



**“AIMING FOR DISTINGUISHED:”
SEVEN PATHS TO DISTRICT SUCCESS**

PATH #6 – “PROMOTING DISTINGUISHED CLUBS”

Of the three Critical Success Factors (CSFs) in the recently revised Distinguished District Program (DDP), the Distinguished Club Program (DCP) “factor” is *arguably the easiest for Districts to achieve*. The Distinguished District goal requires that 40% or more of a District’s clubs achieve Distinguished Club status or higher by June 30. Early results for 2012-2013 (as of July 18) show that all but eleven of our 88 Districts achieved this 40% threshold for Distinguished Clubs. By comparison, 49 of our Districts were unable to achieve the Membership Growth goal, and 45 Districts were unable to achieve the Club Growth goal.

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The DCP “factor,” however, affects the other two Critical Success Factors (CSFs) in the DDP. The Membership Growth goal is affected *directly*; the Club Growth goal, *indirectly*. That’s one big reason why District leaders would be wrong to “take for granted” the DCP goal in the Distinguished District Program. Another – but less important – reason is that for those Districts that achieve Distinguished, Select Distinguished and President’s Distinguished recognition, their rankings within those categories are determined solely by the percentage of their clubs that are Distinguished or higher. [Unlike the pre-2012 version of the DDP, in the new DDP the top-most Districts in the final rankings are not necessarily those with the highest growth rates for Membership Payments or paid Clubs. In the 2012-2013 rankings, for example, based on initial results reported on July 17, the #1 District in the world was actually ranked 6th in growth of Membership payments and 7th in growth of paid Clubs. It earned the #1 ranking because it was #1 in percentage of Distinguished Clubs or higher among the President’s Distinguished Districts.]



Strong clubs help Districts *directly* to achieve their Membership Growth goals. After all, membership growth ultimately depends upon guests and members (newcomers and veterans alike) enjoying a quality educational experience in their Toastmaster clubs. Prospects join. Happy members renew. They also invite friends, family, co-workers and clients to join their Clubs. Disappointed members, however, stay for one or two semiannual periods before heading for the exits. Unimpressed guests rarely come back for a second look.

This guide is one item in a 7-item series, ***Aiming for Distinguished: Seven Paths to District Success***. Please contact Steve at tmstevechen@gmail if you would like to receive the 6 other items in this series:
PATH #1 – “AIMING HIGH”
PATH #2 – “MEMBERSHIP GROWTH”
PATH #3 – “BUILDING NEW CLUBS”
PATH #4 – “NO LOST CLUBS”
PATH #5 – “NO UNPAID CLUBS”
PATH #7 – “STAYING THE COURSE, FINISHING STRONG”

As for the third CSF (Club Growth), the happiest, most satisfied members are the ones most likely to consider starting a new Club. This they can do where

they work, or where they live, or where they went to college, or at the professional, social or religious organization they belong to. In that sense, we can see how thriving Toastmasters clubs – those that are committed both to the 36 “Moments of Truth” and to the ten (10) goals in the Distinguished Club Program – can at least *indirectly* affect a District’s success in achieving Club Growth goals.

A: Essential “Action-Steps” to Promote the DCP

Clubs that achieve DCP goals help Districts to achieve DDP goals. Promoting the DCP is clearly a very smart thing for District leaders to do. Here are *four action steps* you can take:

- ❖ The DG and LGET form a Club Success Committee with representatives from every Division and chaired by an experienced past District leader, preferably a PDG fully committed to this work. The Committee and its chair report to the DG and LGET and work directly with Club leaders to help them understand the value of using the Distinguished Club Program and other management tools from WHQ to build successful clubs.
- ❖ Use every aspect of District operations (including the District bulletin, website, conferences, etc.) to promote use of the DCP. The Club Success Committee should be encouraged to develop and disseminate materials that promote the DCP and quality meetings. For an example, **see Exhibit A on pages 5-6, “Be A Perfect ‘10’ Toastmasters Club,” that was developed by the Club Success Chair who served the year I was District Governor.**
- ❖ In addition to promoting the DCP, promote at all levels the use of the “Moments of Truth” (MoT) program. Help clubs to see the 36 standards in the MoT program as a checklist of essential benchmarks for **measuring the quality of club meeting (see Exhibit B, on page 7).**
- ❖ Ensure that all TLIs and other training events include general sessions devoted to explaining the features and benefits to Clubs from using the DCP and the “Moments of Truth” program.



