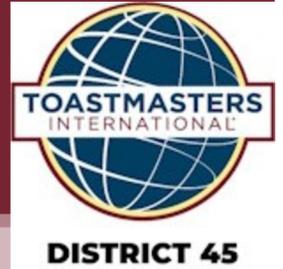


DISTRICT 45

INSIDER

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Vermont | New Hampshire | Maine | New Brunswick
Nova Scotia | Prince Edward Island | Newfoundland and Labrador

Pathways to Excellence

District 45 Toastmasters

First Impressions

Membership Strength

Membership Orientation

Achievement Recognition

Fellowship, Variety, & Communication

Program Planning & Meeting Organization

It All Starts With a Welcome: Moments of Truth

D45TOASTMASTERS.ORG

MEET YOUR DISTRICT LEADERS

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**Sherry MacDonald,
DTM**

**2025-2026
District Director**



Reigniting Our Purpose: A Toastmasters Reflection for the Second Half of the Year

As we enter the second half of the year, it's natural to pause for a moment—to look back on the goals we set, the meetings we attended, the speeches we delivered, and of course the growth we experienced. Whether your year has been full of milestones or marked by detours, this midpoint offers powerful opportunity: the chance to recommit, reset, and move forward.

Toastmasters is more than a weekly meeting; it is a journey of continual transformation. Every time we stand to speak, evaluate, or lead, we strengthen skills that extend far beyond the club. But growth is rarely linear. Some weeks, we feel unstoppable. Other weeks, we feel stuck. What matters is not how perfect the path has been—it's that we keep moving forward towards achieving our goals.

What do you want to achieve before June 30th? Perhaps it's completing a Pathways level, conquering a fear, taking on a leadership role, or mentoring a new member. Maybe it's simply showing up more consistently and allowing yourself to be stretched. Whatever your goals, trust that the support, and community around you will help you get there.

So let's step boldly into the months ahead. Celebrate what you've already accomplished, release what didn't go as planned, and embrace the opportunities still waiting for you. Together, let's make the second half of this year our most confident, intentional, and inspiring chapter yet.



Moments of Truth

The Toastmasters Moments of Truth (MoT) is famous as the club-level blueprint for quality. It defines six critical junctures—from a guest’s first impression to a member’s final award—that decide whether a club sinks or soars.

But while the club owns the execution of MoT, the District owns the responsibility of ensuring every club is capable of achieving a perfect score. If the club is the engine, the District is the pit crew, the fuel, and the track manager. The collective success (or failure) of the MoT standards across all clubs is, in essence, the District’s ultimate performance review.



The District supports the club-level Moments of Truth by equipping club officers, providing shared resources, and driving growth.

Moment of Truth Area	Club Focus (The Moment)	District Action (The Enabler)
1. First Impressions	Welcoming guests and securing a professional meeting setup.	Training: Ensures VPMs are experts in guest procedures and follow-up.
2. Membership Orientation	Formally inducting new members and assigning mentors.	Training & Follow-Up: Ensures VPEs establish strong mentor programs and formal induction processes.
3. Fellowship, Variety, & Communication	Creating a fun, supportive atmosphere with diverse programs.	Events & Media: Organizes contests and summits; uses websites/newsletters to promote inter-club events and quality programming.
4. Program Planning & Meeting Organization	Starting and Ending meetings on time with prepared roles and evaluations.	Quality Assurance: Trains VPEs on effective agenda management and maintaining meeting discipline.
5. Membership Strength	Recruiting and retaining enough members for a vibrant club (20+ members).	Club Growth: Provides resources for membership drives, sponsors new clubs, and supports struggling clubs via the Club Coach Program.
6. Achievement Recognition	Tracking progress and celebrating educational awards promptly.	Systemic Recognition: Ensures award submissions are timely and celebrates club, area, and individual achievements via public channels.

First Impressions: Creating a Welcoming Toastmasters Guest Experience

You never have a second chance to make a good first impression. This is especially true today. According to a Microsoft study, in 2025, the average attention span is a fleeting 8.25 seconds. We are being judged very quickly, so we need to be prepared.

How does this apply to us at Toastmasters? It means intentionally creating an environment that demonstrates professionalism, organization, and warmth from the moment a guest encounters us.

