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ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE MAGAZINE

Gold Reef Toastmasters Club
A Vibrant Community Shaping Future Leaders



District 74 Southern Africa Toastmasters

District 74

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Toastmasters District 74 Mission

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



EDITOR'S NOTE



Dumelang bohle (Greetings all)

As we prepare our journey to Lesotho for ThriveCon and maybe even practice how to greet in seSotho, let us remember to submit those renewals, if we haven't done so yet, focus on our commitments to complete our path levels and continue to support our fellow club members in their journey.

This month's issue has a high focus on leadership and with both Cabinet and Club Officer elections around the corner, I hope these stories will encourage you all.

Encourage current leaders that their leadership matters and give them a few tips to keep their endurance for the last stretch. Encourage all members to know they too can be leaders within Toastmasters and that Toastmasters around the District and beyond are here to support you in your leadership journey.

Khethiwe Malema

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DISTRICT DIRECTOR'S NOTE

It's hard to believe we've arrived at April the start of our final quarter. This season invites both reflection and renewed focus. Thank you to every member who has renewed their membership and chosen to continue their journey of personal and professional growth. Your decision matters not only for your own progress, but for the strength and continuity of your club.

Across our District, I continue to see encouraging signs clubs showing up, members supporting one another, and leaders creating spaces where people can grow. That is what builds a quality club. When members achieve their goals, clubs move closer to achieving theirs.

There is also excitement as we look ahead to ThriveCon, beginning on 30 April. It is always a special time to come together, learn, connect, and be reminded of why we do what we do. During the conference, we will also host our **District Council Meeting on 2 May**, where we will reflect, make key decisions, and elect the next leaders who will carry this work forward.

As we enter the final stretch, the focus is simple – let's finish well. Not with pressure, but with intention. It is also the right



time to prepare future leaders, build continuity, and leave our clubs stronger than we found them.

Our goal of becoming Smedley Distinguished is still within reach. It will not require extraordinary actions, only consistent ones. Supporting members, encouraging one another, and creating places where people want to stay and grow.

Bhekisisa Ngomane,DTM

FROM THE PUBLIC RELATIONS DESK

March was a strong and impactful month for Public Relations across the district. There was notable momentum in showcasing progress toward Distinguished status, as well as recognizing sponsorship and educational accomplishments.

As we move into April, the focus shifts to maximizing high-impact opportunities. Speech contests remain a powerful platform for PR, offering compelling content through contestant journeys, results, and event highlights. Divisions are encouraged to amplify these moments across their channels.

Additionally, with the Toastmasters year progressing, it is important to highlight membership growth, educational awards, and club achievements. Welcoming new members publicly and celebrating progress helps sustain momentum.



Consistency, creativity, and authentic storytelling will remain key to driving engagement and building a strong Toastmasters presence.

Follow our pages here. [\[Link here\]](#)

Leya Musunga



District 74

SOUTHERN AFRICA TOASTMASTERS

Ready to Make an Impact?

Now is the time to nominate yourself or a fellow member for a club officer role.

Which role will you choose?



Step into leadership by serving as a club officer and unlock skills that will **elevate** your **confidence**, **communication**, and **impact**.

Gaborone Toastmasters Club Makes History as District 74's First Smedley Distinguished Club

By Leya Musunga

Gaborone Toastmasters Club has reached an incredible milestone, becoming District 74's first Smedley Distinguished Club Ready for the year. This historic achievement places the club at the forefront of excellence and sets a strong example for others across the district.

When the Toastmasters dashboard updates in mid-April, the club will officially be recognized as Smedley Distinguished, confirming their outstanding performance.

What This Achievement Means

Earning this recognition reflects a club that is focused, disciplined, and committed to growth. Gaborone Toastmasters Club has:

- Submitted its Club Success Plan on time
- Achieved all 10 Distinguished Club Program (DCP) goals
- Reached 25 paid members before 30 June

These accomplishments highlight strong leadership, active membership, and a culture of consistency.

A Standard for District 74

This milestone is more than a celebration it is a reminder that success is achievable for every club. With clear goals, teamwork, and commitment, any club can reach this level of excellence.

