



TOASTMASTERS  
INTERNATIONAL®

# *Maintaining Strong* Clubs



AREA  
&  
DIVISION  
GOVERNORS

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# The Mission of the District

The Mission of the District is to enhance the performance and extend the networks of Clubs, thereby offering greater numbers of people the opportunity to benefit from the Toastmasters educational program by:

- ▶ Focusing on the critical success factors as specified by the District educational goals and membership goals.
- ▶ Insuring that each Club effectively fulfills its responsibilities to its members.
- ▶ Providing effective training and leadership development opportunities for Club and District officers.



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## **PART III: VISUAL AIDS COPY FOR THE TRAINING SESSION**

## **PART IV: HANDOUT COPY**

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# Introduction: Training Area and Division Governors . . . A Vital District Function

The Club is the heart of the Toastmasters program. It provides the environment and support members need to develop their communication and leadership skills.

Featured within the Toastmasters organization are additional levels of assistance which provide support to Clubs. The primary function of Districts, for example, is to help Clubs in their efforts. Area Governors work for the Districts by taking responsibility for the well-being and activities of all Clubs assigned to their Areas. As District officers, Division Governors strengthen this network by offering support and guidance to Area Governors. Effective Area Governors encourage the health and growth of Clubs and insure the success of their Divisions.

The purpose of this Area and Division training program is to explain the Distinguished Area and Distinguished Division Programs. This training program is your comprehensive guide for preparing and presenting effective Area Governor and/or Division Governor training sessions that focus on program goals and planning to achieve those goals. However, since some Districts train Area and Division Governors separately, while others train them together, this training program may be modified by each District as necessary.

Training should help both Area and Division Governors identify the goals they need to successfully serve Clubs and members so that Clubs, Areas, and Divisions all strive to become "Distinguished." After training, Area and Division Governors should:

- ▶ Understand what makes an Area successful
- ▶ Understand what makes a Division successful
- ▶ Know the goals of the Distinguished Division and Distinguished Area programs
- ▶ Recognize the elements of a successful Club and be familiar with the components of the Distinguished Club program
- ▶ Know how to develop a Performance Plan based upon the goals of the Distinguished Division and Distinguished Area programs

The cornerstone of a good training session is preparation. To do a good job, the presenter of a Division Governor training session must be familiar with the District Leadership Handbook (Catalog No. 222) and, additionally, if training Area Governors, the Area Leadership Handbook (Catalog No. 221). The presenter should also review the Distinguished Area and

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Distinguished Division Program brochure (Catalog No. 1481). Take time to review these materials, then study the training program thoroughly. Don't forget to inject your own personality and experiences to create a session that is educational, enjoyable, and motivational. Helpful tips to assist in your preparation for this training session are provided in Part I. Part II covers the "meat" or essential points of the session. Parts III and IV provide you with visual aids and handouts.

Remember, training is not finished when this particular training session ends. It's a process that continues throughout an officer's term. Be sure to inform your trainees that if any questions arise during their year in office, the District Governor, Lt. Governor Education and Training and Lt. Governor Marketing are available to help.

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# Part I: Foundations for a Successful Training Session

## KEEP TRAINING FOCUSED ON THE DISTRICT MISSION

Achievement of the District Mission requires that Districts successfully train Division and Area Governors. Toastmasters International publishes several training programs for Division and Area Governors covering the fundamentals these volunteer leaders need to be successful. Every District is provided several copies of these training programs. The programs are in a modular format and are flexible, yet focused. Each training program also emphasizes an adult learning approach by allowing for discussion and offering practical exercises and case studies.

All Division and Area Governor training must incorporate the core content of the training programs published by Toastmasters International. Here is a description:

*Achieve Success Standards* (Catalog No. 218-A). This program covers Area and Division Governor Standards and the Distinguished Division, Area, and Club Programs.

*Maintain Strong Clubs* (Catalog No. 218-B). Fundamental to keeping Clubs and having a net Club gain is building membership. This module addresses building membership and effective Area-Club visits.

*Build New Clubs* (Catalog No. 218-C). To become a President's Distinguished Division or President's Distinguished Area requires a net gain of one Club. To be a Distinguished Division requires no Club loss. This module teaches District Officers the basics of Club building.

*Build a Successful Team* (Catalog No. 218-D). Successful Division and Area Governors achieve their goals by involving others. This module teaches officers how to build a team and how to effectively use Division and Area Councils.

*Conduct Quality Contests* (Catalog No. 218-E). Although not a top District priority, speech contests are important interclub events. The Area speech contest is probably the one District event in which most clubs participate. This program provides instruction, exercises, and a checklist to ensure that contests run smoothly.

Initial Division and Area Governor training must be a minimum of four hours. Division and Area Governors should be trained together in a central location. Geographically large Districts may train Area Governors by Divisions or group Divisions together. One-to-one training is time consuming and should rarely occur.

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## FIVE STEPS FOR PLANNING A SUCCESSFUL DIVISION AND AREA GOVERNOR TRAINING PROGRAM

### 1. PREPARE THE TRAINING AGENDA.

The core content of training must incorporate the Division and Area Governor training programs published by Toastmasters International. Initial training must be at least four hours to ensure that Area and Division Governors receive an adequate foundation. A sample training agenda is provided at the end of this section.

### 2. OBTAIN AND PREPARE MATERIALS.

- ▶ PowerPoint slides are available at [www.toastmasters.org](http://www.toastmasters.org) or you can prepare overhead transparencies using the master copies found in Part III of each training program. If a flip chart will be used to replace the slides, prepare in advance: write the information on every other flip chart page, using a marking pen and making sure all letters are large enough to be clearly visible to participants. Tips for effectively using visual aids are also included in Part III.
- ▶ Duplicate the handouts in Part IV of each training program, along with any additional handouts you will distribute.
- ▶ Assemble other reference materials. These may be available from the District, or you can order them through the Toastmasters International Supply Catalog. (Be sure to allow adequate time for shipping.)

### 3. SELECT TRAINERS.

Select the best possible trainers, those who you know will do a good job, be enthusiastic, and be able to motivate participants. Notify the presenters well in advance and keep them posted. After selecting the trainers, provide them with session materials.

### 4. COORDINATE THE LOGISTICS OF THE SESSION.

- ▶ Select a date that does not conflict with important local events.
- ▶ Plan for enough time to complete your agenda. A minimum of four to six hours is suggested for completing all five of the Division and Area Governor training programs.
- ▶ Select and *secure* a location and facility which will provide a suitable training environment.
- ▶ Arrange for proper setup of tables, seating, and equipment. See suggested room layout in the section titled, "The Training Environment."

### 5. PROMOTE HEAVILY TO ENSURE ATTENDANCE.

Invite and urge all Area and/or Division Governors to attend the training session, using all available media (District, Division, and Club newsletters, fliers, etc.). Promote early, then follow up by telephone. Your goal should be to maximize attendance, and this

requires a heavy promotion effort. Emphasize how this training will help make Division and Area Governors more effective.

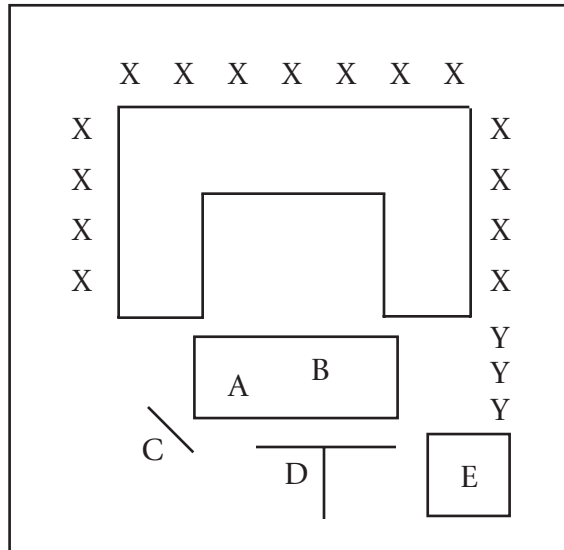
## THE TRAINING ENVIRONMENT

A satisfactory physical environment is essential for an effective training session. Arrange, in advance, for the meeting room to be properly set up. You will need a room large enough to comfortably seat the attending officers. Ideally, it should have space in the back for coffee breaks and sufficient room in front to accommodate your audiovisual equipment and a work table for materials and supplies. Make arrangements for a datascreen or overhead projector and screen (including a spare bulb and extension cord).

The chart below illustrates an ideal physical setting for a District leader training session.

### KEY

- A – lectern and gavel
- B – datascreen or overhead projector
- C – flip chart
- D – screen
- E – table for materials and supplies
- X – participants
- Y – training assistants



Upon arrival, check the room temperature. (Nothing is worse than a room that is too hot or too cold; whenever participants are uncomfortable, it's difficult for them to focus on the presentation.) Lastly, make it a practice to greet participants as they arrive, and, time permitting, chat with them.

## HOW TO USE THE PROGRAM OUTLINE

The Training Program format is simple to use, but it requires considerable preparation. It's designed to allow presenters the opportunity to be flexible and creative. However, it also provides structure so that the important elements of the program are emphasized.

