

POLITICAL AND CAMPAIGN ETHICS

The intent of this Policy is to provide the opportunity for qualified Toastmasters to seek elected office in a positive and equitable environment.

POLITICAL ETHICS

It is imperative that Toastmasters International preserve and protect the democratic principles upon which the organization was founded, including the rights and freedoms to seek and hold office. No action, written, oral, or otherwise, shall be taken that will interfere with the right of every individual qualified Toastmaster to seek and to achieve election to any office at any level of the organization. In addition, no action shall be taken that will interfere with the right and duty of every delegate and of every proxy-holder at all times to vote solely as his or her conscience and best judgment dictates, and no actions shall be taken which might impinge upon the powers, duties, authority and responsibilities of the District Councils and of the District Governors in fulfilling the Mission of the District.

To ensure that the democratic principles are preserved and to protect the personal integrity of its members and the integrity of the organization itself:

1. No individual member, Club, District or other group shall engage in any activity or campaign by use of threats, restrictions, intimidations, "deals," candidate slates, pressures, or other unethical means which would or might prevent or dissuade any individual member from competing in any nomination or election process at any level or from exercising his or her voting franchise in any particular manner;
2. No such person or entity shall use any such action referred to in item 1. to attempt to dictate to any District Officer, or District Council, or member Club in any respect to any degree;
3. No such person or entity shall publish or distribute any newsletter or other publication which contains defamatory remarks, malicious and derogatory charges, or false or libelous statements;
4. Except for District, Regional and International Conferences and Conventions, all other meetings of District Officers and International Directors shall be confined to such activities as will assist the District Officers in fulfilling their responsibilities and shall not be used for political purposes, such as endorsements, distribution of campaign literature, presentations by or for candidates and hospitality room(s) by or for candidates;

CAMPAIGN ETHICS

Toastmasters International is dedicated to providing men and women opportunities to develop communication and leadership skills in a mutually supportive and positive environment. Holding and fulfilling the roles of a Toastmasters Office, whether at the Club, Area, Division, District or International level, allow members to enhance their leadership skills. In keeping with the spirit of Toastmasters International, campaigning for Office at all levels should be a positive experience which fosters self-confidence and personal growth. To ensure that Toastmasters political campaigns are conducted in a positive manner:

1. All communications and activities endorsing a candidate, either by the candidate or by supporters of the candidate, shall focus on the candidate's Toastmasters accomplishments and personal qualifications for Office. Endorsements shall not be used without the permission of the endorser.

2. In keeping with the spirit of Toastmasters, no negative information about candidates will be allowed in written communications meant to be distributed widely or in oral communications at an official Toastmasters meeting.
3. All activities, publications, letters, speeches and conduct of campaign participants shall be represented in a standard of excellence reflecting credit on the organization.
- 4(a) Other than in support of a nominee from his/her District, no Club, Area, Division, District or International Officer shall, except as an individual member but not on behalf of the Club, Area, Division or District, take any action to endorse or officially support any International Officer or Director candidate. District stationery may be used in support of an International Director candidate, only if the candidate has been endorsed by a majority vote of the District Council. No other official Toastmasters letterhead may be used in any campaign communication.
- 4(b) No member of the District Executive Committee or member of the District Nominating Committee shall officially endorse any candidate for District Office. No current International Officer or Director may endorse any International or District candidate.
5. Activities in support of candidacy for Toastmasters office shall be conducted in an ethical manner. The candidate is accountable for the conduct of his/her campaign, and is responsible for keeping the activities of supporters within the established policies and guidelines.
6. No Toastmaster, including Past International Presidents and Past International Directors, shall direct any proxyholder how to vote proxies at any election within Toastmasters International.

Violation of any of the above principles concerning prohibited activities by an individual member of any Club, or by any Club, will subject: a) the offending Club to suspension or expulsion in accordance with Article III, Section 4, and Article III, Section 8, of the Bylaws of Toastmasters International, unless the Club expels the offending individual member or ends its own violations; and/or b) the individual member to suspension or removal from good standing, or other appropriate action, in accordance with Article III, Section 8, of the Bylaws of Toastmasters International.

Reference: Bylaws of Toastmasters International, Article III, Section 4
Bylaws of Toastmasters International, Article III, Section 8