

THE MAGAZINE FOR COMMUNICATORS & LEADERS | JULY 2026

ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE

COMMUNICATION

The Essence of
Versatility

EXTRAORDINARY CORNER

INDUCTION DINNER

Honouring
Excellence

JULY 2026

**Bryton Siyanda
Masiye, DTM**

Ordinary Members Doing Extraordinary Things

District 74 Southern Africa Toastmasters

TOASTMASTERS INTERNATIONAL[®]

District 74

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Toastmasters District 74 Mission

We build new clubs and support all
clubs in achieving excellence.

toastmasters74.org



EDITOR'S NOTE



Greetings, President's Distinguished District 74!

What a wonderful way to begin a new Toastmasters year!

Fresh leaders have been inducted, new goals have been set, and the journey toward another year of excellence is already underway.

In this edition, we celebrate ordinary members doing extraordinary things, reflect on the Induction Dinner and Hall of Fame, and showcase the moments that remind us why we proudly serve in Toastmasters.

"Every meeting creates a memory. Every speech builds confidence. Every act of service becomes part of our legacy. This magazine exists to tell those stories."

As I step into the role of Managing Editor, I am honoured to continue telling the stories that make District 74 such an extraordinary community.

Here's to another year of learning, leading, and achieving excellence.

Lesedi Queen Masina

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DISTRICT DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Welcome to a brand-new Toastmasters year. A new year always brings with it a sense of hope, possibility and renewal

It gives us a fresh start, a clean slate and an opportunity to ask ourselves an important question: What will I do differently this year?

Our theme for 2026/7 is “**Ordinary Members Doing Extraordinary Things.**” This theme reminds us that greatness in Toastmasters does not belong only to a few. It is found in every member who chooses to show up, to grow, to serve, to stretch beyond comfort, and to take one more step forward.

This year, I want to encourage and challenge every member of District 74 to do something extraordinary. Not necessarily something big in the eyes of the world, but something meaningful in your own journey.

For me, my New Year's resolution is to accomplish my first-ever Magic Five. This is something new to me, something that will stretch me, and something I am personally committed to pursuing.

What will be new to you?

Perhaps your extraordinary will be completing a Pathways level. Perhaps it will be inviting two friends or colleagues to experience Toastmasters. Perhaps it will be taking on every meeting role at your club. Perhaps it will be delivering that speech you have been postponing, mentoring a fellow member, stepping into leadership, or helping your club become stronger.

Ordinary Members
Doing
Extraordinary Things



In the words often attributed to Dr Martin Luther King Jr., “If you can't fly, run. If you can't run, walk. If you can't walk, crawl. But whatever you do, keep moving.”

Let us make it a year of courage, service, growth and extraordinary achievement.

That is the spirit we need in District 74 this year. Keep moving. Keep growing. Keep serving. Keep challenging yourself. Keep believing that ordinary members, working with purpose and courage, can achieve extraordinary things.

I wish you, your clubs, your Areas and your Divisions the very best for the 2026/7 Toastmasters year.

Here's to new beginnings. Here's to a fresh start. Here's to a clean slate.

So I ask you: What's your extraordinary?

Bryton Masiye, DTM

FROM THE PUBLIC RELATIONS DESK



Welcome to a brand-new Toastmasters year in District 74!

As we begin under the inspiring theme “Ordinary members doing extraordinary things”—our mission is not only to create excellence within our clubs, but to ensure that excellence is seen, heard, and felt in the communities we serve.

This month’s focus is on starting strong with visibility and intention.

Our PR vision is simple: when our stories are seen, our clubs grow.

As we observe Nelson Mandela International Day (18 July) in South Africa and across the world, let us serve by sharing our stories and inviting others into our clubs and our spaces.

I encourage each of you to do something extraordinary in support of your club VPPR—attend club activities, promote their initiatives and share your Toastmasters story



Across District 74, we are surrounded by extraordinary stories—members who have transformed their confidence, discovered their leadership voice, and changed the trajectory of their lives. Yet too often, these stories remain within our meeting rooms.

There is something powerful about a voice that is finally heard.

This year, that changes.

This is the year we unmute Toastmasters’ voice.

Together, let’s ignite a BrandStorm of visibility!

Matome Seabi

YOU ARE PART OF A PRESIDENT'S DISTINGUISHED DISTRICT!

District 74 has once again achieved the prestigious **President's Distinguished District** recognition—the highest honour a Toastmasters district can receive.



This remarkable achievement is a testament to the dedication of our members, the strength and quality of our clubs, and the unwavering commitment of our leaders who worked tirelessly throughout the 2025-2026 Toastmasters year.

“To every leader, every club officer, every member, every mentor, every friend, and every person who answered the call to be a Catalyst of Success, thank you.” - Bhekisisa Ngomane, DTM

As we celebrate this milestone, we also celebrate the remarkable leaders of the Class of 2025-2026. You truly lived your theme, proving yourselves to be Catalysts of Success. **Congratulations, District 74. This achievement belongs to every one of us.**

LEADING DISTRICT 74 INTO A NEW TOASTMASTERS YEAR

By Lesedi Masina



A new Toastmasters year officially began as the District 74 Executive Committee was inducted into office, committing themselves to serve the members and clubs of our District with excellence, integrity, and purpose.

Each Cabinet member accepted the responsibility of providing strategic leadership, supporting clubs, and creating opportunities for every member to grow as a communicator and leader.



The evening also marked the induction of our seven Division Directors, who will work alongside Area Directors and Club Officers to strengthen clubs, develop leaders, and champion excellence across the District.

As they embark on this journey, we congratulate each leader and wish them every success as they guide District 74 through another remarkable year.

HONOURING EXCELLENCE AT THE HALL OF FAME

The Hall of Fame remains one of the most anticipated moments of the Induction Dinner, celebrating the individuals, clubs, and teams whose dedication and service helped District 74 achieve another successful Toastmasters year. It was an opportunity to pause, reflect, and recognise the countless hours of volunteer leadership that often happen behind the scenes.



Every award presented represented more than an achievement, it celebrated commitment, collaboration, and the collective effort that enabled District 74 to once again earn the prestigious recognition of President's Distinguished District. To every recipient and every member who contributed to this success, congratulations on a legacy well earned.

MORE THAN A RAFFLE—AN INVESTMENT IN OUR DISTRICT

Ordinary Members
Doing Extraordinary Things
20/26/27

TOASTMASTERS INTERNATIONAL

DISTRICT 74
WHERE LEADERS ARE MADE

Congratulations!

TO OUR DISTRICT 74 RAFFLE WINNER!

GABI THULKANAM
Winelands Toastmasters

Gabi purchased
10 TICKETS
and is the lucky winner of our
Toastmasters Winter Gift Set!

A heartfelt **thank you** to everyone who bought tickets and supported our District 74 Induction Dinner.

Your support made a difference. The proceeds go towards making our Induction Dinner a memorable celebration of leadership, service and fellowship.

Thank you!