B: Make Goal-Setting by Clubs a Priority

This process involves three phases: (1) encourage club leaders to declare a specific goal for their Club in the DCP; (2) provide them with assistance in achieving their goal; and, (3) praise and recognize them when they achieve their goal. Here are *four action steps* you can take:

- ❖ Encourage club leaders at all June-to-August TLIs to pledge to a certain level in the DCP. You can distribute “pledge cards” when officers check-in at a TLI, and ask them to complete the card and submit it *before* they go home following the end of the TLI. It should not take them more than a couple of minutes of their time. We found that most officers completed the “pledge card” during the general session on the DCP that was conducted at the beginning of our TLIs. ***I’ve included in this booklet (see Exhibit C, page 8) the DCP “pledge card” we used in my District when I served as District Governor.***
- ❖ List the Clubs which made pledges along with the goal levels they committed to achieve. Post this

“You’re more likely to achieve your goals when you help enough other people achieve their goals.”

— Zig Ziglar, 1999 Toastmasters Int’l Golden Gavel Award recipient

information on your website, in your bulletin, at District conferences, and share it with the Division and Area Governors responsible for these clubs.

- ❖ Recognize clubs as soon as they reach the Distinguished Club level (5 goals), as well as for each subsequent level they reach. This news can be posted on your website. Your Club Success Committee should contact clubs to congratulate them as soon as they reach a particular level, and to encourage them to further aim for a higher level in the DCP.
- ❖ Develop and maintain a “rolling recognition” program to recognize clubs as they pass each of the 5-goal, 7-goal, 9-goal and 10-goal milestones and achieve, respectively, Distinguished Club, Select Distinguished Club, President’s Distinguished Club and “Perfect 10” levels.



C: “Leave No Club Behind”

Many of our clubs have healthy traditions that include a high regard for the DCP and a commitment to earn Distinguished Club honors every year. On the other hand, unfortunately, some clubs have consistently performed poorly in the DCP. Others are recently chartered clubs that have no experience of the DCP. The District should generously praise the strong clubs but target the bulk of their resources to the clubs that really need our help.

Other items in this “Aiming for Distinguished” series provide ideas that can help you and your team “Leave No Club Behind” in your efforts to promote Distinguished clubs. **PATH #4 – “NO LOST CLUBS”** focuses on low-member clubs. **PATH #2 – “MEMBERSHIP GROWTH”** focuses on ways to help clubs to grow their membership levels and to achieve

both goal #7 (4 new members) and goal #8 (4 more new members) in the DCP as well as meet the Membership Requirement for eligibility in the DCP.





Back to the Future with Dr. Smedley

Encouraging Clubs to aim for excellence has long been part of the Toastmasters tradition. Toastmasters' founder Dr. Ralph Smedley has



recorded in his history of our organization:

"During 1938-1939, International President Dr. Gordon Howard introduced the 'Club-of-the-Year' competition, in which each club was urged to strive to reach the highest standards of performance, not for the sake of winning, but for the sake of giving its members the best service. ... In 1956, steps were taken to convert this 'contest' into a general competition with the title 'Club Achievement Standards' in order to stimulate Clubs to the best possible performance in service to their members."

A number of evolutionary steps occurred between 1956 and the Distinguished Club Program which we have in place today. Until 1989, a "Club Management Plan" (CMP) program required Clubs to submit lengthy planning documentation, and to earn "Club Management Points" for achievements in several categories. The CMP was sometimes referred to jokingly as "Toastmasters International's answer to MBO (Management by Objective)." In July 1989, the CMP was replaced by the Distinguished Club Program (DCP), which was initially a performance-based system that awarded points to clubs for achieving standards in 18 or so different activities or measurements. These included not only those activities or measures that are familiar to us today in the current DCP, but also such items as Speechcraft, Youth Leadership, club votes cast at the International Convention, semiannual renewal rates reaching 75% or more, service as a District officer and other categories which are no longer measured in the current DCP. Clubs were then ranked globally in one of four membership-size categories based on their July 1st membership level.