Leading with Impact

Special recognition goes to the Executive Committee (Exco Team) for their leadership and dedication. Their efforts have positioned the club as a true leader in the district.

Congratulations to Gaborone Toastmasters Club for setting the pace and inspiring others. You are truly Catalysts of Success.



Psychological Safety in Leadership

By Tumelo Maphalala

One of the most powerful yet often overlooked aspects of leadership development is psychological safety—the sense that one can speak, participate, and make mistakes without fear of embarrassment or judgment.

In many environments, people hold back ideas or avoid risks due to fear of criticism. Yet where psychological safety exists, individuals feel empowered to contribute, learn, and grow. Toastmasters is one such space.

At its core, Toastmasters creates an environment where members are encouraged to try, improve, and try again. Delivering a speech for the first time can be intimidating. Voices shake, words are forgotten, and nerves are visible. Yet instead of criticism, members receive encouragement and constructive feedback. Evaluations focus on growth, highlighting strengths while offering supportive suggestions for improvement. This culture allows members to experiment with new skills without fear of being ridiculed.

Meeting roles also reinforce this sense of safety. Whether someone is giving a prepared speech, answering a Table Topic, or providing an evaluation, the environment is structured to support participation. Everyone understands that mistakes are part of the learning process. In fact, those moments often become the most valuable lessons.

The true value of this environment is not limited to club meetings. The experience teaches members what psychologically safe leadership feels like, and how powerful it can be. When members return to their workplaces, schools, or communities, they carry this lesson with them.

Leaders who have experienced psychological safety are more likely to create it for others.

They listen more openly, encourage participation, and respond to mistakes with guidance rather than blame.



In this way, Toastmasters does more than teach public speaking. It models a culture of leadership rooted in trust and respect.

As members, the challenge is not only to benefit from this environment but also to replicate it beyond the club. When we create psychological safety wherever we lead, we unlock the courage and potential of those around us.



The Art of Delegation: How to Multiply Your Impact as a Leader

By Leya Musunga

Leadership is often romanticized as the ability to do it all: carry the vision, execute the plan, solve problems, and inspire others. Yet experienced leaders discover an important truth: real impact is not measured by how much you do, but by how effectively you empower others to contribute. This is the art of delegation.

Delegation is more than simply assigning tasks. It is about multiplying capacity, developing people, and creating a culture where leadership is shared rather than concentrated in one person. In environments like Toastmasters, where communication and leadership development are central, delegation becomes an essential skill.

One of the greatest benefits of delegation is that it expands a leader's reach. When leaders empower others, their influence grows beyond their own time and energy. They move from being the person who does everything to the person who enables others to succeed.

Delegation also plays a powerful role in developing new leaders. Every responsibility given to someone else becomes an opportunity for learning and growth. Members gain confidence, discover new abilities, and strengthen their leadership skills through experience.

Another key advantage is sustainability. Leaders who try to manage everything themselves often experience burnout. Delegating responsibilities protects a leader's energy and ensures the long-term effectiveness of the team. Most importantly, delegation strengthens ownership. When people contribute meaningfully, they feel valued and invested in the success of the group.

Toastmasters provides a natural environment to practice delegation. Club officers share responsibilities, district leaders work through teams, and events rely on collaboration. By delegating intentionally, leaders not only achieve more they empower others to grow and lead alongside them.

Congratulations

INDIVIDUAL

SPONSOR AWARD



The Leadership Marathon: Sustaining Passion Beyond the First Year

By Leya Musunga

Leadership is often described as a journey, but in reality, it is closer to a marathon. The first stretch is exciting new responsibilities, fresh ideas, and the thrill of making an impact. But as the months pass, the pace changes. The novelty fades, challenges evolve, and leaders face an important question: How do you sustain passion and purpose beyond the first year?

In Toastmasters, where leadership is rooted in volunteer service, this question becomes especially important. The leaders who thrive long term are not those who sprint at the beginning, but those who learn to lead with endurance, clarity, and heart.