Consider these best practices to make every guest feel welcome:

1. Setting the Stage (In-Person & Virtual)

The environment reflects your club's quality:

- **Prep the Room Early:** For in-person meetings, assign someone to set up the room early. Keep it clean, well-lit, and easy to find.
- **Look the Part:** Encourage all members to dress smartly. This adds instant value to the club.
- **ID Check:** Use name badges for everyone—members and guests—to encourage easy, friendly connections.

2. Welcoming and Guiding Guests

Turn visitors into members by offering clarity and comfort:

- **Warm Welcome:** Greet guests enthusiastically! Give them a welcome package, a sign-in sheet, and their name badge right away.
- **The Guide:** Hand them a simple "Guide to the Meeting" that briefly explains the different meeting segments and roles. This demystifies the process.
- **Explain the Roles:** Ensure all role-takers briefly explain their roles during the meeting so guests never feel lost or excluded.
- **Gentle Participation:** Guests should only be invited to participate (like in Table Topics) if they choose to. Never force it.
- **Assigned Buddy:** Assign one member (like the VPE or a dedicated greeter) to be the guest's contact person for the entire night. Make sure they are available to answer any questions.

3. Making Digital Guests Feel Connected

Extend that great impression to the virtual space:

- **Pro Setup:** Use clear audio/video, and ask members to use professional screen names (e.g., Tom M. - Evaluator) instead of physical badges.
- **Virtual Greeter:** Greet virtual guests immediately in the chat. Explain how online participation works.
- **Digital Tools:** Send them the digital "Guide to the Meeting" and pair them with a virtual mentor to answer questions privately.

Let's welcome our guests with professionalism and clarity, and make them lifelong members!



Tom Macisso, DTM

2025-2026

Program Quality Director



CLUB COACH PROGRAM

There are Toastmaster Clubs in District 45, and every other District, that are struggling with membership. Did you know that there is a Club Coach Program to provide assistance for those clubs?

Clubs are eligible for a club coach appointment provided the following requirements are met:

- The club must have at least 3 but no more than 12 members in good standing at the time of appointment.
- The club must not be suspended or closed.
- The club must not have more than two coaches appointed at one time.

The Club Coach Program allows experienced Toastmasters members to assist in rebuilding club membership and restoring club quality. A successful club coach will:

- Build rapport with club officers and members
- Instill enthusiasm, camaraderie, and structure within the club
- Assess the club environment and recommend best practices for success
- Work with club officers to develop a Club Success Plan
- Motivate the club to strive for Distinguished Club Program (DCP) recognition



Coaches who help clubs achieve Distinguished status (or higher) in the Distinguished Club Program will receive credit in the education program and a digital certificate of accomplishment. This can be used as a step towards becoming a Distinguished Toastmaster.

Learn more about becoming a club coach by completing the Club Coach Training Module in Base Camp.

If your club meets the requirements for a Club Coach, and would like to be matched with a club coach, you want to become a club coach or you want to learn more about the Club Coach Program reach out to our Club Growth Director, Madhu Kanji. d45.madhukanji@gmail.com



Madhu Kanji, DTM

2025-2026

Club Growth Director

PATHWAYS CHANGES

Kavita Kanji, VC2

For existing members of Toastmasters, upon using your Pathways program in Toastmasters International™, you may have noticed some changes to your Pathways. The Paths that are available to choose from now are: Dynamic Leadership, Engaging Humor, Motivational Strategies, Persuasive Influence, Presentation Mastery and Visionary Communication.



Some of the enhancements to your Pathways are:

- A new section added to every level. This section will be the first item in each level, before your projects. It outlines required meeting roles and specific ways those roles contribute to learning in that level. (TMI Education Programs FAQ)
- Levels 3, 4 and 5 will introduce members to the Successful Club Series, the Better Speaker Series and the Leadership Excellence Series.
- Completion of these levels will require members to give presentations from these series to support club growth and improved communication and leadership skills. (TMI Education Programs FAQ).

This applies to all of our Toastmaster members navigating the New Pathways Programs. You will find these enhancements incorporate what we do in our regular meeting setup and how we work toward our goals as a club directly into our Paths in fantastic ways.