Ten years later, in July 1999, this complicated "points" system was replaced by the sleek and focused 10-goal Distinguished Club Program, which we enjoy today. Over the years, our organization has benefited greatly by the various club recognition program, beginning with the one begun in 1938, which Dr. Smedley chronicled for posterity. Use the Distinguished Club Program to generate a rising tide of Club success that will lift your District up and up.

EXHIBIT A

BE A PERFECT '10' TOASTMASTERS CLUB

[A Fun and Easy Approach to the Distinguished Club Program]

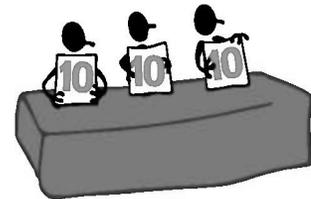
by Amelia Abad, DTM, 1999-2000 District 46 Governor
and Club Success Chair 2010-2011



Millions of people love to watch the Summer Olympics on TV every four years. I'm one of them. One of the most lasting memories for fans was the "Perfect '10'" performance by gymnast Nadia Komaneci at the 1976 Olympics. She made Olympic history for being the first gymnast to consistently receive '10's from every judge. Millions of people from around the world who watched the teenage Romanian on TV were awed by her flawless performance.

Your Toastmasters Club can run as flawlessly as a world-class gymnast or athlete. You want to have a "Perfect '10' Toastmasters Club," but where do you start? Begin with the Distinguished Club Program (DCP) from Toastmasters International. It focuses on quality within clubs, not competition between Clubs. Organize your Club activities around FOUR simple and measurable "*Keys To Success*" that go to the heart of any great Club:

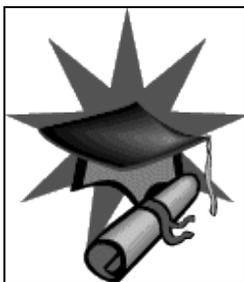
- [I] ***All Members Working On Educational Goals.***
- [II] ***Great Meetings That Attract New Members.***
- [III] ***Committed and Capable Club Officers.***
- [IV] ***Effective Club Administration.***



How do you measure your efforts as successful? How do you know if your Club can be judged as a "Perfect '10' Toastmasters Club?"

The Distinguished Club Program challenges each Club to strive towards ten goals. Think of it as a ten-point scoring system, similar to what an Olympic judge would use to score a gymnastic or figure-skating performance. The ten-point scale is built around four simple and measurable

"Keys to Success" that go to the heart of any great Club:



Key #1 -- All Members Working On Educational Goals:

- (1) Score One Point if 2 members earn the CC award.
- (2) Score One Point if 2 more members earn the CC.
- (3) Score One Point if 1 member earns an Advanced Communicator award (ACB, ACS, ACG).
- (4) Score One Point if 1 more member earns an AC award.
- (5) Score One Point if 1 member earns a Competent Leader, Advanced Leader (AL-Bronze or AL-Silver) or Distinguished Toastmaster award.
- (6) Score One Point if 1 more member earns a CL, AL or DTM.



Key #2 -- Great Meetings That Attract New Members:

- (7) Score One Point for attracting 4 New Members in 2010-2011.
- (8) Score One Point for attracting 4 more New Members.

[TURN OVER, PLEASE]

BE A PERFECT '10' TOASTMASTERS CLUB

[A Fun and Easy Approach to the Distinguished Club Program]

Page 2 of 2 pages.



Key #3 -- Committed and Capable Club Officers:

(9) Score One Point if four or more of your Club Officers attend the District-sponsored training during June-August and if four or more attend during December-February [*One measure of commitment is the willingness of a Club officer to invest time in their growth as a leader and to attend Officer Training run by the District. Training also makes them more capable!*].



