

## Tips and Tricks for Doing Speechcraft (originally written in 2012)

Yeah, you've seen it listed in the Supply Catalog and there is a Speechcraft Coordinator on the District staff, but what is a Speechcraft and why should your club do it? After all, you've got enough problems trying to recruit members and plan regular meetings.

If this is your point of view, then you are really missing one of the best recruitment tools that Toastmasters has to offer. And your members are missing a great opportunity to preach what they practice. The Agricultural Research Center Toastmasters Club, in Beltsville, Maryland, has been doing a 6- or 8-week Speechcraft class in the spring for as long as the oldest member can remember. Over 90% of our club members joined because of a Speechcraft class. We have been able to maintain charter strength for going on 50 years, we get new members every year, and our members get a chance to pass on the great tips they have learned for doing speeches, table topics, evaluations, introductions, and leadership. The students get a crash course in basic speaking and leadership skills.

The process starts in July when we do our Distinguished Club Plan. We map out the year with contests, theme meetings, and Speechcraft. We normally meet bi-weekly, but during Speechcraft we meet every week for 3-4 weeks, take a "spring break" for one week, then meet every week for 3-4 more weeks. We used to do this in March and April, but in the last ten years we have switched to doing it in February and March. (You will understand why later on.)

By October, we pick our Speechcraft Coordinators. These persons will coordinate the advertising, student registration, and course assignments. The Coordinators work closely with the Vice President of Public Relations, Vice President of Membership, and Vice President of Education, as well as other interested members who want to help. At the officers meeting we discuss class costs, ordering of manuals, and educational speeches that our members will give. I have attached a copy of the recruitment flyer and the course outline.

By early December, we have placed ads in our company newsletter and local gazettes. We send email copies of the flyer to our members and encourage them to post them in their buildings. We make sure that copies are available for new employee orientation classes. We post the ad on our webpage, with a great map on how to find our building. December is also when we ask our members to do one of the 10-14 educational speeches we plan to present during Speechcraft. Since these are 5-7 minutes speeches, the members will get credit for a manual speech during the educational portion of the meetings. We also encourage the speakers to prepare a handout on their topics so the students will have something to remember the points they make.

In January, we start getting nervous because pre-registration for the class is not encouraging. So we resend the ad to the newsletter, gazettes, and our members by hard copy and by email. We talk it up at TLI. We start a mini-competition among our members: who can get the most students, ARS or Patuxent employees? January is also when the VPE assigns members to be Toastmaster of the Day, Table Topics Master, Master Evaluator, and to perform other meeting roles during Speechcraft sessions.

Now it is February and (surprise, surprise!) we have students. The optimal class size is 12, but in

2002 we had 20 students. Why were we nervous about registrations? Or you may ask: why did registrations happen at the last minute. I don't know about the rest of my classmates, but I can tell you why I registered late the year that I joined: I was SCARED! I saw the ad three times in three different places before I called and asked for details. I was still reluctant and nervous. But I needed the class for my job, the class was only eight weeks, so how bad could it be? I registered for the class about 5 days before it started. And that was in 1994.

The first meeting of the class is a demonstration meeting. We have the students sit at the table near a seasoned Toastmaster who can explain the agenda structure and the terminology. Everyone who has a role in this meeting has a very important task: to ensure that everything is explained before it happens. Before asking questions, the Table Topics Master must explain what Table Topics are and how this section of the meeting works. Even the grammarian, Ah counter, and timer explain why we have these roles. Our speakers are chosen to give an overview of the class as well as demonstrate the different levels of accomplishment of our members. (And, yes, we will often put a relatively new Toastmaster on the agenda.) We make a point of shaking hands, doing proper introductions, choosing appropriate table topics questions, and all of the other niceties that demonstrate a well-run meeting.

We have a refreshment break at all of our meetings, so this is our opportunity to meet the students and get to know them personally. We come back from break (reluctantly) for the evaluation portion of the meeting. Before adjourning, the Speechcraft Coordinator addresses the group. The students have been broken into two groups. Group A will do their Icebreakers next week and Group B will do Table Topics. The students are assigned a mentor from among our regular club members. This Toastmaster will be that student's personal sounding board for ideas, previewing of the speech in either written or verbal format, and for hand holding. The mentors will do the evaluations of the first two speeches given during Speechcraft class. The students are given the Speechcraft manuals, a back issue of the Toastmaster Magazine, a course syllabus, a club roster with phone and email addresses, a student roster with contact information, a name tent, and any other handouts that they will find useful as reference materials. Everything is in a folder with their name on it (if they preregistered) so it is easy to find and bring with them each week.