TOASTMASTERS INTERNATIONAL
SOUTHERN AFRICA D74

As a non-profit organisation, District 74 is not in the business of making money. However, special events such as the Leadership Induction Dinner and Hall of Fame require significant resources, and fundraising initiatives like the raffle help offset these costs, ensuring that memorable experiences can be delivered without placing unnecessary financial pressure on members.

A heartfelt thank you goes to everyone who purchased a ticket and supported the initiative. Your generosity contributed directly to the success of the evening.

And to our lucky raffle winner—congratulations once again! We hope you enjoy your prize, and thank you for being part of an unforgettable celebration.



District 74
Southern Africa Toastmasters

GOLDEN QUARTER
1 JULY - 30 SEPTEMBER

GOLDEN New Club SPONSOR REWARD

Sponsor a new club during the
GOLDEN QUARTER

30% OFF
MAY CONFERENCE
REGISTRATION

FOR EACH CLUB CHARTERED!
The more clubs you build,
the more you save!

HOME DISTRICT OF THE INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT

District 74
Southern Africa Toastmasters

RENEW EARLY.
Wear it Proudly.

PERIOD
01 July - 31 July

Renew Today!

RENEW IN JULY AND STAND A CHANCES TO EARN AN EXCLUSIVE TOASTMASTERS T-SHIRT!

HOME DISTRICT OF THE INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT

A NEW YEAR, A NEW OPPORTUNITY

As we begin a new Toastmasters year, I am excited about the opportunities ahead for District 74.



Every new year offers a chance to grow not only in membership, but in the lives we impact. Behind every new member is someone discovering confidence, leadership, and a place to belong. That is the heart of Club Growth.

Renew Early, Start Strong

One of our priorities this quarter is encouraging members to renew early. Strong clubs begin with a committed membership, and early renewals provide the stability needed to plan, grow, and deliver meaningful meetings. Through our "Renew Early. Wear It Proudly." campaign, members who renew in July receive an exclusive Toastmasters T-shirt as we celebrate their commitment to personal growth.

Growing Through New Clubs

We are also focused on bringing Toastmasters to more communities and workplaces. This month, we launched the Club Growth Academy, beginning with a session on club building. Whether you have an idea for a corporate, community, or university club, the academy will provide practical guidance and support to help turn your vision into reality. Every new club creates opportunities for more people to develop communication and leadership skills.

Strengthening Our Clubs

Growth is not only about starting new clubs, it is also about helping existing clubs thrive. Throughout the quarter, we will support club leaders with resources, coaching, and best practices to strengthen the member experience. Healthy clubs inspire members to stay engaged, achieve their goals, and welcome new guests.

Together, We Will Grow

Club Growth is a shared responsibility. Every invitation you extend, every guest you welcome, and every member you encourage contributes to the future of our district. Together, we can build stronger clubs, expand our reach, and create more opportunities for people to experience the life-changing benefits of Toastmasters.

Thank you for your commitment and passion. I look forward to working alongside you as we make this a year of growth, collaboration, and lasting impact.

Leya Musunga
Club Growth Director 2026/2027
District 74 Toastmasters Southern Africa

Ordinary Members

Doing

Extraordinary Things

THE ESSENCE OF VERSATILITY

By Retshidisitse Talafala

I joined Toastmasters because I wanted to become a better communicator. Like many people, I thought it was about learning to speak confidently. I quickly realised it was about something much bigger. Toastmasters taught me how to think more clearly, tell stories that matter, lead with authenticity, and connect with people rather than simply deliver words. It has challenged me to step well outside my comfort zone.

The reason I keep coming back is simple: every meeting offers another opportunity to grow, and there is always someone willing to encourage you to become a little better than you were yesterday. I can sum up my Toastmasters journey in one word: empowerment. It has empowered me to trust my voice, embrace new challenges, and believe that my experiences have value.

One of my proudest Toastmasters achievements was placing second in the District 74 International Speech Contest in Lesotho with my speech, "The Blazer". Standing on that stage among some of the best speakers in the District was both humbling and inspiring. The Blazer is a deeply personal story about resilience, courage, and choosing to keep moving forward despite adversity. It taught me that the most powerful speeches are not about perfect delivery—they are about authenticity. More than any certificate or trophy, I am proud that Toastmasters has helped me find my authentic voice. Today, I no longer try to be the speaker I think people expect; I simply strive to be myself.

Many people have influenced my Toastmasters journey, but two members stand out: Justine Norman and Gabrielle Lechtape-Grüter. From the beginning, they have been encouraging, supportive, and generous with their time. They challenged me to step outside my comfort zone, embrace new opportunities, and believe in myself, even when I doubted my own abilities. Their thoughtful guidance taught me that leadership is not always about standing on the stage; sometimes it is about helping someone else find the confidence to stand there themselves. For that, I will always be grateful.

Beyond Toastmasters, I wear many hats, and I genuinely love all of them. I own D&A Model Management in Cape Town, representing models, talent, and children in the film and advertising industry locally and internationally. Before business, I worked as an occupational therapist in forensic psychiatric hospitals, where I learnt that every person has a story worth understanding. I am also a songwriter and storyteller, using music to connect with people just as speaking does. Above all, I am a wife, mother, daughter, and sister who believes that if we can leave people feeling a little stronger than we found them, then we have done something worthwhile.



Before I step onto the stage, I remind myself that it is not about me. I am there to share a story that might inspire, encourage, or touch someone. If even one person leaves with a new perspective or a little more hope, then I have done my job.

I take a deep breath, smile, and remind myself to enjoy the moment because speaking is a privilege, and every audience gives me something incredibly valuable: their time.

And finally... I leave my glasses off! It blurs the audience just enough that it feels a little less intimidating. It may not be an official Toastmasters technique, but it certainly works for me!



WHEN GROWTH BECOMES A MISSION

Some people wait for growth to happen. Caroline Morewa chose to pursue it—one speech, one unfamiliar room and one bold opportunity at a time.

Raised in Protea Glen, Soweto, Caroline holds a BCom degree in International Accounting from the University of Johannesburg and has over a decade of professional experience. Today, she works as a Learning Insights Analyst and serves as Vice President Education at Rosebank Toastmasters Club.

Her introduction to Toastmasters came with an amusing misunderstanding—she initially thought it was a cooking school. Once she discovered its true purpose, however, she saw an opportunity to overcome a challenge that affected her professionally: speaking confidently to people at different levels of authority without freezing or losing her words.

Her first speech revealed just how much growth lay ahead. Nervous, stiff and uncertain, Caroline struggled to see the potential others already recognised in her. Through consistent practice, constructive evaluations and active participation, she developed her body language, vocal variety, speech structure and ability to connect with an audience.

More importantly, she developed belief in herself.

That growth was tested through *To Be Heard*, the most challenging speech she has delivered. By sharing a deeply vulnerable message about being overlooked and the life-changing power of having someone recognise your potential, Caroline discovered that powerful communication begins with authenticity.

But her Toastmasters journey soon became about more than delivering speeches—it became about setting ambitious goals. Just four months after joining, Caroline attended ThriveCon, where hearing about Toastmasters awards sparked a new ambition. , challenge yourself and discover just how much you are capable of becoming.

