

Club Building Strategy Guide for Districts

Leading you to club-building success





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Item 122 Rev. 07/2023

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Missions, Values, and Promises

Toastmasters International Mission

We empower individuals to become more effective communicators and leaders.

District Mission

We build new clubs and support all clubs in achieving excellence.

Club Mission

We provide a supportive and positive learning experience in which members are empowered to develop communication and leadership skills, resulting in greater self-confidence and personal growth.

Toastmasters International Core Values

- ▶ Integrity
- ▶ Respect
- ▶ Service
- ▶ Excellence

Toastmasters International Envisioned Future

To be the first-choice provider of dynamic, high-value, experiential communication and leadership skills development.

Toastmasters International Brand Promise

Empowering individuals through personal and professional development.

This is the promise Toastmasters International makes to club members. Once we have reached this goal consistently, through all clubs across the globe, we will have achieved club excellence.

A Toastmaster's Promise

As a member of Toastmasters International and my club, I promise:

- ▶ To attend club meetings regularly
- ▶ To prepare all of my projects to the best of my ability, basing them on the Toastmasters education program
- ▶ To prepare for and fulfill meeting assignments
- ▶ To provide fellow members with helpful, constructive evaluations
- ▶ To help the club maintain the positive, friendly environment necessary for all members to learn and grow
- ▶ To serve my club as an officer when called upon to do so
- ▶ To treat my fellow club members and our guests with respect and courtesy
- ▶ To bring guests to club meetings so they can see the benefits Toastmasters membership offers
- ▶ To adhere to the guidelines and rules for all Toastmasters education and recognition programs
- ▶ To act within Toastmasters' core values of integrity, respect, service, and excellence during the conduct of all Toastmasters activities

Introduction



Building new clubs is one of a Toastmasters District's primary responsibilities and is one of the most stimulating and rewarding ways to introduce the benefits of Toastmasters membership to communities and corporations. By extending the network of Toastmasters clubs within the boundaries of your District, you will offer more people the opportunity to benefit from the Toastmasters education program. Organizing new clubs also provides leaders with a terrific opportunity to develop and extend their own leadership skills.

This guide provides the steps and ideas a District needs to successfully build new clubs, whether the reader is an experienced club builder or is new to the process. To learn more about the club chartering process, see **[How to Build a Toastmasters Club: A Step-by-Step Guide](#)**. To learn more about District recognition goals, refer to **[District Recognition Program](#)**.

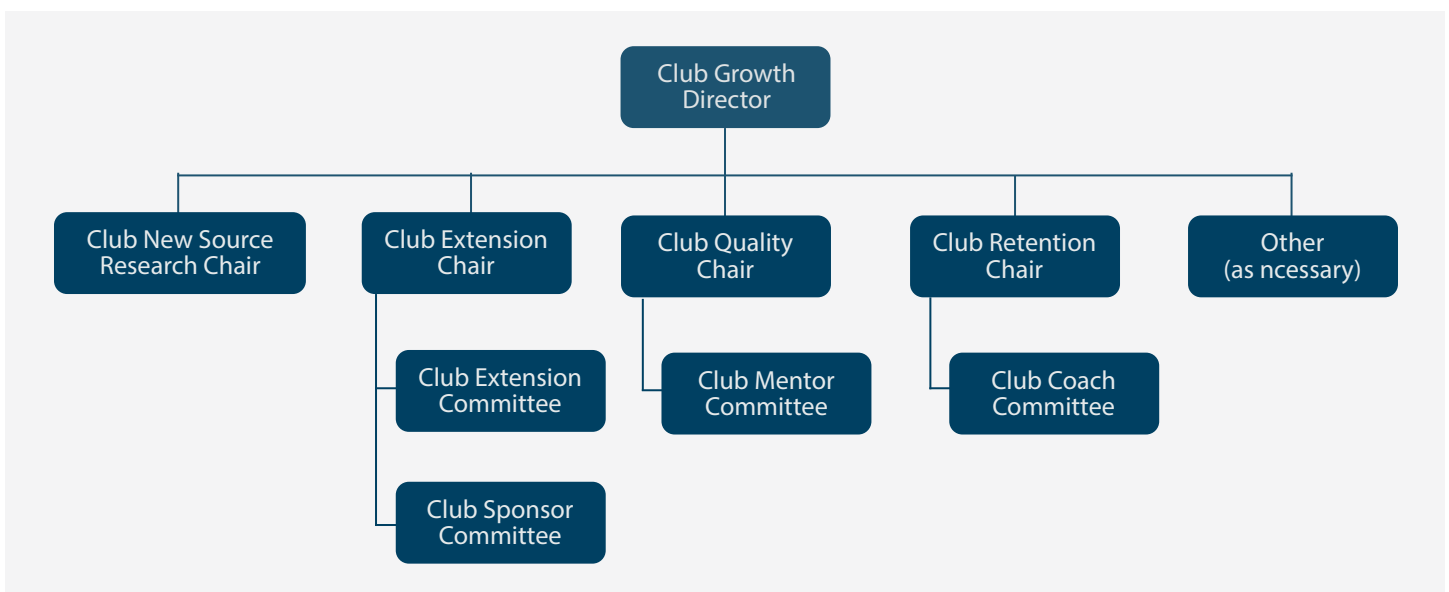
Step 1: Build A Marketing Team

Select and Recruit a Team

To be successful in building new clubs, you must understand that you cannot do everything alone and must first build a team. Finding the right people who will focus on the critical success factors will help develop leadership skills and fulfill the District mission. Through the Club Growth Director’s guidance and leadership, the team will analyze the need, opportunity, and potential for new clubs in the District and help prepare an effective marketing plan, including club-building and member-retention programs.

First, you will want to find individuals to serve as chair for each committee. Consider whether the person has the experience, time, and desire to lead the team. They should also have strong follow-up skills and be able to communicate easily and effectively with the rest of the team.

The following roles offer opportunities for members to advance their skills in club and membership building and build a strong foundation for future District roles. The District may choose to honor these key roles with special local recognition awards, as they are not eligible to receive credit toward Toastmasters educational awards for these roles. However, members who have earned higher level awards in the Toastmasters education program can serve as sponsors or mentors of new clubs to share their experience and fulfill a Distinguished Toastmaster award requirement.



Teams

The first teams are focused on building new clubs in the District and are led by the club new source research chair and club extension chair.

