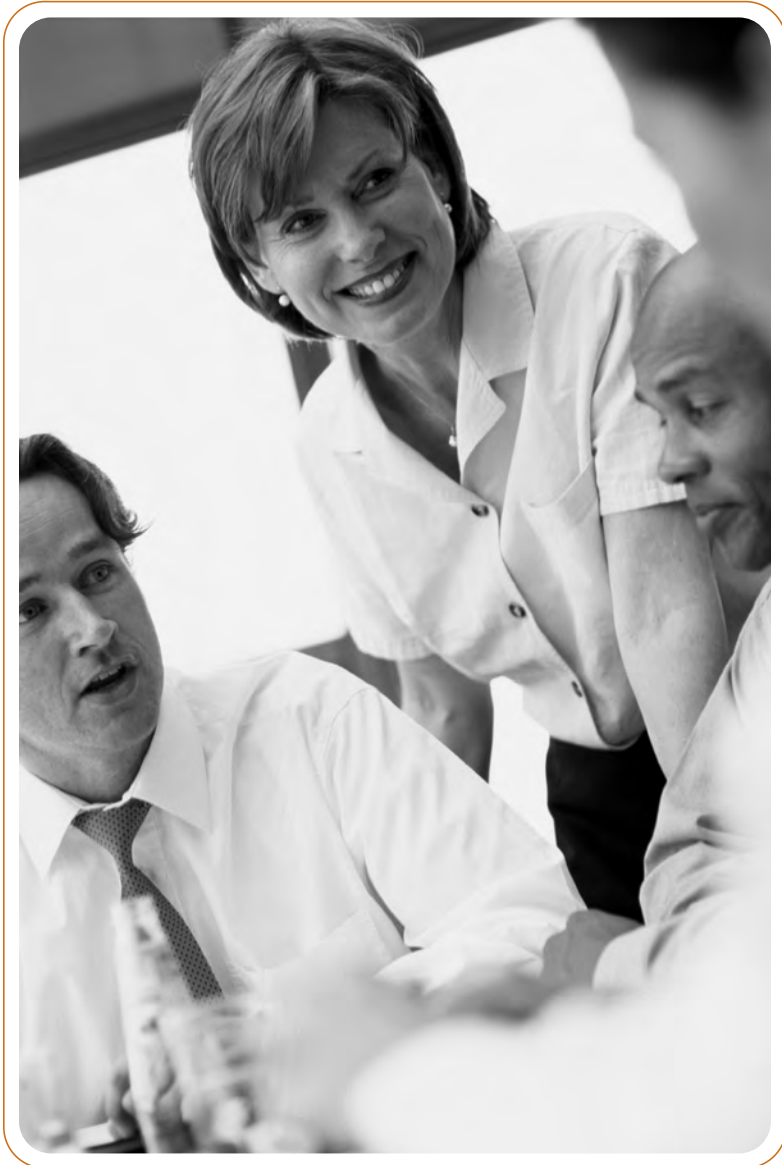




TOASTMASTERS
INTERNATIONAL®

Maintaining Strong Clubs



AREA
&
DIVISION
GOVERNORS

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.
- ▶ Ensuring that each club effectively fulfills its responsibilities to its members.
- ▶ Providing effective training and leadership development opportunities for club and district officers.



TOASTMASTERS INTERNATIONAL®

P.O. Box 9052

Mission Viejo, California 92690 USA

www.toastmasters.org

*1991 Toastmasters International. Educational materials produced and distributed by Toastmasters International are intended for use as part of the Toastmasters educational program only. This publication is produced by Toastmasters International and may not be used outside of the Toastmasters program nor reproduced in full or in part without written permission from World Headquarters. The name "Toastmasters International," "Toastmasters" and the Toastmasters International emblem are trademarks protected in the United States, Canada, the European Union, Australia, Bahrain, China, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, Jordan, Kuwait, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Oman, Philippines, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, South Africa, Taiwan, United Arab Emirates, and most other countries where there are Toastmasters clubs. Clubs may use these trademarks on stationery, newsletters and other printed matter intended for communications purposes. However, these trademarks may not be placed, engraved or otherwise used on items such as trophies, certificates, plaques, badges, banners, clothing, ties, jewelry, mugs, or any other items without the express written consent of the Executive Director. All club and district officers are asked to report to the Executive Director all instances of illegal reproduction of copyrighted materials and illegal use of Toastmasters International trademarks. Toastmasters International will pursue full legal recourse for any unauthorized use of its copyrighted materials and trademarks.