Inspired by the winning spirit around her and encouraged to visit other clubs, she set her sights on earning the Triple Crown Award—with only two months to achieve it.



She created a plan, calculated the speeches and projects required, visited multiple clubs, volunteered for roles and pursued every opportunity available. The journey was demanding, but persistence carried her forward.

The Triple Crown became more than an accolade. It proved what focused action, consistency and a willingness to enter unfamiliar spaces can achieve.

Caroline's message to new Toastmasters reflects the philosophy that transformed her own journey: get involved, keep moving and never lose momentum.

Because extraordinary growth does not happen by watching from the sidelines. It happens when you participate.

— By Keitumetse Moeketsi

Beyond the Words: How Toastmasters Changed the Way Kaseka Kalula Communicates

by Michael Shackleton, DTM

When Kaseka Herman Kalula speaks about communication, he does not begin with the stage. He begins with a group of friends, a lively evening and a joke that goes too far.

In a discussion with me about his Toastmasters journey, Kaseka — Immediate Past President of Woodlands Office Park Toastmasters Club and its current Vice President Membership — offered a simple example. Imagine friends gathered over drinks and food, exchanging stories and laughing. Then one friend makes a joke that embarrasses another in front of the group.

The instinctive response might be retaliation: another joke, an insult or a story designed to embarrass the friend in return. But Toastmasters has helped Kaseka see another possibility.

He would rather pull the friend aside. He might begin by acknowledging the good evening and the friendship, explain clearly that the joke made him uncomfortable, ask that the sensitive subject be avoided in future, and close by reaffirming the respect between them.

For Kaseka, this is not merely conflict management. It is Toastmasters showing up in everyday life. The approach reflects a familiar evaluation technique: recognise what is positive, identify what could be improved and conclude constructively. Through repeatedly evaluating speeches and listening to evaluations, Kaseka has learned how to offer opinions and criticism in a way that is easier to receive. Toastmasters has also strengthened his confidence. He may still work at making his communication clearer and more precise, but shyness no longer prevents him from addressing a group. As a naturally observant person, he believes the club environment has sharpened his ability to notice people, messages and context.

That attention to context is central to what Kaseka believes many communicators are missing: critical thinking and genuine listening.

Too often, he says, people hear what they expect or want another person to say. They form assumptions before the speaker has finished and interrupt before fully understanding the point. His alternative is deceptively simple: be patient, listen, and if you do not understand, ask.

Communication, in this sense, is not a race to produce the quickest answer. It is the discipline of absorbing and digesting what has been said before offering a response or question.

Yet Kaseka's communication style is anything but dull. His most memorable Toastmasters speech was about his high school journey and carried the title “The Red Machine” — the nickname of his former high school's first-team rugby squad.

As he moved through the different grades in his story, he would clap and call out, “Red machine!” He delivered the speech with the excitement and enthusiasm of a schoolboy at an intense rivalry match. The recurring phrase gave the speech energy, rhythm and identity.

His preparation process is equally distinctive. Instead of writing a speech in conventional paragraphs, Kaseka builds a mind map. The speech title sits at the centre. From it emerge bubbles for the introduction, conclusion and different sections of the body. Branches carry quotations, ideas and statistics.



The reason is important: he wants to remember ideas, not memorise lines.

If Kaseka understands the idea, he can use natural language to communicate it. Once the mind map is complete, he practises alone in a room until the structure and ideas are familiar. The method has served him well because it protects spontaneity while still giving the speech direction.

Table Topics has strengthened that same ability to engage without hiding behind a script. It has given him greater confidence when meeting new people, encouraged him to listen more attentively and pushed him to broaden his knowledge so that he can relate to different people and conversations.

Taken together, these lessons reveal a distinction at the heart of Kaseka's Toastmasters experience. Speaking is about producing words. Communication requires something more: observation, listening, context, judgment and the ability to shape a message for the person receiving it.

That is why the lessons of the club room can travel so easily into friendships, meetings and difficult conversations. A speech evaluation can quietly teach someone how to raise a sensitive issue with a friend. Table Topics can make an unfamiliar conversation less intimidating. A mind map can free a speaker from memorised sentences and allow an idea to breathe.

For Kaseka, Toastmasters has not simply made it easier to stand before a group. It has made him more intentional about what happens before he speaks: observing, listening and understanding. Perhaps that is the communication habit the world needs more of. Before preparing the perfect response, make sure you have truly heard the person speaking.

The reason is important: he wants to remember ideas, not memorise lines."

ATTENTION CLUB OFFICERS: INVEST IN YOUR LEADERSHIP JOURNEY

Launching the new material

District 74

UPCOMING

Club Officer Training



Mon, 13 July 15:00-17:00
Corporate COT

Sat, 18 July 8:30-11:30
Division A & D COT

Mon, 20 July 2026
Division C COT (**in-person**)

Sat, 25 July 8:30-11:30
Division B & C COT

Wed, 12 Aug 15:00-17:00
Corporate COT

Sat, 15 Aug 8:30-11:30
Division E COT

Sat, 22 Aug 8:30-11:30
Division F COT

Sat, 29 Aug 8:30-11:30
District Mop-Up COT



TOASTMASTERS
INTERNATIONAL

Invest in Your Leadership Journey

Your leadership journey begins with Club Officer Training (COTi), an opportunity to gain the knowledge, confidence, and tools needed to lead your club successfully throughout the Toastmasters year.

Whether you're serving as President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Sergeant at Arms, these interactive sessions are designed to help you excel in your role while connecting with fellow leaders across District 74.

Register for your training today:

<https://linktr.ee/tli.district74>

All upcoming Club Officer Training sessions, along with member development workshops and leadership training events, are available on the District 74 Calendar:

<https://toastmasters74.org/calendar/>

Learn. Lead. Grow.

We look forward to seeing you at training!

SAYING YES TO LEADERSHIP

— Keitumetse Moeketsi

For Theo, growth has always meant learning how to adapt, connect and step forward when opportunity calls.

Born in a small village in Bushbuckridge, Mpumalanga, and raised in Tembisa as the middle of five children, his upbringing taught him the value of balance, resilience and building meaningful relationships. Today, as a proud father, these values continue to shape the man and leader he is becoming.

With a Bachelor of Science in Information Technology: Systems Engineering, Theo works in ICT infrastructure and systems support, where clear communication, collaboration and problem-solving are essential. While technical expertise is central to his profession, his Toastmasters journey has strengthened the leadership and communication skills that enable him to contribute with greater confidence and impact.

In just one year as a Toastmaster, Theo has served as Vice President Public Relations, a role that has challenged him to communicate strategically, engage stakeholders and take greater responsibility as a leader. The experience has transformed the way he shows up professionally. He now presents ideas with greater confidence, chairs meetings more effectively, facilitates discussions and takes initiative when opportunities arise.



For Theo, saying yes to leadership meant choosing growth over comfort. Although stepping into leadership came with uncertainty, he understood that confidence is built through action. Toastmasters gave him the environment to challenge himself, discover his potential and grow through service.