The first year of leadership is often fueled by enthusiasm, curiosity, and the desire to prove oneself. This energy is powerful, but it is not endless. Without intentional renewal, leaders can experience burnout, disengagement, or stagnation.

The real test of leadership begins when passion must be sustained by something deeper than the excitement of a new role.

This is where leaders shift from motivation to meaning. Motivation is emotional and temporary; meaning is lasting.

Enduring leaders anchor themselves in purpose, service, vision, and legacy.

Instead of asking, “What do I need to do?” they begin asking, “Why does this work matter, and who does it serve?” That shift transforms leadership from a set of tasks into a meaningful contribution.



Sustaining passion also involves knowing when to pass the baton. Leadership is cyclical, and growth often comes through mentoring successors, supporting new leaders, or contributing in new roles. In Toastmasters, this cycle strengthens continuity, culture, and community.

The leaders who endure are not those who never feel tired—they are the ones who learn how to renew their sense of purpose. Leadership is not a sprint of enthusiasm, but a marathon guided by meaning. When leaders stay connected to purpose and continue to evolve, their passion doesn't fade; it deepens.



Your Voice and Leadership

By Tumelo Maphalala

Leadership does not begin with a title. It begins with a voice.

Not merely the sound you make when you speak, but the clarity of your thoughts, the conviction behind your message, and the courage to express what you truly believe. When you invest in finding your voice, you begin investing in your leadership.

Many people hesitate to step into leadership because they feel unheard, uncertain, or unprepared. Yet the journey to confident leadership often starts in the simplest way: by standing up and speaking. At Toastmasters meetings around the world, individuals walk in quietly and unsure. Over time, through prepared speeches, evaluations, and impromptu responses, something shifts. They discover not just how to speak, but what they stand for.

Finding your voice requires reflection. What do you value? What do you believe? What experiences have shaped you? As you articulate these answers, you begin to lead with authenticity rather than imitation. Leaders who borrow voices struggle. Leaders who own their voices inspire.

The process is not instant. It is refined through feedback, strengthened through practice, and sharpened through intentional growth. Each speech builds confidence. Each evaluation deepens awareness. Each leadership role within a club builds responsibility and resilience. Slowly, the once hesitant speaker becomes someone others look to for guidance.

When your voice becomes clear, direction follows. You communicate expectations effectively. You resolve conflict with intention. You influence without intimidation. Your leadership stops being about authority and starts being about alignment.

Your voice is not just a tool for expression, it is a compass. When you learn to use it well, it guides your decisions, shapes your impact, and positions you to lead with purpose.

Find your voice. Refine it. Trust it.
Leadership will follow.

Finding your voice requires reflection. What do you value? What do you believe?

How to Structure a Speech for Maximum Impact

By Leya Musunga

A powerful speech isn't just about what you say it's about how you structure it. Even the best ideas can lose their impact without clear organisation, while a well-structured speech helps your message land and stay with the audience. Whether you're speaking at Toastmasters, work, or a special event, structure is your foundation.

Start Strong

Your opening determines whether your audience listens or disengages. Capture attention immediately with a question, a bold statement, a short story, or a surprising fact. The goal is to spark curiosity and show your audience why your message matters.

Clarify Your Purpose

Once you have attention, clearly state the purpose of your speech. Ask yourself: what is the one key idea I want my audience to remember? A clear purpose keeps your speech focused and helps your audience follow your message from start to finish.

Organise the Body

The body of your speech should be simple and focused. Limit yourself to two or three main points to avoid overwhelming your audience. For each point, briefly explain it, support it with a story or example, and link it back to your central message. Smooth transitions between points help your audience stay engaged and oriented.



Use Stories to Connect

Stories bring your speech to life. While facts inform, stories create emotional connection and make your message memorable. Choose stories that are clear, relatable, and directly support your key points.

End with Impact

Your conclusion is your final opportunity to leave a lasting impression. Reinforce your main message, inspire emotion, and include a clear call to action. You may close by returning to your opening idea, sharing a powerful quote, or challenging your audience to act.

Final Thought

A well-structured speech has a strong opening, a focused body, and a purposeful close. Mastering structure allows your message to resonate long after the applause ends.