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION: TRAINING AREA AND DIVISION GOVERNORS . . . A VITAL DISTRICT FUNCTION	3
PART I: FOUNDATIONS FOR A SUCCESSFUL TRAINING SESSION	5
Keep Training Focused on the District Mission	5
Five Steps For Planning a Successful Division and Area Governor Training Program	6
The Training Environment	7
How to Use the Program Outline	7
Checklist for Training	8
Sample Training Agenda	9
Evaluation and Follow-up	10
PART II: PRESENTATION OF THE TRAINING SESSION: MAINTAINING STRONG CLUBS	
Maintaining Strong Clubs	14
The District Mission	15
Your Most Important Job: Strong Clubs at Charter Strength	16
Attitude of Service	18
Area Governor Visits	27
Membership Growth.....	29
Educational Program Excellence/Standards	32
Club Excellence Standards.....	34
Toward the Future	41
How to Make an Effective Club Visit	44
Good Relationships Go Beyond the Club Visit	50
Case Studies.....	52

PART III: VISUAL AIDS COPY FOR THE TRAINING SESSION

PART IV: HANDOUT COPY

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* (222) and, additionally, if training area governors, the *Area Leadership Handbook* (221). The presenter should also review the Distinguished Area and Distinguished Division Program

brochure (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.

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 available on the Toastmasters International Web site, www.toastmasters.org. Here is a description:

Achieve Success Standards (218A). This program covers area and division governor standards and the Distinguished Division, Area, and Club Programs.

Maintain Strong Clubs (218B). 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 (218C). 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 (218D). 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 (218E). 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.

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 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, flyers, 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.

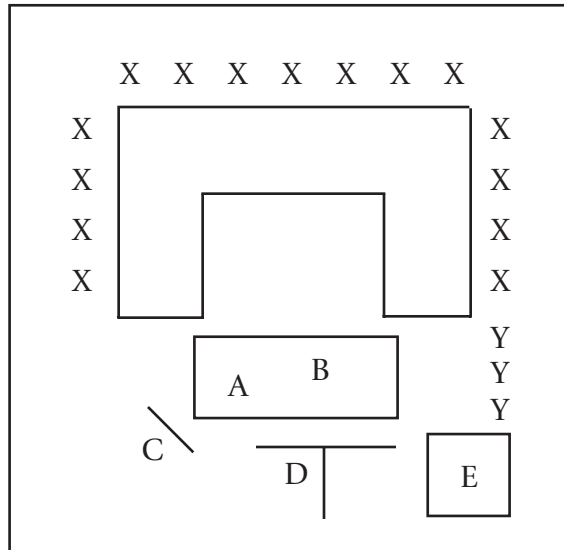
THE TRAINING ENVIRONMENT

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

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.

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* (218A), *Maintain Strong Clubs* (218B), *Build New Clubs* (218C), *Build a Successful Team* (218D). If necessary, *Conduct Quality Contests* (218E) can be conducted later, but before speech contests begin. All of these training materials, including slide presentations, are available on the TI Web site, www.toastmasters.org.

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 achieving the district's four critical success factors, the Distinguished District Program goals for club growth, membership growth, CCs and ACs. 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 will 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 throughout the year:

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

-
- ▶ **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.

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.

CLUB SERVICE AND SUPPORT

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

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

How do I ensure that the Club officers in my area/division attend club officer training?

How many clubs are in my area/division?

How many club visits must an area governor perform and what are the deadlines for making these visits?

