



LA1924 Newsletter

For Excellence in **Communication** and **Leadership**, the
Buck Stops Here!!



We meet every **Wednesday** at Royal Orchid, Manipal Center,
MG Road, Bengaluru.

JANUARY 2015 ISSUE



President's Message

By TM Sureshkumar Kamalanathan



Congratulations LA1924 and LAites!

It is a momentous and proud occasion for LA1924 Toastmasters club. The club which was founded 18 years ago has reached its 900th meeting. This great achievement of 900 meetings has been made possible only by the tireless efforts of our founding members, past presidents, senior members and mentors!

LA1924 has always been at the forefront of communication and leadership. The past presidents and members have ensured that LA1924's flag flies high always! Just to state an example, LA1924 has achieved the Distinguished Club status from Toastmasters International, nine times in the last ten years! Four times it has been recognized as the President's Distinguished Club in the last ten years!

I take this opportunity to recognize and appreciate with gratitude, the contribution of all our Past Presidents, committee members and our mentors in ensuring the club does not waver on the quality of meetings, speeches and the member experience!

The learnings received in LA1924 have been demonstrated successfully by many of our members in the District contests! Our club members have served in many leadership roles in the District and other committees!

The current committee and the future committees of LA1924 have a very tough task ahead. The benchmark has been set very high by the previous committees. We need to live up to that benchmark and also raise it meeting after meeting! I am sure the members of LA1924 will ensure that the flag is kept flying high. And, I am very sure LA1924 will march towards thousands of more meetings, because

“For excellence in communication and leadership, the buck stops at LA1924!”



How LA1924 Toastmasters Club Came Into Being

By TM Chandra Mouli



From the small classroom at the Alliance to Royal Orchid Plaza, we've come a long way. Many members came, participated for a while, picked up communication skills, gained confidence to stand before a crowd and overcome the world's number one fear – the fear of Public Speaking. For those of us who have stayed back in order to support and nurture this wonderful club, we know that it has been a wonderfully rewarding experience for each of us.– this is the enthusiasm to be better and better, the courage to push oneself to the limit, and the determination to strive for excellence in all aspects of communication. For we know that voice modulation, coupled with body language, facial expressions, gestures and eye contact conveys a much more powerful message than just through the words alone.

When Dr. Ralph Smedley, the founder of Toastmasters started the first Club in the year 1924, in a small town called Santa Anna in California, he had a dream. His dream was to make offer young men and women a platform to hone their communication skills. Later this dream was enunciated and quantified, and the mission of Toastmasters was laid out – The mission was to make effective communication a worldwide reality. This dream is today becoming a reality.

Almost 16 years ago, two members of a Toastmasters Club in Bangalore had another dream. Vinay Kamath and Deepak Justin two young and enthusiastic Toastmasters drummed up the courage to start a new club in Bangalore. They determined that this club would have its own special identity. An identity based on excellence in communication, and this identity was to be reflected in the mission statement for the club The mission statement was : For EXCELLENCE IN COMMUNICATION AND LEADERSHIP, THE BUCK STOPS HERE.

At the first meeting, there were only a handful of members present. The meeting venue was a small classroom in the Alliance Française, the quality of the speakers was just average, but the enthusiasm of each of the members was immense.

We have had our up and downs but survived 900 meetings (about 16.5 years!) to tell another story. We leave behind a legacy. For we have amongst us only the best speakers. We have had about seventy Competent Toastmasters. The First Distinguished Toastmaster from our Dist., Mr Ian Faria was with us, along with another Distinguished Toast Master Mr Manian. The Past Dist. Governor Mr Venkat too was a member of this club. We have nurtured young members who have grown up and ventured into their own professions, some have started a new clubs and others have proved their skills abroad.

Lets all therefore raise our glasses as we Toast the founder of Toastmasters – Dr. Ralph Smedley – may his dream for making effective communication a worldwide reality see fruition, and may our great country benefit through the propagation of this dream Long live Dr. Smedley's memory, and may our countrymen become effective and powerful communicators.

Nothing can be changed by changing the face – but what you need to do is to FACE THE CHANGE.



How Is 2015 Coming Along For You?

By TM Binod Maliel



Every new year is an occasion to make new resolutions. Most of us also faithfully break our resolutions in the first 2-4 weeks of the new year.

