



WHERE LEADERS  
ARE MADE

# SPEAK UP

May 2018



## The dreaded blank page

What I faced when writing this article for the front page of SPEAK UP

By Jill Brookfield CC ALB

The more I tried to find something interesting or newsworthy to write about, the more despondent and desperate I became.

I had already filled the other pages in this issue with reports on all the events, meetings and contests that took place during the month. It's May and we're nearing the end of the Toastmasters year and things are slowing down in preparation of changeover to the new year and the new Executive team. So, it's a little quiet on the news front.

Here I am. Staring at a blank page. What to write? Where to begin? What would my fellow Club members want to read about? I have nothing. I can hear the crickets chirping inside my empty mind.

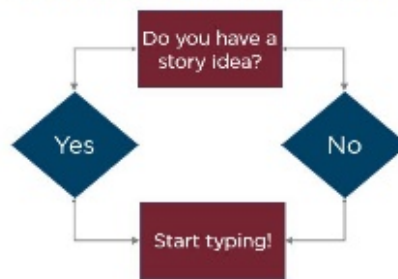
Off I go to Google for ideas. But what do I search for? I typed 'inspiration'. Wrong word - I get myriad inspirational quotes but I'm in no mood for warm and fuzzy words because I'm anything but inspired.

Next, I search 'speech ideas' and then I saw it ... 'Writer's Block'. Jackpot! Writer's block is something Toastmasters are very familiar with. That's what I have and that's exactly what I need to deal with. Great, I'm on my way.

I read numerous articles about dealing with writer's block and they all said the same thing.

First up you must deal with that page staring blankly at you. You must put something, anything, on

### Overcoming Writer's Block



paper. Get your fingers moving on that keyboard and start typing. It doesn't matter what you begin with, it's about starting the flow.

Even something as simple as typing a list of the objects in the room you're sitting in or describing the cat squeezing into the sliver of sunlight between a chair and table leg or discussing the hot steaming cup of tea on your desk.

The subject doesn't matter, keep going and keep typing.

A trick I've used in the past when I had to write a short story and I was completely uninspired and stuck for ideas, was to ask my sister to provide a few different sentences, which would serve as the first line of my story. Those sentences were certainly whacky, but it worked. I couldn't wait to get started. Interestingly, the story didn't end up where I expected. It took on a life of its own and went where it was meant to. That made it fun.

The same idea could be applied to a speech. If you don't have an idea, ask a friend to give you a word, a statement or a sentence that you must include in your speech. You still may not be 'feeling it', but it's a fun way to set off and you never know where it will take you.

You may never use the end product, but it will get the creative juices flowing, so use this to your advantage and keep them flowing on another story.

Some people find mind maps helpful to create a speech. Begin by writing an idea on a sheet of paper and then add words, thoughts or details around that central theme. Before long you may have ideas for one or a series of speeches.

Remember to use the objectives of the Toastmasters workbook or Pathways project, as these will dictate the elements that must be included in your speech and may help you along. And don't forget the ultimate objective of your speech - do you want to entertain, inform, persuade or motivate?

*"It doesn't matter what you begin with, it's about starting the flow"*

There is no right or wrong way to source a story. There is no right or wrong way to write a story. You don't have to start at the beginning. Try starting your story in the middle or at the end. As long as you stick to your objectives and have a strong opening and conclusion, why not get creative with the middle and grab the attention of your audience?

... continued on Page 2

## Meetings

### 1 May 2018

Meeting #1259

At tonight's meeting we welcomed an impressive nine visitors. There were a few first-timers and a few who came back for a second or third look. They all participated in Table Topics and one of our guests even took out the prize for best Table Topic.

Alex, a recent Speechcraft graduate, gave his first Toastmasters speech and George kicked off his Pathways journey with his Icebreaker.

### Speakers

1. Elena Shulyak  
Title: A Shoe Box  
Evaluator: Greg Kennedy
2. George Eynon  
Title: My Children  
Evaluator: Joe Duffey
3. Alex Imre  
Title: Ice Breaker  
Evaluator: Derek Steller

### The winners



Best Speaker Award: Elena Shulyak & Alex Imre (tied)  
Best Evaluator Award: Derek Steller  
Best Assignment: Anna Rubalsky  
Best Supporting Assignment: John Paterson  
Best Table Topic: Vanessa Morrison

### 15 May 2018

Meeting #1260

This week we welcomed David Reid as the newest Miranda Toastmasters Club member.