Key #4 -- Effective Club Administration:

(10) Score One Point if the Club submits one Semiannual Dues report on time to World Headquarters (by October 10 or April 10) and submits the Club & Officer Information report to World Headquarters (by June 30th of the previous year).

Minimum Requirement: Your Club must end the year on June 30 with either 20 or more members on record at World Headquarters or a net increase of 5 members between July 1 and June 30.

During the 2010-2011 Toastmasters Year, how well will your Club perform? Scoring a Perfect '10' tells the world that your Club performs on a world-class level by focusing on the "**Keys to Success**": [1] *All members are motivated to earn an educational award.* [2] *Guests are so impressed by your meetings that they are excited to join.* [3] *Officers are committed and capable.* [4] *Important administrative deadlines are met.* Scoring a Perfect '10' will enable your Club to earn the highest level of recognition in the Distinguished Club Program.

Not everyone can be a Nadia Komaneci, and your Club may fall short of a Perfect '10.' That's OK, because your Club can still receive high recognition from Toastmasters International:

- **President's Distinguished Club** honors for scoring a '9' and achieving nine of the goals.
- **Select Distinguished Club** honors for scoring a '7' and achieving seven of the ten goals.
- **Distinguished Club** honors for scoring a '5' and achieving five of the ten goals.

To achieve any of these honors, your Club must also achieve the Minimum Requirement.

Use this fun and challenging "Perfect '10'" approach to earn the highest honors in the Distinguished Club Program. District 46 will help every Club this year to achieve its goals. In assisting our Clubs, our motto this year is:

"Every Club a President's Distinguished Club"

To learn more about the Distinguished Club Program, and to get ideas on how to become a Perfect '10' Club, contact:

Club Success Chair Amelia Abad, DTM, PDG
at 718-424-9754 or at AmeliaAbad@aol.com

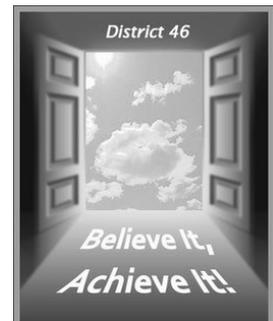


EXHIBIT B

“Moments of Truth”: 36 Service Standards for Toastmasters Clubs

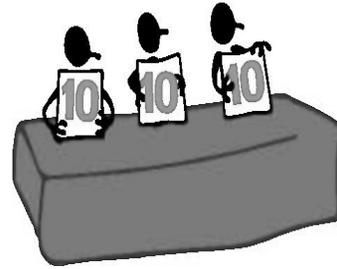
Created by Toastmasters International in 1993 and adapted slightly; see “Successful Club Series” for more details.

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>FIRST IMPRESSIONS</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ Are guests greeted warmly and introduced to Club Officers and members? (1)❑ Is the guest book displayed and are nametags provided? (2)❑ Is the room set up with an agenda, ballots, lectern, gavel and a timer? (3)❑ Is the meeting location conveniently located, accessible and user friendly? (4)❑ Are guests encouraged to participate and comment at the end of the meeting? (5)❑ Guests invited to join the day they visit? (6)	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>NEW MEMBER ORIENTATION</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ Do you schedule a formal induction to present the pin & Basic Manual? (7)❑ New Member assigned a mentor? (8)❑ Do you discuss how our educational programs develop commun. & leadership skills? (9)❑ Formally survey their learning needs? (10)❑ Is the new Member assigned a speaking role as soon as possible? (11)❑ Are new Members encouraged on an ongoing basis to participate? (12)
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>PROGRAM PLANNING</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ Is the agenda publicized in advance, with reminders to participants? (13)❑ Are Members ready & prepared to carry out their program assignments? (14)❑ All speeches from Basic/Advan. Manuals? (15)❑ Are creative table topics and exciting theme programs featured? (16)❑ Are the evaluations positive and helpful and based upon project objectives and the speaker’s learning needs? (17)❑ Do meetings begin and end on time? (18)	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>FELLOWSHIP AND VARIETY</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ Guests greeted, and made welcome? (19)❑ Enjoyable & educational meetings planned with exciting themes? (20)❑ Does the club enjoy regularly scheduled social events? (21)❑ Are Club Members encouraged to attend Area, District and International events? (22)❑ Are inter-club events encouraged, including joint meetings and speak-outs? (23)❑ Is a Club newsletter and/or website issued on a regular basis and in a lively format? (24)
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>MEMBERSHIP STRENGTH</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ Does the club actively work to maintain a minimum of 20 or more Members? (25)❑ Members renew (satisfied with Club)? (26)❑ Is the Club actively promoted within the community or within the organization? (27)❑ Are varied and exciting programs planned to boost membership growth? (28)❑ Do you support membership growth by recognizing sponsors of New Members? (29)❑ Does your Club organize regular membership building programs? (30)	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>RECOGNIZE ACHIEVEMENTS</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ Are all educational award applications immediately sent to Headquarters? (31)❑ Member progress charts displayed? (32)❑ Does your club formally recognize Member educational achievements? (33)❑ Do you acknowledge leaders at the club, District, and International levels? (34)❑ Do you widely publicize achievements of the members and Clubs? (35)❑ Is the Distinguished Club Program used for planning and recognition? (36)

