



# Speakers' Corner

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Toastmasters of Basel

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### Quotes

A man surprised is half beaten  
Thomas Fuller

To improve is to change, to be perfect is  
to change often.

The farther back you can look the  
farther forward you are likely to see.  
Winston Churchill



### Calendar 2008/2009

07 October	Regular meeting
13 October	Area Contest in Berne
22 October	Regular meeting
25 October	Division Contest in Zurich
05 November	Regular meeting
14-16 Nov	District Fall Conference In Bamberg
18 November	Regular meeting
03 December	Regular meeting
17 December	Regular meeting
06 January	Club New Year's Aperó
21 January	Regular meeting
03 February	Regular meeting
18 February	Regular meeting
03 March	Regular meeting
18 March	Regular meeting



### Editorial

26 people attended the Club's contest on September 3<sup>rd</sup> with members listening to some excellent humorous speeches. Jamie and Stewart will advance to the area contest on October 13<sup>th</sup> in Berne, so why not come along and give them a hand.

In her Leadership column Julia explains how you can hone your leadership skills by actively seeking roles beyond the club level.

This is the 20<sup>th</sup> newsletter published under my aegis. I want to thank the 29 contributors and the dozen people who have contributed photos and one poem to make these newsletters possible.

A big THANK YOU to all of you!

Thomas



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Executive Committee  
July 2008 – June 2009

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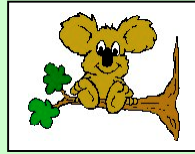
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**Getting the  
knack of the new  
leadership track**



In a past column, I outlined a project for which taking on normal meeting roles was needed, but the leadership track is not just about the normal meeting roles. Other club events, such as the club contest, are also a good opportunity to practise leadership skills, and may even provide a somewhat larger event to really sink your “leadership teeth” into! I used my role as a club contest organiser for the “Organising and Delegating” project. These are the questions that my evaluator used to give me feedback about my role:

- Briefly describe the special event and the role the leader assumed for it.
- How effectively did the leader organise and delegate to fulfil the role?
- What could the leader have organised or delegated differently in his/her role that would have helped the event be better?
- What specifically did the leader organise or delegate well in his/her role that helped make the event a success?

Being organised and delegating appropriately are important parts of leadership; you need to share your vision and give responsibility to the people who can help you achieve your goals. My goal was a well-organised contest that made the contestants feel at ease and that flowed smoothly for the audience. I did this by assigning the key roles to people who I trusted to do a good job and provide them with the information they needed for this. I also used checklists to make sure that nothing was left out; one was to keep track of which members I had asked to take on a role to make sure that we had experienced and less experienced members in the timer, counter and judge groups, and the other was to make sure all the ballot forms, certificates and other paperwork was in place. There are so many small details that it is important not to forget anything and with my checklists, nothing was left out. The contest master and chief judge were good choices too. I was happy with the way the contest went and the leadership manual helped me to delegate with confidence!

**Julia Bird**  
**VP Education**



**...and the winner is...**

26 people attended the Club’s table topic and humorous speech contest on September the 3<sup>rd</sup>.

In the Table Topic Contest, Pierre, Tracy, Stewart, Nina and Doris tried to make the best of:

What have you not done today you regret not having done

The winner was Stewart with Tracy being runner-up and Nina taking third place.

Four contestants entered the Humorous Speech Contest. Stewart spoke about Rugby being a parents’ nightmare; Nina related an unusual visit to the doctor; I talked about a business trip with a twist (Absolutely Routed), whilst Jamie related a children tale in a somewhat abbreviated form (Rindecella). Jamie won the Speech Contest hands down with Stewart being runner-up.

*Summary by Thomas*

**Toastmasters has changed my life**

In the early days of my Toastmaster career, I once read in the *Toastmaster* magazine “Toastmasters can change your life”. At that moment, I thought what nonsense this is. Now six years later I have to confess that Toastmaster has changed my life dramatically, in a positive way. It gave me the possibility to work on myself. I was able to do so because the TM environment was favourable for such an enterprise.

One of the best things of TM is the positive environment in which we can try new things, where we can leave our comfort zone without taking big risks. It’s a perfect sandpit for testing before trying it in the real world. This gave me the possibility to increase my self-confidence, slowly but surely. As an introverted person, I met the possibility at TM to come out of my shell and to become a more sociable person.

Even better, as VP Membership I welcomed guests at the meeting, let them feel welcome and accompanied them through the meeting. Later, as VP Education I had the opportunity to introduce new ideas to raise the club level. On professional level TM had a huge impact; I started to give my presentations in a different and better way. I introduced the vocal variety and more appropriate body language in my speeches. After a while I was able to present "boring" subjects in such a way that the audience were listening until the end of the presentation.

In my international company I became well known for my free-style presentations. Because of this, the headquarters of my company offered me a new job located in Germany where one of the main tasks is to speak to inform, persuade and inspire the audience (I will definitely also include the entertaining part). Toastmasters can change your lives too, the secret is practice, practice, practice and practice again and again and again ...and this with fun.

**Andre Pierre de Craan**