Now, as incoming Club President, Theo's vision is to build a vibrant, supportive and high-performing club where members are empowered to develop their communication and leadership skills. He plans to lead by example, creating a culture of accountability, collaboration and continuous improvement while ensuring that every member feels valued and inspired to contribute.

His message to aspiring leaders is simple: you do not need to have all the answers before you lead. Leadership begins with the willingness to serve, learn and take responsibility.

Theo's journey is proof that leadership starts with one decision: the courage to say yes.

Because when you step forward, embrace the challenge and allow yourself to grow, you may discover that you were ready to lead all along.

I COULDN'T SAY NO TO THE PEOPLE THAT BELIEVED IN ME.

— Makgahlela Talane

Malebo Molebatsi, IPP of Moving Forward and an incoming area F4 Director, was surprised that she was nominated to become an area director. Yet it was an opportunity that she was not going to say no to because she didn't choose it for her.

She believes that those that have nominated her have seen something in her that she was yet to see, something to give to the bigger Toastmasters community and she grabbed the opportunity with both hands.

With less than a year after joining toastmasters, she was voted to become a VPE, a role which she excelled with ease, proceeded to lead her club to become one of the **1st to achieve the Smedley Distinguished club in District 74(2025/26) as the president**, Malebo brings with her a well of experience as a leader and passionate teacher of note in her new role as area director.

When asked how does she keep the team motivated when the energy is low? Malebo understands that the show must go on. However long before the actual club meeting takes place, she would have send individual message to every member to check on them and their welfare. By creating a safe space for people to be proactive when they encounter challenges and needing to take a break from toastmasters without guilt.

For her, Toastmasters has become a community of supportive individuals seeking to grow, and what better way to do that than to pour into each other.

She credits her leadership to several people that she met in her home club as well as Shaun and Osvaldo who reminded her to not forget herself in her quest to make everyone succeed in their pathways journey. One also challenged her to explore various speeches such as ted talks instead of amplifying her disability in her speeches. This modelled her leadership journey in the Toastmasters.

Her advice to any member who doesn't believe that they are ready to lead is "Just do it!", she further elaborates that the best way to learn is by taking a leadership role.



It will challenge you to learn from the different people that you will encounter and challenge you to understand different personalities and how to adjust the sails accordingly.

While her fellow members told her how to enjoy toastmasters is to treat it as a hobby and enjoy every moment, they forgot to tell her that the leadership roles would require her to come face to face with admin work – which is her pet peeve (laughs). She wishes her division director all the strength and patience getting her to deliver on this one aspect. As all other aspect of her role, she will gladly do without 2nd and 3rd reminder. One thing Malebo is passionate about is making people feel seen and helping everyone achieve excellence in their journeys and she is here to provide that support that they need to become excellent!

BEFORE AND AFTER: HOW I TALK NOW VS THEN - TURNS OUT, MY VOICE WORKS JUST FINE: NOMCEBO NDOVELA

— Kqomotso Masela

Achievement: *"Being part of Honeydew Toastmasters has been a life-changing journey that challenged me to step beyond fear and find my voice. Through speeches, evaluations, and Table Topics, I have grown into a more confident, intentional communicator who is willing to show up even when feeling nervous or uncertain. The support of Honeydew Toastmasters and the wider Toastmasters community has taught me that confidence is not about being fearless—it's about having the courage to speak anyway."*

Before Toastmasters, I was the person who would rehearse a comment in my head three times during a meeting; only to discover the meeting had already moved on.

Interviews made me nervous, and difficult conversations felt even harder. I thought good communication was about speaking confidently and finding the right words.

Toastmasters changed that.

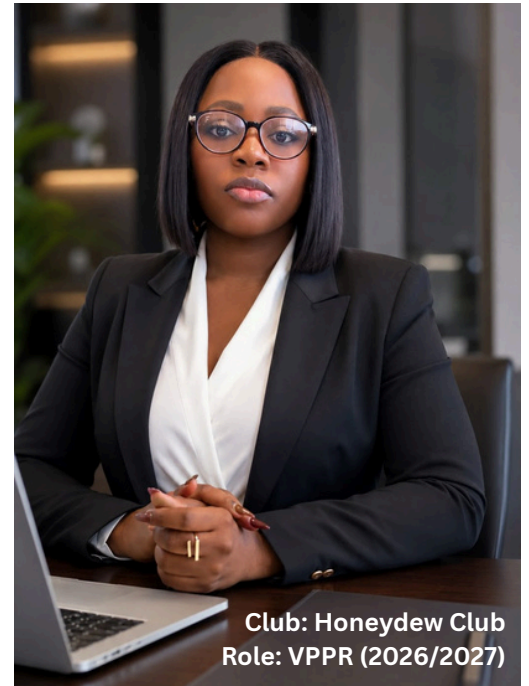
Today, I communicate with more intention, clarity, and confidence. I have learned that communication is not about sounding impressive, it's about connecting with people. I pause more, listen better, and focus on the message I want others to take away.

One of my most memorable speeches, Psychological Safety in the Workplace, was deeply personal. It was about showing up even when you're afraid. Something I experienced myself as a new Toastmaster.

I still remember standing up to deliver my early speeches with shaky hands and a racing heart, wondering why I had signed up for this in the first place! But each time I spoke, I grew a little stronger. The speech resonated because it was real, and it reminded me that people connect with authenticity, not perfection.

My advice to anyone delivering their first Icebreaker?

Don't try to impress people, just be yourself. Everyone in the room wants you to succeed, and the courage to stand up and speak is already your first victory.



Club: Honeydew Club
Role: VPPR (2026/2027)

IS EXTRAORDINARY PERFECTION?

— Part 1

It took Thomas Edison around 1,000 attempts to create the first practical light bulb. He didn't figure it out on attempt 47. Or 200. It was somewhere around the thousandth try that a carbonized bamboo filament stayed lit for about 13.5 hours and that changed the world.

Today, we remember Edison as a genius. But I'd like to believe that if you looked through his notebooks you'd mostly see failed experiments. Filaments that burned out too quickly. Ones that barely glowed. Others that didn't work at all. If perfection means getting it right the first time, Edison was anything but perfect. Yet he still built something extraordinary.

— Kagelelo Mogotsi,

Great Leaders Do Differently: Nabeelah Maharaj on A Winning Team

— Lorato Moroeng

How did you keep the team motivated when energy was low or attendance drops...?

Nabeelah says, when attendance dropped or energy was low, I focused on reconnecting with their “why”. We would check in with members personally, understand any challenges they are facing and encourage them to stay engaged. We introduced more interactive meetings, celebrated members' milestones and gave everyone opportunities to take on meaningful roles. Recognising achievements, no matter how small, helped create a positive environment where members felt valued and wanted to return.

Leading a Toastmaster club is unique because everyone is a volunteer. Leadership is built on influence, trust and shared purpose. It requires inspiring people, creating opportunities for growth and making the experience rewarding. It taught me that when people feel appreciated and empowered, they'll contribute willingly and often exceed expectations.