Notice how the training outline is structured. **The total time for this session is 45 to 60 minutes.** Careful attention to time is essential. Interspersed through the outline are aids and



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**boxed segments**. These are explicit explanations and guidelines for conducting group exercises and portions of the presentation material. In the right-hand column are keys to visual aids and handouts, as well as space for you to make notations. Most of all, it's important to be flexible, since slight differences may exist between your District's practices and the information in this program. Therefore, using the framework presented, you will need to spend time reviewing and adapting this program to your District's needs.

Part II provides a training script. In presenting this material, *do not read the script word for word*. Instead, become thoroughly familiar with each topic, then paraphrase and embellish it to suit your individual presentation style. In preparing for your training session, keep two things in mind. First, fit your planned discussion to the time allocation for each subject. Second, allow ample time for group discussion and participation.

Part III of this booklet contains the basic visual aids for the program. Each slide is designated in the right hand column as "SLIDE #\_\_" in the outline. If you do not have access to the PowerPoint file, a laptop computer and datascreen projector, then it is recommended that you reproduce these visuals on a transparency for use with an overhead projector. If this isn't possible, copy them onto a flip chart prior to the session.

## CHECKLIST FOR TRAINING

- \_\_\_ Meeting facility selected and secured.
- \_\_\_ All participants notified.
- \_\_\_ Follow-up phone calls made to each officer.
- \_\_\_ Training assistants appointed.
- \_\_\_ Visual aids prepared.
- \_\_\_ Handouts reproduced.
- \_\_\_ Room arranged and properly equipped.
- \_\_\_ Refreshments ordered.
- \_\_\_ Supplies and reference materials on hand.
- \_\_\_ Projector available, with spare bulb and extension cord.
- \_\_\_ Flip chart and easel available, along with marking pens.
- \_\_\_ Notepads and pencils available for each participant.

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## SAMPLE TRAINING AGENDA FOR DIVISION AND AREA GOVERNORS

Initial training must be a minimum of four hours to ensure the officers have a solid foundation to do their jobs. This full-day agenda may be modified to a six-hour or four-hour length. However, these Division and Area Governor training programs must be part of any initial training: *Achieve Success Standards* (Catalog No. 218-A), *Maintain Strong Clubs* (Catalog No. 218-B), *Build New Clubs* (Catalog No. 218-C), *Build a Successful Team* (Catalog No. 218-D). If necessary, *Conduct Quality Contests* (Catalog No. 218-E) can be conducted later, but before speech contests begin.

8:00 a.m. ....	Registration
8:30 a.m. ....	Welcoming Remarks
8:45 a.m. ....	<i>Achieve Success Standards</i>
9:45 a.m. ....	Break
10:00 a.m. ....	<i>Maintain Strong Clubs</i>
11:00 a.m. ....	<i>Build New Clubs</i>
12:00 p.m. ....	Working Lunch *
1:15 p.m. ....	Break
1:30 p.m. ....	<i>Build a Successful Team</i>
2:30 p.m. ....	<i>Conduct Quality Contests</i>
3:30 p.m. ....	Break
3:45 p.m. ....	Self-Assessment*
4:45 p.m. ....	Closing Remarks
5:00 p.m. ....	Adjourn

\* During luncheon, you can cover some other topics related to achieving the District, such as the achieving the District's four critical success factors, the Distinguished District Program goals for Club growth, membership growth, CTMs and ATMs. Toward the end of the training session, the District can conduct a group exercise and distribute the self-assessment tool contained at the end of this section (Part I). Participants can answer the questions and discuss their answers with trainers and peers. This can ensure that trainees have a clearer understanding of the role of the District and their roles in the success of the District and their own success.

Division Governor and Area Governor training is ongoing. Training should be part of every District event, particularly District Executive Committee meetings. Here are some suggestions which can be covered as part of the initial training and ongoing training during the year:

- ▶ **Area Governor Breakout Session.** Area Governors meet together and brainstorm/discuss ideas for achieving Distinguished Area or better.

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- ▶ **Area/Division Goal Setting.** Division Governors meet with Area Governors. Review and discuss strategies for achieving Distinguished Division and Distinguished Area goals.
  - ▶ **District Governor Motivational Session and Overview**
    - District Mission/Goals (Critical Success Factors)
    - Meaning of achieving Distinguished District, Division, Area, Club
    - Criteria for Area Governor/Division Governor of the Year
  - ▶ **Brainstorm Club Leads.** Generate prospect ideas for building new Clubs in communities and corporations so that every Division/Area has a net growth of at least one Club and achieves President's Distinguished Division/Area
  - ▶ **Question & Answer Session.** Open discussion focusing on critical issues related to Distinguished District/Division/Area Programs, helping Clubs increase membership, rebuilding weak Clubs, building Clubs, making Area-Club visits.
  - ▶ **Successful Past Area Governors Panel.** Successful Past Area Governors share experiences and techniques for achieving goals and answer questions from trainees.
  - ▶ **Role Play Club Visits.** Practice making effective, service-oriented visits to Clubs.

## EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP

- A. **Self-Assessment Questionnaire** – Toward the end of the training session, distribute the questionnaire on the following pages. Ask participants to complete the questionnaire and take time to discuss responses and answer any other questions or concerns.
- B. **Session Leaders** – Ask the participants to fill out an evaluation form at the end of the entire session. Alter materials as needed based on the feedback you receive.
- C. **District Application** – Evaluate trainees' use of materials. Be sure to follow up with Area and/or Division Governors throughout their term. Keep in mind that learning is a continuous process.
- D. **Refresher Sessions** – Hold formal or informal review sessions as frequently as possible.

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## AREA GOVERNOR AND DIVISION GOVERNOR TRAINING SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

The following questions can help you assess your understanding of your role as a District officer. Answer the questions as best as you can and discuss your answers with your trainers and peers. If you are unsure of the answer to a question, speak with your trainers and/or fellow District officers.

### DISTRICT SUCCESS

Our entire District team's success is measured by its performance in the Distinguished District Program. What are the four goals the District needs to achieve to be successful and be recognized as a Distinguished District?

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### AREA AND DIVISION SUCCESS

What goals must my Area and Division achieve in order to be a President's Distinguished Area or a President's Distinguished Division?

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How will my performance be measured?

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What are my primary responsibilities as an Area Governor or Division Governor?

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Where can I build a Club or help the District identify a prospect for a new Club?

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Where can I get the resources to build a Club in my Area or Division?

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Who is on my Area/Division Council and how often should we meet?

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**CLUB SERVICE AND SUPPORT**

Club success is measured by performance in the Distinguished Club Program (DCP). What are the 10 goals in the DCP?

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How can I help the Clubs in my Area/Division become Distinguished Clubs?

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How do I ensure that the Club officers in my Area/Division attend Club officer training?

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How many Clubs are in my Area/Division?

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How many Club visits must an Area Governor perform and what are the deadlines for making these visits?

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How often should an Area Governor contact Club Presidents?

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What are the names of the Club Presidents in my Area?

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**OTHER**

What are my responsibilities regarding speech contests?

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# Part II: Presentation of the Training Session: Maintaining Strong Clubs

*A Hands-On Approach to Helping Clubs Stay Healthy*

*PRESENTER: You may wish to open your program with some brief remarks in your own words. But remember, now and throughout the seminar, time is precious and must be carefully controlled.*

## MAINTAINING STRONG CLUBS

SLIDE #1

If more people are to receive the benefits of the Toastmasters program we must not only build new Clubs, but we must keep, serve and support our existing Clubs. Maintaining the strength of these existing Clubs is critical to our success as District Officers and the success of the entire organization. You are the front-line officers in efforts to keep our Clubs healthy.

Here are the objectives on this session on maintaining strong Clubs:

**Identify our District's Mission.** We must keep our mission in the forefront if more people are going to benefit from Toastmasters.

**Mission-oriented service.** You are leader-servants for your Clubs and our efforts must be focused on providing purposeful service to our Clubs.

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**Reasons Area and Division Governors Succeed.** We'll identify and discuss the reasons behind successful service as a District Officer.

**Common Customer Service Problems.** We'll also identify pitfalls to avoid as you strive to serve your Clubs.

**Conducting Effective Club Visits.** Area Governors visit Clubs at least twice each year and these opportunities can make or break a successful year. We'll identify the techniques you can use to make these visits work for you and your Clubs.

**Keys to continued success and communication.** A successful service relationship goes beyond Clubs visits and we'll discuss how you can expand upon successful Club visits.

## **THE DISTRICT MISSION**

SLIDE #2

The Mission of the District is to enhance the performance of Clubs so that greater numbers of people will benefit from the Toastmasters educational program. One of the best ways to do this is to make sure that Clubs maintain standards that meet the needs of their membership and enhance their attractiveness to guests.

Area Governors can help by conducting effective Club visits, following up with Club officers on administrative activities, and maintaining year-round involvement with each Club.



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Division Governors help Area Governors achieve these goals. They coach Area Governors on how to conduct effective Club visits, listen to feedback, and, in general, support the Area Governors' year-round involvement with the Clubs. Think back to when you first joined Toastmasters. Do you remember why you joined — and why you have stayed?

***PRESENTER:** Mention your own reasons, then call on audience members to briefly state what keeps them coming back to Toastmasters.*

Toastmasters International is an organization that empowers people to achieve their full potential and realize their dreams. People throughout the world join Toastmasters Clubs to improve their communication and leadership skills. Once they do, they develop talents and qualities that enable them to make positive changes in their personal and professional lives.

