

rescendia

AIN'T NO MOUNTAIN HIGH ENOUGH

TM MEHR TANVIR
Winner,
Toastmasters International Video Speech
Contest 2024

prologue



TM Akash Kumar
Public Relations
Manager, D122P
2024-25

What a start!

It certainly is a series of serendipitous events!

Throughout 2023-24, the PRM for that year used a slide deck that featured certain faces in the background. Little did he know that one of those faces would actually end up being the PRM for 2024-25!

We said farewell in at the end of the last issue of Crescendo. Little did we know that we would be invited back into the fold by PRM Akash Kumar and DD Zaid Kaliya to helm another year of Crescendo.

We are honored and privileged.

Besides a rotation for the editor's post, we are also thrilled to welcome the National Public Speaking Champion and VPE of Quantum Leap Advanced Toastmasters , DTM Erum Rizvi to the team.

2024-25 kicked off at a high note for all of us. On of our very own, TM Mehr Tanvir, managed to achieve something for the first time in our District's history: the coveted first place finish at the Toastmasters Video Speech Contest!

Poetically and heroically, DTM Erum also placed on the podium by earning third place. That gave us the perfect opportunity to initiate the centerpiece of this issue, an interview of TM Mehr by DTM Erum.

Our District shone brightly at the Annual Convention as we bagged a couple of awards, recognizing our leadership's quality and dedication

The Crescendo team has worked closely with TM Akash in the past few months and he has already become a valuable team member. In this issue, you will see an incomparable bouquet of member contributions, the result of his idea of inviting contributions via a Google form!

The Crescendo Team



TM Uroosa Kanwal



TM Imran
Rana



TM
Naureen
Fatima



TM Umna
Salman



DTM Erum Rizvi



EDITOR
DTM Talha bin
Hamid



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Message

The year 2024-25 is poised to become a defining chapter in the history of Toastmasters in Pakistan, Inshallah. We kicked off the program year with an in-person strategy meeting, where the core team of the District united to exchange ideas, refine our vision, and amplify your insightful suggestions.

The District Directors Connect held across three cities, offered us a direct line to members — the very pulse of our community.

This year, we launched an ambitious initiative: the 19 Clubs in 90 Days Campaign. The energy and passion of our members have been nothing short of phenomenal. Our leaders and members are engaging with corporate leaders and organizing demo sessions.

We welcome the West Point Toastmasters Club to our ever-expanding District family — the first drop of rain. Many more are on the horizon.

Our Program Quality Team has organized informative trainings and taken many initiatives. Attendance at both District and Club Officer Trainings have surged to an all-time high—a reflection of the leaders' commitment.

The energy and passion of our members have been nothing short of phenomenal.

I congratulate TM Mehr Tanvir for becoming a Winner in the International Video Speech Contest and DTM Erum Rizvi for securing 3rd place. It has filled us with pride and inspired the entire District.

Our District Public Relations team has been relentless in elevating the Toastmasters brand. The innovative Thank You Toastmasters campaign has sparked tremendous engagement, generating over 200 leads—a resounding success.

My sincere gratitude to the Crescendo team, led by DTM Talha Bin Hamid, for delivering such a brilliantly crafted and uplifting issue setting a new standard of excellence.

I am truly grateful to be surrounded by such a talented and driven team, and I take immense pride in the remarkable progress we've made in such a short time. But our journey is far from complete. Our true success will be realized when we cross that finish line and I do not doubt that together, we will.

Are you with me?

Zaid Kaliya, DTM
District Director, D122P
2024-25



Message

It is our pleasure to share that the Toastmasters year is off to a fantastic start!

Our initial focus has been on forming dynamic teams and brainstorming strategic plans. The District Director Connect initiative has been invaluable, bringing fresh ideas from leaders across Pakistan. Many passionate and creative members became the part of Program Quality Desk for 2024-25.

Our teams include Toastmasters Leadership Institute, DTM Support Committee, Events Committee, Program Quality Team, PR Lead (PQD), Speakers Bureau, Gamification, and YouTube Library. The Program Quality Desk has already hosted three highly successful training sessions, breaking participation records for District 122P. The first session, aimed at Area and Division Directors, was a resounding success with over 90% attendance. This was followed by the Club Officers Training (COT), which saw overwhelming engagement, even exceeding the capacity of our Zoom account—a challenge that was swiftly addressed. The subsequent catch-up session also saw enthusiastic participation.

These events highlight the commitment of our district's leaders to not only their personal growth but also the development of those connected with them.

District Director Connect event has brought fresh ideas from leaders across Pakistan

These sessions have been enriched by experienced trainers, while also offering opportunities for emerging leaders to showcase their talents and inspire others. Looking ahead, we are excited to announce several upcoming trainings in the coming months, alongside key initiatives like the YouTube Library and Speakers Bureau.

The YouTube Library will serve as a platform to archive and celebrate the outstanding contributions of our members, while the Speakers Bureau will elevate members' public speaking skills to a professional level, offering opportunities beyond Toastmasters. We encourage all district members to actively participate and contribute to these initiatives.

Lastly, we extend our deepest gratitude to every member of our team for their invaluable contributions to our district's success. A special thanks to all district members for their unwavering support and commitment to personal growth.

Syed Azam Ali, DTM
Program Quality
Director, D122P
2024-25



Message

Ali Amjad , DTM
Club Growth Director,
D122P
2024-25

"It always seems impossible until it is done".

This is what I have observed and it proved true on countless occasions in my toastmasters' journey spanning over a decade. If you ask me the secret to member growth, it is retention of members. Easier said than done; the member retention is an outcome and as club leaders you must focus on the process for the desired outcome.

The process is quite simple. Toastmasters club is more than a group of people who conduct meetings and learn various skills. It is a family of people with common interest of helping each other succeed and value each other's diverse ideas, take strength from member's unique skillset and complement each other in team work while working towards club excellence.

We'll record both member retention and growth never observed before in the history of our district, Insha Allah.

The executive committee of the club has a responsibility to ensure that member's needs are fulfilled and they feel empowered and valued. The club leadership must strive to create a club experience that is professional, challenging and enjoyable; all these are conducive to learning and growth.

If we are able to create this environment, I am confident enough to state that this program year will be a great success. We'll record both member retention and growth never observed before in the history of our district, Insha Allah. Remember, it always seems impossible until it is done.





From Fear to Fulfilment

Introduction

As I opened the email from Toastmasters International informing me of my Distinguished Toastmaster (DTM) achievement, I was overwhelmed with nostalgia. My mind flashed back to my first speech, when I trembled with fear, and contrasted it with the confident leader I've become, inspiring others and leading teams. This transformative journey has been life-changing, and I'm eager to share my personal DTM story, highlighting the challenges overcome, triumphs celebrated, and invaluable lessons learned along the way."

The Beginning

I joined Toastmasters four years ago, driven by a desire to improve my public speaking skills. My first speech, "The Icebreaker," was a nerve-wracking experience. I stumbled over words, forgot my notes, and rushed through my delivery. I watched my speech multiple times on YouTube. But despite the initial struggle, I was hooked. I saw the potential for growth and was determined to push past my fears.

Overcoming Obstacles

One of my biggest challenges was overcoming self-doubt. I often wondered if I was good enough, if my messages resonated with others. But with each speech, I gained confidence. I practiced relentlessly, sought feedback from mentors, and learned to critique myself constructively. I realized that perfection was not the goal; progress was.