In 2015, can we do something different so that we break lesser resolutions and slack off on fewer goals? Can we achieve more of the goals that matter to us in 2015?

When I interviewed Nandan Nilekani, he shared secrets that made him successful. Here is something he said that made a huge impression on me. He said that to succeed, we need to learn how to be “less busy and more effective”.

One of the secrets of how we can get more done in 2015 – is to have fewer goals. This requires us to have more clarity. Nandan was immediately able to rattle off his 5 present goals. That is the level of clarity he has. How about you? Do you know your top goals for 2015?

Here are two steps that can help us achieve more of what we want in 2015. None of this is rocket science or new to us. All the same, being reminded of these can improve our achievements tremendously.

Step 1: Have Few, Clear, Written goals

Have a maximum of 3 to 5 big goals for 2015 – goals that if you achieve, will take your life to a much higher level. Tony Robbins suggests that you should have goals for your marriage, your kids, your work, and for yourself. You may decide to have goals in other areas too. That is fine. But the important thing is to have few, clear, written down goals.

Three things that you may want to keep in mind when you write your goals:

One, first write the WHAT.

Write down what do you want to get done and by when. This gives clarity. Like the rays in a laser focus to the extent it can cut through steel, clearer goals have better chances of getting done.

Your goals may be behavioral or non-behavioral. For example, saying “Every time I am provoked, I am going to pause for a few seconds before I respond” is a behavioral goal. Saying “I will reach the weight of 55 kgs by June” is a non-behavioral goal. In this case, to achieve the target, although you may need to change some behaviors, it is mainly a non-behavioral goal.

Two, write down the WHY.

Unless you know why you want to achieve what you want to achieve, you will soon lose motivation, and you could fail to achieve your goals.

You can be sure that you definitely will face discouragements and loss of interest in your goals. It happens to everyone. That is when the “why” that you write here will help you. Make sure you write down why you want to achieve each goal.



Three, write down the HOW.

Write down a list of tasks that need to be done to achieve each goal. This seems to be common sense. But very often our common practice does not match common sense. So make a list of things to do and put some dates against them to know at least on a high level, which tasks should get done in which month.

Step 2: Unrelentingly Focus On Your Goals Till They Get Done

Many things can make us lose focus of our most important goals. When we lose focus on goals, we don't do whatever it takes to get them done.

What are some things that make us lose focus?

Other pressing things suddenly come up, which are urgent. When we get caught up in the urgent, we often forget the important. When we get caught up in the day to day things, we often forget our long term aspirations.

Another thing that can make us lose focus is negativity of people around us. How many times have you faced negativity from people around that affect your dreams and ambitions? You may have great dreams but they may mock you. They may taunt you because they are jealous of what you are doing or trying to do. Many times this negativity comes from people who are very close and dear to us. And that makes it all the more difficult to face.

So, how do we maintain unrelenting focus on our goals in the middle of these distractions and discouragements?

First of all, decide in your mind right in the beginning...

Decide that you will not give in to the negativity of other people. It all starts in the mind. Tell yourself that you are going to achieve your dreams and goals, no matter what others say about them. It has been said, "you get what you expect". So expect great things, and don't give in to negativity.

Secondly, review your goals regularly.

Remind yourself of the goals you set for yourself. Review what you should have completed by now, and how much you have actually completed. Be willing to be flexible to revise your plan and detail out sub-tasks required in the near future to reach your big goal. In my interview with Nandan, he said that he reviews his big-5 goals at least once every week.

So, do you want to make 2015 your best year yet?

If you do, write down 3-5 goals – including the what, why and how. Then relentlessly focus on them every week, not giving in to any negativity that you face, and then review and revise your tasks as needed.

And you are definitely on your way to make 2015 your best year yet? Happy New Year 2015!

Binod Maliel is a Peak Performance Strategist, an International Trainer, Author, Speaker and Executive Coach. If you want access to a free online tool to help plan your 2015 goals, go to: <http://bit.ly/my2015goals>



What I Learnt From My Role As Sargeant-At-Arms

By TM Sagnik Dutta

As the Sargeant-At-Arms, my major responsibilities include to start the meeting on time and introduce the President on a high note. And the tough part is doing it week after week. Which means in the term, I deliver it 26 times. Yes, it was very difficult. And yes - I still feel the same though I reached end of my term and managed more than 20 times. But my final thoughts about the role is - given another chance, I would love to take the commitment all over again.