How often should an area governor contact club presidents?

What are the names of the club presidents in my area?

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?

How will my performance be measured?

What are my primary responsibilities as an area governor or division governor?

Where can I build a club or help the district identify a prospect for a new club?

Where can I get the resources to build a club in my area or division?

Who is on my area/division council and how often should we meet?

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 in order to be successful and recognized as a Distinguished District?

OTHER

What are my responsibilities regarding speech contests?

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 maintain, support and serve existing clubs. Maintaining the strength of clubs is critical to our success as district officers and the success of the organization. You are the critical link in keeping our clubs healthy.

The objectives for maintaining strong clubs are:

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

Mission-oriented service. You are ambassadors to the clubs and your efforts must be focused on providing purposeful service to our clubs.

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 will determine your success. 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 club visits and we'll discuss how you can expand upon successful club visits.

THE DISTRICT MISSION

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.

SLIDE #2

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 of the clubs in your area is a Distinguished Club. The mission of the club is
. . . 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.

Clubs achieving the club mission have three things in common. (1) excellence in educational programming , (2) strong membership and, (3) a focus on Distinguished Club goals.

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

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 additional 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.

Clubs that have members moving through the Communication and Leadership tracks and clubs that consistently maintain a 20-plus membership are clearly 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 recruit and retain 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 sustain 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 SERVICE-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 team members focused on serving our 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 must also serve and support clubs in their efforts to meet individuals' needs by offering membership in Toastmasters.

OUR ORGANIZATION'S PURPOSE. Our organization's mission is to provide the benefits of Toastmasters to more people. We operate in a service environment or 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 has said that, "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, club and district missions.

SLIDE #5

REASONS DIVISION AND AREA GOVERNORS SUCCEED. We must 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, and in turn clubs and members leave the organization. Success can generally be grouped into one or more of the following areas:

- ▶ **Focus 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 and division governors are distracted by activities not directly related to achieving the district mission. The district mission, along with the Toastmasters International and club missions, can

SLIDE #6, 7, 8

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 more people will join these 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 failing to meet the needs of our customers.

► **Area and division governors know critical goals.** Area and division governors are not successful when they don't understand or are confused about the priority of goals.

For example, having each club work toward charter strength by improving programming, membership drives, etc. is much more important than focusing on speech contests. Although divisions and areas must conduct certain speech contests, the majority of a division and area governor's time should be focused on club service and retention.

► **Area governors and division governors view clubs, members, and prospective clubs and members as customers!** Customer service translates at every level of the organization, from staff, districts, divisions and areas

to the clubs and club members. Successful organizations focus their business on their customers by adding value and building relationships. Area and division governors extend this by serving the clubs, whether through area club visits or supporting clubs via the Distinguished Club program goals. If we are not focused on what is of value to the club and club member, we can't be successful.

- ▶ **Area governors and division governors see satisfying our customers as their job.** Volunteers sometimes focus on the mechanics of service delivery rather than on why they are a district officer. 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 not being met.
- ▶ **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 not know it. However, the key to providing service is to understand the customer's needs and go from there.

► **Area governors and division governors recognize or address causes 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 are all feedback opportunities that help us better understand customer needs. Some signs that customer needs are not being met are:

- Declining membership or attendance at club meetings.
- Few or no CCs in a club
- Poor club programming.

COMMON CUSTOMER SERVICE CHALLENGES IN DISTRICTS, DIVISIONS AND AREAS. Let's take a brief look at just a few of the challenges that can occur in service exchanges with clubs:

► **Area governors do not understand their roles as service providers or are unable to communicate their service roles to clubs.** When you visit clubs or telephone club presidents, it's important to have a purpose. Clearly communicate to the club that you're available and eager to help the club be successful in serving its members. Ask how you can best serve the club and make some agreements on how to execute that service.

