

Saturday Morning LIVE!

Toastmasters International
Club 9196, Frontier Division
District 6

Issue 04, April 2012

LIVE! Wire

Quarterly Newsletter of Saturday Morning LIVE!

The Leadership Challenge

Ravi Rai

President, SML!



The 2011–2012 Toastmasters year is finally winding down. For some of us it's a relief that the year is finally over. For a lot of us, it is a humbling moment when we think of the year gone by with a sense of gratitude.

A big challenge in our leadership structure is to successfully pave the way for the new leadership team coming on board for the 2012–2013 Toastmasters year. I believe a majority of clubs have the challenge of finding their next leader. We have that challenge every year at our club.

Let me share my personal views on the leadership.

Many years ago when I was approached to be the club president, I said no. I doubted my abilities, and I was afraid of failure. Over the years, those fears kept me away from taking on the leadership challenge. Finally, in 2011, I accepted the challenge. This was to overcome the very fear that made me join Toastmasters. The fear can easily be overcome in a positive leadership learning environment such as SML. Stretch yourself by going that extra mile. I did that, and the path has been wonderful.

The challenge of leadership was rewarded with respect that I got from fellow members; the hard-working team of officers and role players was an eye-opener. I learned that in the world of good leadership, you are always surrounded with positive, supportive people. The best part is that help comes from unexpected quarters.



2011–2012 MESSAGE:
GO THE EXTRA MILE

This Issue

The Leadership Challenge	P. 1
Joe's Views and Collections	P. 2
Concentration = Focus	P. 3
District 6 February TELI	P. 4
Abstract of Andrew Stanton TED Talk	P. 5
Robert McKee 10 Story Commandments	P. 5
Sakes aLIVE!	P. 6
Guest Comments	P. 6
Evaluation Tips from the SML! President	P. 7
Meetings	P. 8

I hope you will accept the challenge in your club or SML by considering a leadership role.

Have a wonderful time on your extra mile.

SML! Focus Statement

The focus of Saturday Morning LIVE! Toastmasters Club is to provide an environment in which experienced Toastmasters can achieve a degree of excellence made possible in an advanced club setting, with emphasis on the ability to provide and receive skillful evaluations of advanced-level speeches.

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Joe's Views & Collections

Dr. Joe Sharp



Time Timing Light

How can Toastmasters best prepare us to make outside speeches? Out there, we don't get "crutches" like the green, yellow, and red flags. If experienced speakers want to train themselves not to rely on the first two "crutches," they should be able to request that the green and yellow flags not be shown. Their time requests would look like this:

TIME: 5–7 minutes, no green or yellow flags

I believe an advanced club of experienced speakers like SML would be more professional to have such an option.

Is Plot or Character More Important?

Kristin Thompson writes, "The question of whether the modern Hollywood cinema is plot-driven or character-driven is in most cases misleading. *It is both* [my emphasis], with strong plots being based on strong characterization."

Robert McKee divides stories into three classes in order of decreasing plot strength: archplot, miniplot, and antiplot. He comments that ease of obtaining financing in Hollywood is proportional to this strength. His list of the most popular Hollywood movies is dominated by archplots.

Incidentally, this strong a preference for archplots is not true elsewhere, where art movies are popular.

The Teacher

A mother once asked Gandhi to get her son to stop eating sugar. Gandhi told the child to come back in two weeks. Two weeks later the mother brought her child before

Gandhi. Gandhi said to the boy, "Stop eating sugar." The puzzled woman replied, "Thank you, but I must ask why you didn't tell him that two weeks ago." Gandhi replied, "Two weeks ago, I was eating sugar."

Script Reading Is Helpful

I have learned much reading scripts of the movies I've been watching. Luckily, most are available on the web at no cost.

Many confusing messages in *The Piano* sent by Holly's piano playing and the Maori tribes people were cleared up in the script.

To see the omitted details in *Educating Rita*, the script of the play on which it was based was most helpful. It wasn't clear, for example, why Macbeth had a big effect on her. The play clarifies this by quoting Macbeth's moving soliloquy:

Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
And then is heard no more; It is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury
Signifying nothing.

Medium vs. Story Complexity

We have three mass media to portray a story:

Prose brilliantly portrays inner conflict.
Theater especially portrays interpersonal conflict and particularly exploits the voice.
Screen excels at dramatizing extra-personal conflict, with huge vivid images of many people wrapped inside their living society and environment.

I believe presentations exploit the voice, like theater, but are best at portraying inner conflict, like prose.

These differences affect the best type of story to write for each medium, but even more how much reinvention will be required to adapt a given story from one medium to another, and how well this can even be done.