Serving as president has strengthened my confidence and made me a more intentional leader. I have become better at communicating with different personalities, facilitating discussions, resolving challenges collaboratively and leading through influence rather than position. It has also reinforced the importance of listening, recognising people's contributions and creating an environment where everyone feels they can grow. Those are skills I now bring into my professional role every day.

IS EXTRAORDINARY PERFECTION?

— Part 2

That's where people often get it wrong. **We treat "extraordinary" and "perfect" like they mean the same thing.** We imagine the perfect score, the perfect speech, the flawless performance, the product launch with zero bugs. But when you look at the things that actually changed the world, they almost never started out that way.

The first iPhone couldn't send MMS messages. The first version of Photoshop didn't even have layers.

Vincent van Gogh sold only one painting during his lifetime. Each of those stories began with something incomplete, limited, or overlooked. None were perfect yet all became extraordinary. Perfectionism has a way of disguising itself as high standards. It tells you your work isn't ready yet. Just one more revision. One more tweak. One more problem to solve before you finally put it out there.

Meanwhile, someone else ships an imperfect version, gets real feedback, learns from it, and keeps improving while you're still polishing something no one has seen. That's one of the biggest lessons I've learned from Toastmasters. You don't become a better speaker by endlessly rewriting your speech you become better by delivering it, receiving evaluations, and speaking again. Every speech is a draft. Every evaluation is data. Progress comes from the stage, not from perfection.

Thomas Edison is often quoted as saying he didn't fail 1,000 times, he simply found 1,000 ways that didn't work. Whether or not those are his exact words, the idea is powerful. He wasn't chasing perfection. He was making progress. The light bulb didn't have to be perfect to make history. It simply had to exist, prove its value, and improve over time. That's what extraordinary really is

STEPPING INTO GREATNESS: SILINDILE BUTHELEZI ON SAYING YES TO LEADERSHIP

— Lorato Moroeng

According to Silindile, saying “YES” was bigger than accepting the title. It was saying “YES” to growth.

There was a time when I doubted myself and questioned whether I was capable of leading, Toastmasters has played a significant role in helping me find my voice and build my confidence.

Accepting the Treasurer role was my way of giving back to an organization that has invested so much in me. I believe leadership is about serving others, learning continuously and leaving every place better than you found it.

I believe every member has a reason why they joined Toastmasters, and sometimes life makes us forget that reason. I would take time to reconnect with members, encourage them personally, and remind them that growth doesn't happen only when we feel motivated.

It happens when we remain consistent. I always say that leaders don't quit because things get difficult; they adjust, keep showing up, and inspire others to do the same. One meeting can change someone's confidence, and one speech can change someone's life.

When asked, What would you say to a member who is ready to lead but doesn't believe they're ready...? She responded, I would smile, because I know exactly how that feels. If I had waited until I felt completely ready, I probably wouldn't be where I am today. Growth begins the moment we step outside our comfort zone. You don't have to know everything before you lead. Be teachable, stay humble, ask for help, and trust yourself. Leadership is not about having the courage to take the first step.



IS EXTRAORDINARY PERFECTION?

— Part 3

Not perfection from the start, but the willingness to act, learn, and keep refining until the results speak for themselves. Extraordinary is the result of showing up, experimenting and improving over and over again. It's the hundredth experiment and the thousandth iteration.

The problem with waiting for perfection is that the math never works. If you wait until everything is perfect before you begin, you never actually start. And if you never start, you never get the feedback that helps you improve. Thomas Edison's breakthrough wasn't perfect, his successful bulb lasted about 13.5 hours. Compared to today's standards, that's not impressive. But compared to the versions that lasted seconds, or never worked at all, it was a massive leap forward. It wasn't extraordinary because it was flawless. It was extraordinary because it was finally useful.

Maybe that's a better standard to aim for: useful enough to move forward. Not perfect. Just good enough to start the next cycle and apply the feedback. So, is extraordinary the same as perfection?

Not even close.

Extraordinary is being willing to be imperfect 999 times, if that's what it takes for the 1,000th attempt to matter.

FROM A WHISPER TO A LEGACY: THE JOURNEY TO DTM

By Keitumetse Moeketsi

Edith's Toastmasters journey began not with confidence, but with a presentation that went horribly wrong. The feedback from her lecturer was difficult to hear, but it became the catalyst for extraordinary personal growth.

Born in Benoni and raised in Mabopane, Edith studied at the University of Limpopo and qualified as both a teacher and social worker. Today, she works as a consultant within a parastatal in the Department of Transport. She is a wife, mother of two daughters, passionate reader, runner, Rotarian and lifelong learner.

In March 2008, Edith joined Gold Reef Toastmasters Club determined to improve her confidence and presentation skills. Her first Ice Breaker evaluation described her as "very soft-spoken" and challenged her to project her voice and improve eye contact. Eighteen years later, those words remain a powerful reminder of just how far she has come.

What began as a short-term goal to gain a skill became a lifelong journey of personal development, leadership and service.

Along the way, Edith learned to say "yes" to growth opportunities and figure out the what, how and when later. She served in numerous leadership roles, including Area Director, Club Sponsor, Club Mentor and Mentors Without Borders Coordinator, while also serving in almost every club executive role.

The journey to Distinguished Toastmaster (DTM), Toastmasters' highest educational achievement, demanded perseverance, self-awareness and courage. Her DTM project, the establishment of the Gold Reef Gavel Club for young people under 18, took more than a year to complete. There were moments of doubt and loneliness, but with the support of her team, club and fellow Toastmasters, the vision became a reality in November 2025.

For Edith, however, the greatest achievement is not the title after her name. It is seeing others grow because she chose to serve.

Her journey is proof that extraordinary growth begins when preparation meets opportunity, mentorship meets commitment, and courage becomes action.



Her message to every new Toastmaster is simple but powerful:

"Toastmasters works, only if you work it."

Commit fully. Find mentors. Attend training. Embrace opportunities.

Demand a return on your investment by giving the programme your very best.

Edith entered Toastmasters searching for confidence. Eighteen years later, she leaves footprints for others to follow. The DTM award may recognise her achievement, but the lives she continues to influence are her true legacy.

THE ACCIDENTAL LEADER: HOW TOASTMASTERS PREPARED ME WITHOUT MY KNOWING: LUANA MALAN

By Kgomotso Masela

As Charter President of the IDC Lion Toastmasters Club, a Distinguished Club, Luana Malan helped lead the successful launch of the club, establish its culture and governance, support members on their Pathways journeys, and create a strong foundation for future leaders.

When I sat down with Luana Malan, I expected to hear about leadership lessons, club achievements and perhaps a few memorable Toastmasters moments. What I did not expect was to hear the story of someone who never set out to be a leader in the first place.

"I joined Toastmasters to become a better communicator," Luana told me. "Leadership wasn't really part of the plan."

Yet, as Charter President of the IDC Lion Toastmasters Club, she found herself helping to build a new club from the ground up, learning lessons that would shape both her personal and professional growth.

The IDC Lion Toastmasters Club was launched as a pilot project, officially chartering in September. For Luana, saying yes to the role felt less like accepting a leadership position and more like stepping into an exciting opportunity.