Beyond the Podium: From Conference to Conversation

By Kofi Simpson

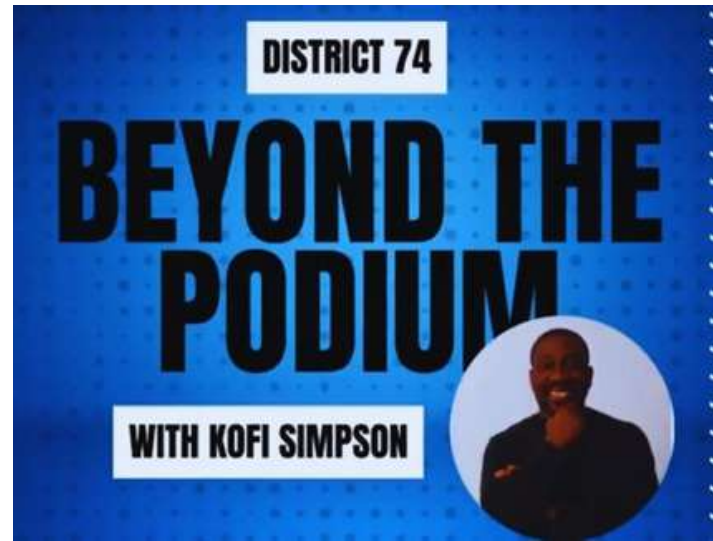
Attending RoarCon 2025 reminded me that Toastmasters International offers far more than speech training. Beyond speeches and contests, conferences create spaces for leadership development, meaningful networking, and genuine connection. That experience became a turning point for me.

It was there that I chose to act on building Beyond the Podium as a platform to pursue my passion as an interviewer and moderator, amplifying the stories of Toastmasters and leaders beyond the stage.

Like many Toastmasters, I've experienced analysis paralysis, overthinking, waiting for the "right" moment, and hesitating because of doubt or uncertainty. Yet Toastmasters has consistently taught me an important truth: real progress comes from participation, not perfection.

Through the podcast, we've featured inspiring voices such as Thulisile Mgidi, who shared her leadership journey in "When Leadership Meets Purpose", and Yonela Motloun, who offered insight into ThriveCon 2026 and the value of leadership within the organisation. We've also spoken with Mosa Nyamande and Siyabonga Mthembu, who highlighted how Toastmasters supports entrepreneurs in strengthening their communication and leadership skills.

Looking ahead, the podcast will feature voices such as Bhekisisa Ngomane (District Director), Toastmasters brothers Frank and Andrew Tsuro, and stories of couples navigating the Toastmasters journey, including Bryton Masiye (Programme Quality Director) and Yonela Motloun (ThriveCon 2026 Conference Convenor).



We'll also hear from the 2026 District 74 Speech Contest winner, and from Toastmasters who have launched their own podcasts, exploring how they built their platforms and continue to grow.

Beyond the Podium is more than a podcast. It's a reminder that your voice matters, that action overcomes doubt, and that investing in yourself through speaking, leadership, and storytelling can open unexpected doors.

If you're interested in sharing your journey or supporting the platform behind the scenes, we invite you to be part of this growing community.

Listen to our previous episodes [HERE](#).

How to Give a Toast People Will Remember

By Leya Musunga

We've all heard them the toast that drags on, wanders off course, and fades from memory as soon as the glasses clink. And then there's the one that stops the room: warm, sincere, and unforgettable. The difference isn't confidence alone. It's clarity, structure, and heart.

A great toast begins with purpose. Remember, a toast is not a speech or a life story. Its role is simple: to honour a person or moment and uplift everyone present. Know who you are celebrating and what feeling you want to leave behind.

Keep it short

The most memorable toasts last 60 to 90 seconds. Brevity shows respect for the occasion and keeps attention high. Think of your toast as a highlight reel, not the full movie.

Start strong

Skip apologies and clichés. Instead, open with a warm observation, a personal moment, or a light touch of humour. A compelling opening immediately draws people in and sets the tone.