Club New Source Research Chair

The club new source research chair works closely with the Club Growth Director to complete the District’s Market Analysis Plan, which is developed in **Step 2** of this guide.

In addition to assisting with the marketing plan, the club new source research chair generates new club leads at the District level. Lead generation is the first stage of building new clubs, which is discussed in **Step 3** of this manual.

Club Extension Chair

The club extension chair collaborates with the Club Growth Director to oversee the objectives for the Club Extension and Club Sponsor Committees. The Club Extension Committee maintains quality leads which means supporting them through stages 2 through 5 of building new clubs (initial contact through application). The Club Sponsor Committee provides guidance over the club sponsor program to ensure that prospective clubs are chartered successfully. In addition to providing sponsors for prospective clubs, the Club Sponsor Committee arranges club sponsor credit opportunities for members who seek it. It is important that the club extension chair provides training to all members of their teams to ensure that expectations are clear. Make sure the team understands their responsibilities, how to communicate with leads, the forms they will help leads complete, etc.

The club extension chair is recommended to be a user of the Toastmasters Lead Management (TLM) system and will enter new club leads into the TLM system.

Club Extension Committee – This committee is responsible for the most important aspects of the District’s marketing strategy—qualifying, managing, and tracking leads. Members of this team:

- ▶ Manage all credible new club leads within the boundaries of their District.
- ▶ Contact, follow up with, and track the status of all leads/opportunities.
- ▶ Schedule and staff all demonstration meetings.

Club Sponsor Committee – This committee recruits, trains, and tracks sponsors for all clubs that charter or are in the midst of the new club process. Members of this team:

- ▶ Recruit and assign club sponsors to new club opportunities in the District.
- ▶ Understand and facilitate club sponsor training, including refining the curriculum and assisting sponsors to ensure clubs are served effectively.
- ▶ Work with club sponsors to collect the required fees to organize a new club, and ensure they receive club sponsoring credit from Toastmasters International.

The next teams are focused on supporting new clubs in having long-term success and are led by the club quality chair and the club retention chair.

Club Quality Chair

Members joined Toastmasters to become more effective communicators and leaders. They stay in Toastmasters because the club provides a valuable service and meets their individual needs. The club quality chair focuses on establishing a Club Mentor Committee to provide this service through the club mentor program. Club mentors are the advisors and support for new clubs and have a great effect on the degree to which a new club succeeds. In addition to providing mentors to the club, the committee arranges club mentor credit opportunities for members who seek it.

Club Mentor Committee – This committee recruits, trains, and tracks mentors for all new clubs that are being organized. Members of this team:

- ▶ Recruit and assign club mentors to the newly organized clubs in the District.
- ▶ Understand and facilitate club mentor training, including refining the curriculum and assisting mentors to ensure clubs are served effectively.
- ▶ Ensure club mentors receive club mentoring credit from Toastmasters International.

Tip: For smaller Districts, it may make sense to combine the Club Mentor Committee and Club Sponsor Committee. If you choose to do so, make sure that whoever chairs the committee is able to manage the additional workload effectively.

Club Retention Chair

The club retention chair heads the Club Coach Committee, which assists with the club coach program. Club coaches support struggling clubs in rebuilding their membership and restoring club quality. The committee helps club coaches develop action plans to aid their assigned clubs. In addition to providing coaches for qualified clubs, the Club Coach Committee arranges club coach credit opportunities for members who seek it.

The club retention chair also assists with promoting **membership-building programs** designed by Toastmasters International (Smedley Award, Talk Up Toastmasters, and Beat the Clock), and additional programs designed by the District.

Club Coach Committee – This committee recruits and trains coaches for all clubs that qualify for the program. The committee also reviews its clubs to see which ones are in need of a club coach. Members of this team:

- ▶ Follow up continually with club coaches.
- ▶ Monitor the effectiveness of each club coach's action plans and suggest adjustments.
- ▶ Provide the Club Growth Director and club retention chair regular status reports.
- ▶ Organize the recognition of club coaches and ensure they receive club coaching credit from Toastmasters International.

Tip: Club coaches can be assigned in pairs. There may be an advantage to pairing a more experienced Distinguished Toastmaster (if one is amenable) with a Toastmaster working towards credit for their Educational Award Requirements.

Other Committees

Depending on the size of your District, you can consider creating additional committees and appointing volunteers as leaders to help manage other responsibilities. It may also be more feasible to combine some of your committees. Consider what makes the most sense for your District but make sure that individuals aren't being overloaded or trying to do all the work themselves.

Additional Support

Support from Toastmasters leaders

Your committees may be supported at the Division and Area levels by Toastmasters leaders who are appointed by the respective Division Director or Area Director. Ask Division Directors and Area Directors if they have any leaders on their team who could provide that support. Additionally, lean on the experience and expertise of past leaders, including District leaders, Region Advisors, International Directors, and International Presidents, to support your team's efforts.

Support from the Region Advisor (RA)

District leaders work closely with the RA to meet the District's membership- and club-building goals. The RA serves in a support capacity, helping Districts fulfill the District mission as measured by the critical success factors of membership payments, club growth, and Distinguished clubs. RA support will vary based on the unique needs of each District.

The RA can help your District achieve its goals by:

- ▶ Providing marketing support and expertise that expands the District’s capacity to grow clubs and grow membership.
- ▶ Assessing the **District Success Plan (DSP)**, **District Market Analysis Plan**, and **District Communication Plan**
- ▶ Mentoring the team to optimize its performance.
- ▶ Establishing a trusting relationship through frequent and consistent communication.

Tip: Be sure to work with your Region Advisor early in the program year so they can help your team plan for success with enough time to see the impact of those plans.

Support from your Public Relations Manager (PRM)

The PRM is responsible for coordinating publicity efforts in the District. They publicize District news and events, create media opportunities, and maintain communication between the District, its members, and the public. While your team is responsible for identifying a high-level marketing plan along with incentive and recognition programs, it is the PRM’s job to provide detailed plans for supporting them. These include plans for social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.), newsletters, free forms of community PR, trade shows, chambers of commerce, and television/radio options. Ensure that the PRM has access to the **Let the World Know: Publicity and Promotion Handbook**.

Train Your Team

Once committees are selected, the team should set up an initial planning meeting at the beginning of the year to clarify goals and processes. Hold a special session for training based on the club-building process in which you discuss the District’s plans. Be sure to give club-building training top priority and avoid scheduling a concurrent session. In the training session, share the District’s expectations for the year:

- ▶ What are the District’s club-building goals?
- ▶ How will your team accomplish them?
- ▶ When and how will progress be measured?
- ▶ What are the expectations of each team member?