"As the first Executive Committee, we knew we would be setting the tone for future members," she explained. "I wasn't completely sure what the role would involve, but I understood that the success of the pilot depended on people being willing to build something new."

That pioneering spirit was quickly tested. As a newly chartered club with members located across South Africa, the committee had to navigate hybrid meetings, unfamiliar processes and situations where there was no obvious answer. "We were learning as we went," Luana laughed. "There wasn't exactly a handbook called How to Run a Perfect Hybrid Toastmasters Club."

What stood out most from those challenges was the importance of communication. "Sometimes you can't give everyone the outcome they want, but you can communicate openly and honestly. That makes all the difference."

When asked who influenced her leadership journey, Luana was quick to acknowledge the support of others. She credits Soweto Positive Speakers Toastmasters Club, the club's mentor, and particularly Ayanda Ncgohe, for providing guidance throughout the charter year.

However, some of the strongest leadership lessons came from closer to home. "I learned a lot from our own members and Executive Committee," she said. "Watching people volunteer when the club needed support reinforced my belief that leadership is often revealed through actions rather than titles."



Continues

Luana Malan



"I became far more intentional about listening, facilitating discussions and structuring conversations." She admits that regular feedback from Grammarians, Ah-Counters, Timers and Evaluators also played a role.

"Let's just say it's difficult to keep bad communication habits when an entire meeting is paying attention to them," she joked.

As our conversation drew to a close, I asked Luana what she would say to members considering a leadership role. Her answer was simple.

"Leadership is often visible to others long before we see it ourselves. Many people focus on what they don't know instead of recognising what they already bring to the table."

Looking back, she wishes someone had told her how much time and effort goes into building a new club. Yet despite the challenges, she speaks with immense pride about what the team achieved.

For Luana, the biggest lesson is that leadership does not begin with a title. It begins with showing up, contributing, serving others and caring about the success of the group.

The irony, she admits, is that she joined Toastmasters to find her voice.

Instead, she accidentally discovered a leader.

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

Semiannual Membership Dues increase

\$60 → \$72

From **3 August 2026**, semiannual membership dues will increase from US\$60 to US\$72.

Leading Beyond Technical Excellence

By Nomthandazo Miselo

Ruvarashe Ndoora is a chemical engineer specializing in technical project delivery within a pharmaceutical manufacturing environment.

She is also the Vice President Membership of Talking Heads Toastmasters Club in Cape Town. Reflective, purpose-driven and growth-oriented, she is passionate about meaningful connections, purposeful contribution and inspiring action.

Her interest in communication began in high school through debates and youth leadership platforms, where she learned the value of sharing and refining ideas. As her engineering career progressed, she realized that technical expertise alone was not enough. Effective leadership required strong communication skills, prompting her to join Toastmasters.

One of the most significant lessons Ruvarashe has learned is the impact of mindset. She discovered that the story she tells herself directly influences how she approaches opportunities and challenges. Believing in her ability to learn and contribute has allowed her to step beyond fear and take on greater leadership responsibilities.

A defining moment in her growth came when she hosted a professional networking event through The Career Circle Cape Town, an initiative she founded to promote collaboration in career development.

Despite moments of self-doubt during the planning process, she successfully led the event. For her, this marked a shift from participating in existing spaces to creating opportunities for others to connect and grow.

Through Toastmasters, Ruvarashe has become a more confident leader and communicator. Most importantly, she no longer allows fear to dictate her direction, choosing instead to embrace growth and new opportunities.



LEAD FROM ABUNDANCE: NOMALANDELA ZULU ON EXCELLENCE, BOUNDARIES AND SERVICE

Michael Shackleton, DTM

Nomalandela Zulu believes kind, helpful and service-oriented people can be highly effective leaders. For her, leadership is an opportunity to influence people positively while helping them grow and succeed.

That philosophy has been tested in practice. Nomalandela served as Club President of Green Speakers Toastmasters Club during the 2025/2026 Toastmasters year and now serves as Area A3 Director for 2026/2027, extending her leadership and service beyond a single club.

In a discussion with me about her leadership journey, Nomalandela admitted that saying yes to leadership did not mean she was comfortable with the spotlight. Leading from the front was one of her greatest fears. So was the possibility of failing to meet her team's expectations.

Experience taught her that leadership is not about perfection. It is about showing up consistently, learning and supporting others. That philosophy was tested during ThriveCon. A main sponsor had allocated a limited number of conference seats. There were more deserving candidates than available places, leaving Nomalandela with the difficult task of deciding who would not attend.

The decision was uncomfortable precisely because the people affected were worthy of the opportunity. It taught her that leadership sometimes requires choices that are difficult without being personal. Clear reasons, honest communication and transparency about constraints can help a leader navigate those moments with integrity.

Her approach to club leadership is equally intentional. Nomalandela believes a club often takes its cue from the disposition of its leader. Members observe and replicate energy and behaviour. The leader's attitude can therefore set the tone before the meeting formally begins.

Her first principle when attendance is low is memorable: remain deliriously optimistic.

Every meeting matters, she says, and deserves energy and commitment. Last-minute cancellations should not automatically mean cancelling the meeting. Instead, she focuses on recognising those who did attend and creating an experience worth their time.

Sometimes that means reaching into the wider Toastmasters community and inviting guests or experienced members to support a meeting – what she playfully describes as “renting a crowd”. But she also sees attendance as a collective responsibility. Members can invite guests, reconnect with former members and promote the club, while leaders should personally contact inactive members to understand their challenges.

This emphasis on influence reflects what Nomalandela sees as the fundamental difference between Toastmasters leadership and leadership at work. In a professional environment, leaders are accountable for key performance indicators. Performance can affect remuneration, ratings and career progression. Toastmasters is different. Members are volunteers balancing personal development with the demands of life. There is no conventional performance-management lever.



A Toastmasters leader must inspire rather than compel.

Nomalandela has seen this modelled by Nicola Crossan, whom she describes as an exemplary leader and mentor. Nicola's approachability, kindness and willingness to celebrate even small achievements showed Nomalandela that high performance and genuine care can coexist. Regular check-ins and encouragement created trust while still challenging leaders to stretch beyond their perceived limits.

Toastmasters leadership has also reintroduced Nomalandela to the concept of excellence. She regularly asks herself how to create a culture that exceeds expectations and how to encourage team members to go beyond what is required. Those questions now shape her leadership both within Toastmasters and professionally.

Her advice to a member who doubts their readiness is simple: leadership can be learned, developed and refined. A person does not need every answer before beginning..

Her phrase is powerful: leaders should lead from a place of abundance rather than exhaustion. That idea brings together Nomalandela's leadership philosophy.



Be optimistic enough to give every meeting your best. Be courageous enough to make difficult decisions. Be caring enough to notice people. Pursue excellence. But recognise that service is strongest when the leader has preserved the capacity to serve.

Leadership is not perfection, and it is not endless self-sacrifice. Sometimes it is simply the discipline of showing up, setting the tone and helping others believe that growth is possible — while remembering to leave enough in yourself to lead again tomorrow.