Milestones and Achievements

Completing my first Pathway, Presentation Mastery, was a pivotal moment. It signalled a seismic shift from honing my speaking skills to cultivating leadership abilities. Buoyed by this success, I pursued my second Pathway, Dynamic Leadership, and achieved it. My confidence soared as I ventured into contests, securing multiple awards. The crowning glory was winning first place in the Humorous Speech Contest at the Division level (2023), which propelled me to the District level. Each milestone built upon the previous one, creating a snowball effect that propelled me toward greater achievements.

Lessons Learned

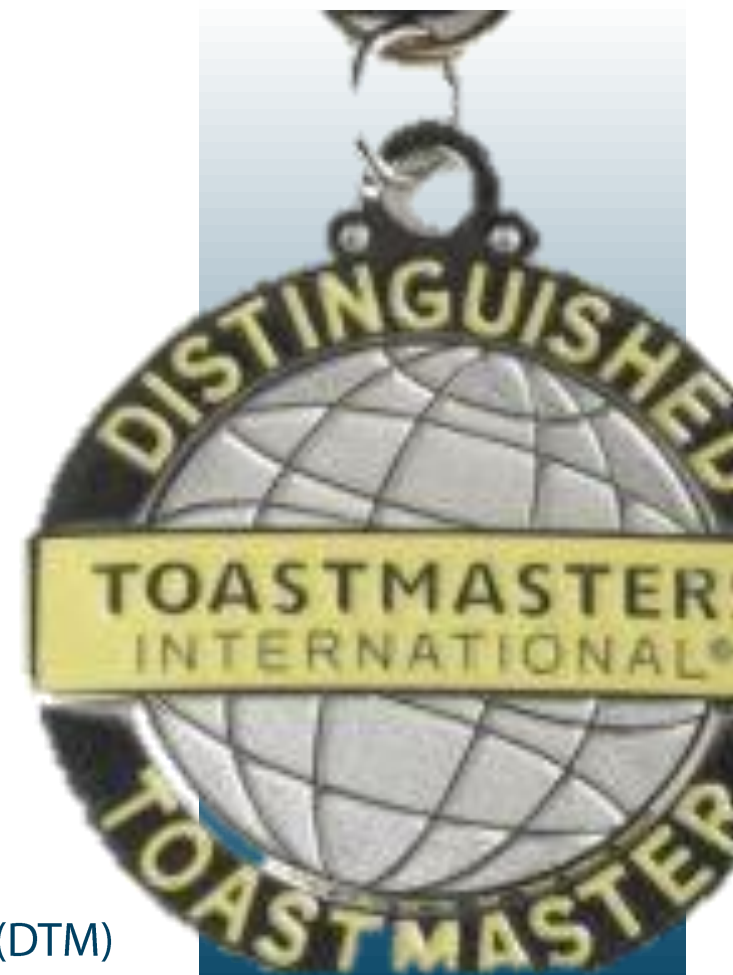
Looking back, I've distilled my DTM journey into three key takeaways:

1. Courage is not the absence of fear, but the willingness to act despite it.
2. Feedback is a gift; seek it, and use it to grow.
3. Leadership is not about titles, but about inspiring and serving others.

To fellow Toastmasters and aspiring DTM candidates, I offer this advice: stay committed, be patient, and celebrate your progress.

Conclusion

Receiving my DTM award was a moment of immense pride, but it's not the destination; it's a milestone on a lifelong journey. Toastmasters has taught me that growth is a continuous process, and I'm grateful for the experience. If you're considering embarking on your own DTM journey, I encourage you to take the leap. The transformation awaits.



HINA AZAM,
DTM



I realized
that
perfection
was not
the goal.
Progress
was.



My Journey from “Toastmaster” to “Distinguished Toastmaster”

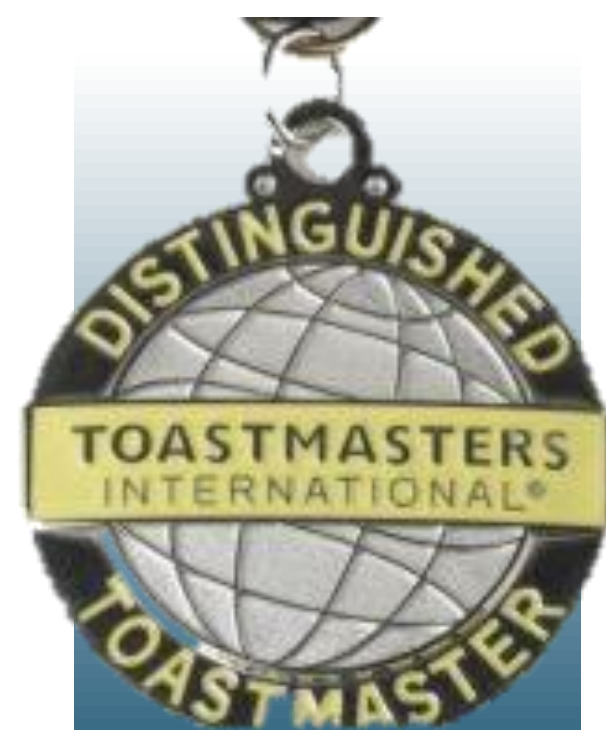
Venturing from a novice Toastmaster to attaining the prestigious Distinguished Toastmaster (DTM) designation has been one of the most transformative experiences of my personal and professional life.

Although, my initial goal was to improve my public speaking and communication skills yet the motivating and encouraging environment compelled me to continue my journey zealously. As I went fourth, I realized that leadership was an equally important aspect of being a Toastmaster. I embarked on various roles within my club, from being the Timer to eventually serving as Club President. Each role brought new challenges and fostered my skills that are crucial in everyday and professional life.

The most remarkable phase in my journey was participating in speech contests. These contests pushed me to refine my speeches and deliver with precision and impact. Competing at higher levels introduced me to a wider network of talented speakers, and the feedback from seasoned Toastmasters was invaluable in refining my techniques.

Paying back to the community is a critical aspect of the DTM journey. As my confidence grew, I had the privilege of mentoring new members and new clubs. This was perhaps the most rewarding part of my journey. This experience multiplied my confidence and allowed me to help other club members groom and thrive. The journey from my first tentative steps as a Toastmaster to standing confidently as a Distinguished Toastmaster has been nothing short of transformative experience.

Looking back, I see a clear evolution in my skills, mindset, and confidence. What started as a desire to improve communication skills has evolved into a passion for leadership, mentorship, and community service. While reaching DTM is a spectacular achievement, it is not the end of my journey but rather the beginning of a new chapter where I continue to inspire and lead others on their Toastmasters journey.



AZAM
WASEEM,
DTM



Paying back to the community is a critical aspect of the DTM journey





Club Officers Training & District Officers Training – Round 1

First round of District Trainings was held over late July and early August 2024. The trainings, held online, under the auspices of PQD and TLI Chair, melded together trainers with vast experience from all over Pakistan and beyond.

The trainings were exceptionally well attended.

CLUB OFFICERS TRAINING

Empowerment - Vision to Victory











TRAINERS

TOASTMASTERS INTERNATIONAL
District 122P
Aug 03, 2024 - Saturday
06:00 pm PKT - Zoom
PROGRAM QUALITY DESK
2024-25
TLI

Participants visible in the grid include: Abdul Waheed, naimat mustafa, Sarfaraz Nazir, Sofia Qadir Khan, Abdul Hannan, tahir iqbal, and Shahbaz Sarwar. The interface shows standard Zoom controls at the bottom.