What I learnt from my sarge role.

1. Preparing and believing

If you are a beginner in public speaking journey, Sarge speech however short needs preparation. I realized this the hard way. The only way you can do justice to your job is by preparing week after week. The time to prepare might vary from person to person and I realized that I do take a lot of time when I prepare. Few things my mentor suggested that served well was to visualize the speech in mind as if live and to believe every word that you say.

2. Consistency while Experimenting

My mentor always says as far as speaking goes, you are only as good as your last performance. When you are the sarge delivering the speech week after week to same lot of crowd, it is important you raise your bar. But that is a difficult ask. I realized my performance was sinusoidal and not always a rising. One week my address went far too short, another week it went far too stretched. A week, I was on low key and week next I was on a high pitch. But none of this discounts experimenting which my mentor always said is necessary. I realized in order to be a good sarge, there are certain elements in your address you should and must play around with and okay to not be great but one of your core responsibility which is to introduce your president – has to be consistently good.

3. Performance Report

While this can be considered as over kill for your sarge role which is ideally just about 2-3 minutes, having a weekly performance report where you can note down the what went well and what could have been better entry is high useful. There are number of things you can note down from the GE evaluation online as well as offline feedback from audience, mentor and GE itself.

Hence in summary, there is a wonderful opportunity that sarge role offers you who is trying to improve their public speaking. It is a commitment for 26 weeks and though the journey can be painful, the end of the term satisfaction is immense and full of fulfillment.



*Message From A Senior Toastmaster On The Occasion Of
900th Meeting*

By TM Dr.Ushy Mohandas



Then until now.....

It feels **truly** great to help someone

It feels **truly** great to make new friends

It feels **truly** great to share all what I know

It feels **truly** great to have given and continue giving

Give and forget....Get and never forget

Making a difference in someone's life is an everlasting feeling

Giving takes me out of myself. I expand beyond my limitation

Then until now.....



LA1924's Day Out

By TM Namitha Acharya



Do you remember those college days when the idea of going on an excursion or a trip would get all of us super excited? I felt the same when we decided to spend an entire day at a resort with fellow club members.

For me, LA1924 has not only been a club that has helped me become a better speaker and a better leader over the months, it has given me friendship that I will cherish for the rest of my life. Hence this outing was very special for me.

Being the VP-Membership of the club, I was given the task of organizing this fun event. The preparation started by identifying a resort that is far away from the hustle bustle of the City. With the help of TM Jagadish, we found a very good deal at Goldfinch Retreat, a sprawling resort located 7kms before the Bangalore International Airport. The place was finalized.

All we had to do after that was to wait for Sunday, 16th Nov'14 which eventually arrived 😊. The transport and all logistics were taken care of the previous day. On the day of the outing, the weather was pleasant, the drive to the resort was excellent with no traffic to curb my enthusiasm. One by one we gathered at the venue.

I believe that sports and games bring out the best in us and that is exactly what happened. The first activity was playing Cricket. Being the only lady in the group did not dampen my spirit. I offered to bat as well although as a spare batswoman. The game began, team spirit was soaring and so was the excitement. There were fours and sixes being hit, catches being taken, runs being made. The scorching heat did not matter, all that mattered was winning and the most deserving team won. Luckily I did not have to bat for long as I got out on the second or third ball that I faced but I totally enjoyed the cricket session.

After all the running and sweating, it was time to chill out. What better way to beat the heat than a refreshing swim. Many of us jumped into the pool and did not get out until our stomachs were growling. No outing is complete without good food and food at the Goldfinch Resort was extremely delicious. After a sumptuous lunch, it was time to relax by the pool. Of course we were chatting and the topics varied from family, travel experiences, favourite food and so on. After clicking a few pictures, I took leave while the rest of them proceeded to play more games.

All in all, it was a fun filled experience for me. I got to know each one of my fellow members a little bit better. I am thankful to members of LA1924 for the camaraderie we share. As Hellen Keller said

“Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much”, I believe that together at LA1924, we all can do much more.