Examples of pretty effective adaptation after extensive reinvention are Salieri's confession in *Amadeus* and most of *Educating Rita*.

Puzzling

I was recently reminded that as they floated down the Mississippi, Jim and Huck expressed puzzlement over how foreigners could possibly understand each other, since they don't speak English.

Truth in Storytelling

A story should be just true enough to be interesting, but not true enough to be tiresome.

—paraphrase of Saki

Concentration = Focus

Dr. Joe Sharp

What counts is the amount of uninterrupted time spent on a project.

Concentrating on one thing at a time is key in every activity, whether personal or organizational.

Few problems can resist an all-out attack.

Edwin Bliss's classical *Getting Things Done* is a series of titled topics, in alphabetic order. This ensures maximum exclusive focus on each topic.

The most extreme focus I know of is by the modern novelist Georges Simenon. He achieves total isolation to write each new book: no phone, no visitors, no newspapers, no mail, no TV—"I live like a monk." After

True to Life?

Casablanca: Release a dangerous criminal because of the writing of a dead enemy Prime Minister. Use a whole plane to fly only two people when a third is armed.

The Verdict: Modern hospital in a first-world sophisticated city where no one reads the slip admitting a patient to major surgery.

These were ridiculous setups for dramatic endings in movies pretending to be realistic.



Caroline Baker won 1st place in the Frontier Division Table Topics



Tim Kelley won 2nd place, Frontier Division International Speech Contest.

eleven days in this total writing immersion, he emerges with another best-selling novel.

Oliver Wendell Holmes wrote, "If you want to hit a bird on the wing, you must have all your will in focus... You must be living with your eye on the bird. Every achievement is a bird on the wing."

A Loss to SML!

Our fellow toastmaster, Fed Domnick, breathed his last on Feb 27. Fred was a kind hearted soul who inspired people around him. He will be dearly missed at our meetings. We spent part of a meeting paying tribute to Fred. The video is available at our website.

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District 6 February TELI

By Ravi Rai



D6 members signing the banner

The District 6 February TELI was as held at the Ramada Plaza, Minneapolis, MN.

Notable items:

- Jana Barnhill, Past International President, was the guest speaker at the TELI.
- Jana awed the audience with plenary sessions “Dare to Be a Diamond!” and “Which Way Did They Go? I’m Their Leader!”
- SML! member Faye Hefele presented an educational session, “Finding and Shaping the Diamonds to Build Leaders in District 6.”
- District 6 is gearing for a march across the stage at the Toastmasters International convention in Florida by signing the banner to be distinguished district.
- Ravi co-hosted an educational presentation with LGET Dru Jorgensen because of a presenter’s last-minute cancellation.



Sharon Rollefson, SML member and LGM, with Jana Barnhill



SML member Edward with Joe Brauer and Brian Hinton



The audience enjoyed two sessions with Jana



Fred Domnick at TELI



Jana interacts with the audience



Carol Duling and Ravi Rai with Jana Barnhill



An eager audience for Jana's presentation



When a presenter is unavailable, a Toastmaster steps up



SML member Faye Hefele is all smiles for the camera



Triple Crown award recipients



Faye presenting an educational session on mentoring

Abstract of Andrew Stanton TED Talk

LIVE! Wire

By Joe Sharp

Storytelling is knowing your punch line, your ending.

Storytelling is knowing that everything you're saying, from your first sentence to your last, is leading to a single goal and ideally confirming some truth that deepens our understanding of who we are as human beings.

We all love stories; we're born for them.

We all want affirmation that our lives have meaning, and there is no stronger affirmation than when we connect through stories.

"There isn't anyone you couldn't learn to love, once you've heard their story." (Mr. Rogers kept this quote in his wallet.)

The greatest story commandment is to make the audience care—emotionally, intellectually, and aesthetically. A good story makes a promise that it will lead you somewhere worthwhile. That promise, if told well, will propel you through the story to the end.

The audience wants to "work for its meal." In other words, people are prepared to follow a compelling story without necessarily knowing where it will lead to get to the conclusion. They are willing to make the effort.

The Unifying Theory of 2 + 2: Don't give the audience 4, give them 2 + 2 and let them work out the answer themselves.

The elements you provide and the order in which you place them are crucial to whether you succeed in

engaging the audience or not.

A good story is inevitable but not predictable.

All well-portrayed characters have a goal that they want to achieve.

Change is fundamental in story; if things go static, stories die because life is not static.

"Drama is anticipation mingled with uncertainty."
— William Archer, British Playwright

You need to craft your story so that it builds anticipation. Construct honest conflicts that create doubt about what the truth might be.