## **YOUR MOST IMPORTANT JOB: HELPING CLUBS ACHIEVE THE CLUB MISSION**

SLIDE #3

As Area Governor, your most important responsibility is to ensure that each one of the Clubs in your Area is a Distinguished Club. In other words, each of your Clubs should be achieving the Club 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 growth.*

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Clubs achieving the Club Mission have three things in common. They have great educational programming and strong membership and are striving to become a Distinguished Club.

Successful Clubs move members through the Toastmasters International Communication and Leadership Tracks. New members are encouraged to get their CTM. It is expected that every member will earn a CTM and proceed on to Advanced Toastmaster Bronze, Silver, and Gold awards.

Also, healthy Clubs that are achieving the District Mission are at charter strength and are constantly searching for new members. Healthy Clubs strive to achieve the Distinguished Club program goals of four new members and four more new members.

Perhaps you belong to a very healthy Club with a current membership of 20-plus. Within a short time, however, this situation could be drastically changed by circumstances beyond anyone's control. Remind Toastmasters in your District to anticipate these changes and work continuously toward increasing their Club's membership.

Even if a Club is edging toward the comfortable 40-plus category, it's important that new people are encouraged to join. Not only do new members give the Club a stronger leadership base, but they also provide a continuous flow of fresh ideas and new personalities. On the other hand, becoming complacent and "resting on one's laurels" will lead, sooner or later, to a Club's illness and probable demise.

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Clubs that have members moving through the Communication and Leadership tracks and Clubs that consistently maintain a 20-plus membership are obviously doing something right. Before we talk about the specifics of Club visits, let's first define what makes a great Club.

***PRESENTER:** Briefly discuss some of the best aspects of your own Club. Then ask audience members for feedback on what they think makes a great Club, one which achieves the Club Mission.*

## **ATTITUDE OF SERVICE**

As Toastmasters leaders, our purpose is to get and keep members. It's really that simple. We must do everything possible to devote the lion's share of our efforts toward that purpose. At the District level and at the Club level, every interaction has an impact on whether members leave or stay in a Club. Every interaction has an impact on whether Clubs grow or decline. These are the "moments of truth" . . . the points where we keep or lose Clubs and members.

***PRESENTER:** Lead a brief discussion with participants, asking for responses to the questions "Who are your Division's or Area's customers?" and "Who are the 'customers' in Toastmasters?" Then continue with the following.*

## **SUCCESSFUL DISTRICTS ARE MISSION-FOCUSED AND SERVICED-ORIENTED.**

Customers are the "life blood" of any organization including Toastmasters. Districts, Divisions, and Areas are the "service units" of Toastmasters International. It's important to define who our "customers" are and keep District

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team members focused upon serving these “customers.” For Districts, Divisions, and Areas, our “customers” are:

SLIDE #4

- ▶ **Clubs.** Clubs are a Division’s and Area’s primary customers. Along with building new Clubs, your most important job is to ensure that existing Clubs are healthy, conduct quality programming, and meet member needs. The Club has the primary responsibility to make sure that members’ educational needs are met and that the individual member is satisfied with Toastmasters. Simply, your responsibility is to help each Club fulfill its Mission and become a Distinguished Club.
- ▶ **Members.** Although the Club is the primary provider of service and satisfaction to this customer, the District, through its Divisions and Areas, also has a role in satisfying the member. Delivery of leadership training to Club Officers, support of quality Club programming through the Area Governor visits and conduct of inter-Club activities are examples of direct customer services which maintain Club health and guarantee member satisfaction.
- ▶ **Potential Clubs and Members.** New Clubs and new members breathe life into our organization. Division and Area Governors must search to satisfy the needs of corporations, community groups and other groups through Toastmasters. You also must service and support Clubs in their efforts to meet individuals’ needs by offering membership in Toastmasters.

**OUR ORGANIZATION’S PURPOSE.** Our organization has a particular Mission: to provide benefits of Toastmasters to more people. We operate in a

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service environment . . . call it a market. Understanding the nature of our market is crucial to our ability to properly provide quality service. We must do this in order to retain members. Peter Drucker once said, "The purpose of a business is to create and keep a customer." To paraphrase this, "The purpose of Toastmasters is to create and keep a member." This is really the essence of the Toastmasters International, District and Club Missions.

SLIDE #5

**REASONS DIVISION AND AREA GOVERNORS SUCCEED.** As volunteers, we are trying to provide our members and Clubs with the best service possible. Division Governors and Area Governors are successful when they:

- 1) meet Club needs and
- 2) help Clubs meet member needs.

Division Governors and Area Governors fail when they do not adequately meet the needs of these "customers." Clubs and members leave the organization. So to be successful, we need to meet the needs of Clubs and members, the specific reasons for success can generally be grouped into one or more of the following areas:

- ▶ **Focused on the District Mission.** We would seldom lose a Club if every Area Governor and Division Governor devoted time solely to helping each of their Clubs reach and maintain charter strength. However, too often that's not happening because Area Governors and Division Governors are distracted by activities not directly related to achieving the District Mission. The District Mission, along with the Toastmasters International and

SLIDE #6, 7, 8

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Club Missions, can “liberate” you and give you the direction and focus to tackle what is truly important: making each Club a healthy, thriving Club.

► **Dedicated to achieving Distinguished Area and Distinguished Division.**

The goals in the Distinguished Division and Area Programs are objective measures of your success as a service provider. If you are focused on serving Club needs and on ensuring that Clubs are healthy, then members will stay in Clubs and guests will join these healthy Clubs. We must be dedicated to building new Clubs and serving existing Clubs, thereby creating more “customers.” If we are not on track to achieving Club, membership, and educational goals, this means our District, Divisions, and Areas are literally failing to meet the needs of our customers.

► **Area and Division Governors know critical goals.** Area and Division Governors fail when they don’t understand or are confused about which of their goals are absolutely essential and which are less important.

For example, having each Club working toward Charter strength (by improving programming, membership drives, etc.) is much more important than spending time on speech contests. Granted, Divisions and Areas must conduct certain contests and these should be conducted well. But the vast majority of a Division Governor’s and Area Governor’s time should be spent on making sure that we eventually have Clubs. In the future, if a District/Division/Area has no clubs, then it will have no speech contests.

► **Area Governors and Division Governors see Clubs, members, and potential Clubs and members as customers!** Working hard and serving

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as a volunteer is not always the same as satisfying Clubs and members. Each year we have District Officers who devote immense amounts of time with limited results. No matter how much administrative work is completed, no matter how much time is spent on District meetings, training, visiting Clubs etc., if we do not focus on making sure that what we do is valuable to our Clubs and members, then the overall, long-term benefits of our efforts will be very limited.

- ▶ **Area Governors and Division Governors see satisfying our customers as their job.** Volunteers sometimes focus on the mechanics of service delivery and do not concentrate on why they are a District Officer: to ensure that people continue to get the benefits of Toastmasters through participation in a Club. Too often, Area Governors diligently visit Clubs twice during the year, yet their Clubs continue to have problems or declining membership. In these cases, “service” is being delivered, but results show that customer satisfaction is lacking.
- ▶ **Area Governors and Division Governors know they do not have “authority” over Clubs.** How would you feel if a service technician came into your home to repair an appliance and began telling you how to conduct the affairs of your household? This may seem like a ridiculous situation. However, we have Area Governors, Division Governors, and other District Officers who essentially do this when they contact or visit Clubs. Unfortunately, Area Governors visit Clubs and forget that they are guests in these Clubs. District officers have no authority over Clubs or members. Remember, we’re here to serve Clubs. Sure, some Clubs need guidance and may

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not know it. However, the key to providing service is to understand the customer's perspective and work with the customer.

► **Area Governors and Division Governors recognize or address symptoms of customer dissatisfaction.** Can you imagine Club meetings without effective evaluations? Of course not. Yet Districts and District Officers often do not seek out or listen to feedback provided by Clubs and members. Area Governor visits, the various District, Division, Area, and Club performance reports, and Club Officer training all are feedback opportunities which are too often ignored. Some signs that customers are not being satisfied include:

- Low membership or low attendance at Club meetings.
- Declining membership or declining attendance at Club meetings.
- Few or no CTMs in a Club — a reliable sign of poor Club programming.
- Poor Club programming. This can kill a Club more quickly than just about anything

**COMMON CUSTOMER SERVICE PROBLEMS IN DISTRICTS, DIVISIONS AND AREAS.** Let's take a brief look at just a few of the problems that occur in service contacts with Clubs:

► **Area Governors fail to understand their roles as service providers or fail to communicate their service roles to Clubs.** When you visit Clubs or telephone Club Presidents, it's important to have a clear idea about the purpose of the Club contact. Clearly communicate to the Club and that

SLIDE #9, 10



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you're available and eager to help the Club be successful in serving its members. Believe it or not, a Club member once contacted World Headquarters and asked what it is an Area Governor does. This member wanted to know because one of the Club's members was the Area Governor!

- ▶ **Corporate Clubs complain that Area Governors do not understand/respect the Club culture or corporate culture.** A corporation sponsors a Club because it feels Toastmasters provides a product beneficial to that company and its employees. Corporations do not have any obligation to support Toastmasters Clubs. Companies often have their own corporate culture which permeates the fabric of Club meeting. Sometimes corporate Clubs have little or no interest in activities outside the Club, such as training or speech contests. In situations like these, the needs of a Company must be respected, even if it means that a Club does not participate in District-sponsored activities. Of course that doesn't mean that an Area Governor cannot continue to encourage participation, but encouragement must be done tactfully and you need to know when to "back off" and when to be sensitive to a Club's culture.
- ▶ **Clubs complain that Area Governors try to impose their views of the "right ways" to run Club meetings.** We all have our opinions on how Clubs should be run. However, we are all aware that many successful Clubs operate differently from other successful Clubs. Before offering advice, Area Governors and other District Officers need to determine what kind of help a Club is looking for.

