



INTRODUCTION: TOASTMASTERS INTERNATIONAL & MORNINGSIDE TOASTMASTERS CLUB

Public speaking is learnt. Few of us, if any, are natural public speakers: public speaking is a skill gained through experience born of understanding, practice, familiarity and know-how; by listening to the constructive criticism of our audience, peers and mentors. Experience, by itself, is not enough if one makes the same mistakes year after year.

Toastmasters International – a non-profit, educational organisation - was founded during 1924 in America and has subsequently, and enthusiastically, found its way into ninety countries around the world with a membership of approximately two hundred thousand. South Africa is well represented. The movement is devoted to making oral communication a worldwide reality, helping men and women learn the art of speaking, listening and thinking: promoting self-actualisation, enhancing leadership potential and fostering understanding. At the individual club level it provides a mutually supportive and positive learning environment in which every member has the opportunity to develop communication and leadership skills, fostering self-confidence and personal growth.

The key, perhaps, is the mutually supportive and positive learning environment. When you stand to make your speech you know the feedback from your peers is there to encourage not belittle, to praise your strong points and overcome your weak ones. You learn by studying the manuals, practicing and helping one another.

The concept is a simple one. Attend meetings, watch and listen, take note of your peers' constructive comments, and, when you feel ready, begin to speak. The speaking format follows ten specific projects designed to enhance organisation of speeches, getting to the point, how to say it, body language, vocal variety, research, visual aids, persuasion and inspiration. All of which takes you to the Competent Communicator Level, following which you can proceed, if you wish and in your own time, through the Advanced Communicator Levels of Bronze, Silver and Gold to reach the highest recognition of Distinguished Toastmaster. The advanced levels cover a multitude of projects, including; entertainment, public relations, management, professional, technical and special occasions.

Morningside Toastmasters is conveniently situated at Morningside Country Club, just off Rivonia Road (see Google maps). We meet twice a month in the Tennis Pavilion; the second and fourth Thursday of each month. We strive to facilitate structured but social and fun meetings. There are of course numerous other Toastmasters clubs throughout South Africa and these can be located through the website at www.toastmasters74.org. Our own site is at www.mstm.co.za

Tumelo Tladi

President

Morningside Toastmasters