Storytelling has guidelines, not hard and fast rules. A strong theme always runs through a well-told story. The big question: Can you invoke wonder in your audience? Wonder is honest, innocent, and can't be artificially invoked.

The ability to instill wonder in others, to hold them still for a brief moment and make them surrender to wonder, is one of the greatest gifts one person can give to another.

The best stories infuse the audience with wonder.

When developing your stories, use what you know. It doesn't always mean plot or fact. It means capturing a truth from your experience and expressing values you personally feel deep down to your core.

Robert McKee 10 Story Commandments

By Joe Sharp

For over 25 years, Robert McKee's story seminar has been the world's ultimate writing class for over 50,000 screenwriters, filmmakers, novelists, actors, producers, and playwrights. Now Mr. McKee shares his 10 Commandments of Story.

10 Commandments of Story

- I. Thou shalt respect thine audience.
- II. Thou shalt research.
- III. Thou shalt dramatize thine exposition.
- IV. Thou shalt layer a subtext under every text.
- V. Thou shalt create complex characters rather than merely complicated story.
- VI. Thou shalt use neither false mystery nor cheap surprise.
- VII. Thou shalt not use *deus ex machina* to get thine ending.
- VIII. Thou shalt not make life easy for thine protagonist.
- IX. Thou shalt take thine story into the depth and breadth of human experience.
- X. Thou shalt not sleep with anyone who has more problems than thou.

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Sakes aLIVE!

By Keith Hardy, DTM

This coming August 2012 will be the 20th anniversary of Saturday Morning LIVE!'s first meeting. The 12 of us who began the fledgling effort only wanted a LIVE advanced club on the east side of the Twin Cities that would be a model of excellence for regular Toastmasters clubs along with other advanced/specialty clubs.

We have done that and then some.

I remember being nervous as I was the first-ever speaker to receive that three-person evaluation. That first meeting—August 8, 1992—was my birthday, of all days. I should have been having fun, yet I was sweating out how I would fare getting feedback from three people for the same speech!

I had to remember that we picked the second Saturday of each month so that we didn't conflict with Crest O' the Hill Toastmasters, a club in which many of us were members or had benefited from being guests at their meetings.

My speech was about railroad safety, taken from a presentation that I had been giving for three years on behalf of my employer, Burlington Northern Railroad. I did what I thought was my usual good job. Was I in for a surprise!

That first team evaluation set the stage for what would be two decades of high-level learning for me at SML! Dawn (Sursely) Fish, Doug Ward, and Charles Burrell gave excellent suggestions. I especially remember how Dawn suggested that I focus on all three types of learners: kinesthetic, auditory, and visual. Everyone who attended saw the value they could gain by joining this club.

As we gained our 20th and 21st members at our January 9, 1993, meeting, we were ecstatic. I remember how in one breath we celebrated the final two charter members (Marcy Minikus and Bob Overby) and with the next breath started planning a quality, memorable charter party (including Dallas Sursely calling then-District Governor Sue Koering to ensure we picked a date she could attend). That was



SML! from the start, and how we continue to be.

In the 19-plus years I've been a member I have seen great people join and move on from our club. Thankfully, some of the long-timers are still active with us—Dave Hutcheson (fellow charter member), Pat Croal, Mary Torno, and Violet Schmitz, our mainstay guest. I've been quite blessed with our "newer" members over the past decade, including having my first-ever evaluation include singing at our recent April 14 meeting!

I'll be a lifer with SML!, LIVing it up with advanced evaluation.

Guest Comments

By Mary Torno, DTM

I would like to thank Mary Torno for asking me to share some thoughts about my time as a member of Saturday Morning Live! I visited the club sometime in 1998 after I had been a Toastmaster for about two years. I remember how impressed I was at the professional level of the club and its members. It only took one visit to convince me that the club had a lot to offer. While I always appreciated good evaluations for my projects, I struggled to provide solid evaluations to others. Through the many examples of my fellow members, I learned to be a better evaluator. Thank you SML!

Cliff Heinsch, DTM, PID

Saturday Morning Live taught me to be prepared. Evaluations were geared to dig deep to help the speaker. I learned to say to the speaker how their speech affected me. Also, not to criticize the speaker personally, but rather focus on the speech itself.

The club helped me grow as an evaluator.

Judy Southwick, DTM, PID

By Ravi Rai

SML has always followed the tradition of having the president give an evaluation tip of the day. During my term as president, I selected my evaluation tips based on my observation of speakers, listeners, and professionals who aspire to make an impact on their audience.