— Michael Shackleton, DTM

CLUB GROWTH ACADEMY

STRONGER CLUBS. STRONGER DISTRICT <<<

The Club Growth Academy is a series of practical and interactive sessions designed to equip **YOU** with the knowledge, tools and confidence to grow Toastmasters in your community and beyond.

 SESSION 1 CLUB BUILDING Turn your idea into a thriving Toastmasters club.	 16 JULY 2026	 18:00 CAT
 SESSION 2 Marketing for club growth	 13 AUGUST 2026	 18:00 CAT
 SESSION 3 More impact. More members.	 8 OCTOBER 2026	 18:00 CAT
 SESSION 4 Finishing the year strong!	 10 DECEMBER 2026	 18:00 CAT

OUR GOAL

Build more clubs.
Empower more leaders.
Transform more lives.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

All Toastmasters who are passionate about growth and making a difference!

WHO CAN JOIN?

Anyone with ideas about clubs or interested in club building.

VENUE

Online
via Zoom

Ordinary Member, Extraordinary Story: Brenda Joao

— Kgomotso Masela

Some Toastmasters journeys unfold slowly, one speech and one meeting at a time. Others seem to move at the speed of a Table Topics response after hearing a question you actually know the answer to.

For Brenda Joao, one word sums it all up: "Skyrocket."

In just eighteen months, she has gone from someone who struggled with presentations at work to a leader, contest winner, mentor, trainer, and educational champion. Behind the awards is a story rooted in faith, service, perseverance, and a genuine desire to help others grow.

By profession, Brenda is a Finance Director for a licensing agency, but beyond spreadsheets she enjoys cooking, baking, arts and crafts, and serving others. She believes the talents we've been given should be used not only for personal success but to help others along the way.

When she joined Toastmasters in February 2025, it was simply because her boss noticed she struggled during presentations.

"I would stumble over my words and didn't always come across professionally," she recalls.

Like many members, she joined to improve her speaking but discovered a community dedicated to growth. Speech by speech, she learnt that confidence isn't something you're born with—it's built through practice, courage, and showing up. And show up she did.

Just four months after joining, Brenda was elected Vice President Education, taking on the challenge of coordinating educational goals, supporting members, and helping her club achieve excellence. "It felt like I had a day job and then Toastmasters became my night job," she laughs.

The effort paid off. By December 2025, the club had achieved its educational goals, secured second place in District 74 for Educational Achievements, and earned both the Smedley Award and the Leadership Excellence Award.

Personally, Brenda completed seven Pathways levels, earned the Powerful Personal, Triple Crown, and Magic 5 Awards, trained members on Base Camp, organised a mock contest, participated in Round the District in 80 Days, and helped charter a new club.

Her contest journey has been equally impressive. She won her club's Table Topics Contest in 2025, placed second at Area level, and repeated her club victory in 2026. Although illness prevented her from competing at Area that year, she chose to celebrate the learning and the fact that her club was represented by District Champion James.

One of Brenda's greatest inspirations wasn't a district leader or contest winner, but fellow Toastmaster Johanna Letlhogela. Watching Johanna persevere through a difficult speech and return two weeks later with remarkable improvement reminded her that the most inspiring people are often those who simply refuse to give up.



Toastmasters has also transformed her life beyond the lectern. Her family has seen her confidence grow, while colleagues have noticed stronger leadership, better communication, and even a few acting skills along the way.

Looking back on everything she has achieved in just eighteen months, "**Skyrocket**" feels like the perfect description. Toastmasters gave Brenda the platform; she brought the energy, determination, faith, and willingness to serve.

Her journey reminds us that extraordinary stories don't always begin with extraordinary circumstances. Sometimes they begin with a nervous speaker, a supportive club, and the courage to say "yes" to growth.

And occasionally, if you're truly committed, they also involve turning Toastmasters into an unofficial second job—only with better applause and far fewer spreadsheets.



— Kgomotso Masela

ATTENTION NEW MEMBERS: START YOUR JOURNEY WITH CONFIDENCE!

If you've recently joined a Toastmasters club, District 74 invites you to our New Member Onboarding sessions—designed to help you build a strong foundation for your Toastmasters journey.

Whether you're wondering how Pathways works, what each meeting role involves, how to prepare for your Ice Breaker, or how to make the most of your membership, these interactive sessions will equip you with the knowledge and confidence to get started.

You'll also have the opportunity to connect with fellow new members, ask questions, and discover the many opportunities Toastmasters offers for personal and professional growth.

Your Toastmasters journey doesn't begin with your first speech—it begins with understanding the incredible journey ahead. Join us and take the first step towards becoming a confident communicator and inspiring leader.

Visit the District 74 Calendar for upcoming onboarding sessions and member training events:

<https://toastmasters74.org/calendar/>

Learn. Participate. Grow. Your journey starts here.

Desiree Lee Son

Chris Bompas

Erica MacKay

D74 New Member Onboarding

We meet **monthly on the 2nd Wednesday** of every month **19:00 - 20:30 (CAT)** to guide members on Basecamp, meeting responsibilities & come and discover how you can grow.

- 12 August
- 9 September
- 14 October
- 11 November
- 10 February
- 10 March
- 14 April
- 12 May
- 9 June

Meeting Dates
(19:00 - 20:30 UTC+2)

Contact Us
+27 82 780 9643

Meeting Link
<https://bit.ly/D74NewMember26>

Extraordinary Corner: Kgaugelo Khonou

Moving Forward Toastmasters Club | Member since 2024

By Gcobisa Sigwili

For Kgaugelo Khonou, Toastmasters has opened doors far beyond personal development. Attending her first District Conference transformed the way she viewed the organisation, revealing opportunities not only for growth but also for building skills that can be applied professionally.

When asked who embodies the theme **Ordinary Members Doing Extraordinary Things**, she immediately points to her club's Vice President Membership, Khaka, whose innovative attendance and meeting management app has streamlined club operations by tracking visitors, meeting roles, speeches, and member participation.

To Kgaugelo, his creativity demonstrates how ordinary members can make an extraordinary impact.

Her own speaking superpower is the ability to command a room with calm confidence, inspiring others, bringing smiles, and helping people feel at ease. Her advice to anyone nervous about public speaking is refreshingly simple:

"There is nothing special about the stage—it's just a stage. Go there and be yourself."

Her message to fellow members is equally inspiring: "If I can do it, you can too, because I'm just an ordinary person."

When asked to name District 74's Person of the Year, her answer was Thandi Thombeni.



Extraordinary Corner: Thembile Mkhize

Moving Forward Toastmasters Club | Member since 2023

By Gcobisa Sigwili

Although her Toastmasters journey included a few pauses along the way, Thembile Mkhize found renewed purpose after attending the District Conference.

She describes the experience as her comeback—a turning point that reignited her commitment to Toastmasters while creating valuable networking opportunities.

For Thembile, Ordinary Members Doing Extraordinary Things is perfectly represented by Themba Ntuli, whose warmth and genuine care for people have left a lasting impression on her.

Known for her natural sense of humour, Thembile believes laughter is one of her greatest strengths as a speaker, helping her connect authentically with audiences.