By the end of the training session, the team should be able to answer these questions, along with others specific to your District. Keep in mind that many of your team members will be completely new to club building. This manual is a great resource to support them in learning about the process.

Resources

How to Build a Toastmasters Club: A Step-by-Step Guide

Club Sponsor, Mentor, and Coach Training

Club Coach Program

Motivate and Recognize Your Team

Now that your team is assembled, expectations are shared, and the basic skills and knowledge to execute their roles are provided, how will the team stay motivated? Encourage one another and discuss possible incentives that will inspire the hard work that is necessary to achieve the District's club-building goals. Several Districts have been successful in motivating club growth by creating contests between Divisions. Challenge your Divisions to do their part by helping them set a specific goal based on achieving Distinguished status or higher.

There are a few more motivators to achieve successful club growth: models of success, enthusiasm, and commitment from the District leaders. It is also a good idea to get to know your team members and learn what motivates them.

Work closely together and demonstrate your commitment to the team and the program. Perhaps more than anything else, this will determine your success.

Note: The District leaders, as a team, determine the type of training, motivation, and recognition that will be implemented in your District.

Resources

District Incentives Tips

Incentives Ideas Generator

Step 2: Develop Your Marketing Strategy

Elements of a Successful Marketing Plan

The **District Market Analysis Plan** is a series of steps that help the District leadership team identify the gaps and strengths within the District. Conducting the analysis will help the team define and prioritize the District's club-building goals, strategies, and area of opportunities.

1. Situational Analysis

A summary of the state of your District, including five-year historic performance, club status, club strength status, and District Recognition Program standards.

2. Market Analysis

An evaluation of your District segmented by geographic opportunities (community clubs) and a corporate club analysis. With this information, you can generate an assessment of the opportunities to build community and corporate clubs.

3. Industry Analysis

An analysis of the top corporations and employers, categorized by industries in the District and industries represented in existing clubs. Consider government offices in addition to corporations.

4. Strategy

Plan how you and your team will prospect opportunities by targeting various groups, markets,

and industries based on the information collected and analyzed. For example, define the approach your team will take to grow clubs based on your analysis, identify the resources your team will need, and establish how your team will monitor progress. Developing the right tools to reach your target audience is the foundation of your marketing plan.

5. Tactics

Pinpoint the necessary actions, tasks, and required budget to execute your marketing plan throughout the program year.

6. Teams and Roles

Document your team and review the roles to ensure accountability and success of each team member.

7. Top Leads

List the top leads within your Toastmasters Lead Management (TLM) system pipeline to keep a close watch on the greatest opportunities for chartering a club.

Resources

District Market Analysis Plan

District Strategies Guide

Toastmasters Lead Management System: Best Practices and Guidelines

Marketing

Brand Portal

Note: To safeguard the Toastmasters brand, trademarks, and copyrights, ensure that all Toastmasters materials used or created by your District comply with appropriate copyright and trademark laws, as well as the guidelines contained in the **Brand Portal** section of the website.

Step 3: Build New Clubs

The stages in the club building process are:



Guiding Principles

Keep the following guiding principles in mind throughout the club-building process.

- ▶ Club building is about helping people discover how Toastmasters will bring them value. The goal is to help solve their challenges and meet their communication and leadership skills development needs without pressuring them to start a club. Club building is about demonstrating how Toastmasters can benefit, and your job is to understand the needs of the lead.
- ▶ The club-building process is not always going to flow directly from lead generation to initial contact to the introduction meeting. Sometimes you will combine steps, come back to previous steps, or even skip steps entirely. Be comfortable moving between all the steps.
- ▶ All steps offer an opportunity to gather more information or do additional research on the lead.
- ▶ If at any point in the process your lead is hesitant, acknowledge it and ask if they can help you understand their concerns. You might also ask the lead if they'd prefer to pause and resume the conversation at a later date. Being too aggressive can cause the lead to lose interest in Toastmasters going forward, while proceeding with understanding can leave the door open for future conversations.
- ▶ Be selective about what information and resources you send to a lead. If you choose to use the templates available on the Toastmasters website, think about how you can customize the information to their needs.
- ▶ Club building is a team effort. District leaders should take advantage of the expertise offered from their International Director and Region Advisor. They are some of your greatest assets in the club-building process.
 - Schedule meetings with leads during International Director and Region Advisor visits.
 - Work with your Region Advisor for guidance on developing club-building strategies.
- ▶ Verify that you have the right people in the room. You will have more success when you ensure key stakeholders will attend a demonstration meeting.
- ▶ Invite leads and key stakeholders to a Toastmasters club meeting to see the education program in action.
- ▶ If you're building a corporate club, consider the culture of the organization and the terminology you use (e.g., talk about tuition rather than dues; talk about enrollment in a program, rather than membership in a club). Check out the **corporate club** page on the Toastmasters website for more information.

Toastmasters Lead Management (TLM) System

The TLM system is a platform where all District leads can be processed, tracked, and managed by the District. It contains critical steps of the club building process for each lead, which makes managing and directing team efforts more efficient and productive.

When you identify leads to pursue, it is important that they are added to the TLM system right away so that they can be assigned to a member of your team, who will support the lead in progressing through the club building process.

Monitoring leads in the TLM system in a timely and routine manner is critical to supporting leads in progressing through the club-building process and finally chartering as a new club. When leads are left unattended in the TLM system, this creates a negative experience and damages the Toastmasters International brand. Establish and communicate a lead management plan with your team to determine who is regularly accessing the TLM and nurturing those important relationships. The Club Growth Director is responsible for teaching the District's club growth team how to effectively use the TLM system.

Use the TLM system as a tool to streamline the club-building process

The TLM system is available in District Central to the District Director, Program Quality Director, Club Growth Director, Public Relations Manager, Administration Manager, Finance Manager, Division Directors, Area Directors, and the club extension chair. Region Advisors also have read-only access to the TLM system. The system features pipeline stages that guide you through the new club process. The stages align with the middle four stages of the club-building process: initial contact (qualifying), introduction meeting, demonstration meeting, and awaiting application. As you work through each opportunity, update the stage to maintain an accurate status of each lead.