- ✓ **Definition of “Moment of Truth”:** Any time a member or guest comes into contact with any aspect of the Toastmasters experience and forms an impression of a Club’s quality of service.
- ✓ **Self-Diagnostic Tool** (Evaluate your Club’s performance against the 36 service standards listed above):
 - (1) Club officers meet to discuss and identify which standards are routinely met and which are not.
 - (2) Conduct a “Moments of Truth” theme meeting: (a) *An officer presents the Moments of Truth “Successful Club Series” for credit towards an educational award;* (b) *Table Topics is organized to reinforce the key points;* (c) *The Business Meeting is devoted to discussing how the Club can strengthen service standards.*

EXHIBIT C

Build a Great Club *with the*
Distinguished Club Program
Be a "Perfect 10 Club" – Achieve Ten Goals That
Will Help Your Club Focus on What is Most Important



Ten Goals:

- Goal #1: **Two CCs**
- Goal #2: **Two more CCs**
- Goal #3: **One AC**
- Goal #4: **One more AC**
- Goal #5: **One CL, AL or DTM**
- Goal #6: **One more CL, AL, DTM**
- Goal #7: **Four new Members**
- Goal #8: **Four more new Members**
- Goal #9: **Minimum four Club officers trained during both training periods (June-August; December-February)**
- Goal #10: **One dues report & one officer list received on time**

Recognition:

- Achieve ten of 10 goals: **Perfect 10 Club**
 - Achieve nine of 10 goals: **President's Distinguished Club**
 - Achieve seven of 10 goals: **Select Distinguished Club**
 - Achieve five of 10 goals: **Distinguished Club**
- Minimum Requirement: *to receive recognition for these honors, a Club must have at least 20 members by June 30th or achieve a NET growth of at least five members during the 2010-2011 year.*



2010-2011 Distinguished Club Program PLEDGE CARD

During 2010-2011, our Club will achieve the following levels of accomplishment in the Distinguished Club Program and the District 46 "Believe It, Achieve It!" program:

- Distinguished Club** [achieve 5 of the ten goals]
- Select Distinguished Club** [achieve 7 of the ten goals]
- President's Distinguished Club** [achieve 9 of the ten goals]
- Perfect 10 Club** [achieve all ten goals]
- "Each One, Build One" Club** [achieve 5 or more DCP goals **and** Sponsor a new Toastmasters Club]
- "Believe It, Achieve It!" Club** [achieve all ten goals **and** Sponsor a new Toastmasters Club]

Send Your Club's Pledge to:

Amelia Abad, DTM, PDG
34-49 81st Street, Apt. 6-Y
Jackson Heights, NY 11372-2836
Email: AmeliaAbad@aol.com

To meet our pledge, we will need help from the District in the following areas:

- Recruiting new members.
- Encouraging CC/AC/CL completions
- Motivating existing members.
- Ideas for quality Club meetings.

Name & Office: _____

Club Name: _____

Email Address: _____