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- ▶ **Area Governors “badger” Club Officers into attending training or other District events.** The road to disaster is paved with good intentions. Focus on the benefits Clubs and members receive from participation in District events, particularly Club Officer Training. If Club Officers see how training will help them and if we do our part to make sure training is well run, Club Officers will attend. Most Club Officers really want to do a good job and help their Clubs.
  
  - ▶ **Area Governors treat Club Officers as subordinates instead of treating them as customers.** As District Officers your authority over a Club is non-existent. You have no authority at all over a Club. However, not all Area and Division Governors see it this way and the results can be disastrous. Be aware, you can only motivate and you have no “clout” to speak of. Again, view Clubs as customers.
  
  - ▶ **Area Governors fail to understand/communicate that Club visits, getting semi reports submitted on time, etc., are designed to help Clubs.** We understand the benefits of all these things. However, in our zeal to achieve recognition, we have to remember that Clubs need to understand the benefits, too. Let’s remember to keep those benefits in the forefront so that Clubs are eager to receive Area Governor visits, submit semis promptly, and do the other things that will make the Club successful.

**SERVICE: AN ATTITUDE OF RESPECT.** Officers and members are often new and inexperienced. We need to positively communicate the reason for setting goals and having deadlines: to ensure Club success. In your visits and other

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contacts with Club Officers and members, be sure to remember and communicate that the Club is the customer. Respect is key to building a productive service relationship with Clubs:

- ▶ **Respect the dignity and unique character of each Club.** This should be kept in mind during Club visits. We have many successful Clubs in Toastmasters, each with its own approach to the Toastmasters Communication and Leadership program. We want all Clubs to be successful and there are many ways to achieve this success. When offering suggestions, focus on the outcomes and how these will have a positive impact on Clubs and members.
- ▶ **Respect the dignity of Club Officers as Club leaders.** Club officers are volunteers. Club members elected them to serve the Club's needs. Respect this when visiting Clubs and when dealing individually with Club members. When discussing Club issues, communicate to Club Officers your understanding and appreciation for their leadership role. Reassure them of your service role and reinforce that they ultimately are responsible for making decisions about the Club.
- ▶ **Commit to encourage, support, and serve Clubs and Club Officers.** Again the key here is customer service. As District leaders and District representatives, treat Club Officers and members as you would wish to be treated.
- ▶ **Use the "carrot" approach.** District Officers don't have a "stick" with which to work. In dealing with Clubs, a positive, respectful, and motivational approach is necessary. When working with Clubs and Club Officers, never lose sight of your service role. In other words, "Speak softly and carry a big carrot."

SLIDE #11

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- ▶ **You serve Clubs and Clubs, in turn, serve members.** You must empower Club Officers to be successful. In your own Club, you may be used to helping members individually. However, as a District leader, you can't go directly to members. Just as our District relies on you to achieve success in the Division and Area, you must work with Club leaders to ensure that Clubs are successful in meeting member needs and achieving the Club Mission.

***PRESENTER:** Take a few moments and let participants discuss how service oriented their Areas and Divisions have been. Some possible questions for discussion:*

- ▶ *What has been the service attitude among your Division and Area Governors in the past?*
- ▶ *Have Area/Division Governors been "mission focused," spending most of their time on weak Clubs, membership, etc., or have they given priority to less important activities (e.g., speech contests, meetings, etc.)? What will be your focus as Area/Division Governor?*
- ▶ *What are some of the Club needs in your Area or Division and how will you serve the Clubs to meet those needs?*

## **AREA GOVERNOR VISITS**

Area Governor visits are your most valuable service opportunities. Why are these visits so critical?

To begin with, if Area Governors visit each of their Clubs at least twice a year, they are in an excellent position to know if a Club needs assistance. Perceptive Area Governors can then provide feedback and insight that will help Clubs learn

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how to have more effective meetings. Members also gain further exposure to District resources and opportunities when Area Governors visit with Clubs and their officers. Once an Area Governor establishes rapport and gets to know each Club, members are more likely to call for assistance when problems do arise. Finally, regular Area Governor visits also encourage Clubs to continually be aware of their need for progress and methods for improvement.

In essence, the purpose of Area Governor visits is **to ensure that every Club is a great Club!** This can be done by

SLIDE #12

- ▶ establishing rapport and a positive relationship with the Club and its officers;
- ▶ promoting the Distinguished Club Program, quality Club programming, the Toastmasters International educational system, and leadership opportunities by letting the Club know what it is doing right and what areas need improvement;
- ▶ keeping the District and World Headquarters informed of which Clubs are prospering and which Clubs need special attention; and
- ▶ always demonstrating that you want to help Clubs serve their members.

In order for an Area to receive credit in the Distinguished Area Program, Area Governors are required to visit each Club within their Area at least twice a year and complete an Area Report of Club Visit Form (Form No. 1471) for each Club visited. The completed form is then turned over to the District Governor, and a copy of that form is sent to World Headquarters for Distinguished Area and District credit.

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The Area Report of Club Visit Form is the key to a successful Club visit. It provides Area Governors with an easy-to-follow, yet comprehensive, one-page guideline for evaluating each Club and its members. If you are an Area Governor, it's important that you become familiar with the form before visiting your Clubs. If you are a Division Governor, you will need to understand the form's contents so you can assist Area Governors who might have questions.

SLIDE #13

***PRESENTER:** Distribute the Area Report of Club Visit Form. Emphasize those items on the form your District is most concerned with. Forms are included with the Area Governor Kits (Catalog No. 1370) sent to each District for distribution to Area Governors. Additional copies are sent to Area Governors in January. A copy of this form can also be found in the Area Leadership Handbook (Catalog No. 221).*

HANDOUT #1  
Club Visit Form

The Area Report of Club Visit Form is divided into four major areas: 1) Membership Growth; 2) Educational Program Excellence/Standards; 3) Club Excellence Standards; and 4) Toward the Future. Let's briefly review each of the four sections.

## I. MEMBERSHIP GROWTH

SLIDE #14

The information gathered in this section includes:

- ▶ **Is the Club at charter strength?** At first glance, a Club with fewer than 20 active members may appear healthy. Only seven or eight people are present

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— still, they all seem to be performing their roles with efficiency and enthusiasm. Sooner or later, however, these members are likely to feel overburdened. Meetings that feature the same people over and over again will also tend to become stale. In order to keep meetings vital and interesting and avoid member burnout, Clubs should always work toward maintaining a roster of 20 or more members.

**What you can do:** When visiting a Club with fewer than 20 members present, ask the officers about membership and determine some of the reasons for low membership. Emphasize the importance of increasing their numbers, and recommend Club building strategies such as presentation of the survey program, “Moments of Truth,” (Catalog No. 290), which asks members to consider six different aspects of Club climate that can encourage — or discourage — membership. Other strategies might include increased publicity and membership drives.

- ▶ **Club membership programs/new member recruitment/goals.** Membership is not just a problem for small Clubs. Even the strongest Clubs experience some attrition. But by implementing membership programs and actively recruiting new members, declines in membership can be avoided.

**What you can do:** After the meeting, ask the President if the Club has an active membership campaign. If not, recommend publications such as

- “A Simple Membership Building Program” (Supply Catalog No. 1621), and

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- “Membership Building 101: Your Club’s Pattern for Success” (Supply Catalog No. 1622), both of which may be obtained free of charge by contacting World Headquarters.

- ▶ **Membership goals.** A Club operating at less than charter strength needs to work toward a goal of 20 or more members. Clubs reaching that goal should work to maintain their numbers.

**What you can do:** Determine what the Club’s goals are for each month and for June 30. Remember, Clubs must have 20 paid members or a net gain of five members by June 30 to qualify for the Distinguished Club Program. (Members transferring into a Club **are not** included in that Club’s paid membership until they have paid semiannual dues to that Club.)

- ▶ **Will the Club conduct a Speechcraft this year?** Speechcraft brings Toastmasters training to the community and is a great membership building tool. It can strengthen Club membership, provide additional learning opportunities for members, and help promote an awareness of Toastmasters to nonmembers.

**What you can do:** If the Club expresses interest or needs help, offer to assist the Club officers and presenters in setting up a Speechcraft Program.

When interviewing Club leaders regarding these goals, ask what the Club will do and how you can help the Club achieve its membership goals. Each Club needs to know that the District expects them to set attainable goals that will encourage their members to achieve and excel!



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Also, don't forget that the Successful Club Series modules, "Finding New Members for Your Club" (Catalog No. 291) and "Closing the Sale" (Catalog No. 293) can help encourage membership growth.

## II. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM EXCELLENCE/STANDARDS

SLIDE #15

Achievements in the basic and advanced communication and leadership manuals are fundamental to the Toastmasters program. Through these achievements, members are able to measure their progress and have tangible proof of their success. While reviewing the Area Report of Club Visit Form, be sure to ask the Vice President Education or other Club leaders:

- ▶ **Which members will commit to CTM, ATM, Competent Leader, Advanced Leader, and DTM achievement during the year?** This part of the form has special significance since it can help you and other District officers develop a follow-up list that will help measure the success of the District. CTMs, ATMs, CLs, ALs, and DTMs are also a measure of the Club's success in helping members develop communication and leadership skills.