SLIDE #9, 10

-
- ▶ **Corporate clubs feel that area governors do not understand the corporate club culture.** A corporation sponsors a club because it feels Toastmasters provides a value to the 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 the 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, and sell the benefits of these programs so that corporate clubs find value in their offerings.
 - ▶ **One size does not fit all.** Clubs operate differently from other clubs. What works for one club may not work for another. Be sensitive to each club's special needs. This will allow you the opportunity to work together and determine how best to meet each club's unique needs.
 - ▶ **Training programs and other events must provide value to the participant.** Focus on the benefits clubs and members receive from participation in district events, particularly club officer training. If club officers see how training will benefit them and if we do our part to make sure training is relevant, club officers will most likely attend.

-
- ▶ **Clubs are your customers.** As an area governor you are charged with servicing your clubs. It is important to view the club as a customer. You are there to educate and inform, but clubs are final decision-makers.
 - ▶ **Help make club visits and deadlines meaningful to clubs.** As leaders, we understand the benefits of all these things, but need to remember that clubs need to understand those benefits too. Remember to make it meaningful for clubs, so that they want to receive area governor visits, submit membership payments promptly and do the other things that will help make the club successful.

SERVICE: AN ATTITUDE OF RESPECT. We need to positively communicate the reasons for setting goals and deadlines: to ensure club success. In your visits and other contacts with club officers and members, be sure to communicate that the club is the customer. Respect is key to building a productive and lasting service relationship with clubs:

- ▶ **Respect the 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 success. When providing feedback, focus on the outcomes and how these will have a positive impact on clubs and members.

SLIDE #11

-
- ▶ **Respect the club officers.** Club officers are volunteers. Club members elected them to serve the club's needs. 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 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.

 - ▶ **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, but as a district leader, you must focus on all 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 clubs with challenges? 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 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 challenges do arise. Finally, regular area governor visits also encourage clubs to continually be aware of their need for progress and strategies for improvement.

In essence, the purpose of area governor visits is to ensure that every club is achieving their goals. 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 for each club visited. The form should be submitted online at www.toastmasters.org as a copy of the report is sent, via e-mail, to the district leaders and the club president. The Area Report of Club Visit form is required for Distinguished Area and District credit.

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 (1370) sent to each district for distribution to area governors. A copy of this form can also be found online at www.toastmasters.org.*

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

The information gathered in this section includes:

SLIDE #14

- ▶ **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 – 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 20 or more members.

What you can do: When visiting a club with fewer than 20 members, 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," (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 and new member recruitment goals.** Membership is not just a challenge 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” (1621), and
- “Membership Building 101: Your Club’s Pattern for Success” (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. 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!

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. 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 Competent Communicators, Advanced Communicators, Competent Leader, Advanced Leader Bronze, Advanced Leader Silver, 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. CCs, ACs, CLs, ALBs, ALSs, 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: "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 club excellence 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 new Advanced Leader Bronze Award. So they can present the modules, benefit the club, and help themselves achieve recognition as a club leader.

- ▶ **Are all speeches from the Competent Communication or Advanced Communication 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.

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 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.

Most clubs maintain time management standards. Once members understand these standards and realize that meetings need to begin and end on time, they are more likely to comply.

- ▶ **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 uncomfortable, 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 facilitate in identifying 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 success.

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 (1111) and its benefits, then offer to help the officers complete a plan.

- ▶ **Does the club submit on time educational applications to World Headquarters on time? Does it 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 CC, AC, 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 (227-D) and ask how long it takes the vice president education to submit educational award applications to World Headquarters. Stress the importance of recognizing member progress and achievement. Encourage the club to formally recognize those who receive their CC, CL, AC, AL, etc. One option is for the club to present each member with a 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 quickly 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. 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 (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” (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, a number of clubs do not vote in 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. 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. When club officers are committed to conducting quality club programs, getting and retaining members, and serving member needs, clubs would continually be successful.

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 renewals on time?**

Submitting dues promptly to World Headquarters ensures that members keep receiving the Toastmaster magazine and other benefits of membership. 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 in order to receive Distinguished Club Program recognition. Submissions of dues renewals are also Distinguished Area Program goals.