Now, for the class size reasoning. We like to have 12 or fewer students. When we have a small class, we can stay in one room and hear everyone's Icebreaker speech. At each meeting, we will have Table Topics for half the students, speeches from half the students, two educational speeches, a refreshment break, evaluations for half the students, minor critics' reports, and assignments for the next meeting. When you add it up, the timing of the entire meeting is about 2 hours. If you have more than 12 students and try to stay in one meeting room, the total meeting time quickly rises to 3 hours for 20 students. This was unacceptable for our regular members and would have completely alienated our students. So in 2002, we split the students groups again. Groups A1 and B1 went to a secondary meeting room, while Groups A2 and B2 stayed in the regular meeting room. We moved our educational speeches to the end of the agenda (after the minor critics reports) so everyone would be in one room again for those speeches. In this way, we were able to keep to the 2 hour time frame. The only complaint is that we missed hearing all speeches from all students.

The third meeting is much like the second, except that the assignments for the students are reversed. Group A does Table Topics and Group B does Icebreaker speeches. Mentors again do the evaluations.

At the fourth meeting, Group A students give their second speech: Organize Your Speech. Group B students again do Table Topics plus they will introduce a speaker. How to introduce a speaker was explained in an educational speech in week three. Our “spring break” is inserted here. Then at the fifth meeting, Group B does the Organize Your Speech speech and Group A does Table Topics and introduces a speaker. These are the meetings when they first need the student roster to interview and prepare the introductions for their partners.

If we are doing an 8-week class, during weeks 6 and 7 the students do their third speech. We usually give them a choice between two projects in the manual. They are also continuing to do Table Topics. And for the first time, the students evaluate each other. How to do an evaluation was covered during week 5's educational speeches.

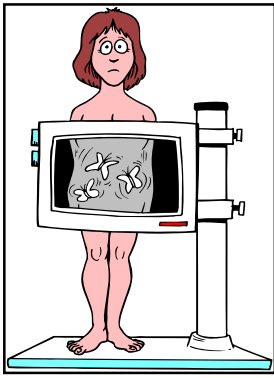
For the last session, we have the students run the meeting. They do every role in the meeting from TMOD to timer. Since they are running the meeting, the regular Toastmasters are fair game for the Table Topics questions again. (Payback can be fun!) The club provides refreshments, usually as a full meal this time, complete with a Happy Graduation cake. After the work is done, the graduates receive a certificate of completion, we sing our Speechcrafter Graduation Song (which I wrote in 1994), and the students are invited to become members.

To encourage them, we remind them that we only meet bi-weekly (the hectic schedule is done). If they join within the next month, their Speechcraft fee will be applied to the new member fees. In 2012, we have priced the total costs for conducting a Speechcraft:

Speechcraft Manual:	\$1.25
Graduation Meal:	\$12.00
New Member Fee:	\$20.00
Semi Dues (6 mo)	\$36.00
Club Dues (6 mo)	<u>\$3.00</u>
Total =	\$72.25
Speechcraft Class:	<u>-\$60.00</u>
Student Savings:	\$12.25

We made a conscious decision to structure the cost this way. Historically, only about half of the students will join the club. If that is true, then we break even or come out a little ahead. Granted it is a gamble but we usually win because we have new members with new energy and new speech ideas. And we didn't work that hard to get them. We think it is worth the effort.

Still not convinced? Our next class is in February 2013. Why don't you experience it for yourself? The class isn't full ... yet!



**EVER GET BUTTERFLIES WHEN YOU HAVE TO SPEAK BEFORE A GROUP OR EXPLAIN SOMETHING TO YOUR BOSS OR COLLEAGUES?**

Toastmasters International is sponsoring a PUBLIC SPEAKING CLASS in Beltsville starting in February. This class is a short, comprehensive program in the fundamentals of oral communication, designed to give quick help to the inexperienced speaker, and to assist a person who has some training in becoming a more polished speaker. The instruction will be given by members of local Toastmasters Clubs, who will base their teaching on practical experience, reinforced by Toastmasters International's educational material.

**Public Speaking Class can't prevent butterflies,  
but it will make them fly in formation!**

**WHERE?** Beltsville Agricultural Research Center, Building 005, Room 021, Beltsville, MD.  
(For directions, see <http://home.comcast.net/~arctoastmasters/directions.html>)

**WHEN?** Six Wednesdays 5-7 pm February 18, 2009 through April 1, 2009 (with one week break)  
**Don't be left out! There's only room for 12 students.**

**COST?** \$50 covers EVERYTHING (materials, six weeks of instruction, assigned mentor, and refreshments at each class session)

Please complete and mail this form to secure your spot in the class. Mailing and payment instructions are below.

Contact Ellen at 301-504-6067 or e-mail [Ellen.Mann@ars.usda.gov](mailto:Ellen.Mann@ars.usda.gov) for more information.