PATHWAYS CHANGES Continued

Level	New Requirements
Level 1	<p>You must fill the following roles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Table Topics Speaker• Evaluator (Feedback & Evaluation Project)• Timer or Ah-Counter.
Level 2	<p>You must fill the following roles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grammarian• Topicsmaster• Evaluator• Toastmaster of the Day, Timer or Ah-Counter.
Level 3	<p>You must fill the following roles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Toastmaster of the Day• Evaluator• Table Topics Speaker, Topicsmaster, or Introductory Mentor• One of the following Successful Club Series presentations:<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Creating the Best Club Climate,◦ Meeting Roles and Responsibilities,◦ Keeping the Commitment, or◦ Going Beyond our Club
Level 4	<p>You must fill the following roles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Toastmaster of the Day• Evaluator• Table Topics Speaker, Topicsmaster, or Introductory Mentor• One of the following Successful Club Series presentations:<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Creating the Best Club Climate,◦ Meeting Roles and Responsibilities,◦ Keeping the Commitment, or◦ Going Beyond our Club• One presentation from the Better Speaker Series
Level 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• General Evaluator (twice)• Toastmaster of the Day (twice)• Evaluator (twice)• Table Topics Speaker, Topicsmaster, Ah-Counter, Timer, Grammarian, Club Mentor, or an unofficial role that is unique to your club• One of the following Successful Club Series presentations:<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Moments of Truth,◦ Evaluate to Motivate,◦ Mentoring• One presentation from the Leadership Excellence Series

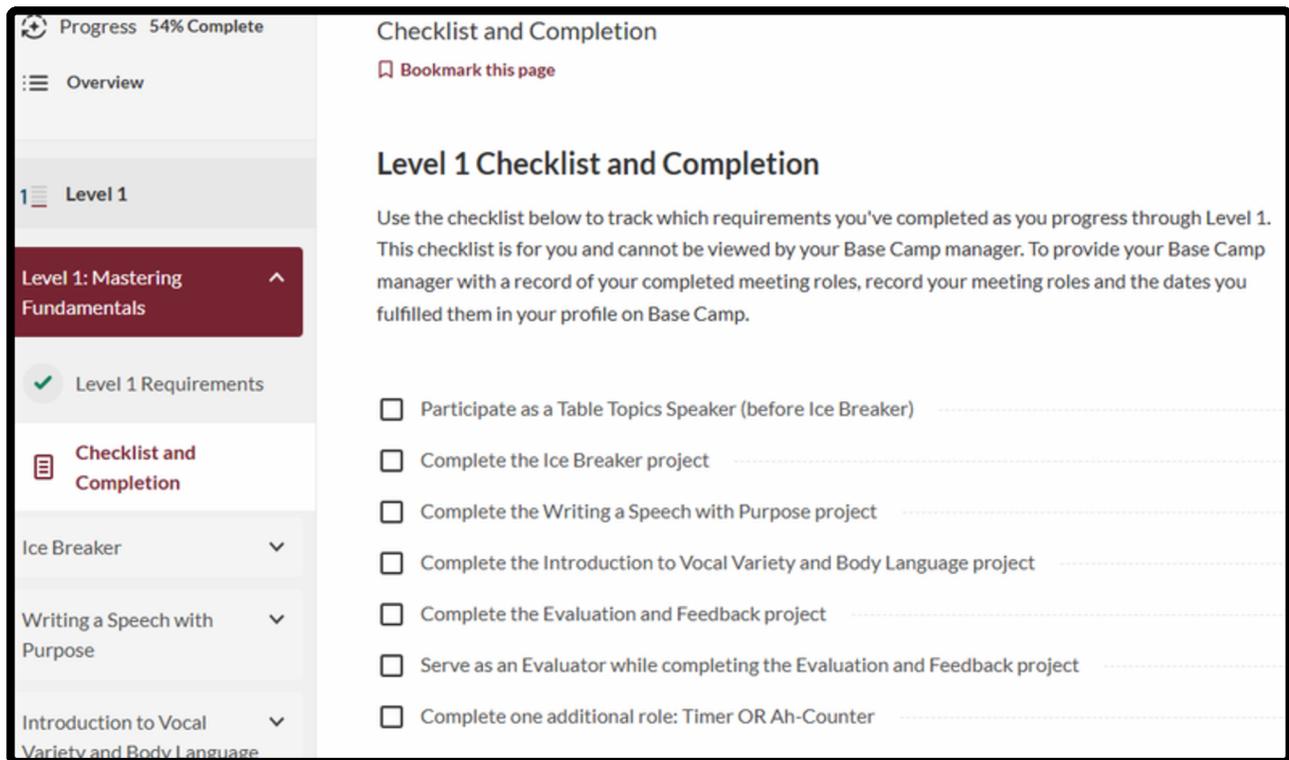
PATHWAYS CHANGES Continued

You may have some follow-up questions...

