, "Toastmasters meeting ideas" at www.google.com.

Establish a mentoring program. Assign a mentor to every new member in your club. Joining Toastmasters is big step for most people. Having an experienced Toastmaster as a mentor will help the new member accomplish their goals, feel more comfortable and confident, and more inclined to stick with the program...and your club. It's never too late to establish a mentoring program. The Club Mentor Program Kit is available www.toastmasters.org. Look for catalogue #1163.

Track member goals. We join Toastmasters in order to attain certain life, career and personal goals. It is important for the club's top officers, especially your Vice President of Education and club President, to know the goals of each member. As your members attain their initial goals, help them explore and establish new goals. Club Scheduler (<http://www.tjande.com/cs/>) not only helps schedule programming but also tracks member goals and their progress toward those goals!

Acknowledge every member and guest. Greet them at the door and introduce them during the meeting. Help guests and new members feel welcome, and they'll keep coming back!

Involve members in the meeting and in various programs inside and outside the club environment. Members gain skills when they serve as a club officer, help at Area and Division Speech Contests, District Conferences, plan special club events, become a mentor, or serve on a committee. In addition, their involvement gives them a sense of ownership and belonging to the club.

Name tags and badges for everyone attending the meeting will help guests and new members feel welcome. Make your club a "place where everybody knows your name."

Bonus Tip

To keep your club in top shape, conduct a *Moments of Truth* program every six months. Let your club members tell you where they see club strengths and weaknesses. The *Moments of Truth* module will help you identify ways you can improve your club, keep it strong and make it a club people will want to join! The *Moments of Truth* module is available through Toastmasters International, www.toastmasters.org. Look for catalogue #290.