**What you can do:** Write down the names and projected dates for earning the awards. Call the Club President to provide follow-up and encouragement!

- ▶ **Will the Club conduct modules from Toastmasters International's Successful Club Series?** These modules are great educational tools for Club members and can help improve Club quality. During the year, a Club should conduct each of the following Successful Club Series Modules:

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“Moments of Truth,” “Evaluate to Motivate,” “Finding New Members,” “Closing the Sale,” “Creating the Best Club Climate,” “Meeting Roles and Responsibilities,” “Keeping the Commitment,” “Going Beyond Our Club,” “How to be a Distinguished Club” and “Mentoring.” Clubs that deliver these modules are focused on excellent Club programming and extending the benefits of Toastmasters to others.

**What you can do:** If the Club has not conducted these modules or is unaware of them, get the commitment of the Club Officers to order these modules from World Headquarters and get the dates when the Club will be conducting the modules. Also, remind the Club Officers that presenting two modules in the Successful Club series fulfills one of the requirements for the Competent Leader Award. So they can present the modules, benefit the Club, and help themselves achieve recognition as a Club leader.

- ▶ **Are all speeches from the basic or advanced Communication and Leadership Program manuals?** Every manual project helps members develop specific skills needed to prepare and present effective speeches, so it is important that all members work within manual guidelines.

**What you can do:** If some members seem to be getting away from using the manual, discuss the benefits of gradually building speaking skills when working within the framework of the basic and advanced manuals.

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### III. CLUB EXCELLENCE STANDARDS

SLIDE #16, 17,  
18, 19, 20

The quality of a Club's environment can be one of the most important aspects contributing to its growth. Determine whether your Clubs are meeting the standards they need to be successful.

#### CLUB MEETING

- ▶ **Was the meeting well-organized, productive, and run on time?** Other indicators of a good meeting include printed meeting agendas at every seat, well-planned speeches, constructive evaluations, and a Table Topics session that gives priority to those not scheduled for major meeting roles.

**What you can do:** If the Club is not running its meetings on time, ask the officers about it. Depending on the causes:

- suggest that an officer present a speech on the benefits of running a meeting on schedule, or
- reinforce how precious time is in today's world. Starting on time rewards those who arrive on time. Starting late sends a message that the latecomers' time is somehow more important than the time of those who are not late.

Most Clubs maintain strict policies of time management. Once members understand these policies and realize that meetings need to begin and end on time, they are more likely to comply eagerly.

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- ▶ **Were guests made to feel welcome, given information, and asked to join?** When a visitor first walks into the meeting site, it's important that he or she is greeted by the Sergeant at Arms and other members, asked to sign the Club's guest book, and given a guest name badge. During the course of the meeting the guest should be introduced and asked to give his or her impressions of the meeting. Once the meeting is over, the Vice President Membership should be ready to discuss the benefits of Toastmasters and help the guest fill out an application if a decision is made to join at that time. Every guest should be invited to apply for membership.

**What you can do:** If Club members seem awkward in the presence of guests, recommend that guest materials be used, that time be set aside in the agenda for recognition of guests, and that all members make it a priority to welcome guests.

## RECOGNITION

- ▶ **Does the Club use the Distinguished Club Program/Club Success Plan? Are the Club Officers committed to achieving Distinguished, Select Distinguished, or President's Distinguished Club?** Club officers need to be reminded that both the Distinguished Club Program and the Club Success Plan can be powerful tools in measuring a Club's success and areas for improvement. The Distinguished Club Program is designed to promote achievement in those areas most critical to a Club's success. The Club Success Plan helps Clubs establish goals, plans, and strategies that Clubs can use to achieve recognition.

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**What you can do:** Ask to see the Club's Plan. If it doesn't have one, review the Distinguished Club Program/Club Success Plan (Supply Catalog No. 1111) and its benefits, then offer to help the officers complete a Club Success Plan.

- ▶ **Does the Club immediately submit educational applications to World Headquarters? Does it quickly recognize member achievement? Does the Club use the Member Progress Chart?** Recognition of member achievement is critical to overall Club quality and success. When a member completes the requirements for a CTM, ATM, or other educational or leadership award, the application must be sent to World Headquarters immediately. This ensures the member is properly recognized and motivates continued achievement by the member and other Club members.

**What you can do:** Ask the Club President and the Vice President Education about the Member Progress Charts (Catalog No. 227-D) and ask how long it takes the Vice President Education to submit educational award applications to World Headquarters. Stress the importance recognizing member progress and achievement. Encourage the Club to formally recognize those who receive their CTM, ATM, etc. One option is for the Club to present each member with badge or pin from World Headquarters noting their new educational achievement.

## NEW MEMBERS

- ▶ **Does the Club orient new members within two weeks, explain the Toastmasters International recognition system/programs, and immediately**

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**assign mentors to new members?** New members need to be oriented about the Club and the Toastmasters International educational program so new member needs can be determined. Also, assigning a mentor to a new member helps ensure that individual is successful from the start.

***PRESENTER:** Time permitting, ask the participants, "How many of you received an orientation after joining your Club?" and "How many did not?" Also ask, "How many of you were assigned a mentor after joining your Club?" and "How many did not?" Discuss with the participants some advantages of orientation and mentoring and some challenges when a Club does not provide an orientation or mentor.*

**What you can do:** Ask if the Club orients new members using the Toastmasters International New Member Orientation Kit (Catalog No. 1162). If not, these should be ordered from World Headquarters and used with every member who joins. Also, each new member receives a note in the New Member Kit, directing him or her to ask for a mentor. Check with the Club and determine how they assign mentors. If they do not assign mentors, encourage the Club to deliver the Successful Club Series module, "Mentoring" (Catalog No. 296).

- ▶ **Does the Club formally vote in and induct new members?** The Club Constitution requires Clubs to vote in new members. Voting in and inducting new members can be a fantastic way to welcome new members into the Toastmasters family. However, too many Clubs do not vote in

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members and allow a person to become a member as soon as he or she signs the membership application form. Voting in members protects the Club. Of course the vast majority of people who fill out a membership application are readily voted into membership and welcomed. However, from time to time, a person will ask to join who has been a disruptive visitor or who may cause other problems within the Club. Clubs are private associations. A Club has a right to determine its membership as long as it does not discriminate based on age (exception: people under age 18 are prohibited from joining a Toastmasters Club), race, color, creed, gender, national or ethnic origin, sexual orientation, or physical or mental disability (so long as the individual, through his or her own effort, is able to participate in the program). By voting in members, a Club formally recognizes the value of a new member while protecting the interests of the Club.

**What you can do:** If a Club is not voting in members, encourage the Club Officers to read the Club constitution. A copy can be obtained from World Headquarters or viewed on the Toastmasters International Web Site at [www.toastmasters.org](http://www.toastmasters.org). Explain how voting in and formally inducting new members can make new Toastmasters feel special and welcome.

## **CLUB OFFICERS**

- ▶ **Do Club Officers attend Club Officer training and understand their roles and responsibilities?** Trained Club officers who understand their roles and responsibilities are essential. However, too many officers don't understand their jobs and don't attend training to find out how to help their Clubs. If each of our Clubs had committed Club Officers who knew

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how to conduct quality Club programming, get and keep members, and serve member needs, we would seldom lose a Club.

**What you can do:** First and foremost, encourage each officer in the Clubs to attend Club officer training. It takes only a few hours to attend, but can make a tremendous difference in the success of each of your Clubs. Training builds a foundation for future success. Also, make sure each Club Officer receives his or her copy of the Club officer manuals sent to each Club President in May. World Headquarters produces a manual for the President, Vice President Education, Vice President Membership, Vice President Public Relations, Secretary, Treasurer, and Sergeant at Arms.

- ▶ **Does the Club submit its October and April Club dues renewal on time?** Submitting dues promptly to World Headquarters ensures that members keep receiving the Toastmaster magazine and other benefits of membership in our organization. Submitting dues on time (so dues are received at World Headquarters by October 10 and April 10) is also one of the goals Clubs need to achieve to receive Distinguished Club Program recognition. Submissions of dues renewals are also Distinguished Area Program goals. When a Club does not submit dues on time, it can be a sign of problems with Club health.

**What you can do:** During your visits or contacts in September and in March, determine if Clubs are in the process of collecting/submitting dues. If not, encourage the Club President to ensure that dues reach World Headquarters on time (by October 10 and April 10). Offer to help the Club if



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there is confusion about submitting the renewal form and dues payment. Encourage Clubs to submit dues as early as possible so these are received at World Headquarters by the deadline dates.

- ▶ **Does the Club submit new member applications promptly?** To get off to a fast start, new members need to receive their basic Communication and Leadership Program Manual and other material in the New Member Kit. If a Club delays submitting new member applications, it takes longer than it should for a member to get started on achieving his or her CTM. After receiving the membership application and voting the new member in, the Club should immediately submit the application and dues to World Headquarters. Within a few days of receiving the application, World Headquarters will mail the New Member Kit.