Her encouragement to anyone afraid of stepping onto the stage is heartfelt:

"Come as you are and be open-minded."

Her message to others is wonderfully simple:

"If I can do it, you can too—because I did."

Asked who she believes was District 74's Person of the Year, she proudly nominated Themba Ntuli.



Extraordinary Corner: Bhekisisa Ngomane, DTM

President's Club (District 129) & Sell the Sizzle
Toastmasters (District 74) | Member since 2018

By Gcobisa Sigwili



For Immediate Past District Director Bhekisisa Ngomane, the phrase **Ordinary Members Doing Extraordinary Things** captures the very essence of Toastmasters.

He believes that while members come from different backgrounds and walks of life, everyone arrives as an ordinary person. It is through choosing to do extraordinary things—serving others, embracing leadership, and stepping beyond their comfort zones—that remarkable results are achieved.

Reflecting on the past year, Bhekisisa is most proud of the District's outstanding performance and the many members who embraced the shared vision.

Watching people support one another, celebrate each other's dreams, and become true Catalysts of Success remains one of his greatest rewards.

Having spent much of his life on stage, he describes it as a place where he feels completely at home. That comfort has become one of his greatest strengths as a communicator.

His encouragement to every Toastmaster is simple yet powerful:

"If an ordinary person like me can do extraordinary things, then so can you."

When asked who deserved the title of District 74 Person of the Year, he declined to name a single individual, instead honouring the entire District leadership team, cabinet, and members whose collective efforts made the year's success possible.

Every Great Leader Has a First Day

By Retshiditse Talafala

Meet Maxwell Netshirembe, Vice President Education – West Rand Toastmasters Club

Every leadership journey begins with a single decision to say "yes." For Maxwell Netshirembe, who has been a Toastmaster for just three months, accepting the role of Vice President Education was an opportunity to contribute beyond being a club member and to challenge himself in new ways.

"I wanted to stretch myself beyond my comfort zone," he shares. "Toastmasters had already helped me find my voice; now it was time to see if I could lead with it." Like many first-time leaders, his biggest concern was not knowing enough and the possibility of letting others down. However, he quickly realised that growth happens when we step into the unknown and trust the process.

Maxwell credits the outgoing Club President and senior members as his greatest leadership influences. Watching them calmly navigate challenges, support fellow members, and lead with a solution-focused mindset taught him that leadership is not about having all the answers. Instead, it is about asking the right questions, empowering others, and creating an environment where everyone can succeed.

As he begins his leadership journey, Maxwell believes that trust is built through transparency, consistency, and open communication. He hopes to create a team culture where members feel comfortable asking questions, sharing ideas, and working together towards common goals. Personally, he measures accountability by setting clear goals, tracking the club's educational progress, and ensuring members receive the support they need to succeed.

He also recognises that leadership is a team effort. He looks to his Executive Committee for collaboration and guidance, while encouraging members to offer honest feedback and patience as they grow together. One leadership skill he continues to develop is delegation, learning that empowering others is often more valuable than trying to do everything alone.

Before stepping onto the stage, Maxwell keeps his routine simple—a banana for energy and a bottle of water to stay calm. His own version of a pre-flight check before take-off.

For new leaders wondering whether they are ready, Maxwell's story is a reminder that leadership isn't about knowing everything before you begin. It's about having the courage to take that first step and growing into the leader your team needs.



UNMUTING OUR VOICE IGNITING A BRANDSTORM ACROSS DISTRICT 74

A Vision for Strategic Visibility

Visibility is not about noise. It is about being seen by the right people, in the right places, with the right message—consistently.

When we are visible:

- Guests find our clubs
- Communities recognize our value
- Organizations seek partnerships
- Members feel proud to belong

Strategic visibility is how we:

- Build new clubs
- Strengthen existing clubs
- Support every member's journey to excellence

What is the BrandStorm PR System?

The BrandStorm PR System is our district-wide approach to transforming public relations into a structured growth engine.

In simple terms:

- BrandStorm is how we turn visibility into visitors, and visitors into members.

It provides:

- Clear campaigns (Open Houses, Speechcraft, community outreach)
- Simple tools (templates, content guides, messaging frameworks)
- Consistent execution across Clubs, Areas, and Divisions

It is not about doing more. It is about doing what works—together, and consistently.

And our role is clear:

- To support every VPPR
- To equip every club
- To amplify every story
- To drive consistent visibility

Because when you succeed:

- Clubs grow
- Members thrive
- District 74 rises

1. CLUB PROMOTION - "The Pressure Shift"

Our clubs create that initial pull.

Through:

- Social media
- Open House promotions
- Community engagement

We create a presence that draws attention inward.

2. AWARENESS IN THE AREA - "The Winds Begin to Move"

This creates strong winds and forces warm, moist air upward.

- As promotion grows, awareness spreads.
- People begin to:
 - Recognize Toastmasters
 - Talk about our meetings
 - Share our message
 - Momentum builds.

3. ATTENTION & VISITORS - "The Storm Forms"

As the air rises, it cools and condenses into towering storm clouds... producing rain, thunder, and lightning.

- This is where impact happens.
- Guests walk into our meetings
- Experiences transform perceptions
- Members are born
- This is the BrandStorm moment.

The Heart of BrandStorm: The People
At the very centre of this system is not technology. It is people.

Specifically:

- Club Vice Presidents Public Relations (VPPRs)
- Area PR Coordinators
- Division PR Coordinators

You are not just communicators. You are the catalysts of the storm.

The BrandStorm Analogy: How Growth Happens

A storm does not begin with chaos. It begins with a shift.

- A storm begins when a center of low atmospheric pressure develops, pulling in surrounding high-pressure air.

Supporting the Mission and Theme
The BrandStorm PR System directly supports our District mission:

- Building New Clubs
 - By increasing visibility and demand, we create:
 - New opportunities
 - New communities
 - New clubs
- Supporting All Clubs in Achieving Excellence
 - By bringing in:
 - More guests
 - More energy
 - More engagement
- We strengthen the foundation of every club.

"Ordinary Members Doing Extraordinary Things"

BrandStorm ensures that these extraordinary stories:

- Are told
- Are shared
- Are celebrated
- Because inspiration is contagious.

This is not a campaign for a few.

This is a movement for all.

- Every post you create.
- Every Open House you promote.
- Every story you share.

You are not just doing PR.

- You are building momentum
- You are creating visibility
- You are igniting a BrandStorm

A single drop of rain changes nothing.
But a storm?

A storm transforms everything.

- This year, across District 74:
- Let us create storms in every club
- Let us move with purpose across every area
- Let us rise together across every division

And together—Let us unmute Toastmasters' voice and make it impossible to ignore.



District 74

CLUB ANNIVERSARIES

JULY 2026

Division

A

The Sages Toastmasters Club - 39 Years

Division

B

Protea Toastmasters Club - 51 Years

Division

C

Swakopmund Toastmasters Club - 16 Years

Division

E

SpeechQuest Toastmasters Club - 48 Years

Gaborone Breakfast Toastmasters Club - 7 Years

District 74 Southern Africa Toastmasters