CLUB OFFICERS TRAINING

Empowerment - Vision to Victory






- EX-COM ROLE TRAINERS -





TOASTMASTERS INTERNATIONAL
District 122P
Aug 03, 2024 - Saturday
06:00 pm PKT - Zoom
PROGRAM QUALITY DESK 2024-25
TLI

DISTRICT OFFICERS TRAINING

Empowerment: Vision to Victory

TRAINERS














TOASTMASTERS INTERNATIONAL
District 122P
July 26, 2024 - Friday
06:30 pm PKT - Via Zoom
PROGRAM QUALITY DESK 2024-25
TLI

DISTRICT OFFICERS TRAINING

Empowerment: Vision to Victory

An Insightful Panel Discussion On
"ELEVATE YOUR DIVISION"

- Panelists -

TOASTMASTERS INTERNATIONAL
District 122P
July 26, 2024 - Friday
06:30 pm PKT - Zoom
PROGRAM QUALITY DESK 2024-25
TLI

PANEL MODERATOR - TM FARYAAH IQBAL





Leadership Strategic Meeting

On 6th July in Lahore, District 122P leaders gathered to kick off the 2024-25 term with vision and vigor! This strategic meeting was a powerhouse of ideas, collaboration, and plans for an incredible year ahead.





District Director Connect

The year kicked off with a series of events titled "District Director Connect". The events served as a gathering of leaders and members in 3 locations, for an exchange of ideas and set a strategy for the coming year. The event boasted the following highlights:

- 🤝 **Networking:** Members from across Pakistan engaged in lively conversations, sharing their Toastmasters experiences.
- 💡 **Brainstorming:** We collaborated on innovative ideas to elevate our District's success.
- 🏆 **National Champion Trophy Distribution:** Celebrating the remarkable achievements of our top performers.
- 🎖️ **District Officer Badges Distribution Ceremony:** Honoring our newly appointed district officers.

Share





Islamabad



Karachi





Pakistan shines at the Annual Convention 2024

Toastmasters Annual Convention 2024, held at Anaheim, California, proved to be very special for District 122P. Two of our stalwart speakers, TM Mehr Tanvir and DTM Erum Rizvi, swept the Video Speech Contest, winning 1st and 3rd places, respectively.

Our District's TLI Chair, a former WCSP Semi Finalist and all-around Gandalf, DTM Sarfaraz Nazir, attended the Convention and represented us superbly.



District Program Quality Awards (Continued)

The Program Quality Directors in Districts that train 85% of their Area and Division Directors and meet Distinguished goals in number of Distinguished clubs receive the District Program Quality Award.

District	District
100 Heather Osborn, PM1	117 David Lindquist, DTM
101 Raji Bandanapudi, DTM	118 Peter Wang, DTM
102 Hui Qin Woo, DTM	119 Charilaos Aneziris, DTM
104 Abdulhadi Hawsawi, DTM	120 Mohanakrishnan G, DTM
105 Saiju Victor, DTM	121 Savitha Sallian, DTM
107 Claudia Villarreal, DTM	122P Zaid Kalya, DTM
108 Chomicz Lukasz, IP2	124 Gaurav Agarwal, IPS
109 Elena Grammenou, VCS	125 Shaikh Anjum, DTM
110 Adriana Kurtoglu, DTM	126 Vikram Chandrakumar, DTM
113 Cesar Paul Montoya Grijalva, DTM	127 Sujil Vallyandy, DTM
114 Robert Karanja, DTM	128 Bin Xu, DTM
116 Sabeena M K, DTM	

District Club Strength Awards (Continued)

District 93 Gilhee Park, DTM 20.93%
District 95 Katharina Zaiser, DTM 14.35%
District 96 Paul Rostagno, DTM 15.61%
District 100 Marcia Yamanaka, DTM 12.03%
District 102 CP Lau, DTM 11.65%
District 104 Saji Kuriakose, DTM 13.10%
District 107 Vera Cunha, DTM 21.62%
District 108 Kamil Chmiel, DTM 14.01%
District 109 Margherita Brodbeck Roth, DTM 18.95%
District 110 Balazs Somogyi, DTM 16.64%
District 113 Elena Almeida Mora, DTM 15.58%
District 115 Kenneth Richardson, DTM 11.30%
District 117 Karlene Phillips, DTM 17.56%
District 120 Gayathri Ganapathy, DTM 11.15%
Provisional District 122 Atif Irfan Shaikh, DTM 13.37%
District 123 Leslie Benfield, DTM 20.71%

District 122P scored Excellence in Program Quality and Club Strength Award, reaffirming our commitment to unparalleled member service





Recognizing someone special

Karachi Toastmasters Club held a special ceremony to recognize the valuable services of DTM Rashid Dastagir, past Division Director Division B and President of Husne Khitabat Toastmasters Club.

DD Zaid Kaliya and PDD Sameer Hamid Dodhy joined to commemorate this special occasion.



Tying the Knot

Our beloved Administration Manager, TM Moiz Naim, tied the knot on July 27, 2024.

The wedding ceremony, somewhat predictably, turned into an unofficial Toastmasters convention with attendance by DD, PQD and other leaders from District 122P





An interview with Pakistan's first-ever Champion of Toastmasters International Video Speech Contest, 2024



REACHING THE TOP

INTERVIEWER: Erum Rizvi, DTM

Winner, D122P International Speech Contest 2024
Third Place, Video Speech Contest 2024

1. Can you share your journey to becoming a World Champion in the Video Contest? What were some key milestones or turning points along the way?

Well, to be honest, I really was not aware that club contest speeches were reviewed for the International Video Speech Contest until the very day of the competition. This was the first time I was participating, and I was under no illusion of winning, given the kind of talent we had at our club. My key focus was to have fun, present my story with gusto – entertain, inspire and uplift the audience, and share a message that was close to my heart. Also, as the Charter President of WordWise, I felt that it was my responsibility to encourage my fellow club members to participate by taking part myself and make our first ever contest a success. It was truly a pleasant surprise to secure a position, and I am grateful for this gift.

Looking back, I realize that public speaking has been a lifelong passion. I credit my mother with instilling a love of storytelling, with her vivid narratives and portrayals of fairytale characters when I was very young. She was my first mentor and coach, and encouraged my interest in debates, poetry competitions and dramatics throughout school and college life. I was always moved by great orators, and I found it enthralling to perform on stage. The spell of stories also led to a love of reading and a fascination with the play of words. Along the way, I took up communication-centric roles in my professional capacity, where I gained an appreciation for the accurate use of language. Later, I enrolled in courses pertaining to writing and personal management. I was greatly inspired by the instructors at the PAF Finishing School for Women, Islamabad, who exemplified impactful public speaking and encouraged us to pursue our passions. It was there that I resolved to enhance this skill and the decision to be a teacher was seeded.





I joined the Rawalpindi Toastmasters Club in 2020 with the primary goal of polishing my performance both inside and outside the classroom: as an instructor, a public speaking coach for students, and an aspiring school leader. I was attracted by the positive and friendly culture, and the network of like-minded individuals. It was at Toastmasters that I learned to build on the power of personal experiences and human vulnerabilities. I learned that there was a world of inspiration to be found in the seemingly simple moments of our everyday lives and everyday emotions, that are tales all unto their own. Through trial and error, I tried to find my own authentic voice through a blend of humour, sensitivity and courage to look inward and find the stories within.

For the contest itself, I must acknowledge the impact of my brilliant colleagues at WordWise, from whom I learned through osmosis and observation; the speechcraft and educational sessions held at both the Rawalpindi Toastmasters Club and WordWise Advanced Toastmasters Club respectively, in the months before the event. I must also acknowledge the learning I gained from studying past champions inside and outside the District. Truly, there is a very long list of individuals to whom I am grateful for sharing their insights and experience.