Stage 1: Lead Generation

Successful Districts continually look for opportunities for new clubs. Although a small number of clubs in your District may organize on their own, it is up to you to capitalize on existing leads and generate new leads to achieve your District's goals. The primary methods of lead generation are completing your District Market Analysis Plan and pursuing leads from Toastmasters International, officers, and members. District leaders should ensure that they consult their Region Advisor—they are an excellent resource for tips, tools, and best practices.

Leads are divided into two categories: inbound leads and outbound leads. Between the two categories, Districts should prioritize inbound leads first.

Inbound Lead Generation

Inbound leads are people who seek you out. They may come from a variety of sources.

Possible inbound lead sources:

- ▶ Start a Club inquiries via Toastmasters Website/TLM
- ▶ Responses to District marketing and PR efforts
- ▶ Events (e.g., trade shows, expos, conferences)

Leads received from the Start a Club webpage are automatically entered into the TLM system. The lead is assigned to the appropriate District within 24 hours using the location information provided by the lead's primary contact. Once the District is assigned, the TLM system automatically assigns the lead record to the Club Growth Director.

An email notification is sent to the Club Growth Director notifying them that a new lead has been received. Once the lead has been received, the Club Growth Director can reassign it to another member of the team. If the lead record's assigned owner is changed, an email notification is sent to that new owner using the email address associated with their Toastmasters membership. Please ensure all committee members working in the TLM system have updated their primary contact information.

Revisit club leads

Leads that were contacted by previous Club Growth Directors should be revisited and contacted to see if an interest still exists—reconnecting and restating the benefits might reenergize the lead.

If the primary contact that was interested in starting a club is no longer available, you have another opportunity to share the benefits of Toastmasters. If the new contact is not ready to start a club, they may want to do so in the future. In this situation, update the lead record in the TLM system by disqualifying the lead or make a note to follow up at a later time.

Outbound Lead Generation

Outbound leads are people that you identify or pursue who may be interested in starting a club.

You will need to conduct research and actively seek opportunities for new clubs. Possible outbound lead sources:

- ▶ District Market Analysis Plan (market and industry analyses, current leads)
- ▶ Existing corporate clubs in other Districts. Talk to officers in existing clubs to find out more about the organization, club success, and contact information for other locations.
- ▶ Plot the clubs currently in the District on a map and look for areas with few clubs. Identify existing members that live there to see if there are opportunities.
- ▶ Contact the local chamber of commerce to learn what organizations and companies are in your District that could benefit from a Toastmasters club.
- ▶ Think about the things people do outside of work in your community and which of those activities could benefit from a Toastmasters club. For example, if there are several community theaters in your neighborhood, a Toastmasters club could provide opportunities for less experienced actors to become comfortable in front of an audience.
- ▶ Referrals/networking contacts. Ask people at District events if they know of opportunities in the area or at their workplace.

Tip: Some Districts create and place a “lead sheet” on every seat for people to complete at all District events and then collect them during the meeting. Other Districts use the lead sheets as entry forms for a door prize. A lead sheet is a way for your members to share information about potential clubs with you. Assign a member of your marketing team to follow up with individuals who submitted lead sheets. Ask the individual to discuss the possibility of a new club and if they can help schedule a demonstration meeting. The person providing the lead can possibly serve as one of the new club's sponsors or mentors. Additional information is available about club sponsors and mentors at **Club Sponsor, Mentor, and Coach Training**.

Stage 2: Initial Contact

The goal of the initial contact stage is to determine the needs of the lead you are contacting to assess whether Toastmasters is a good fit. You never want to force Toastmasters as a solution to a lead's challenge. Doing so can damage the organization's reputation.

Before making the initial contact with any lead, do some research to learn more about what their needs might be.

Conducting Research

- ▶ Gather information about the potential new club's needs:
 - For a community group, focus on individual development needs. Think about the skills this group is hoping to develop; if you're meeting with a group that is planning to run for office in the future, emphasize the importance of public speaking to politicians and the leadership opportunities in Toastmasters that will support them in their future roles.
 - For a corporate group, focus on business needs, including ROI (return on investment), core values, appropriate terminology, key initiatives, etc. Make sure you can speak to the company's core values and key initiatives.

Once you have completed your research and believe you understand the needs of your lead as much as you can without contacting them, you will make the initial contact. This may take place as a phone call or could be an email. You'll also use different tactics for inbound leads and outbound leads. The following sections outline each of the different ways you might make the initial contact, as well as tips and tricks that will help you be successful regardless of how you contact your lead.

Tip: Keep your lead engaged during initial contact:

- Be polite, courteous, and respectful.
- Smile and be enthusiastic during conversations. A lead can hear if you are genuinely excited.
- Allow the lead to set the pace of the conversation. This takes a lot of the burden off you and the lead will feel good knowing that you are listening.
- Wait for the lead to respond and practice active listening skills when you ask them a question.
- Be confident when you are connecting the lead's needs to what Toastmasters has to offer.
- Do not forget that you are trying to find groups and companies that have a need for a Toastmasters club. If a lead is not a good fit, move on to the next lead.

Calls

Inbound Lead Call

Whenever possible, call your lead (rather than sending an email). The goal of calling the inbound lead is to share some information about how Toastmasters might meet their needs and to request a meeting.

- ▶ Call the inbound lead after completing research about the group or organization.
- ▶ Introduce yourself.
- ▶ Explain why you have their information.
 - “I received your contact information from the Toastmasters website.”
- ▶ Ask permission to have the conversation.
 - “May I ask you a few questions?”
- ▶ Be respectful of their time.
 - “How much time do we have?”
- ▶ Explain the purpose of the conversation.
 - “The purpose of my call today is to determine your needs and challenges and if Toastmasters is a fit for your [Group/Organization].”
- ▶ Create an up-front agreement.
 - “If we find that Toastmasters does meet your needs, the next step would be to schedule a meeting to demonstrate how we meet your needs. Would you be open to that?”
- ▶ Once you have created an agreement with your lead, the next step is to identify the needs of the lead.
 - “Tell me more about your [Group/Organization].”
 - “I noticed that one of your core values is communication. What are some of the improvements you’d like to see related to this?”
 - “What are the biggest challenges your [Group/Organization] faces?”
 - “What are the top skills you’d like to see your [Members/Employees] develop? What solutions have you tried in the past? What kept you from continuing with those solutions?”
- ▶ Listen for understanding. You should be talking less than the lead.
- ▶ Determine if lead is qualified (Can Toastmasters address their needs/pain points?)
 - If no, thank them for their time, but keep the “door open.”
 - “If something in the [Group/Organization] changes, please let me know and we can revisit the conversation about starting your own club.”
 - “If starting a club isn’t a good fit for you right now, do you think any of your [Members/Employees] would be interested in joining an existing club in the area?” (If yes, request permission to leave them with pertinent information and materials.)
 - If yes, connect their needs/pain points to a few specific benefits and value gained from membership in a Toastmasters club. Once you have done so, ask to schedule the demonstration meeting.