If you have already completed a level, the level will remain completed.

If you are working in a legacy path; Effective Coaching, Innovative Planning, Leadership Development, Strategic Relationships and Team Collaboration, these paths will not receive the enhancements with the meeting role and Education Series requirements.

There is a new section in each level with a checklist of requirements, so you can track which meeting roles you have completed.



As mentioned above, the additions in roles and presentations in levels 3, 4 and 5 from the Education Series are:

- The Successful Club Series: Helps members understand what is necessary for a club to deliver an excellent experience.
- The Better Speaker Series: Provides your entire club with information that will help everyone improve their speech writing and delivery.
- The Leadership Excellence Series: Helps foster stronger, more informed leadership in your club.

If you have any further questions about this and about the new and improved Basecamp, you can check out [Toastmasters.org](https://www.toastmasters.org) in the Education Programs Frequently Asked Questions as well as inquiring with your Club Coach or Vice President of Education.

The Lifers: Beyond the DTM, What Keeps Them Coming Back?



Name: Jim Kokocki, DTM
Joined Toastmasters in 1987

Why do you continue to renew your membership after all these years?

I stay mainly for two reasons;

1) Public speaking and team leadership are skills. If you want them to be sharp when you really need them you better be exercising these skills regularly. My Toastmasters meetings allow me to exercise these skills weekly.

2) There is no better reward than watching and supporting a new member grow in skill, ability and confidence. My weekly Toastmasters meetings consistently deliver this reward to me.



Name: Betty Kemp, PM3
Joined Toastmasters in 1994

Why do you continue to renew your membership after all these years?

I continue to renew my membership in Toastmasters because I am able to re-enforce my public speaking skills.

It is also interesting to meet new members and learn about their involvement in learning how to run a business meeting, prepare special projects.

I like the social aspect of being a member of a group.

The Lifelong Commitment: Why 40+ Years of Toastmasters Isn't Enough

When you meet a member who has been a dedicated Toastmaster since 1981, like Jim Murphy, PM3, a natural question comes to mind: Haven't you learned all the tips and tricks by now?

Jim shared why he continues to renew his membership and invest his time, even after achieving so much. His insightful response proves that Toastmasters is not a destination, but a vital, lifelong commitment to growth.

The Fitness Principle: Consistency is Key

Jim initially joined Toastmasters simply to gain confidence in all aspects of life. He quickly realized that skill-building, much like physical health, requires continuous effort.

"Like physical fitness, where one trip to the gym was not going to keep me physically fit for a lifetime, one year in Toastmasters was not going to give me a full life of confidence."

For Jim, Toastmasters provides the necessary gym for the mind—a place for consistent practice to maintain and expand the confidence he built.

The Unseen Benefits: Beyond the Podium

Jim highlights several rewards beyond standard public speaking that keep his experience fresh and valuable:

- Mastering Parliamentary Procedure (PP): Jim notes that PP gives every member a means to participate and ensures regulations are enforced. He finds immense satisfaction in seeing everyone participate and knowing their presence matters. *"Learning PP takes study and lots of practice, and nowhere else can you practice PP than in Toastmasters... it is so satisfying."*

- Leadership and Practice: He emphasizes that leadership also requires constant study and practice. Serving on the club Executive allows a member to practice all aspects of leadership across seven different positions.
- The Art of Mediating: Toastmasters offers a safe space to navigate different personalities and ideas. Jim views learning how to mediate differing opinions as an art that can only be attained through practice and experimentation within the club environment.

The Most Rewarding Aspect: Mentoring

The commitment to helping new members is perhaps the most powerful force drawing Jim back year after year.

"One of the most rewarding part of Toastmasters for me is mentoring... to help them see all the benefits available, to help them in each meeting role, and above all else, to see the satisfaction on their face, that is most rewarding."