In hindsight, I would say, that just as a persistent drop of water can shape a jagged-edged rock into a smooth, round stone, consistent effort and practice over time, does indeed bear results. It is important to walk your talk; to have integrity in representing your message – you never know when preparation may meet opportunity. For myself, I feel I am still searching for my personal best and the journey continues.

2. What specific technical aspects do you believe were crucial to your success, such as video storytelling, engaging the audience, or delivering a powerful message on camera?

The heart of any speech is the core message that we want to impart to an audience. The more relatable the message, the more engaging is the speech. In my view, a great speech – whether online or offline – has both the depth of emotional intensity and the height of an elevated epiphany.

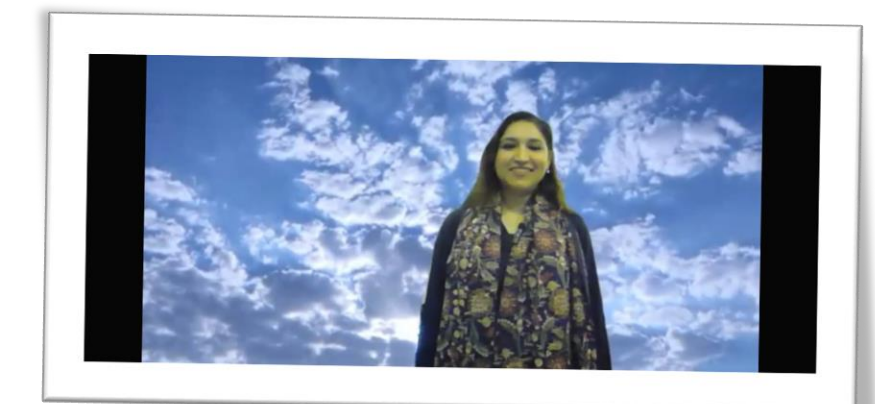
Therefore, we need to dig deep enough to find something that we truly believe in – something we connect with strongly and emotionally. The more we resonate with our message, the more powerfully we can imprint that emotion on an audience.

Speaking on camera is a different experience. After all, we do not have a live audience in front of us, and we can neither gauge their response nor reactions to know if our speech is being received properly. Yet, it is important to ensure that we are effectively taking the audience along on our personal journey, showcasing both the pain and path to progress. I would suggest a few essentials that we can attempt, to make the speech come alive.

First, one needs to unlearn the tempting habit of looking at the 'Gallery' view and look directly into the camera. This one change will give the audience a better impression of eye-contact and being spoken to 'directly'. In a video speech we need to take our story to a virtual audience, and this trick goes a long way in helping to bridge the gap.

Second, different audience members react with differing intensity to descriptive language: some respond more to the sense of sound, some to visual descriptions, and others to statements of feeling. Therefore, dialogues are very important in a video speech, as they cater to our sense of sound, in addition to creating a more engaging delivery. I even experimented with a couple of accents for the double benefit of adding humour and developing character. I also drew on my travel experiences and used visual imagery in describing the landscape. Furthermore, the joyful impact of the words symbolically illustrated the happiness of the final transformation. Descriptive storytelling is not only enjoyable to write but lends itself to a great delivery as well.

It was at Toastmasters that I learned to build on the power of personal experiences and human vulnerabilities.





Third, the power of metaphors cannot be stressed enough. In fact, our entire story is a metaphor of resilience, love, overcoming the odds, or whatever lesson it is we want to transfer to the audience. Metaphors have the ability to move us at an unconscious level and are very effective in establishing a connection.

Fourth, callback is one technique that consistently comes up in award-winning speeches. It is important to tie all loose ends by referring to the question, problem statement or joke we presented at the beginning. This is where we reveal the value addition of our speech – our great epiphany – the liberating realization of the meaning of our challenge. Coupled with a motif that we repeat throughout our delivery, we can emphasise the importance of our theme, keep its reference alive and mark our transitions to help our listeners stay on track. The motif could even be the title of the speech.

Finally, the simple act of using an effective prop can support your linguistics to another level and make the story even more vivid. Mohammad Qahtani, Dananjaya Hettiarachchi and Verity Price have all used simple props to great effect in their WCPS winning speeches. Often, the prop itself is a metaphor and callback device.

Personally, I used a virtual moving sky to immerse the listeners in their imagination. However, if you consider using a virtual background as a prop, do test it thoroughly or use a green screen if you can, to ensure there are no technical glitches and the judges can see your face and body language clearly. I also used the Mountain as a metaphor, motif and callback device. Its changing role from fiend to friend reflected my own transformation from fear to faith. In effect, it was both the problem *and* the resolution – the catalyst for changing my own mindset towards life's problems, and the harbinger of the lesson itself.

3. How did you tackle common challenges during the competition, nerves, unexpected challenges, or moments of doubt, on both stage and online? Can you describe any similar obstacles you faced in both setups and how the approaches differed or aligned?

I think the most common challenge for any public speaker is conquering nervous energy. The biggest thing to remember during contests is that, in the end, the competition is only with your own self. Prepare your story with your goal in mind to ensure that it reaches the audience the way you pictured it.

Personally, I used a virtual moving sky to immerse the listeners in their imagination