If at any point in the process the lead is unsure, try to quickly gain an understanding of their hesitation. If they are truly not interested, do not pressure them. If they are not ready, leave the door open. (“It sounds like you are not at a decision point yet. I want to be respectful of your time. Feel free to contact me if your needs change in the future.”)

Inbound Lead Call Script

The following is a suggested script for when a lead has requested or received information via email and might be interested in meeting with you to learn more.

You: "Hello, [Primary Contact's First Name]?"

Lead: "Yes?"

You: "This is [Name]. I'm a volunteer with Toastmasters International. I've been a member for [Number] years. How are you today?"

Lead: "I'm fine, thanks."

You: "Great! I am calling because I received a request for information from your [Group/Organization]. I can send the information to [Primary Contact's Email Address] or I'd be happy to meet you in person. Which one is better for you?"

- ▶ If the lead answers that they would like to receive the information via email:

You: "Okay! I'll email you the information so you can see all the benefits your [Group and Members/Company and Employees] will receive when you sponsor a Toastmasters club."

- ▶ If they agree only to receiving the email, that's not a problem! You can always call in a few days with the Email Follow-up script on **page 20**.
- ▶ If the lead answers they would like the information in-person:

You: "What day and time work best?"

Congratulations, you've just set up your first meeting!

How to handle objections:

Sometimes a lead may be interested but may not have time or does not understand the benefits that Toastmasters offers. The following are ways you can overcome common objections.

Objection 1: Lead wants information over the phone.

You: "Of course! Toastmasters International is the leading organization dedicated to communication and leadership skills training. Each week, we help thousands of companies in every industry including Toyota, Project Management Institute, and Amazon."

Lead: [Responds or pauses.]

You: "Your [Group and Members/Company and Employees] can enjoy many benefits when you sponsor a Toastmasters club. What day and time work best for you to meet with me and learn more about sponsoring a Toastmasters club?"

Objection 2: Lead says they are no longer interested.

You: "Can you share with me what changed your mind, or are there any questions I can answer to help clarify the benefits of Toastmasters?"

- ▶ If they answer positively, respond and share information that answers their questions directly and succinctly.

You: "Great! I'll get you all the information you need to see how your [Group/Organization] will benefit from sponsoring a Toastmasters club. What's the best email address to send this to?"

- If the lead says they are still not interested, that's okay! We do not want to push a Toastmasters club onto a group or organization that isn't truly interested.

▶ If they answer no:

You: "Thank you for your time and interest in Toastmasters! If the opportunity changes in the future, we would be happy to meet with you then."

Objection 3: Lead says they did not request information.

You: "I apologize. Please let me check my information to make sure I'm talking to the right person. Is this [Primary Contact's First Name] [Primary Contact's Last Name]?"

Lead: "Yes."

You: "And you're [with Group Name/at Company Name]?"

Lead: [Responds.]

You: "And that is in [City, State/Province]?"

Lead: [Responds.]

Explain how you received the lead contact information and confirm again if the lead is the appropriate contact.

▶ If the lead answers "no":

You: "Oh, I'm sorry. Could you connect me with the person in your [Group/Organization] who expressed an interest who might be interested?"

- If the lead says "no" again, that's okay! Move on to another lead on your list.

▶ If the lead answers "yes":

You: "That is wonderful, [Primary Contact's First Name]. I can send the information to [Primary Contact Email Address] or I'd be happy to meet you in person. Which one works best for you?"

▶ If the lead answers, "Email is better":

You: "Great! I'll send you the information." Keep in mind that if the lead agrees to receiving the email only, that's not a problem! You can always call in a few days with the Email Follow-up script on **page 20**.

▶ If they answer "I'd like to meet in person":

You: "Great! What day and time work best for you?"

Outbound Lead Call

Whenever possible, call your lead (rather than sending an email). The goal of calling the outbound lead is to share some information about how Toastmasters might meet their needs and to request an in-person meeting.

- ▶ Call the outbound lead after completing research about the group or organization.
- ▶ Introduce yourself.

- ▶ Build rapport by mentioning or asking about something you discovered during your research
 - “Congratulations on the [Award Description] you received!”
 - “I read that your team is working on a [Initiative Description] initiative. How is that going?”
- ▶ Explain why you are calling and relate it to the above, if possible.
 - “Toastmasters specializes in helping [Groups/Organizations] like yours with [Benefits Description]. Would you be interested in talking about how we could benefit your [Group/Company]?”
 - If you were referred by someone they know, or by someone affiliated with their [Group/Organization], tell them.
 - “Your [Group/Organization]’s [Location] branch has been seeing great results through their Toastmasters club, and [Name] suggested I call you. Would you be interested in talking about how we could benefit your [Members/Employees]?”
- ▶ Ask permission to continue the conversation.
 - “Would it be okay if I ask you a few questions to determine what your needs and challenges are and if Toastmasters is a fit for your [Group/Organization]?”
- ▶ Be respectful of their time.
 - “How much time do we have?”
- ▶ Create an up-front agreement.
 - “If we find that Toastmasters does meet your needs, the next step would be to schedule a meeting to demonstrate how we meet your needs. Would you be open to that?”
- ▶ Once you have created an agreement with your lead, the next step is to identify the needs of the lead.
 - “Tell me more about your [Group/Organization].”
 - “I noticed that one of your core values is communication. What are some of the improvements you’d like to see related to this?”
 - “What are the biggest challenges your [Group/Organization] faces?”
 - “What are the top skills you’d like to see your [Members/Employees] develop? What solutions have you tried in the past? What kept you from continuing with those solutions?”
- ▶ Listen for understanding. You should be talking less than the lead.
- ▶ Determine if lead is qualified (Can Toastmasters address their needs/pain points?)
 - If no, thank them for their time, but keep the “door open.”
 - “If something in the [Group/Organization] changes, please let me know and we can revisit the conversation about starting your own club.”
 - “If starting a club isn’t a good fit for you right now, do you think any of your [Members/Staff] would be interested in joining an existing club in the area?” (If yes, request permission to leave them with pertinent information and materials).
 - If yes, connect their needs/pain points to a few specific benefits and value gained from membership in a Toastmasters club. Once you have done so, ask to schedule the demonstration meeting.