Jill Brookfield presented an educational on meeting roles, reminding members of the comprehensive Assignment Guide available on the Club's website.

Mike Smith conducted the club elections for the 2018-2019 year. See Page 3 for details of the new Executive.

### Speakers

1. Derek Steller  
Title: Something Different, Something New  
Evaluator: Aurelien Schibli
2. Alex Kosheliev  
Title: People  
Evaluator: George Eynon
3. John Paterson  
Title: A VW Campervan in 1982  
Evaluator: Mike Smith

### The winners



*LtoR: George, Mike, Trina, Brian & Derek*

Best Speaker Award: Derek Steller  
Best Evaluator Award: Mike Smith  
Best Assignment: Trina Snaidero  
Best Supporting Assignment: Brian Havilah  
Best Table Topic: George Eynon

## The dreaded blank page *(continued from Page 1)*

Oh look, now I have 600 words. Have I said anything worthwhile? Time to walk away from the computer and return later with fresh eyes to review if I've achieved my objectives and provided a relevant story for my audience.

One thing I do know, next time I have writer's block I will start typing and keep typing, knowing that eventually the words will find their own way into a completed story.

*About the author: Jill Brookfield joined Toastmasters in April 2016. She's the current Vice President Public Relations and is the incoming Vice President Education.*

## Meetings

29 May 2018

Meeting #1261

This week was the Parliamentary Contest where contestants evaluate the performance of the meeting Chairman and the best Parliamentary evaluation takes out the prize.

Joseph Duffey was the Chairman and he was really put through his parliamentary paces, in a lively and lengthy meeting.

Motions on notice, motions being put, speakers for and against, points of order and more. Joseph did a tremendous job keeping control of the meeting.

### Parliamentary contest



*LtoR: John, George, Brian, Greg, Anna & Derek*

### Parliamentarian contestants

- Brian Havilah
- Anna Rubalsky
- George Eynon
- John Paterson
- Derek Steller

### Contest winners



*LtoR: John, Brian & Anna*

- 1<sup>st</sup> Place: John Paterson
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Place: Brian Havilah
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Place: Anna Rubalsky

### Speakers

1. Ngaire Ranginui  
Title: Tend your garden  
Evaluator: George Eynon
2. Alex Imre  
Title: Less is more  
Evaluator: Anna Rubalsky

### The winners



*LtoR: David, Joseph, Jill, Anna & Alex*

- Best Speaker Award: Alex Imre
- Best Evaluator Award: Anna Rubalsky
- Best Assignment: Joseph Duffey
- Best Supporting Assignment: David Reid
- Best Table Topic: Jill Brookfield

## Club elections

### The annual Club elections were conducted at the 15 May meeting

The Club Officers elected for 2018-2019 are:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| - President - John Paterson                        | - Secretary – Elena Shulyak               |
| - Vice President Education – Jill Brookfield       | - Treasurer- Joseph Duffey                |
| - Vice President Membership – Anna Rubalsky        | - Sergeant at Arms – Kathy Tasker         |
| - Vice President Public Relations – Trina Snaidero | - Immediate Past President – George Eynon |

Club Executive team members are elected for 12 months, for the period 1 July to 30 June. The new Executive will be installed at the Changeover Dinner on Tuesday, 26 June 2018.

## Other news

### District 70 International Speech contest

Congratulations to Miranda Toastmasters Club member, Aurelien Schibli, on competing in the International Speech contest at the District 70 Annual Conference.

Many Club members were there to support Aurelien and cheer him on. It was an extremely strong field and it was unfortunate that Aurelien didn't place.

Congratulations to the ultimate winner, Sulei Gu from Women of Westpac (WoW) Toastmasters.

### District 70 Public Relations Award

Congratulations Miranda Toastmasters Club on winning first prize for the *District 70 Public Relations Award – Category 2* at the recent District 70 Annual Conference.