4. Could you share any behind-the-scenes stories from your preparation for the contest?

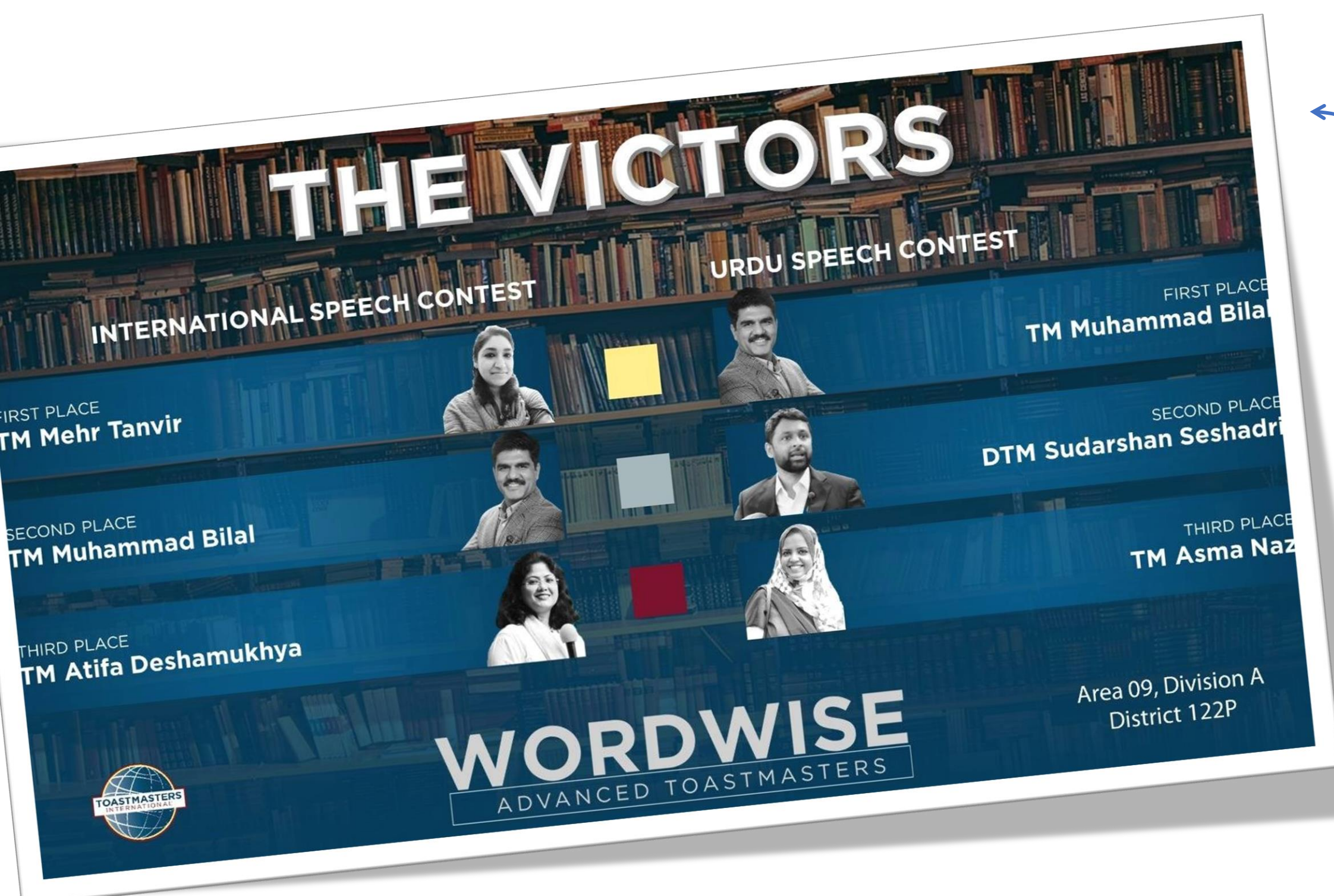
Thinking about it now, it feels like comedy, but the background to the club contest was rife with internal drama. I was juggling multiple commitments: Presidential duties at the club, my post-graduate studies, a couple of professional development courses and my own personal responsibilities. As a result, I did not get much time to write the speech, even with just a week remaining for the contest. However, the infectious enthusiasm and encouragement of TM Amit Dudani, a fellow member, propelled me to find a way, for which I am grateful. I decided to rework an older draft from my Pathways and looked for a mentor to fast-track the process.

I was able to get in touch with TM Cyril Paul, double-District champion from D98, who had visited our club as a guest speaker. He generously responded to my request for feedback. It quickly became very clear that a new story was in order, yet the time constraint was daunting. However, he strongly advised me to give my voice and story a chance to be heard.

The question of finding an appropriate narrative now arose. That very weekend, I wrote the introduction to an adventurous episode during the meeting's unique and wonderful Extempore Writing segment, drawing on a real-life paragliding experience. It was literally a cliff-hanger, and no doubt reflected the situation at hand! I realized that I now had three promising ideas I'd generated during the club meetings, so I picked my favourite one, and decided to run with it. However, we were not out of the woods, yet! Three days before D-Day – as I was still formulating my speech – it turned out we were facing challenges in locking down contest role players. At this point, my responsibility to support my team outweighed all else, and with a looming academic deadline and an incomplete tale, I decided to drop out of the competition. Being a dual member, the consolation was that I may still have a chance at my second club. However, our VPE DTM Talha bin Hamid assured me that all arrangements would be completed in the best way, and expressed his confidence that I would deliver well, time constraints notwithstanding. Thus, in a series of fortuitous events, I was happily dunked into the deep end. Looking back, I'd say, the club itself came to my rescue, providing a platform to generate a wonderful story idea, and a means to connect with the right people!

I made it a point to have two mics and two devices charged and ready a day before the contest. Practice was precious, but meaningful.

Standing there, in front of the laptop with the image of the virtual sky behind me – it really did feel like I had climbed a mountain, and I just hoped, I would indeed fly.



The flyer announcing TM Mehr's victory at the WordWise International Speech Contest. This led to the speech's submission to the International Video Speech Contest



بات پتھر کی

TM Sofia Qadir
Khan
(Area Director)



This beautiful
poem was first
recited at a
meeting of
WordWise
Advanced
Toastmasters

Translation: Talha bin Hamid

خواب شیشے کے رات پتھر کی
لب سے نکلی نہ بات پتھر کی

Dreams like glass, the rocky night
My lips, silent, made of stone

تجھ سے مل جانا زندگی ٹھہری
ورنہ کیا تھی حیات پتھر کی

All my senses come alive with you
Once, all was different shades of stone

کوئی چنگاری کو ہوا دے دے
خود سے غافل ہے ذات پتھر کی

Another must strike to ignite
Or else, so remains the state of stone

پھول کا روئے ارض پر کھلنا
کتنی واضح ہے مات پتھر کی

You walked away and nothing was left
Except a desert of hate, of stone

تیرے جانے سے اب یہ عالم ہے
ہم ہیں اور کائنات پتھر کی

Every blossom fighting through
Proves the fragile fate of stone

صبح نو کا گماں نہ گزرے اب
مجھ پہ گزری تھی رات پتھر کی

I cannot see the morning light
For I live in night made of stone

اس نے پوچھا کہ سچ ہے کیا جاناں؟
کیسے کہتے تھی بات پتھر کی

He asked me to speak the truth
I choked under the weight of stone

آبلہ پا ہوئے تو کیوں ہے گلہ
خود چنی تھی حیات پتھر کی

Now that my feet are but raw blood
Green is the path that I laid of stone



Belle of the Prisoned Ball

TM Fatima
Abeer Ahmed



Cage surrounded by melodies
Pleasing tweets and gentle breeze
Dancing sculptures, soothing
screams

Fascinating audible beings
A flickering ember, hope within you
Gained through the burning hue
That's the dawn set for all
Belle of the prisoned Ball





The Four Fundamentals of Storytelling in Business

People make decisions based on emotions, not logic, and that makes the ability to tell a compelling story essential to winning them over.

Most of our business communication is designed to persuade somebody to do something, whether that's a prospect to appoint your company, a client to increase their budget, a talented individual to join your team, or a senior colleague to answer your email.

I know we all think we're supremely logical beings and that we make our decisions for carefully thought through logical reasons. That's why every presentation has a 'benefits' slide, right?

But the neuroscience shows that this isn't the case. We make decisions for emotional reasons... and then our brain post-rationalizes the decision by finding some logical reasons to justify it.

Now that you are, hopefully, convinced of the importance of business storytelling, here's how to maximize your chances of hitting your audience's emotional buttons.



1

A story has to be about only one thing

Too often, business communications begin with someone in a meeting saying "so... what do we want to say", then multiple stakeholders all give their opinion, and a Frankenstein's monster of ill-matching parts is constructed.

Just as a great novel or movie maintains one clear narrative thread, a business story should have a similarly unified purpose. It should be about one thing, and you should make clear what that thing is right at the beginning. This is how you ensure that your audience remains engaged and can easily grasp your core message.

TM Syed Faraz Anjum





The Four Fundamentals of Storytelling in **Business**



2

The hero of the story is your audience – not you

Rather than placing your company or brand as the protagonist, craft a narrative that talks to your audience about their experiences, challenges and aspirations.

Placing your audience at the heart of the story involves positioning them as the ones overcoming obstacles and achieving their goals – all with the help of your talent, products or services, of course.

3

A story must have a beginning, a middle and an end

Like any great story, a business narrative should follow the classic three-act structure. The beginning should introduce the protagonist (your audience) and establish the challenge they face. The middle then explores the possible solutions, and the further obstacles and complications that arise. Finally, the end should provide a resolution, where the protagonist reaches their ultimate triumph.

