

ORIENTATION OF THE NEW MEMBER AND MENTORING

Handout #1

Start New Members Off Right

Follow these four steps to “start you new members off right”.

Tell them about Toastmasters. The vice president education (or another officer) should conduct a two-way orientation interview with each new member. This permits the new member to review his needs and discuss his expectations it also provides club leaders with an opportunity to explain how Toastmasters works and what is expected from each club member.

Coach them to excellence. Select a mentor for each new member. This is an experienced Toastmaster who provides guidance, support, and assistance in helping the new member set and achieve her self-development goals. The Mentor Program Kit (Catalog No. 1163) contains all you'll need to establish an effective mentoring program.

Induct them with flair. Joining Toastmasters is an important event in someone's life, and a meaningful induction ceremony underscores this fact. It also strengthens a new member's commitment to excellence and sense of belonging.

Get them speaking. Schedule a new member's Ice Breaker speech as soon as possible. Assign your club's best evaluators to evaluate a new member's speeches. Give new members lots of positive reinforcement, and make them feel good about themselves!

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Handout #2

Mentoring Your New Members

Trying to explain everything at once to a new member will only confuse and discourage them. But when information is provided over several meeting or several months it is less overwhelming and more likely to be understood and remembered. Following are some suggestions about what to tell new members and when to tell them.

Meeting 1

Sit with the new member. Explain the various parts of the meeting such as the business session, table Topics, prepared speeches and evaluations as they happen and answer any questions the mentee might have.

Orient the new member to club customs and procedures. If your club has special award or events or other special activities or procedures, explain those to the mentee. Help the mentee become comfortable and part of the club in any way you can.

Orient the new member to the Toastmasters program highlighting the two track system.

Check that the new member's Ice Breaker is scheduled. Ask the Vice President Education to schedule the mentee's Ice Breaker speech as soon as possible if this has not already been done. Also advise the mentee as to the system of requesting meeting roles that is used in your club. Also explain who to contact if the mentee is scheduled to fill and role but is unable to attend a particular meeting.

Encourage the mentee to volunteer to serve on a committee or participate in planning a special event if that is applicable to your club.

Help with the Ice Breaker. Many experienced Toastmasters will consider the first speech to be the most difficult. This is because new members are not only uncomfortable speaking before a group but they are also speaking before relative strangers. Your assistance can help a mentee overcome fears and get off to a good start. Discuss speech ideas with the mentee and offer suggestions for organization of the speech if necessary. Listen to the mentee practice the speech and offer feedback.

Meeting 2

Make mentees aware of resources. If your club has a library, show it to the mentee. Point out the material in *The Toastmaster* magazine and TIPS. Also discuss District Conferences. Explain the roles of club officers and the information they can provide.

Provide positive feedback. The first few weeks of membership are critical. Members must feel they are already benefiting from the Toastmasters experience. Compliment them on their progress.

Explain responsibilities. Membership requires more than just giving speeches and receiving evaluations. It also means a commitment to helping the club and its members be successful.

Help with speeches and other assignments. As you work with mentees on their speeches, be sure to help them use their evaluation feedback to improve their next speech, then offer your own feedback. When mentees are assigned other meeting roles, explain the roles and offer tips for fulfilling them.

Explain the Leadership Program and how your club puts it into effect. Make sure your mentee knows the importance of completing assignments in the Competent Leadership Manual.

At Following Meetings

Eventually mentors should also do the following:

Tell how you've benefited. Share your own goals and aspirations with the mentees and how you have benefited from the program. You are proof that they can achieve their own goals.

Invite the mentee to other events. Toastmasters speech contests, conferences and other clubs' meetings all offer mentees the opportunity to extend their learning and participation.

Acknowledge progress. During a club meeting mention your mentee and his/her progress in the program, maybe during an evaluation. Such recognition shows that the club cares about the mentee's progress and motivate the mentee to continue.

Explain officers' duties. Describe how the mentee can develop leadership skills by serving as a club officer. Help the mentee select a club office in which to serve and discuss when the mentee should serve.

Explain speech contests. Discuss the purpose of speech contest, the types of contests conducted by the club, and how some contests progress to Area, Division, District and sometimes International levels. Help mentees assess their readiness to participate in contests.

Describe the TI organisation. Acquaint the mentee with Toastmasters International structure including the Area, Division, District, Region and International levels and the purpose of each. Help the mentee understand how the organisation works, the mentee's role in the organization and the leadership opportunities available beyond the club