## What is Toastmasters?

From a humble beginning in 1924 at the YMCA in Santa Ana, California, Toastmasters International has grown to become a world leader in helping people become more competent and comfortable in front of an audience. The nonprofit organization now has nearly 250,000 members in more than 12,500 clubs in 106 countries, offering a proven – and enjoyable! – way to practice and hone communication and leadership skills.

Most Toastmasters meetings are comprised of approximately 20 people who meet weekly for an hour or two. Participants practice and learn skills by filling a meeting role, ranging from giving a prepared speech or an impromptu one to serving as timer, evaluator or grammarian.

There is no instructor; instead, each speech and meeting is critiqued by a member in a positive manner, focusing on what was done right and what could be improved.

**The Toastmasters Vision**

Toastmasters International empowers people to achieve their full potential and realize their dreams. Through our member clubs, people throughout the world can improve their communication and leadership skills, giving them the courage to change.

**The Mission of the Club**

The mission of a Toastmasters club is to provide a mutually supportive and positive learning environment in which every member has the opportunity to develop communication and leadership skills, which in turn foster self-confidence and personal growth.

**Some of the Toastmaster Benefits:**

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| **Communications Skills** | **Leadership Skills** |
| Connect with your listeners | Formulate and articulate a compelling vision |
| Create and organize messages that motivate, inform, persuade, or inspire | Interact effectively with team |
| Master the use of gestures and movement to demonstrate confidence | Improve collaboration and reduce conflict |
| Effectively use your voice to maintain interest | Focus on the six dimensions of leadership to ensure success in every project |
| Eliminate distractions from your message | Learn how to achieve tactical objectives linked to goals |
| Maximize your own natural speaking style | Learn to give effective evaluations and offer feedback for improvement |
| Incorporate visual support for maximum impact | Learn to accommodate and value multicultural and pluralistic teams |
| Think quickly, and express ideas clearly and concisely | Develop critical career enhancing influence skills |