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**Please register me for the 2009 Beginners Public Speaking (Speechcraft) Class.**

Name:		
	<b>Home</b>	<b>Work</b>
Address:		
City, State ZIP:		
Phone:		
FAX:		
E-Mail:		

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*Sponsored by the Agricultural Research Center Toastmasters Club*

**Make checks payable to:**

A. R. C. Toastmaster Club 3039

**Mail payments to:**

Ellen Mann  
2016 Mayflower Drive  
Silver Spring, MD 20905

## SPEECHCRAFT 2009 – COURSE STRUCTURE

(six week class)

	Educational Presentations	Speechcraft Agenda
Session 1 <b>February 18</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to Speechcraft</li> <li>• Value of Communication</li> <li>• Winning tips for impromptu speaking</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Students introductions: give name and why decided to join the class.</li> <li>2. Observe a typical Toastmasters meeting—its division into 3 main Groups:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Impromptu speeches called Table Topics</li> <li>b) Prepared speeches</li> <li>c) Evaluations of prepared speeches and of meeting.</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. Speechcraft students are assigned groups A and B. You will have a chance to meet your mentor and speak with her/him during refreshment break.</li> </ol>
Session 2 <b>February 25</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Topic Selection</li> <li>• Organize Your Speech</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Group <b>A</b> practices impromptu speaking: <b>Table Topics</b>.</li> <li>2. Group <b>B</b> gives prepared speech “<b>The Ice Breaker</b>.”</li> </ol>
Session 3 <b>March 4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gestures</li> <li>• Vocal Variety</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Group <b>A</b> gives prepared speech “<b>The Ice Breaker</b>.”</li> <li>2. Group <b>B</b> practices impromptu speaking: <b>Table Topics</b>.</li> </ol>
<b>March 11</b>	SPEECHCRAFT BREAK	Speak-a-thon --- Speechcraft students welcome to watch
Session 4 <b>March 18</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Visual aids and prop</li> <li>2. Audience analysis</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Group <b>A</b> practices impromptu speaking: <b>Table Topics</b>.</li> <li>2. Group <b>B</b> gives prepared speech “<b>Organize Your Speech</b>”.</li> </ol>
Session 5 <b>March 25</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Role of language</li> <li>• Toastmaster organization</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Group <b>A</b> gives prepared speech “<b>Organize Your Speech</b>”.</li> <li>2. Group <b>B</b> practices impromptu speaking: <b>Table Topics</b>.</li> </ol>
Session 6 <b>April 1</b>	GRADUATION DAY: Ceremony and banquet	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Students run the meeting.</li> <li>2. Students make up missed speeches.</li> <li>3. One or two students may deliver third speech, if there is time.</li> <li>4. Graduation banquet and ceremony.</li> </ol>

SPEECH Course Details 2001  
(eight week class)

Expected Class Size: 20

	Educational Speeches on :	Other Activities:
Session 1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Introduction to SPEECHCRAFT</li> <li>2. Value of Communication</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Demonstration Meeting with impromptu speaking, prepared speeches by a beginning speaker and an advanced speaker, evaluations of the prepared speeches</li> <li>2. Assign Mentors to SPEECHCRAFT attendees</li> <li>3. Assignments for next meeting</li> </ol>
Session 2	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Topic Selection</li> <li>2. Organizing a Speech</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Section A of class practices impromptu speaking</li> <li>2. Section B of class gives first prepared speech (Give Your Icebreaker)</li> </ol>
Session 3	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Gestures</li> <li>2. How to Introduce a Speaker</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Section B of class practices impromptu speaking</li> <li>2. Section A of class gives first prepared speech (Give Your Icebreaker)</li> </ol>
Session 4	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Audience Analysis</li> <li>2. Vocal Variety</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Section A of class practices impromptu speaking and introduces speeches of Section B</li> <li>2. Section B of class gives second prepared speech (Be In Earnest)</li> </ol>
	SPRING BREAK	
Session 5	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Visual Aids and Props</li> <li>2. Evaluation of a Speech</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Section B of class practices impromptu speaking and introduces speeches of Section A</li> <li>2. Section A of class gives second prepared speech (Be In Earnest)</li> </ol>
Session 6	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Role of Language</li> <li>2. Role of Humor</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Section A of class practices impromptu speaking and evaluates speeches of Section B</li> <li>2. Section B of class gives third prepared speech (Workbook #4 or #6)</li> </ol>
Session 7	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Toastmaster Organization</li> <li>2. Organize a Productive Meeting</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Section B of class practices impromptu speaking and evaluates speeches of Section A</li> <li>2. Section A of class gives third prepared speech (Workbook #4 or #6)</li> </ol>
Session 8		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. SPEECHCRAFT class organizes meeting, and carries out major roles</li> <li>2. Graduation ceremony</li> </ol>