**What you can do:** Ask the Club President if the Club mails new member applications to World Headquarters within 24 hours. If not, explain how important it is to get new members headed toward achieving their CTMs and beyond. Get the Club's commitment to send those new member applications in as soon as possible!

- ▶ **Does the Club submit Club Officer lists on time?** Although this may seem like an administrative detail, it is extremely important. Club officers, particularly the Club President, receive several mailings from World Headquarters and the District. Having an accurate and up-to-date Club Officer list ensures that semiannual dues, Club Officer Handbooks, TIPs, and other mailings get to the right address.

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**What you can do:** Encourage all Clubs to send their Club Officer lists so that they arrive at World Headquarters on or before June 30. Similarly, encourage Clubs electing officers semiannually to send their Club Officer lists so that they arrive at World Headquarters on or before December 31. Remind the Clubs that they get credit toward goal achievement in the Distinguished Club Program if the lists are received on time.

#### IV. TOWARD THE FUTURE

SLIDE #21, 22

In addition to resolving current issues, it is important to plan for the future. To assist each Club, Area Governors should consider the following issues:

- ▶ **The Club's strengths.** Be sure to praise the most positive aspects of the meeting. Look for ideas you can share with other Clubs!
  
- ▶ **Areas needing attention.** Mention one or two areas which could be improved. You will find that Club members appreciate new ideas that help make their Club more exciting.
  
- ▶ **What can you and other District officers do to provide support?** Ask how you can help. And be ready with suggestions! Perhaps all it will take is a little of your extra support and attention. If, on the other hand, membership is a problem or another dilemma arises, consult your District's top three officers. The Lieutenant Governor of Education and Training will be able to supply or refer the Club's officers to specific programming materials from Toastmasters International's Supply Catalog; the Lieuten-

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ant Governor Marketing should be consulted for information about membership building.

A club with 12 or fewer members is eligible to have up to two Club Coaches appointed to help the club. The coach(es) may not be a member of the club at the time of appointment (the coach typically joins after having been assigned. The assignment lasts to the end of the current club year if the club reaches distinguished status or better, or the end of the following club year if Distinguished Club status or better is not reached in the first year. Club coaches will receive a pin upon assignment. Credit toward Advanced Leader is awarded upon successful completion. A certificate will be sent to the club coach(es) upon successful completion.

- ▶ **Recommendations for action.** For every aspect that needs attention, offer some ways to fix the situation. If a Club simply wishes to measure its progress, one of the members might consider presenting the “Moments of Truth” program from *The Successful Club Series* (Supply Catalog No. 290). This program discusses six areas of service —

- First Impressions
- Fellowship, Variety, and Communication
- Membership Orientation
- Program Planning and Meeting Organization
- Membership Strength, and
- Achievement Recognition

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— that all Clubs should monitor on a continuing basis. On the other hand, if it is obvious that the Club needs an immediate increase in membership, have them conduct one or more of the membership building campaigns sponsored by Toastmasters International.

Next, recommend that they conduct a **Speechcraft** program. Since Speechcraft is a four- to eight-week training program for non-Toastmasters, presenting a Speechcraft is an excellent way to introduce potential members to Toastmasters.

- ▶ **Members interested in future leadership roles within the District.** It's never too early to be on the lookout for a capable person who could eventually take on the role of Area Governor! If anyone is interested in developing their leadership skills at an Area or Division level, be sure to list their names in the designated space. When speaking with the Club, promote the benefits of serving as Area Governor. Ask if any who received the Competent Leader Award are interested in taking the next step toward the Advanced Leader Award. As part of your visit, share with the Club some of the benefits you are gaining as Area Governor. The leadership growth and experience is invaluable.

The Area Report of Club Visit Form is a valuable tool that will help you discover which Clubs need assistance. Most importantly, the Area report of Club Visit Form gives you the opportunity to assess a Club's overall health with easy-to-use, objective questions.

An Area Governor's recommendations and support can make a tremendous positive impact on the future success of the Club.

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## IMPORTANT!

SLIDE #23

Completed Area Report of Club Visit Forms must be sent to the District Governor no later than October 31 (1st visit) and April 30 (2nd visit). If an Area Governor needs more Area Report of Club Visit Forms, copies may be made from the forms you already have or from the forms in the Area Leadership Handbook or District Leadership Handbook. Be sure to keep your copy so you can follow up on Club progress, membership commitments, and educational achievements.

## HOW TO MAKE AN EFFECTIVE CLUB VISIT

One of the occupational hazards of being a leader is getting sidetracked by a dizzying amount of detail. Despite careful planning and delegation, occasionally it *can* happen — even to Toastmasters! For that reason, it's a good idea to periodically remind yourself of your goals as a District officer by reviewing the District Mission. **Remember, your top priority is not speech contests.**

***PRESENTER:** You may wish to take an extra minute or two and review the District Mission (SLIDE #2) once again. During that time, the Strong Clubs Handout #2 can be distributed. Once everyone has a copy, go over some or all of the standards, depending on the amount of time left in the session.*

Return to  
SLIDE #2

HANDOUT #2

Area-Club visits can have a very positive effect on Club health. Before each Club visit, however, it's important to remember that visits are like speeches: they require careful preparation, a great delivery, and a few finishing touches.

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Here are several standards that Area Governors should incorporate into every Area-Club visit.

### **PREPARING FOR THE VISIT**

- ▶ **Contact the Club President at least one month before you plan to visit.** Remember, as Area Governor, you are there to serve the Club. Unexpected company can be unsettling! When you show the Club consideration, they will respond in kind. Advance notice will also allow confirmation of meeting location and time and any special arrangements. Explain your service role as Area Governor. Don't assume he or she even knows what an Area Governor is.
- ▶ **Establish and build rapport by asking about the President's experiences as a Toastmaster, the Club's history, involvement with the District, etc.** Knowing the Club's history will not only help you to understand its present operations, but will also help you provide appropriate assistance later. The President will appreciate your interest and be more likely to communicate openly and provide future assistance with Area functions.
- ▶ **Since meeting agendas tend to be tightly planned, request program time in advance to explain the purpose of the visit (i.e., offering support, helping Club meet needs, promoting educational programs, sharing District goals, etc.).**
- ▶ **Send the President a copy of the Area Report of Club Visit Form.** This will allow Club officers to understand what you will be discussing with them during your visit.

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- ▶ **Ask if the meeting will feature award presentations, new member installation ceremonies, or any other special events.** These activities may affect the content of your own presentation, and you may be asked or expected to participate in them.
  - ▶ **Check to see if the Club has submitted its semiannual report yet.** If not, offer assistance; you may be able to provide quick solutions to problems that have delayed completion and submission of the report.
  - ▶ **Familiarize yourself with the names of Club Officers.** Since these Club members have shown a willingness to take on leadership roles, they need to be appreciated on an individual level. Club officers are also likely candidates for assistance with Area functions and future District leadership roles.
  - ▶ **Ask if the Club needs help or has any concerns.** Toastmasters may be reluctant to make requests or discuss specific matters unless invited to do so. If, on the other hand, the Club seems to be operating smoothly, remember that this can change. Encourage members to contact you whenever they have questions or concerns.
  - ▶ **Ask the Club President to schedule some time after the meeting.** This will give you a chance to speak with Club officers and complete the Area Report of Club Visit Form.

## THE VISIT

### Before the meeting:

- ▶ **Dress appropriately for the occasion.** Set a standard of professionalism!

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- ▶ **Give yourself a generous allowance of time** — especially if this is your first visit to the meeting site. Arriving punctually is a minimum requirement; arriving about 10 minutes in advance is the ideal. Doing so helps you feel more at ease, sets a good example, and gives you an excellent opportunity to mix and mingle with the members.
  - ▶ **Wear your name badge and Toastmasters pin.** Aside from identifying yourself and conveying your dedication to Toastmasters, wearing your badge and pin reminds members that a name badge makes them much more accessible to guests.

#### DURING THE MEETING

- ▶ **Stick to your allotted time.** Be concise; remember that your visit is only one aspect of the agenda.
- ▶ **Briefly review the Club Mission with members** so that everyone, yourself included, will be familiar with the Club's purpose.
- ▶ **Motivate and inform.** Discuss programs, such as "Moments of Truth" from *The Successful Club Series* (Supply Catalog No. 290), or review tools, such as The Member Achievement Kit (Supply Catalog No. 1115) and *The Successful Club Series* program, "Mentoring" (Catalog No. 296), that will help the Club become even more dynamic.
- ▶ **If you give a speech, make it a manual speech.** This reminds Club members to always plan their speeches within manual guidelines.



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- ▶ **Listen actively.** Remember that effective communication involves more than talking — it's a two-way street!
  
  - ▶ **Using the Area Report of Club Visit Form, tactfully evaluate the Club's key elements, taking notes when necessary,** on areas such as leadership, attendance, quality of program, treatment of guests, and orientation of guests and new members. This will help you provide adequate feedback to the Club later on.
  
  - ▶ **Look for future leaders.** Always be ready to offer encouragement to Toastmasters who want to develop leadership abilities. Today's Club officer or fledgling Toastmaster just might have "the right stuff" to become tomorrow's District leader.
  
  - ▶ **Publicize programs** such as upcoming training sessions, the Distinguished Club Program, contests, District Conferences and those programs which focus on building membership.