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 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 Competent Communication and Competent Leadership manuals 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 CC or CL. 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 their materials quickly. 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 membership dues, club officer handbooks, TIPs, and other mailings get to the right address.

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. 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

In addition to resolving current issues, it is important to plan for the future.

SLIDE #21, 22

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 leaders. 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 lieutenant 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* (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

Clubs should monitor these six areas of service 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 prospective leaders 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 anyone who received the Competent Leader Award is 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 an 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.

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). Submit these reports online at www.toastmasters.org.

HOW TO MAKE AN EFFECTIVE CLUB VISIT

One of the challenges of being a leader is staying focused on goals. It's a good idea to periodically review 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. 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 an 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 (e.g., 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.

- ▶ **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 membership dues 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!

-
- ▶ **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 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* (290), or review tools, such as The Member Achievement Kit (1115) and *The Successful Club Series* program, "Mentoring" (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.

-
- ▶ **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, program quality, 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 membership growth.

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.

-
- ▶ **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 (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, unless you are submitting it online.**

AFTER THE VISIT

- ▶ **Submit the Area Report of Club Visit form online at www.toastmasters.org.** A copy of the report will be automatically generated and sent, via e-mail, to the district leaders and club president.
- ▶ **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 on a monthly basis 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.

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.

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. 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 Challenges**
- ▶ **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.
- ❑ Ensuring 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**

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



- ▶ **View clubs, members and potential clubs and members as customers!**
- ▶ **Meeting customer needs is your 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 (CCs, ACs)**
 - **Poor club programming**

Common Customer Service Challenges



- ▶ **Area governors do not understand their roles as service providers or are unable to communicate their roles as service providers to clubs**
- ▶ **Corporate clubs feel that area governors do not understand the corporate club culture**
- ▶ **One size does not fit all**

Common Customer Service Challenges



- ▶ Training programs and other events must provide value to the participant
- ▶ Clubs are your customers
- ▶ Help make club visits and deadlines meaningful to clubs

Service: An Attitude of Respect



- ▶ **Respect the unique character of each club**
- ▶ **Respect club officers**
- ▶ **Commit to encourage, support and serve clubs and club officers**
- ▶ **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 the 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 CC?**
- ▶ **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 officer training?**
- **Understand roles and responsibilities?**
- **Submit dues promptly to WHQ?**
- **Submit new member applications immediately?**
- **Send in officer 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!



**Submit the Area Report of Club Visit
Form online no later than**

November 30 (1st Visit)

May 31 (2nd Visit)

Some Keys to Continued Success and Communication



- ▶ Telephone calls and e-mail
- ▶ Additional visits
- ▶ Area newsletter or Web site
- ▶ Club officer installations

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.

Feel free to revise the material to suit your own style.



TOASTMASTERS INTERNATIONAL®

Area Report of Club Visit Form

DISTRICT	DIVISION	AREA	CLUB NO.	VISIT DATE

An area governor visit is an important opportunity to help the club in its efforts to achieve the club mission and to provide a supportive environment where Toastmasters can learn communication and leadership skills. It is a chance to work together toward achieving Distinguished Club Program goals so that each member receives the full benefits of the Toastmasters program.

Print a copy of the club's DCP report and discuss the club's Success Plan with club leaders. Also, print a copy of the district's educational achievements to determine if club members have achieved an educational or leadership award. The DCP report and educational achievements are available online at www.toastmasters.org. Complete the following:

► I. Distinguished Club Program/Membership

Goal 1: Two CCs – Which two members will achieve CCs this year and when?

Name _____ Date _____ Name _____ Date _____

Goal 2: Two more CCs – Which two additional members will achieve CCs this year and when?

Name _____ Date _____ Name _____ Date _____

Goal 3: One AC – Which member will achieve an AC this year and when? Name _____ Date _____

Goal 4: One additional AC – Which member will achieve an additional AC this year and when? Name _____ Date _____

Goal 5: CL, ALB, ALS or DTM – Which member will achieve one of these leadership awards this year and when? Name _____ Date _____

Goal 6: One additional CL, ALB, ALS or DTM – Which member will achieve one of these leadership awards this year and when?