If at any point in the process the lead is unsure, try to quickly gain an understanding of their hesitation. If they are truly not interested, do not pressure them. If they are not ready, leave the door open. (“It sounds like you are not at a decision point yet. I want to be respectful of your time. Feel free to contact me if your needs change in the future.”)

Outbound Lead Call Script

The following is a suggested script for contacting an outbound lead to plant the idea of chartering a Toastmasters club and seeing if they might be interested in meeting with you to learn more.

You: “Hi [Primary Contact Name]. This is [Name]. I’m a volunteer with Toastmasters International. I’ve been a member for [Number] years. How are you today?”

Lead: “Hello, I am fine.”

You: “Congratulations on your [Group/Company] being [Describe Achievement]. I just read about this in [Source]. I see that one of your major initiatives this year is [Describe Initiative], correct?”

Lead: “Yes, thank you. Our [Group/Company] is really focused on this initiative.”

You: “We specialize in working with [Groups/Companies] like yours and we have helped with [Describe Benefits]. Toastmasters has delivered consistent results with many [Groups/Companies] such as Toyota, Project Management Institute, and Amazon are finding success with the Toastmasters program. Would you be interested in knowing how we could benefit your [Group/Company]?”

Lead: “Sure.”

You: “At Toastmasters, we focus on communication and leadership skills. With every Toastmasters meeting, [Members/Employees] learn how to better interact with one another to successfully organize meetings, facilitate quality meetings and tactfully evaluate fellow [Members/Employees]. Would you be interested in the other benefits Toastmasters could provide to your [Group/Company]?”

Lead: “Sure.”

You: “I would be happy to share this with you if it is convenient now. Are you familiar with the Toastmasters club-meeting environment?”

- ▶ If the lead says no, offer a succinct explanation of what a club-meeting environment is and how it is beneficial.
 - Since 1924, Toastmasters International has been recognized as the leading organization dedicated to communication and leadership skill development. Through its worldwide network of clubs, each week Toastmasters helps men and women of every ethnicity, education level, and profession build their competence in communication so they can gain the confidence to lead others. By regularly giving speeches, gaining feedback, leading teams, and guiding others to achieve their goals in a supportive atmosphere, leaders emerge. They learn to tell their stories. They listen and answer. They plan and lead. They give feedback—and accept it. They find their path to leadership.
- ▶ If the lead says yes, ask questions to determine if a Toastmasters club is a good fit for their [Group/Company].

You: “Would you be willing to offer a place for a club meeting to occur? How many employees do you have?”

- ▶ If the lead agrees on these qualifications, offer to meet in-person to build the relationship further.

You: “It sounds like a Toastmasters club is a good fit for your [Group/Company]. Could we set a date for us to review some options in detail?”

- If the lead agrees to set a meeting date, you have succeeded in meeting your objective.
- The next step is to follow up with an email explaining what to expect at the introductory meeting. It is important to be transparent and mindful of the lead’s time.

- ▶ If the lead doesn't agree, let them know that there are clubs in their local area and offer to send them information to promote Toastmasters internally.
- ▶ If the lead seems hurried, ask for a convenient time to talk and call back at that time.
- ▶ If the lead does not seem interested, build interest by asking if you can send them an email with more information to review at their convenience.

Outbound Lead Call to Company that Sponsors Toastmasters Clubs at Other Locations

The following is a suggested script for contacting an outbound lead whose company sponsors Toastmasters clubs at other locations to plant the idea of chartering a Toastmasters club and seeing if they might be interested in meeting with you to learn more.

You: "Hello, [Primary Contact's First Name]?"

Lead: [Responds.]

You: "This is [Name]. I'm a volunteer with Toastmasters International. I've been a member for [Number] years. How are you today?"

Lead: [Responds.]

You: "Great! [Primary Contact's First Name], I'm calling because [Company Name]'s other locations are currently using Toastmasters clubs for communications and leadership training. We would now like to help your location sponsor a Toastmasters club as well! I am able to send the information about Toastmasters via email or we can meet in person. Which do you prefer?"

- ▶ If the lead answers "Email is better":
 - You:** "Great! I'll send you the information."
- ▶ If the lead agrees to only receive the information via email, that's not a problem! You can always call in a few days with the Email Follow-up script on **page 20**.
- ▶ If the lead answers they would like the information in-person:
 - You:** "Great! What day and time work best?"

Email

Inbound Lead Email

For the initial contact, you can choose to email your inbound lead if the person has requested specific resources. The goal of emailing the inbound lead is to provide requested resources and share information on how Toastmasters might meet their needs, and to request a call or meeting.

Send the inbound lead specific, pertinent resources that share how our organization meets their needs. Personalize the email to the person you're contacting. You may include the **Benefits of Toastmasters Membership** flier and Develop Your **Develop Your Leaders From Within** brochure.

In the email, ask to schedule a conversation. This can be on the phone or in person.

When the lead responds to your email, schedule the conversation. If you schedule an in-person conversation, ask to include other key stakeholders or decision makers.

If the lead does not respond to your email within three to five business days, follow up with a phone call. If they did not provide a phone number, email them. If you do not receive a response after three attempts, mark the lead as disqualified in the TLM and do not continue to pursue this lead.

Inbound Lead Email Template

The following is a suggested template for when a lead has requested information and resources and might be interested in meeting with you to learn more.

1. Choose your preferred subject line below

Thanks for contacting Toastmasters International!
Getting Started with Toastmasters
Ready to learn more about Toastmasters?

2. Email body – Personalize it by replacing the text in brackets

Dear [Primary Contact First Name],

Thank you so much for contacting us with your interest in starting a new club! I'm confident that Toastmasters will be an excellent fit for [Group/Organization Name]. Toastmasters' communication and leadership training teaches [Members/Employees] how to:

- ▶ Conduct effective meetings.
- ▶ Practice time management.
- ▶ Enhance their listening skills.
- ▶ Sharpen their presentation skills.
- ▶ Boost team collaboration.
- ▶ Guide successful teams.