The Ultimate Confidence Boost

Jim reminds us that the entire speech process—from choosing a topic and researching to writing, rehearsing, and experimenting with mechanics—is an education in itself. The final delivery, when the audience responds positively, is where the confidence level soars.

"Delivering the speech is where you bask in the good feeling you experience when the audience showers you with grandiose applause... it's where your confidence level can go thru the roof... AND KEEPS ME COMING BACK."

Jim's Sage Advice

Jim's guidance for every reader is refreshingly simple and direct: **"FOR BEST RESULTS IN ALL ASPECTS OF YOUR LIFE JOIN TOASTMASTERS TODAY."**

Congratulations!

New Distinguished Toastmaster

~ Leslie Carter ~



What was the single most challenging requirement you faced on the journey to DTM, and how did you overcome it?

The most challenging requirement for me was the final step: conducting the community-based program. I initially didn't know where to start, but in true Toastmaster fashion, other dedicated members were there to help guide me in the right direction. I am incredibly thankful for the fantastic and dynamic network of fellow Toastmasters who have become dear friends. The Youth Outreach program may have been the most difficult to begin, but it ultimately became one of the most rewarding things I have ever done.

Looking back, what is the most valuable skill you gained - and how do you apply it today?

While public speaking and confidence were the two most important foundational skills I learned from Toastmasters, the most valuable outcome was the ability to take these skills to the next level and apply them to leadership within the District, my work, and my personal life. Throwing myself into District leadership, specifically becoming the Public Relations Manager, gave me a new perspective and a broader sense of belonging. Before that, I only focused on activities within my own club. Opening myself up to what the entire District provides and being an active part of that exchange is something I continue to value, and I'm grateful to still be a resource within the District today.

Now that you've achieved the DTM, how has your involvement in Toastmasters changed? What's your focus now?

I sometimes joke that I would love to just be a POT (Plain Old Toastmaster), but I know that's not really what I want! For the first time in my entire Toastmaster career, I'm a member of two clubs, and I'm thoroughly enjoying this new experience. People often ask me, "When can you quit Toastmasters?" and I respond that it's not like that for three key reasons:

1. The skills I learn at Toastmasters need to be constantly practiced, or I might choose not to use them, which would be detrimental.
2. Doing something that takes you outside your comfort zone is recommended for our mental health, and Toastmasters definitely provides that for me.
3. Toastmasters thrives because the people who go through the program stay in the program to mentor new people, just as experienced Toastmasters mentored us when we started.

IMPORTANT DATES & EVENTS

Speech Contests

March

- March 7th - Area 9 (Division D) Speech Contests
- March 21st - Areas 2, 4 & 13 (Division C) Speech Contests
- March 21st - Areas 1, 11 & 18 (Division D) Speech Contests
- March 28th - Area 17 (Division C) Speech Contests

April

- April 11th - Division A Speech Contests
- April 11th - Division B Speech Contests
- April 11th - Division C Speech Contests



District 45 Conference

May

May 22nd-24th - District 45 Conference in Nova Scotia



CELEBRATE OUR LEGACY: Submit Your District 45 Photos and Stories

Hello District 45 Members!

This is a monumental year—our final year as District 45 before we merge with other Districts! To honor the incredible legacy of our District (founded in 1955 and spanning six regions), we are creating a special commemorative project.

We need your help to capture the history! We are enthusiastically seeking your best photos and stories from any year that highlight the heart of D45.

We Need Your D45 Stories and Snapshots!

Think back over your time in the District. What are the moments that truly capture the spirit of D45?

- **Club & Event Photos:** Pictures from club meetings, banquets, contests, conferences, or workshops.
- **Member Stories:** Candid shots of triumphs, laughter, and friendships—the moments that truly show our motto: For the members, by the members!
- **Historical Gems:** Photos of our longest-running clubs, past leaders (like International President Jim Kokocki), or any cross-border event.

Every single image and anecdote contributes to the beautiful tapestry of District 45. Let's showcase our history and celebrate our achievements before we merge. This is our chance to build a commemorative time capsule!

How to Share Your Legacy:

Please send your photos and/or brief stories to d45.prm.erin@gmail.com before April 15th, 2026. Include a brief description with each photo, noting the club name, year, and a few names if you remember them!

We can't wait to see your favorite memories! Let's make our final year the most inspiring one yet! We are eager to celebrate the legacy that you helped create!