Name _____ Date _____

Goal 7: Four new members – Has the club achieved this goal? Yes No If no, when will the club achieve this goal? Date _____

Goal 8: Four more new members – Has the club achieved this goal? Yes No If no, when will the club achieve this goal? Date _____

Does the club have an active membership-building program? Yes No

Goal 9: Minimum four officers trained June–August and December–February

How many club officers attended training in: June–August? _____ December–February? _____

Has the club achieved this goal? Yes No If no, describe efforts club will make to ensure officers are trained at next opportunity: _____

Goal 10: Dues Renewals/Officers List – Has the club achieved this goal? Yes No If no, and the club will achieve this goal, enter date(s): _____

Does the club have 20 or more members? Yes No

Is the club working toward the DCP requirement of a net gain of 5 members or membership of at least 20 members by June 30? Yes No

If no, describe what changes the club will be making to achieve this requirement: _____

List any members who will be achieving additional educational awards this year and the dates those awards will be achieved: _____

► II. Educational Program Excellence/Standards

Each year the club should conduct one or more of the following modules from *The Successful Club Series*. This year the club will conduct:

Moments of Truth Evaluate to Motivate Finding New Members Mentoring How to be a Distinguished Club Closing the Sale

Are all speeches from the manuals? Yes No If no, please explain: _____

Do all speakers receive verbal and written evaluations? Yes No If no, please explain: _____

► III. Club Excellence Standards

Meeting Quality The meeting (check all that apply): was well organized was productive was run on time

had effective/supportive evaluations had printed meeting agendas

Guests were (check all that apply): welcomed informed about the meeting/club/Toastmasters asked to return or join asked for comments

Recognition The club (check all that apply): uses the Distinguished Club Program for planning/recognition presents its Distinguished Club Program Plan to members immediately submits educational award applications to WHQ quickly recognizes member achievement

displays Member Progress Chart

New Members The club (check all that apply): orients new members within two weeks immediately assigns mentors to new members

votes in and formally inducts new members (including presenting member pin/basic manual)

Club Officers/Administration Club officers (check all that apply): understand roles/responsibilities submit membership applications promptly

meet at least monthly discuss DCP Progress at executive committee meetings

► IV. Area Governor Comments

List members interested in future leadership roles within the district: _____

Club strengths: _____

Areas needing attention: _____

What can the district and I do to support the club? _____

Recommendations for action: _____

Area Visit Round 1 – Submit forms online at www.toastmasters.org. Online submissions must be made by November 30 for credit in the Distinguished Area Program. If not submitted online, the area governor must mail this form to district governor by October 31. District governor forwards copy to World Headquarters. Mailed forms to World Headquarters must be postmarked by November 30 and received by December 10 for credit in the Distinguished Area Program.

Area Visit Round 2 – Submit forms online at www.toastmasters.org. Online submissions must be made by May 31 for credit in the Distinguished Area Program. If not submitted online, the area governor must mail this form to district governor by April 30. District governor forwards copy to World Headquarters. Mailed forms to World Headquarters must be postmarked by May 31 and received by June 10 for credit in the Distinguished Area Program.

SIGNATURE OF AREA GOVERNOR

SIGNATURE OF DISTRICT GOVERNOR

SIGNATURE OF CLUB PRESIDENT

Area-Club Visit Standards for Area Governors

PREPARING FOR THE VISIT

- Contact the club president at least one month in advance of your visit. Remember, as an 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 (e.g., 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 membership 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 successes and challenges, taking notes when necessary.
- Look for future leaders.
- Publicize programs (e.g., 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 or submit it online (a copy will go to the club president).

AFTER THE VISIT

- Submit the Area Report of Club Visit form online by the deadline date.
- 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

CASE STUDY ONE: LOW ATTENDANCE

As an 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 an 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 an 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?