#### AFTER THE MEETING

- ▶ **Meet with the Executive Committee** to address any Club needs and review and complete the Area Report of Club Visit Form. If time can't be scheduled after the meeting, set up a time when you can telephone the Club President and address any Club needs. Remember, Club cultures vary and successful Clubs have many different approaches to the Toastmasters program. Maintain an attitude of service and respect when interacting with Club officers.

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- ▶ **Review Club Success Plan and progress in the Distinguished Club Program.** If the Club is not pursuing Distinguished Club Program goals, discuss the importance of the program. Bring a copy (Catalog No. 1111) with you so officers can see that the program and plan are not only comprehensive, but easy to follow.
  - ▶ **Have the Club President sign the Area Report of Club Visit Form and leave a copy of the form with the Club.**

#### AFTER THE VISIT

- ▶ **Send completed copies of the Area Report of Club Visit Form to the District Governor; make an additional photocopy of the report and send it to the Division Governor. Do this immediately!**
- ▶ **Follow up on any questions, needs, or concerns expressed by the Club.** Doing so confirms your interest and helps lay the groundwork for future communication.
- ▶ **Write a thank-you note to the Club.** Give Clubs tangible proof of your appreciation.
- ▶ **Keep in touch with the Club President monthly and be available to respond to any questions or concerns from Club members throughout your term.** Solving small problems before they develop into major dilemmas is the mark of a good leader. Work at keeping the lines of communication open.

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Area Governors help provide the knowledge and support necessary to help Clubs get on track and achieve success. They also set a standard for other Toastmasters, some of whom may eventually serve in District leadership roles. For these reasons, Club visits are an Area Governor priority, and successful Club visits should always be our goal!

## **GOOD RELATIONSHIPS GO BEYOND THE CLUB VISIT**

SLIDE #24

Building good relationships with Clubs takes more than just two visits. Area Governors need to keep in touch with their Clubs throughout the year. Here are just a few ideas and activities which can help Area Governors keep the lines of communication open and provide Clubs with quality service:

- ▶ **Telephone calls and e-mail.** What's the easiest and most immediate way to keep in touch with Clubs? From time to time, simply pick up the phone and call each Club's President or keep in contact via e-mail. Doing so adds a personal touch to your communications, goes a long way toward breaking down barriers, and is great for building rapport. Telephoning and e-mail are both two-way streets: Be sure to encourage Club leaders to always feel free to contact you!
- ▶ **Additional visits.** Clubs are complimented when Area Governors take the time to visit beyond their required two annual visits. If possible, make an extra visit early in the year at a time when the Club can best benefit.

- 
- ▶ **Area communications.** Although it takes extra time and planning, a letter or newsletter is an effective way to communicate upcoming events and deadlines. It also can serve as an ideal forum for complimenting successful Clubs.
  - ▶ **Club officer installations.** Clubs appreciate Area Governors who attend officer installations and, if requested, officiate at these events.

Now that we've learned about the importance of Area-Club visits and effective ways to conduct them and remain in communication, let's review some case studies and come up with some possible solutions to the questions they present.

## CASE STUDIES

**Presenter:** Conduct a 20-minute exercise to familiarize participants with Club visits.

**Purpose:** To expose participants to common problems encountered during Club Visits, and to discuss possible solutions.

**Materials:** Case Studies Handout.

**Time:** 20 minutes

**Process:**

1. Have participants form small groups of three or four.
2. Distribute the case study handouts to everyone.
3. Assign each group one of the case studies. If you have more than three groups, assign the same case study to more than one group.
4. Give each group 10 minutes to read the case study and answer the questions listed in the case study.
5. After 10 minutes, ask each group to briefly describe, in two minutes or less, the case worked on and share one or two strategies to deal with the problem.

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# Part III: Visual Aids

Slides on the following pages are designed specifically for the presenter who will be conducting the training session. These slides are available in a PowerPoint file at [www.toastmasters.org](http://www.toastmasters.org). If a laptop computer and datascreen projector are not available, slide copy may be used to make transparencies for an overhead projector, or they can be copied onto a flip chart.

Each page is designated as an overhead by a number that corresponds with the training outline (SLIDE #1, SLIDE #2, etc.).

## TIPS ON USE:

1. Show the slide while you are talking about it. Turn off the slide when you want attention directed back to you. Your audience cannot concentrate on both at the same time.
2. Be sure that everyone in the audience can clearly see the slides. Visibility to the people at the rear of the room is your guide.
3. Talk to the audience, not to the slide. Maintain eye contact even when your listeners are looking at the slide. This will help you judge their understanding of it.
4. Don't overdo it. You need not discuss every point on the slide.
5. Rehearse. Nothing is more important than adequate preparation. Know how and when you will use the slide, then practice until you can use it smoothly. Anticipate all possible problems, especially when audiovisual equipment is involved.
6. Remember . . . Be as professional as possible.

# Session Objectives



- ▶ **Identify our District's Mission**
- ▶ **Mission-Oriented Service**
- ▶ **Reasons Division and Area Governors Succeed**
- ▶ **Common Customer Service Problems**
- ▶ **Conducting Effective Club Visits**
- ▶ **Keys to Continued Success and Communication**

# The Mission of the District



The Mission of the District is to enhance the performance and extend the network of Clubs, thereby offering greater numbers of people the opportunity to benefit from the Toastmasters educational program by:

- Focusing on the critical success factors as specified by the District educational goals and membership goals.
- Insuring that each Club effectively fulfills its responsibilities to its members.
- Providing effective training and leadership development opportunities for Club and District officers.



# **Your Most Important Job:**



**Help Clubs achieve the Club 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.***

# Mission-Oriented Service



**Successful Area and Division Governors are Mission-focused and service-oriented toward their “customers”:**

**□ Clubs**

**□ Members**

**□ Potential Clubs and Members**

**The purpose of  
Toastmasters is to  
create and keep  
Clubs and members.**

# Reasons Area and Division Governors Succeed



- ▶ Focused on District Mission
- ▶ Dedicated to achieving Distinguished Area and Distinguished Division
- ▶ Know and are committed to achieving **critical** goals

# Reasons Area and Division Governors Succeed



- ▶ **See Clubs, members, and potential Clubs and members as **customers!****
- ▶ **See satisfying these “customers” as their job**
- ▶ **Know they do not have “authority” over Clubs**

# Reasons Area and Division Governors Succeed



- ▶ **Recognize or address signs of customer “dissatisfaction”:**
  - **Low membership or low attendance at Club meetings**
  - **Declining membership or attendance**
  - **Few Club educational completions (CTMs, ATMs)**
  - **Poor Club programming**

# Common Customer Service Problems



- ▶ **Area Governors fail to understand their roles as service providers or fail to communicate their roles as service providers to Clubs**
- ▶ **Corporate Clubs complain that Area Governors do not understand or respect the Club culture or corporate culture**
- ▶ **Clubs complain that Area Governors try to impose their views of the “right ways” to run Club meetings**

# Common Customer Service Problems



- ▶ **Area Governors “badger” Club Officers into attending training or other District events**
- ▶ **Area Governors treat Club Officers as subordinates instead of treating them as customers**
- ▶ **Area Governors fail to understand or communicate that Club visits, getting semi reports submitted on time, etc., are designed to help Clubs**



# Service: An Attitude of Respect



- ▶ **Respect the dignity and unique character of each Club**
- ▶ **Respect the dignity of Club Officers as Club leaders**
- ▶ **Commit to encourage, support, and serve Clubs and Club Officers**
- ▶ **Use the “carrot” approach**
- ▶ **You serve Clubs and Clubs, in turn, serve members**

# **Purpose of Club Visits: Ensure Every Club is a Great Club!**



- ▶ **Establish rapport and positive relationships with Club and its officers.**
- ▶ **Promote**
  - **Distinguished Club Program**
  - **quality Club programming**
  - **moving members through the TI Communication and Leadership tracks**
  - **leadership opportunities.**
- ▶ **Report on Club's progress.**
- ▶ **Help Clubs serve members.**

**The Area Report  
of Club Visit Form  
is your key to  
successful visits.**

# Membership Growth



- ▶ **Is the Club at charter strength?**
- ▶ **Membership recruitment:**  
**How many new members will the Club add?**
- ▶ **Will the Club conduct a Speechcraft?**
- ▶ **What can the District and Club do to help build membership?**

# **Educational Program Excellence and Standards**



- ▶ **Which members will earn awards?**
- ▶ **Are all speeches manual speeches?**
- ▶ **Is the Club committed to have every new member achieve a CTM?**
- ▶ **Will the Club conduct Successful Club Series modules?**

# Club Excellence Standards



## ▶ Club meeting:

- well organized?
- guests welcomed?
- guests asked to join?

# Club Excellence Standards



## ► Recognition

### Does the Club:

- **Use the Distinguished Club Program and Club Success Plan?**
- **Have members and officers committed to achieving Distinguished, Select Distinguished, or President's Distinguished Club?**

# Club Excellence Standards



## Does the Club:

- Immediately submit educational applications to WHQ?
- Quickly recognize member achievement?
- Display the Member Progress Chart?



# Club Excellence Standards



## ► New Members

### Does the Club:

- Orient new members within two weeks?
- Explain programs and recognition systems?
- Immediately assign mentors to new members?
- Formally vote in and induct new members?