Tell one story

Choose a single, meaningful moment that captures the essence of the person or occasion. Specific, heartfelt stories are far more powerful than long lists of achievements. Authenticity beats perfection every time.

Speak from the heart

Use your natural voice and simple language. When your words are genuine, emotion follows and emotion is what people remember.

End with intention

A strong closing brings everything together and clearly signals the toast. Invite the room to raise their glasses with confidence and pride.

Finally, deliver with presence

Stand tall, make eye contact, slow down, and smile. Preparation turns nerves into confidence.

A memorable toast doesn't impress, it connects. Say it simply, mean it deeply, and people will remember not just your words, but how you made them feel.

Curiosity Killed the Cat, but Satisfaction Brought It Back

By Kagelelo Mogotsi

We've all heard the idiom, "curiosity killed the cat," often used as a warning to avoid unnecessary probing. Yet the full phrase tells a richer story: curiosity didn't end the cat satisfaction brought it back. That idea invites us to rethink how we approach understanding and conversation.

Curiosity is the desire to explore and make sense of the unknown. Psychologists Celeste Kidd and Benjamin Hayden describe it as "the desire to understand what you know but don't know." It's more than thinking it's active engagement. Like studying a painting, the deeper you look, the more meaning emerges.

Curiosity allows us to experience life with greater depth, turning ordinary moments into meaningful ones and helping us connect more deeply with others.

Conversations are no different. Too often, we keep them at surface level, missing opportunities to truly understand the person in front of us. When we don't ask questions or explore further, we limit connection. Curiosity, then, becomes more than a feeling it's a skill that can be developed.

Yet we live in a world of constant distraction. Endless scrolling fills every quiet moment, conditioning us to avoid depth. Even in conversations, we default to quick responses instead of meaningful



engagement. We hesitate to ask deeper questions, often believing we should "mind our business," but in doing so, we miss understanding.

True curiosity requires openness. It means listening without judgment and exploring the "why" behind what others say. This creates space for genuine connection and stronger relationships.

To cultivate curiosity, start small. Step away from constant distractions, even if only for a moment. Give yourself time to think without immediately reaching for your phone. Ask open-ended questions. Instead of settling for simple answers, go deeper. Approach conversations with the mindset of someone who wants to understand, not someone who wants to respond.

When we embrace curiosity, we unlock deeper conversations, richer perspectives, and a more meaningful way of living.



Gold Reef Toastmasters Club: A Vibrant Community Shaping Future Leaders

By Samantha Dube
Editor: Khethiwe Malema

Gold Reef Toastmasters Club is more than just a gathering of individuals it is a dynamic and supportive community where people from diverse professional and personal backgrounds come together with a shared commitment to growth.

The club's membership spans young professionals eager to sharpen their communication skills to seasoned leaders who bring a wealth of wisdom and experience. personal backgrounds come together with a shared commitment to growth. This diversity creates a powerful environment where different perspectives intersect, fostering learning, confidence, and leadership development.

A Vibrant and Welcoming Atmosphere

What truly sets Gold Reef Toastmasters apart is the atmosphere it cultivates. Proudly known as one of the most vibrant clubs in the south of Johannesburg, it radiates warmth and energy from the moment one walks in. Visitors often describe the club as having a “homey” feel a place where they are instantly welcomed and valued.

Members are approachable and intentional about creating an inclusive space where everyone feels they belong. Feedback, which is central to the Toastmasters experience, is delivered constructively and with care, ensuring that each member is encouraged to grow in a safe and supportive environment.

A Strong Sense of Belonging

At the heart of Gold Reef Toastmasters is a strong sense of belonging. Members consistently describe the club as more than just a meeting space it is a community, a support system, and for many, a second home. Genuine connections are formed, and encouragement flows freely. Members are not just participants; they are invested in each other's growth and success. This family-like environment is what makes the club experience truly meaningful and lasting.

Investing in the Next Generation: The Gavel Club

A significant extension of the club's impact is its Gavel Club, which focuses on developing communication and leadership skills among young people still in school. For Gold Reef, the Gavel Club is not a peripheral initiative but an integral part of its mission. Members of the executive committee actively participate by attending meetings, mentoring young members, and providing consistent guidance, ensuring that the youth are empowered to grow.