For example, a company's origin story. The beginning of the story centers on the founders' identification of an unmet customer need. The middle explores how the company began to meet this need. What were some of the challenges in the early days? What were the learnings from this time and how do they impact the organization today? The ending should focus on how what was true and important then remains true and important for the organization today.

4

The story must contain a lesson

Stories are fundamentally about learning. Effective storytelling should not only entertain but also impart valuable lessons or insights – and this is especially true when building a story around data. Don't just tell your audience the facts; give them the learning contained in the data – actionable knowledge that they can use.

You can use this storytelling principle when you are applying for a new role and you are faced with the most daunting interview question of all: "what is your greatest weakness?" We all know we can't actually admit to a really major weakness. So use storytelling to talk about a historical weakness, and how you encountered a challenge that revealed this, teaching you a vital lesson about yourself.

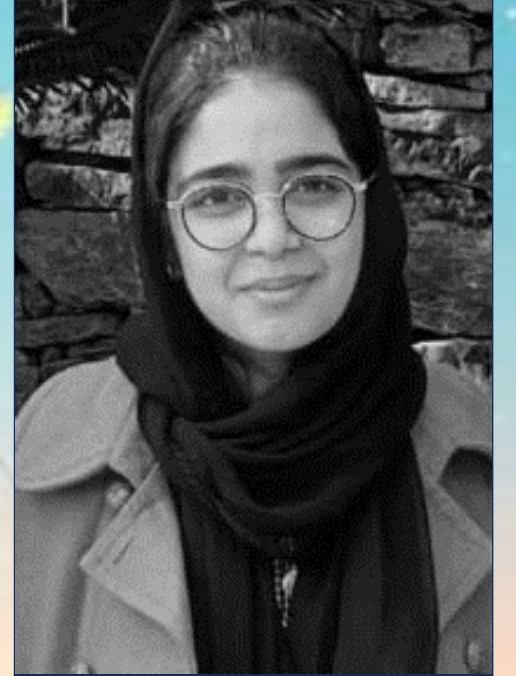
This allows you to tell a 'hero's journey' about solving a business problem (share the credit with your team, of course), while using the 'inner journey' to reveal your weakness, but crucially also your awareness of it and what you've done to address it.

Embrace these principles and you'll be well on your way to becoming a great business storyteller.



ILLUSION

TM Zoha Ruman



The first ever poetry that I wrote was illusion few years back. And after that the world of poetry changed my perception. It helped me speak my mind at good and bad times. And I found my talent of writing. I kept on writing, not continuously but occasionally.

Took a step back to have a better view
saw a dark aura,
not meant for me to see

a land of lust, a sky of greed
a world behind the curtains,
not meant for me to see

the truth when revealed, so untrue
orbs behind the blindfold,
not meant for me to see

the push of wind, the catch of sea
the grin behind the smile
not meant for me to sea





Through the glass, a world transformed,
By heavy rain, the storm performed,

Birds were splashing water overall,
As were doing John and Paul

Flocks of birds circling high in the sky,
Like saying summer happily goodbye

Jubilant trees dancing, big and small,
As though there will never be fall

Trees bow low with leaves in tears,
Whispering tales of bygone years,

Cars splash through puddles, fleeting fast,
Moments caught but never last.

Windows shiver with the storm's
embrace,
Nature's fury, yet a tender grace,

Yet through the window, wild and free,
The rain performs its symphony.

Droplets race on windows' pane,
A myriad paths, none the same,

And through the window, life reframed,
A masterpiece by rain proclaimed.

A SCENE THROUGH THE WINDOW DURING HEAVY RAIN

DTM Azam
Waseem





Conversations That Heal

TM Gule Zehra
(Edited by
TM Cyril Paul)



A month masseuse, had a relentless pain in my left wrist. My mother sent for the masseuse and she arrived a short while later. The masseuse was an elderly woman, her skin the colour of wet soil, and her age appearing in the form of sagging dark circles around her eyes. We sat facing each other on the carpeted floor; she held my wrist in her hands as tenderly as if holding a delicate bird. Her touch made me realize that she understood pain and it dawned upon me that 'understanding is the first step to healing'.

Enveloped in a blanket of silence, she continued her soothing motion on my wrist. I recalled from memory that I had seen her earlier as well. Time hadn't altered her appearance much, perhaps only adding more wrinkles on her face, like newer instalments of an in-progress book. Drawing upon these observations, I asked her:

"How long have you been working?"

"15- 16 years"

"Do you like working?"

"I never worked when my husband was alive."

"And now you do. But what do you do with the meagre amount you get?"

"Oh, I buy paan and gutka."

Of all the worldly things to indulge in! Betel leaves and tobacco.

"Yani apni tafreeh ka saman kerti hain aap!" (you indulge yourself with the earning)

Our chat continued, where she patiently answered my questions about the life of the earlier generation and changes over time, her progeny and the town gossip. It was then that she revealed about the sudden demise of one of her daughters in the recent past. And the pain had left her bereft. That's why she wandered among people to avoid the nagging sense of loss that came to haunt her especially when she was home alone. I nodded in response as I looked unwaveringly into her greying eyes. Our conversation flowed uninterrupted. When she was done with the wrist massage, she drank a glass of sherbet and took her leave. Near the gate, she halted for a moment, turned around, placed her hand on my shoulder and said, "Thank you, may Allah grant you a long life."

Startled as to what had prompted the blessing, I gave her a hesitant smile. It was I who should be thanking her and I had already done it. Quite perplexed by this exchange, I mentally went over our conversation trying to decipher what I had done to deserve her prayers. Why did she even feel so emotionally connected as to lovingly bless me?





Conversations That Heal

In that moment, I recollected that Charles Duhigg in his book "Supercommunicators" mentions three types of conversations:

1. Practical – where we discuss ideas
2. Emotional – where we share emotions
3. Social – where we talk about beliefs and identity.

For most part, our conversation had switched between the 2nd and 3rd types. True understanding occurs when one realises the type of conversation that one is in, and responds accordingly. As I further deconstructed my conversations, I made another discovery - I inadvertently had been using a communication framework even in my everyday dialogues. It goes like:

1. Observing
2. Questioning
3. Listening

Close observation provides insight into the speaker's life. Driven by this knowledge, we can ask relevant questions. Enquiries are meaningful only when they are followed by profound listening. And this is not strictly hierarchical process; it overlaps with at least two out of three elements taking place in parallel to each other most of the time.

What I had done unbeknownst was to pick up observations from the past and ask relevant questions to the masseuse. That opened the floodgates of her long-held emotions and she shared while I listened. All this gave birth to an understanding that resulted in a prayer – one of the highest forms of connection and bonding. As someone said, "if we listen with understanding and empathy, we have the potential to help heal others". While she worked on my pain, I worked on hers unknowingly, healing each other in the process.

Let's interact with our family, friends, colleagues, and even strangers with the first and foremost purpose of understanding them. Let's give this world not just our words but also genuine understanding. Let's heal the world together by understanding it through observing, questioning, and listening. As Yoko Ono said:

"Healing yourself is connected with healing others"

Of all the worldly things to indulge in! Betel leaves and tobacco.





The Curious Case of Seniority Complex in Pakistani Corporate Culture

TM Dua e Zahra



It seems every other day you struggle with telling your manager about a hospital visit you absolutely need to take, or that dentist appoint for which you need to take off 2 hours early. Why though? It may not be the case in other cultures, but in ours, Pakistani society is dependent heavily on “don’t-say his-opinion-is-wrong-because-he-is-a-senior-even-if-this-mistake-might-cost-the-company-and-arm-and-a-leg”.