I'm attaching resources that will help you learn more about how Toastmasters can benefit your [Group/Organization]. I'd like to schedule some time to talk and answer any questions that you have. Would a call on [Date] at [Time] work for you?

Best Regards,

[Name]
[Toastmasters Title]
[Phone Number]
[Email Address]

When you schedule a conversation with the lead, you can use the Email Follow-Up script on **page 20** to guide the conversation.

Outbound Lead Email

On occasion, an email address may be the only contact information available for a new club lead. The goal of emailing the outbound lead is to start the conversation and share information on how Toastmasters might meet their needs, and to request a call or meeting.

In the email, ask to schedule a conversation. This can be on the phone or in person.

When the lead responds to your email, schedule the conversation. If you schedule an in-person conversation, ask to include other key stakeholders or decision makers.

If the lead does not respond to your email within three to five business days, follow up with another email. If you do not receive a response after three attempts, do not continue to pursue this lead.

Outbound Lead Email Template

The following is a suggested template for when you only have the email address of an outbound lead and are attempting to schedule a conversation.

1. Choose your preferred subject line below

Help your [Members/Employees] become better communicators and leaders
Affordable communication and leadership training
Why Fortune 500 companies choose Toastmasters

2. Email body – Personalize it by replacing the text in brackets

Dear [Name],

Did you know that Toyota, Project Management Institute, Amazon, and other industry leaders offer Toastmasters communication and leadership development on site? In fact, more than half of all Fortune 500 companies sponsor clubs to help their employees become better communicators and leaders. They provide this invaluable benefit because it's easy, cost-effective, and efficient.

- ▶ Conduct effective meetings.
- ▶ Practice time management.
- ▶ Enhance their listening skills.
- ▶ Sharpen their presentation skills.
- ▶ Boost team collaboration.
- ▶ Guide successful teams.

I'd like to schedule some time to talk and answer any questions that you have. Would a call on [Date] at [Time] work for you?

Best Regards,

[Name]

[Toastmasters Title]

[Phone Number]

[Email Address]

When you schedule a conversation with the lead, you can use the Email Follow-Up script on **page 20** to guide the conversation.

Email Follow-up

The following is a suggested script for when you have sent the lead information via email and you are now trying to establish an introduction meeting.

You: "Hello, [Primary Contact's First Name]?"

Lead: "Yes."

You: "This is [Name]. I'm a volunteer with Toastmasters International. I've been a member for [Number] years. How are you today?"

Lead: [Responds.]

You: "Great! [Primary Contact's First Name], I'm calling because I recently emailed you some information regarding sponsoring a Toastmasters club. Did you receive it?"

- ▶ If the lead says "yes":

You: "Perfect! As you already know then, sponsoring a Toastmasters club [For Your Group/At Your Company] is easy, cost-effective and efficient. Let's discuss if your [Group/Company] is the right fit for a Toastmasters club. What day and time work best for us to meet?"

- ▶ If the lead says they did not receive the information via email:

You: "I apologize. Let me check my information to make sure I'm sending it correctly. Are you [Primary Contact's First Name] [Primary Contact's Last Name]?"

Lead: [Responds.]

You: "And you're at [Group Name/Company Name]?"

- Wait for a response. If it's negative, thank them for their time. If it is positive, continue with:

You: "And your email address is [Primary Contact Email Address]?"

Lead: [Responds.]

You: "All right, [Primary Contact's First Name], now that I have the correct information for you I can resend it to [Primary Contact Email Address], or I'd be happy to meet you. Which one works better for you?"

- If the lead says email is better:

You: "Great! I'll send you the information."

- ▶ If the lead agrees to receive the information via email only, that's not a problem! You can always call in a few days and refer back to this "Email Follow-up" script.

- If the Lead answers they'd like to meet:

You: Great! What day and time work best for you?"

How to handle objections:

Objection 1: Lead does not have time.

Lead: "I don't have the time."

You: "I understand how you feel. [Thinking about skills development for your group/Setting up a training and development program] can be quite challenging, yes?"

Lead: [Responds.]

You: Many of our current Toastmasters club sponsors, including Toyota, Project Management Institute, and Amazon felt the same way. But when they learned how inexpensive, easy, and efficient sponsoring a Toastmasters club is, they quickly added clubs to their [Groups/Organizations]. Let me show you the benefits of sponsoring a Toastmasters club. What time and day work best for you to meet?"

Objection 2: Lead wants information over the phone.

Lead: "Can you just tell me about the information you'll be sending now?"

You: "Of course! Toastmasters International is the leading organization dedicated to communication and leadership skills training. Each week, we help thousands of companies in every industry, including Toyota, Project Management Institute, and Amazon."

▶ Wait for a response. If it is positive, continue with:

You: "Your [Group and Members/Company and Employees] can enjoy many benefits when you sponsor a Toastmasters club. What day and time work best for you to meet and learn more about sponsoring a Toastmasters club?"

▶ If the lead responds negatively, see if you can clearly identify their needs and connect Toastmasters to them. If you cannot, thank them for their time.

Objection 3: Lead at a company doesn't want/need another program.

Lead: "We have all the employee development programs we need."

You: "I understand how you feel. Having too many employee development programs can be difficult, right?"

Lead: [Responds.]

You: "Many of our current Toastmasters club sponsors, including Toyota, Project Management Institute, and Amazon, felt the same way. But when they found out how inexpensive, easy and efficient sponsoring a Toastmasters club was, they came on board quickly. Let me show you the benefits of sponsoring a Toastmasters club. What time and day work best for you to meet?"

Lead: "Can you just tell me about the information you'll be sending now?"

You: "Of course! Toastmasters International is the leading organization dedicated to communication and leadership skills training. Each week, we help thousands of companies in every industry, including Toyota, Project Management Institute, and Amazon."

▶ Wait for a response. If it is positive, continue with:

You: "Your company and employees can enjoy many benefits when you sponsor a Toastmasters club. What day and time work best for you to meet and learn more about sponsoring a Toastmasters club?"

▶ If the lead responds negatively, see if you can clearly identify their needs and connect Toastmasters to them. If you cannot, thank them for their time.

Stage 3: The Introduction Meeting

The goal of this meeting is to show that Toastmasters meets the needs of the lead that you have identified and to schedule a demonstration meeting. If you have not talked to key stakeholders or decision makers previously, you want to make sure they are included and that you build rapport with them. It is important to prepare for this meeting to ensure that you can clearly connect their specific needs and challenges to the benefits and value provided by Toastmasters. It is possible to achieve this goal through a in-person meeting or online meeting.