# Club Excellence Standards



## ► Club Officers

**Do officers:**

- **Attend Club Office Training?**
- **Understand roles and responsibilities?**
- **Submit dues promptly to WHQ?**
- **Submit new member applications immediately?**
- **Send in Officers lists on time?**

# Toward the Future



- ▶ **What are the Club's strengths?**
- ▶ **What Areas need attention?**
- ▶ **How can the District and Area support the Club?**
  - **Area Governor arranges to work with Club leaders**
  - **District supplies membership building materials**
  - **District assigns Club Coach**

# Toward the Future



- ▶ **Recommendations for action**
  - **Present *Moments of Truth***
  - **Hold membership campaign**
  - **Conduct Speechcraft**
  
- ▶ **List those interested in future leadership roles**

# Meet Your Deadlines!



**Send Area Report of Club Visit Form  
to the District Governor no later than**

**☐ October 31 (1st Visit)**

**☐ April 30 (2nd Visit)**

# **Some Keys to Continued Success and Communication**



- ▶ **Telephone calls and e-mail**
- ▶ **Additional visits**
- ▶ **Area newsletter**
- ▶ **Club officer installations**

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# Part IV: Handout Copy

The handouts that follow may be reproduced for distribution to training session participants. Make certain you accurately project the number of attendees so you won't run short of material.

If you wish, feel free to revise the material to suit your own style.

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District	Division	Area	Club No.	Visit Date

The Area-Club visit is an important opportunity to assist the Club in its endeavors to provide a supportive, positive learning environment where Toastmasters can develop communication and leadership skills. It is a chance to work together toward achieving Distinguished Club and Distinguished Area goals with the purpose of ensuring that each person receives the full benefits of the Toastmasters Program.

**Please use ball point pen and press down hard!**

Club Name \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State/Province \_\_\_\_\_

### I. MEMBERSHIP GROWTH

- Does Club have 20 or more members?  Yes  No
- Current paid membership: \_\_\_\_\_
- Members in attendance: \_\_\_\_\_
- Guests in attendance: \_\_\_\_\_
- Will the Club commit to have:  20 or more members or  net gain of 5 members by June 30?
- Will the Club or a member conduct a Speechcraft?  Yes  No (dates: \_\_\_\_\_)
- What can the District and Club do to help maintain or build the Club to charter strength? \_\_\_\_\_
- New members since July 1: \_\_\_\_\_
- Club's new member goal for June 30: \_\_\_\_\_
- Does the Club have an active membership-building program?  Yes  No

### II. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM EXCELLENCE/STANDARDS

- Members committed toward achieving: CTM (List names and expected dates of achievement): \_\_\_\_\_
- Members committed toward achieving: ATM (List names and expected dates of achievement): \_\_\_\_\_
- Members committed toward achieving: CL, AL, or DTM (List names and expected dates of achievement): \_\_\_\_\_
- Is the Club committed to have every new member achieve a CTM?  Yes  No
- Is the Club committed to have every member achieve a CL?  Yes  No
- High Performance Leadership Program (dates: \_\_\_\_\_)
- Each year a Club should conduct one of the following modules from the Successful Club Series. This year, will the Club conduct:
  - Moments of Truth (month: \_\_\_\_\_)
  - Evaluate to Motivate (month: \_\_\_\_\_)
  - Finding New Members (month: \_\_\_\_\_)
  - Mentoring (month: \_\_\_\_\_)
- Are all speeches from the basic and/or advanced C & L Manuals?  Yes  No If not, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

### III. CLUB EXCELLENCE STANDARDS

#### MEETING

- Meeting quality:  well organized  productive  run on time  effective evaluations
- Were guests:  welcomed?  informed about the meeting?  informed about the Club?  informed about Toastmasters?  asked to return or join?

#### RECOGNITION

- Does the Club:  use the Distinguished Club Program for planning/recognition?  have its leaders/members committed to achieving Distinguished Club recognition?  immediately submit educational award applications to WHQ?  quickly recognize/publicize member achievement?  display/maintain Member Progress Chart?

#### NEW MEMBERS

- Does the Club:  orient new members within 2 weeks?  assign mentor immediately when member joins?  vote in and formally induct new members (including presenting member pin/basic manual)?  explain programs/recognition system?  involve new members in the first meeting after joining?

#### CLUB OFFICERS/ADMINISTRATION

- Club Officers:  attended District Club Officer training?  committed to attend next Club Officer training?  understand roles/responsibilities?  submit semiannual dues by Oct. 10/April 10?  submit new member applications promptly?  submit Club Officer list(s) on time?
- Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

### IV. TOWARD THE FUTURE

- Club's strengths: \_\_\_\_\_
- Areas needing attention: \_\_\_\_\_
- What can the District and I do to support the Club? \_\_\_\_\_
- Recommendation for action: \_\_\_\_\_
- List names of members who are interested in future leadership roles within the District: \_\_\_\_\_

**DEADLINES: 1st Visit** – Area Governor must mail this form to District Governor by October 31. District Governor forwards copy to World Headquarters. Must be postmarked by November 30 and received at WHQ by December 10 for credit in the Distinguished Area Program.

**2nd Visit** – Area Governor mails this form to District Governor by April 30. District Governor forwards copy to WHQ. Must be postmarked by May 31 and received at WHQ by June 10 for credit in the Distinguished Area Program.

\_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE OF AREA GOVERNOR

\_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE OF DISTRICT GOVERNOR

\_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE OF CLUB PRESIDENT

#### DISTRIBUTION OF COPIES



# Area-Club Visit Standards for Area Governors

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## PREPARING FOR THE VISIT

- Contact the Club President at least one month in advance of your visit. Remember, as Area Governor you are there to serve the Club.
- Establish and build rapport by asking about the President's experiences as a Toastmaster, the Club's history, and their involvement with the District.
- Request time on the program to explain the purpose of the visit (i.e., offering support, helping meet Club needs, promoting educational programs, sharing District goals, etc.).
- Send the President a copy of the Area Report of Club Visit Form.
- Ask if the meeting will feature award presentations, new member installation ceremonies, or any other special events.
- Find out if the Club has submitted its semiannual dues renewal yet. If not, offer assistance.
- Familiarize yourself with the names of Club Officers.
- Ask if the Club needs help or has any concerns.
- Ask the Club President to schedule some time to speak with you after the meeting.

## THE VISIT

### Before the meeting:

- Dress appropriately.
- Arrive early; mix and mingle with the members.
- Wear your name badge and Toastmasters pin.

### During the meeting:

- Stick to your allotted time on the meeting schedule.
- Briefly review the Club Mission.
- Motivate and inform with information about what it takes to be a successful Club.
- If you give a speech, make it a manual speech.
- Listen actively.
- Using the Area Report of Club Visit Form, tactfully evaluate the Club's key elements, taking notes when necessary.
- Look for future leaders.
- Publicize programs (i.e., training sessions, the Distinguished Club Program, contests, District Conferences and membership building programs).

### After the meeting:

- Meet with the Executive Committee to address any Club needs and review and complete the Area Report of Club Visit Form.
- Review Club Success Plan and progress in the Distinguished Club Program.
- Have the Club President sign the Area Report of Club Visit Form and leave a copy of the form with the Club.

## AFTER THE VISIT

- Send completed copies of the Area Report of Club Visit Form to the District Governor; make an additional copy of the report and send it to the Division Governor.
- Follow up on any questions, needs, or concerns expressed by the Club.
- Write a thank-you note to the Club.
- Keep in touch with the Club President monthly and be available to respond to any questions or concerns from Club members throughout your term.

# Case Studies: Area Governor Club Visits

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## CASE STUDY ONE: LOW ATTENDANCE

As Area Governor, you are visiting one of your Clubs to see if it is operating effectively. Only seven members are present. You ask about the rest of the membership and discover that the Club has a roster of 20 paid members. Concerned about the low attendance, you ask one of the Club's officers how many members attend on a regular basis. As it turns out, the seven members present are also the Club's seven officers, and they have been the only ones attending Club meetings for the last five weeks.

- ◆ What additional questions would you ask the Club officers?
- ◆ Write down two strategies the Club might implement to increase their attendance.
- ◆ How would you share these strategies with the Club officers?

## CASE STUDY TWO: SPEAKERS ARE NOT GIVING MANUAL SPEECHES

As Area Governor, you are eager to visit a particular Club because it has a healthy membership and the officers are experienced. Manual speeches are one of the key ingredients to a healthy Club. However, you realize that only one of the three speeches during this meeting was from the Communication and Leadership manual and the Club's not moving members through the TI Communication and Leadership tracks.

- ◆ What questions would you ask the Club officers?
- ◆ Write down two strategies to help the Club promote manual speeches as part of their regular meetings.
- ◆ How would you share these strategies with Club officers?

## CASE STUDY THREE: NEGLECTED GUESTS

As Area Governor, you are conducting a scheduled Club visit. You are excited to learn that three guests are attending a Toastmasters Club meeting for the first time. As the Club meeting continues, however, you become concerned for several reasons:

1. The guests were not introduced at the meeting. In fact, you wouldn't have known that guests were present unless you had heard the Sergeant at Arms say that "it was refreshing to have three new people visit."
2. The program and meeting responsibilities were not explained. Therefore, the guests had difficulty following the format of the meeting.
3. At the end of the meeting, Club officers were so interested in talking with you that the guests were ignored and were not asked if they were interested in joining.
  - ◆ What additional questions would you ask the Club officers?
  - ◆ Write down two strategies to help the Club correctly handle guest visits.
  - ◆ How would you share these strategies with the Club officers?