Growth Through Mentorship and Leadership

The Gavel Club has seen remarkable progress, largely due to strong leadership, particularly from Edith Nkosi, who played a key role in its foundation and early growth. Today, the young members confidently run their own meetings, demonstrating independence, capability, and leadership.



This transformation highlights the power of mentorship and the immense potential within young people when supported effectively.

A Legacy of Impact and Empowerment

For Gold Reef Toastmasters, the Gavel Club represents the future. It embodies the values of empowerment, growth, and community, ensuring that the legacy of communication and leadership excellence continues for generations to come. Supporting the Gavel Club is not just about mentorship it is an investment in tomorrow's leaders.

A Beacon of Excellence

Gold Reef Toastmasters Club stands as a beacon of vibrancy, authenticity, and empowerment. Through its welcoming culture, and commitment to nurturing both current and future leaders, it continues to transform lives and strengthen communities.



Congratulations

Triple Crown Awards - March 2026

Members

- **Bill Russell, DTM** - Two Oceans
- **Retshidisitse Talafala** - West Rand Toastmasters Club
- **Gil Harper** - Toast and Talk Toastmasters Club
- **Leya Musunga** - Gaborone Toastmasters Club
- **Lucelle Delport** - Winelands Toastmasters Club



Leading the Way in Pathways!

MARCH 2026

TOP 5 RANKED CLUBS

Rank	Total Level	Club Name
1	27	Gaborone Toastmasters
2	18	Green Speakers Toastmasters Club
3	17	Bloemfontein Toastmasters Club
3	17	Eloquent Speakers Club
3	17	Morningside Toastmasters
3	17	West Rand Toastmasters Club
4	14	Carpe Diem Aspire
4	14	Moving Forward Toastmasters
5	13	Rainbow Toastmasters Club
5	13	Rosebank Toastmasters Club

A Milestone Earned: Celebrating Consistency and Commitment

— By Maud Nale

Some achievements are measured not just in distance, but in dedication over time.

At this year's Two Oceans Marathon in Cape Town, a truly special milestone was reached. Our International President, Aletta Rochat, DTM, completed her 10th race and earned her Blue Number, a recognition reserved for those who return, year after year, and cross the finish line 10 times.

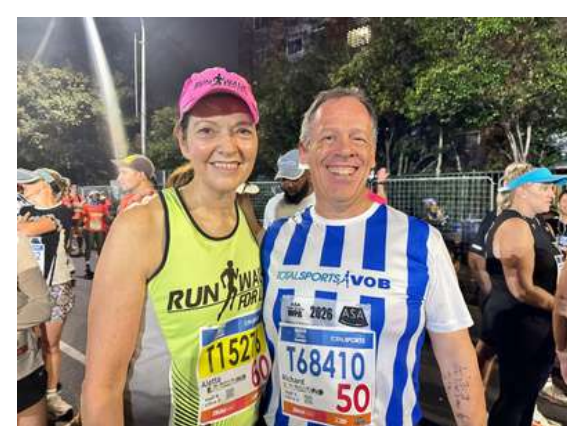
While the Blue Number is a running achievement, what it represents goes far beyond the race itself. It speaks to consistency, discipline, and the quiet determination to keep showing up, even when the journey is demanding.

These are qualities that resonate deeply within Toastmasters International. Much like the path of personal and leadership development in Toastmasters, this milestone was not achieved overnight. It is the result of sustained effort, resilience, and a long-term commitment to growth.

For many who witnessed the moment, it was more than a finish line it was a reflection of what is possible when we stay the course.

As we continue our own journeys, whether in our clubs, Districts, or personal goals, this milestone serves as a powerful reminder: meaningful progress is built over time, one step, one meeting, and one moment at a time.

Congratulations, Aletta, on this remarkable achievement.



A Second Yes to Toastmasters: How Recommitment Led Sipokazi Swana to Club Coaching

— By Editor: Khethiwe Malema

My name is Sipokazi Swana, and I have been an active member of Toastmasters since 2021. Although my official join date reflects 2009, that earlier experience was brief I attended once, delivered a single speech, and did not return. My true Toastmasters journey began later, when timing, purpose, and exposure aligned.