Category 2 is Toastmasters 'Let the World Know' for maintaining media channels of communication and updating them regularly.

The prize was awarded for the Club's SPEAK UP newsletters.

George Eynon accepted the award on behalf of the Club. As part of the prize, George gave a three-minute PR presentation at the Annual Conference.

To enter, the Club had to submit three consecutive newsletters.



LtoR: Jill & George

## Member Achievements

### Congratulations

to Jill Brookfield for achieving the Triple Crown award.



Jill was awarded her Triple Crown pin at the Annual Conference.

The Triple Crown is awarded to Toastmasters who achieve three education awards in a single program year.

Mike Smith also achieved a Triple Crown this year, receiving his pin in November 2017.

## Member Achievements in 2017-2018

Congratulations to Jill for achieving her ALB during May.

	Award	Date	Member
1	CC	11 July	Sue Haynes
2	CC	11 July	Aurelien Schibli
3	CL	13 July	Marian Foulcher
4	ACG	24 July	Mike Smith
5	CC	4 October	Mike Smith
6	CC	5 October	Jill Brookfield
7	ACS	11 October	Brian Havilah
8	CL	23 October	Jill Brookfield
9	CC	20 February	Claudia Blumer
10	ALB	15 May	Jill Brookfield



## What's on

### June

- 12 June Meeting at Sutherland
- 26 June Changeover Dinner

### July

- 10 July Meeting at Sutherland
- 24 July Meeting at Sutherland

**Visit:** [www.miranda-toastmasters.org.au/whats-on/](http://www.miranda-toastmasters.org.au/whats-on/)

### Next Speechcraft Course

Next 8 week public speaking course starts  
Wednesday, 3 October 2018

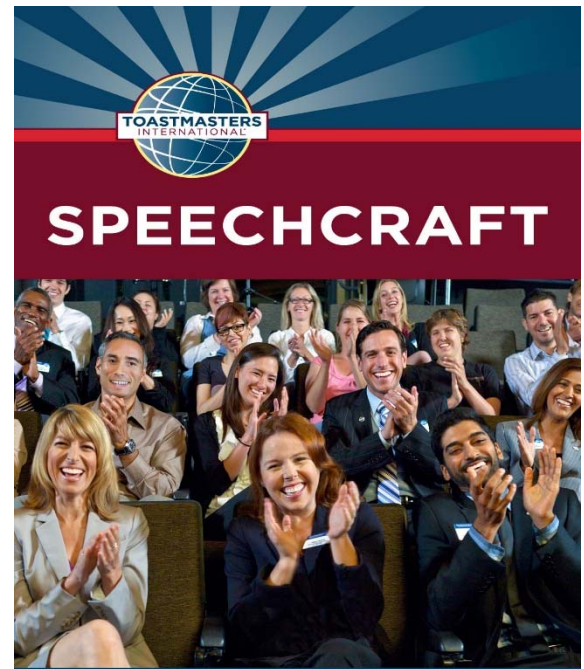
To register contact:

Contact Mike Smith

M: 0411 173 290

E: <mailto:speechcraft@miranda-toastmasters.org.au>

To register: [Download Rego form](#)



**SPEECHCRAFT**

- Build confidence
- Grow as a leader
- Improve communication & public speaking skills
- Overcome fears
- Improve career potential
- Think on your feet

In 8 weeks become a confident public speaker in a friendly, supportive atmosphere

### CLUB MISSION

We provide a supportive and positive learning experience in which members are empowered to develop communication and leadership skills, resulting in greater self-confidence and personal growth.

### Find us

**Web:** [www.miranda-toastmasters.org.au/](http://www.miranda-toastmasters.org.au/)

**Facebook:** Search for Miranda Toastmasters Club  
[www.facebook.com/Miranda-Toastmasters-Club-113871933658](https://www.facebook.com/Miranda-Toastmasters-Club-113871933658)

**Calendar:** [www.miranda-toastmasters.org.au/whats-on](http://www.miranda-toastmasters.org.au/whats-on)

**Newsletter contact:** Jill Brookfield  
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