Here is a list of those tips and the meaning behind them:

1. Think of the speaker as a professional speaker and evaluate them accordingly.

At Saturday Morning LIVE!, we regard our speakers as professionals. As a result, we want our evaluations to be top-notch. To have an evaluation of high caliber, treat the speaker as a professional.

2. Show that you care by making caring comments.

An evaluator's words can shower praise on the speaker or can break the speaker. One has to choose comments. Carefully chosen comments are vital for a speaker.

3. Validate others.

This tip comes from Lance Miller's World Championship speech. Just as he promoted the idea of validating others, an evaluator can make a positive difference in a speaker's life by validating his or her speech.

4. Dale Carnegie suggests making someone feel special.

According to Dale Carnegie's *How to Win Friends and Influence People*, there are six dimensions of T.H.A.N.K.S. "S" means special. It is critical. As an evaluator, think about making your speaker feel special. The evaluation can be fine-tuned to make the speaker feel he is a special person in the evaluator's eyes.

5. Connect with the speaker.

We always advise our speakers to connect with the audience. But how do we connect with the speaker? A good evaluator first connects with the speaker. At our club, we meet with our speaker before the meeting. We go over the objectives to understand how the speaker will use the stage to give the speech. An evaluator uses this time before the meeting to connect with the speaker to truly understand the purpose of the speech and the speaker.

6. Be aware of mental and physical space. Give feedback, connect with, and think of the audience.

Internal space refers to a speaker's preparation of the speech in their mind. I came up with this concept to explain how, as speakers, we think of a speech in our minds, where it takes a shape. This speech, when delivered to the audience, is transformed into a physical space. It is important to consider the efforts that were spent in the space while working on the speech.

7. Look for how speakers make connections emotionally.

Emotional connection is a measure of the effect that a speaker has on the audience. This evaluation tip encouraged our members to look at the emotional appeal of the speech.

8. As an evaluator, look for the uniqueness of the speaker to find their hidden treasure.

This evaluation tip comes from a Toastmaster whom I greatly admire. She is Betty Liedke. Betty always encourages us to find those hidden treasures inside ourselves. Use this concept of hidden treasure to find something unique about the speaker and the speech.

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SML! Officers

President

Ravi Rai

VP Education

Linda Ruhland

Carol Duling

VP Membership

Faye Hefele

VP Public Relations

Mary Torno

Secretary

Mary McGrath

Treasurer

Pat Croal

Sergeant-at-Arms

Dave Hutcheson

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Sml.d6pages.com

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9:30 – 11:30 a.m.

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Saturday Morning LIVE!

Advanced Toastmasters Club

Meets every month (2nd Sat.)

Affinity Plus Federal Credit Union

175 W. Lafayette Rd.

St. Paul, MN 55107

Meetings

January 14, 2012

Theme: **Winter Wonderland**

Toastmaster: Kirk Johnson

General Evaluator: Dave Hutcheson

Videographer: Joe Sharp Timer: Keith Hardy

Grammarian: Caroline Baker

Evaluation Team 1: Ravi Rai, Joe Sharp, Jane Michelkamp

Evaluation Team 2: Linda Ruhland, Carol Duling, Tim Kelley

Speeches:

1. Bridget Kelley: "It's About Time!"

2. Mary McGrath: "Book Proposal of the Littlest Lighthouse"

Best Evaluator Award: Linda Ruhland

Sunny Award: Dave Hutcheson

February 18, 2012

Theme: **Breakfast of Champions**

Toastmaster: Caroline Baker

Videographer: Joe Sharp Timer: Susie Bergh

Grammarian: Faye Hefele

General Evaluator: Linda Ruhland

Evaluation Team 1: Keith Hardy, Bridget Kelley, Mary McGrath

Evaluation Team 2: Ravi Rai, Fred Domnick, Dan Vesey

Speeches:

1. Pat Croal: "A Plan for your Development"

2. Tim Kelley: "Change Demands Action"

Best Evaluator Award: Ravi Rai

Sunny Award: Carol Duling

March 10, 2012

Theme: **Club Contest**

Toastmaster: Carol Duling

Contest Chair: Linda Ruhland

Chief Judge: Ravi Rai

International Speech Contestant:

Tim Kelley "1975"

Table Topics Contestant:

Caroline Baker, Mary McGrath, Tim Kelley

Videographer: Bridget Kelley

Timer: Pat Croal

Grammarian: Carol Duling

Tim & Caroline will represent SML at the Area 25 Contest.

Ravi also gave a speech titled "Refresh."

A memorial Table Topics was held in honor of Fred Domnick.



At Saturday Morning LIVE! we believe that every Toastmaster receives real 'value' through Quality Evaluations