Besides personal getaways, we don’t even consider pointing out work-related problems that have actual financial consequences for the company and ourselves! Seniority must be respected; however, in order to get the work done right, employees need to stop shying away from telling those in charge what’s causing that bug before the deadline!

If you don’t say it, your manager might miss it, imagine if that release gets to production with that bug and the client doesn’t like it, whose loss is it?

Malcolm Gladwell in his book, *Outliers*, meticulously analyses how cultures that follow the “hush hush” attitude when it comes to being transparent with their seniors in strictly work-related issues, lead to poor team collaboration and low client satisfaction. Consider the analogy given by him, in this case, relating to the Colombian airliner Avianca flight 052 that crashed in January of 1990:

“All the guys had to do was tell the controller, ‘We don’t have the fuel to comply with what you are trying to do. All they had to do was say, ‘We can’t do that. We have to land in the next ten minutes.’ They weren’t able to put that across to the controller.” – *Outliers, The Ethnic Theory of Plane Crashes* – Page 236.

Columbian culture, like many other 3rd world cultures, forces someone junior to hesitate if they want to contradict their senior who they have noticed have made a mistake or stated some wrong facts that might cost the team client dissatisfaction. The question of “whether I should point this out or cost me my job for humiliating someone senior” makes a whole people incompetent.

Although cultures are not made overnight, and I do not suggest that they should be altered at the same pace. However, just the mere realization of the cause of the problem can take us one step further in becoming a competent populace.



Next Time

TM Cyril Paul



Two little words that hide a lot more than they divulge.

At first blush, they look like two very ordinary words – nothing special at all – but on closer inspection, the sheer diversity of meanings that those eight simple letters can assume is astounding: promise, encouragement, consolation, procrastination, determination, reprimand, and many more, depending on the context. If ‘chameleon phrases’ were a thing, then ‘**next time**’ would certainly be somewhere close to the top.

Unlike the phrases ‘please’, ‘thank you’, ‘sorry’, ‘good _____ (morning/ afternoon/ evening/ night)’, etc., that are drilled into children’s daily vocabularies (*les bon mots* as the French call it), ‘**next time**’ is one of those phrases that they intuitively pick up from their parents. The earliest usage of ‘**next time**’ is often in the form of encouragement: e.g., when toddlers take their first tentative steps and stumble on their path, there’s always an adult close by who says, “don’t worry, you’ll get it **next time**”.

As toddlers grow up to be little children, ‘**next time**’ takes the form of a “consoling phrase”. When the child comes crying after losing a 100-metre race or did not receive that much-awaited gift from Santa, out comes this phrase again, “don’t worry, I’m sure it will happen **next time**”.

As children grow up and start attending high school, the utility of the phrase as a balm for pacifying presently irreconcilable situations has dawned on them. They learn to use the phrase quite effectively as a promise, especially in connection with academic performance. During this time, the person issuing the phrase (let’s call them the ‘Next Timer’) also undergoes a change. The Next Timer is usually the child who promises the adult a better outcome, such as “I will get better scores next time, Mama”. For those choosing to adopt the ‘helicopter parenting’ approach, ‘**next time**’ gets uttered as an ominous warning: “you better get better scores next time, or else...”

‘**Next time**’ is also usually the ‘first warning shot’ phrase from teachers who catch their students’ mischievous behaviour: they peer at you with spectacles perched at the very tip of their noses, hold that cane in their hand menacingly, and say: “this better not happen **next time**”. This author heartily confesses having received several such warnings from his teachers and dares to finally state it in writing: “yes, it ALWAYS happens the **next time**”.

When a person enters teenage, ‘**next time**’ appears a lot in a cunning sentence “I will do it **next time**”, which depending on his/her mood-of-the-day, is either an excuse or a promise, both of which may be packed (or unpacked) with an equal amount of sincerity and determination.

“Our apologies that we cannot accommodate your request for a pay-hike or a promotion this time, but yes, we promise to do so the **next time**”, is a phrase that gets thrown around a lot in the corporate sector, especially during performance appraisals: Well, good luck with waiting for that promise to be fulfilled.

When a person enters his/her sunset phase in life, ‘next time’ throws up a soft, bittersweet and wistful image: a grizzled geriatric sitting on a wheelchair reflecting on the best moments in their life, as their heart gently murmurs from within: “God, will there be a **next time**?”

I’m sure that there are at least half a dozen more ways that the phrase ‘**next time**’ gets used in our lives, but I guess, by now, you see why I regard this beautiful, magical phrase with the respect that it rightfully commands. Very few phrases in the English language can offer the sheer versatility that it conveys: shining with promise in one moment, and twinkling with mischief in the next.

Therefore, until ‘**next time**’, here’s wishing all of you a blessed month of learning. May your paths be full of sunshine, and may your cup never run empty.





TM Mubina Rauf

Lahore is Love



They say ‘Lahore Lahore ae’ (Lahore is Lahore). They also say that ‘‘Lahore eik ishq hei’’ (Lahore is love). These definitions of Lahore can only be felt or thought about. But then, what’s so great about these definitions? Just like Lahore Lahore ae, Sialkot Sialkot ae te Peshawer Peshawer ae. Any city of this world is one of its kind, good or bad, why does Lahore get the credit of owning this quote?

My earliest memories of Lahore are of the Mall road. I remember going from shop to shop with my siblings. We didn’t live in Lahore, but for our winter coats, we went to Suba Khan. From there we went to buy shoes and then to our eye doctor close by and then to E Plomer’s or Saffan wala chowk to get our glasses.

Family jeweler was also on the Mall road. All these places were close by. It was a well-knit world where nothing was far away. What fascinated me during these trips was not the shopping, but the incredible, massive trees that shadowed the Mall road and the uncanny rhythm of the haunting birdsong at the twilight hour when we were leaving the city.

Later, I got married to a Lahori and consequently became a naturalized Lahori. As newly married lovebirds living in a joint family, our favorite escape was the Lawrence garden which was later named Bagh e Jinnah.

I doubt if Mr. Jinnah ever saw the garden or the bagh, whatever you call it. Again, I was fascinated by the ageless trees there. They seemed so ancient and standing under them made you feel that you have transcended back to that old era of haunted places with gigantic trees occupied by supernatural beings. Mind you, I read loads of Urdu fiction those days which was full of such stories.





Lahore is Love

Practical life made me forget all those things and get engrossed in the mundane. All the allure and fascination vanished and I got busy in the redundancies of life. Somehow, I kept my reading habit intact which at some rare moment took me to those unknown worlds of imagination and fantasies again. But that was brief and some thing or the other brought me back to humdrum. Being away from Lahore, my husband's favorite pastime was reading the weekly 'Barish, Samavar aur Khushboo' by A. Hameed in the weekly Nawai Waqt magazine. He had so many stories to tell... climbing trees and watching the cricket matches going on at the gymkhana grounds, playing cricket, life in NCA and so on.

This fateful year of 2024 brought us back to Lahore to settle down. We had plans to spend the rest of lives here. But why have I written this sentence in past tense. No idea! We came here in January when the city was enveloped in a thick layer of smog. We found a place to live quite far away from the actual city where the time on my watch was not of Lahore and that was disappointing! No doubt, Lahore is still quite green but I don't know why it seems artificial. This green doesn't bring that haunted feeling, that allure, that enchantment that I felt in the past. It seems to be a strange place where I haven't been before.