- ▶ Make introductions, as needed.
- ▶ Briefly recap previous conversation(s) and confirm your understanding of their needs and challenges is accurate.
- ▶ Set expectations for the meeting or call.
 - Explain your purpose and ask what their desired outcome is.
 - During this meeting, I would like to ensure that I fully understand the needs and challenges your [Members/ Employees] are facing to jointly determine if Toastmasters is a fit for your [Group/Organization]; and make sure you get all of your questions answered. Does that sound good to you? What would you like to accomplish?
- ▶ Confirm how much time you have for the meeting or call.
- ▶ Create an up-front agreement.
 - “If we find that Toastmasters does meet your needs, the next step would be to schedule a meeting to demonstrate how we meet your needs. Would you be open to that?”
- ▶ Continue uncovering needs and challenges
 - “In addition to what we already discussed, are there any additional needs or problems that would be helpful for me to know about?”
- ▶ Listen for understanding. You should be talking less than the lead.
- ▶ Connect their needs to a few specific benefits gained from Toastmasters membership.
 - “You mentioned that some of your less experienced actors are experiencing stage fright when they are cast in a production. With regular Toastmasters meetings, these actors would have more opportunities to be in front of an audience and develop strategies and tactics to help them work through their stage fright.”
 - “You mentioned that your employees have been having a hard time conducting effective meetings. With Toastmasters, your employees will have regular opportunities to practice conducting meetings, receiving feedback each time to help them improve.”
- ▶ Ask if they feel that Toastmasters can solve the needs and challenges you have been discussing.
- ▶ If yes, discuss organizational resources and commitment: “It sounds like you are ready to move forward. Let’s talk about what is needed to start and support a club in your [Group/Organization].”
 - Meeting space: Do have you meeting space available?
 - Contribution: Will the [Members/Employees] contribute?
 - Funds: Do you have a budget set aside for a club?
 - When would you be hoping to have the first meeting?
 - Commitment: Are you authorized to make this commitment? If not, who else should be involved in this conversation?
 - Challenges: Do you foresee any challenges or financial concerns that would prevent you from moving forward?
- ▶ Address any final concerns they may have.

- ▶ Ask to schedule the demonstration meeting and explain the purpose of it. Be sure to ask them to invite key stakeholders, including potential club members.

If at any point in the process the lead is unsure, try to quickly gain an understanding of their hesitation. If they are truly not interested, do not pressure them. If they are not ready, leave the door open. (“It sounds like you are not at a decision point yet. I want to be respectful of your time. Feel free to contact me if your needs change in the future.”)

Resources

All About Toastmasters

The Benefits of Toastmasters Membership

Corporate Clubs Soft Skills

Transform Your Talent

Toastmasters Introduction Presentation Templates

Stage 4: The Demonstration Meeting

The goal of the demonstration (demo) meeting is to provide the lead with the experience of a Toastmasters club meeting that is relevant to their organization. Another option could be to invite the lead, key stakeholders, and potential club members to your club’s Toastmasters meeting.

- ▶ Create a customized demonstration (demo) meeting presentation.
 - Using the needs and pain points you identified previously, work with the sponsor to customize a demo meeting presentation for the lead that will resonate with the audience.
- ▶ Select demo team to run the meeting.
 - Select individuals who are representative of the potential members and fit their culture (e.g., if their list of needs includes “improving technical presentations made by staff,” have the speaker deliver a good technical presentation and ensure they receive valuable feedback.)
- ▶ Rehearse the demo meeting with the sponsor and team.
- ▶ Ensure that the right people from the prospective club’s [Group/Organization] attend the demo meeting (i.e., be sure that potential members of the prospective club attend.)
- ▶ Deliver the demo meeting.
- ▶ Focus on being relevant to the key decision makers and prospective club members who are in the room.
- ▶ Ask if they are ready to start a club.
- ▶ If at any point in the process the lead is unsure, try to quickly gain an understanding of their hesitation. If they are truly not interested, do not pressure them. If they are not ready, leave the door open. (“It sounds like you are not at a decision point yet. I want to be respectful of your time. Feel free to contact me if your needs change in the future.”)

Tip: If you are using an video conference platform, make sure to conduct a test meeting to practice using the platform. Invite other Toastmasters members to assist in the test meeting. This will help to avoid common challenges often experienced with running a video conference meeting.

Resources

Demonstration Meeting Sample Agenda

Find Your Voice

A Toastmaster Wears Many Hats

Your Path to Leadership

Stage 5: The Charter Process (Application)

The goal of the charter process is to form a prospective club.

- ▶ Obtain a completed Application to Organize (ATO) and initial fee (\$125 USD) – converting the lead to a prospective club.
 - If necessary, meet with the key decision makers to assist with ATO.
 - Collect the fee right away if possible.
- ▶ Ensure support is provided to the prospective club by assigning a sponsor.
 - The sponsor assists and supports the prospective club in generating interest, building membership, and overcoming challenges. The sponsor's responsibilities also include:
 - Marketing.
 - Conducting meetings.
 - Understanding meeting roles.
 - Meeting location.
 - Finance/budget concerns.
 - Selecting club officers.
- ▶ Ensure that the prospective club is ready to complete the new-club process.
 - Provide support and encouragement to continue momentum.

Resources

How to Build a Toastmasters Club: A Step-by-Step Guide

From Prospect to Guest to Member

Let The World Know Publicity and Promotion Handbook

Membership Application

Member Welcome Kit

Member Interest Survey

Stage 6: New Club Support

To ensure the prospective club completes the new-club process and provides its members a high-quality educational experience from the start, you need to ensure ongoing support is provided.

- ▶ Assign a club mentor.
 - Select someone who understands the new club's interests or industry, fits their culture, and can best support their needs.
- ▶ Ensure remaining paperwork is completed accurately and submitted.
- ▶ Support the club in collecting membership fees and dues.
- ▶ Guide clubs to create a quality club experience.
- ▶ Celebrate the accomplishment with the new club.
- ▶ Provide ongoing support as needed.
 - Club sponsor, mentor, and Area Director work with the club to assess its needs, as well as provide resources.

Resources

How to Build a Toastmasters Club: A Step-by-Step Guide

Club Sponsor, Mentor, and Coach Training



toastmasters.org