I still haven't been to the Mall or the Lawrence garden. I've heard they are dirty and crowded like never before. But by chance, I went to the Faiz mela at Alhamra. We tried explaining to the driver the place and when we reached, I can't forget what he said, 'Acha, aap ne Faiz melay pe ana tha' (Okay! you wanted to come to Faiz mela?) Even he seemed so interested in it. It reminded me of that time old spirit of Lahoris which still kindles in the city's nooks and corners and reminds us that 'Lahore Lahore ae'. Roaming around in the Alhamra complex and listening to recitals and talks was a treat in itself.

So which of the two definitions fits Lahore? Lahore te Lahore hei hi (Lahore is Lahore), undoubtedly. But I will go for 'Lahore eik ishq hei' (Lahore is love). Why? I don't know. Can't think of any particular reason.

I think there are no whys in 'ishq' (love).





D22 PR Team held a unique contest where clubs were asked to run a campaign on social media, by utilizing templates provided by the D122P PR. The clubs putting up posts with the most engagement won

BRAND BUILDER AWARD

TOASTMASTERS INTERNATIONAL
DISTRICT 122P

ULTIMATE BRAND BUILDER CLUB AWARD
12 PTS

CA AFFILIATES
TOASTMASTERS CLUB

HATS OFF TO EFFORTS OF
TM EMAN (CLUB PRESIDENT)
AND CLUB MEMBERS

D122 PUBLIC RELATIONS TEAM

TOASTMASTERS INTERNATIONAL
DISTRICT 122P

OUTSTANDING BRAND BUILDER CLUB AWARD
11 PTS

CENTURY PAPER
TOASTMASTERS CLUB

HATS OFF TO EFFORTS OF
TM WAHEED (CLUB PRESIDENT)
AND CLUB MEMBERS

D122 PUBLIC RELATIONS TEAM

TOASTMASTERS INTERNATIONAL
DISTRICT 122P

OUTSTANDING BRAND BUILDER CLUB AWARD
11 PTS

THE CENTURIONS
TOASTMASTERS CLUB

HATS OFF TO EFFORTS OF
TM IQRA (CLUB PRESIDENT)
AND CLUB MEMBERS

D122 PUBLIC RELATIONS TEAM

TOASTMASTERS INTERNATIONAL
DISTRICT 122P

EXCEPTIONAL BRAND BUILDER CLUB AWARD
9 PTS

EXPRESS
TOASTMASTERS CLUB

HATS OFF TO EFFORTS OF
TM HINA (CLUB PRESIDENT)
AND CLUB MEMBERS

D122 PUBLIC RELATIONS TEAM





D122P continues its proud tradition of Gamification for the year 2024-25. The mechanism of gamification is based around awarding scores for members participation in meetings and awards.

This year, the Gamification Chair is **TM Imran Rana**.

GAMIFICATION

GAMIFICATION
AUGUST 2024 RESULTS
CLUBS MEET WEEKLY

Rawalpindi Toastmasters Club
1st Place

Islamabad Toastmasters Club
2nd Place

Emumba Toastmasters Club
3rd Place

GAMIFICATION
AUGUST 2024 RESULTS
CLUBS MEET FORTNIGHTLY

ICAP Toastmasters Club
Islamabad
1st Place

Contour Toastmasters Club
Islamabad
2nd Place

Wordwise Toastmasters Club
3rd Place

GAMIFICATION
AUGUST 2024 RESULTS
CLUBS MEET WEEKLY

TM Seerat Kamal
Cloud 122 Toastmasters Club
1st Place

TM Samreen Mukhtar
Rawalpindi Toastmasters Club
2nd Place

TM Ejaz ul Haq
Rawalpindi Toastmasters Club
2nd Place

GAMIFICATION
AUGUST 2024 RESULTS
CLUBS MEET FORTNIGHTLY

TM Ali Imran Malik
Speak 2 Lead Toastmasters Club
1st Place

TM Abdul Mateen Qasmi
ICAP Toastmasters Club ISB
2nd Place

TM Nausheen Yasir
ICAP Toastmasters Club ISB
3rd Place

TM Haris Waheed
Contour ISB Toastmasters Club
3rd Place

GAMIFICATION
AUGUST 2024 RESULTS
MEMBERS ATTENDED AS GUESTS

TM Musharraf Khan
1st Place

TM Majid Akhtar
2nd Place

TM Bilal Aslam
3rd Place



GA⁺IFICATION RESULTS

CLUBS MEET WEEKLY

Rank	Name	Club	Score
1 st	Seerat Kamal	Cloud 122	31
2 nd	Ejaz - Ul Haq	Rawalpindi Toastmasters Club	29
2 nd	Samreen Mukhtar	Rawalpindi Toastmasters Club	29
4 th	Irfan Yousaf Qureshi	Rawalpindi Toastmasters Club	27
4 th	Fatima Abeer Ahmad	Cloud 122	27
6 th	Ammar Yasir Habib	Visionary Voices Wah Club	25
7 th	Humayun Kiani	Rawalpindi Toastmasters Club	24
8 th	Zainab - Shiraz	Rawalpindi Toastmasters Club	23
8 th	Summayya - Batool	Rawalpindi Toastmasters Club	23
8 th	Muska Khalid	Visionary Voices Wah Club	23
8 th	Muhammad Ali	Islamabad Toastmasters Club	23

CONGRATULATIONS

From The Desk of Program Quality Team



GA⁺IFICATION RESULTS

CLUBS MEET FORTNIGHTLY

Rank	Name	Club	Score
1 ST	Ali Imran Malik	Speak to Lead Toastmasters Club	18
2 ND	Abdul Mateen Qasmi	ICAP Toastmasters Club Islamabad	17
3 RD	Nausheen Yasir	ICAP Toastmasters Club Islamabad	16
3 RD	Haris Waheed	Contour Islamabad Toastmasters Club	16
5 TH	Talha Bin Hamid	Quantum Leap Advanced Toastmasters Club	15
5 TH	Erum Rizvi	Quantum Leap Advanced Toastmasters Club	15
5 TH	Lubna Azam	Speak to Lead Toastmasters Club	15
8 TH	Irfan Bashir	ICAP Toastmasters Club Islamabad	14
8 TH	Samreen Mukhtar	Contour Islamabad Toastmasters Club	14
8 TH	Saad Ahmed	CA Affiliates TMC LHR	14

CONGRATULATIONS

From The Desk of Program Quality Team



GA⁺IFICATION RESULTS

MEMBERS ATTENDED AS GUESTS

Rank	Name	Score
1 ST	Musharraf Khan Muhammad Ishaque	29
2 ND	Muhammad Majid Akhtar	25
3 RD	Bilal Aslam	15
4 TH	Syed Faraz Anjum	13
5 TH	Ali Amjad	12
5 TH	Murad Ali	12

CONGRATULATIONS

From The Desk of Program Quality Team



GA⁺IFICATION RESULTS

CLUBS MEET WEEKLY

Rank	Club	Score
1 ST	Rawalpindi Toastmasters club	318
2 ND	Islamabad Toastmasters Club	240
3 RD	Emumba Toastmasters Club	168

CLUBS MEET FORTNIGHTLY

Rank	Club	Score
1 ST	ICAP Toastmasters Club Islamabad	165
2 ND	Contour Toastmasters Club Islamabad	150
3 RD	Word Wise Toastmasters Club	73

CONGRATULATIONS

From The Desk of Program Quality Team

epilogue

**Our next issue is out on
December 1, 2024.**

**Submit your
contributions [here](#) by
November 15, 2024**