I often describe my life as a journey shaped by discovery rather than careful planning. I became a Chartered Accountant not through long-term intention, but after discovering the profession during university orientation. That moment changed my life.

After qualifying, I realised that technical competence alone was not enough. Understanding numbers mattered—but communicating the story behind them mattered more. I struggled to express myself clearly, and a colleague recommended Toastmasters. That recommendation became a turning point.

When I rejoined, I found more than a platform for public speaking. Toastmasters became a safe space to build confidence, find my voice, and grow comfortable communicating in English. Most importantly, it gave me exposure something I now believe is often the missing link in many people's challenges.

Through my experiences, I have learned that people rarely struggle due to lack of ability. More often, they lack exposure they are simply unaware that help or solutions exist. This belief drives my commitment to sharing knowledge whenever I can.

This same passion inspires my desire to serve as a Club Coach. As a Club Officer and later an Area Director, I observed how member experiences differ across clubs. Some thrive, while others struggle despite committed members. Leadership plays a critical role in shaping that experience.

For me, being a Club Coach is about helping clubs clarify goals, strengthen systems, and unlock their potential. It is an opportunity to create environments where members grow, thrive, and discover what is possible just as I did.



Coaching to Save What Matters: Lesego Nhlapo's Commitment to Club Growth

By Khethiwe Malema

Lesego Ndlapo, a passionate Toastmaster, describes herself as a transformational coach, facilitator, and emcee who follows her passions all while maintaining a full-time career. But the story she believes is worth telling is not about her many titles—it is about why she chose Toastmasters Club Coaching in a situation where others might have stepped away from the challenge.

As an Area Director, Lesego watched one of the clubs in her Area slowly decline. Attendance dropped, leadership roles recycled among the same few members, and each area council meeting revealing growing frustrations from the club's leaders. "I could see it dying by the day," she says. "The reason I did it was to save it"

Unlike newly established clubs that benefit from six months of structured and dedicated mentorship, many clubs struggle while fending for themselves and the club in her Area was no different. Once thriving, it began to struggle without sustained support. The same executive committee members had rotated roles for more than three years, not from ambition, but from necessity. Even now, challenges persist, with key leaders resigning despite renewed efforts.

For Lesego, this experience reflects a broader issue in club development. Early support is essential, but long-term sustainability depends on systems. Her coaching approach focuses on structure rather than rescue—lightening the load for leaders by equipping them to succeed.

Her plans are practical and targeted: strengthening administrative systems, supporting membership drives, introducing role-specific scripts, and improving



and improving onboarding and orientation. These tools, she believes, help new leaders step into roles with confidence and clarity. "It calms the nerves," she explains.

Mentorship is central to her vision. Lesego actively encourages experienced members to guide new leaders, particularly those in executive roles. She is also passionate about helping members understand Base Camp, Pathways, and project submissions—gaps that often hinder member progress and the success of clubs.

Lesego's coaching journey is driven by purpose. It is about choosing to stay, to build, and to believe that with the right support, clubs can not only survive—but thrive.

Finding My Voice Through Toastmasters

— By Modieng Ramekosi

In today's fast-paced digital world, technical expertise alone is no longer enough how we communicate that expertise matters just as much. This realization led me to join Toastmasters International, a decision that has significantly shaped both my personal and professional growth.

As an IT professional specializing in cybersecurity, I often present complex information to diverse audiences. Whether addressing technical teams or everyday users, the challenge is not just understanding cybersecurity concepts but simplifying them into relatable and actionable insights. Cybersecurity awareness workshops play a vital role in helping individuals recognize threats, identify risks, and protect themselves in an increasingly digital world.

Toastmasters has provided the ideal platform to refine my communication and presentation skills. It has taught me that

effective presenting is not about rushing through slides or displaying technical knowledge, but about delivering a clear, meaningful message that resonates and creates impact.

Beyond professional growth, this journey has been deeply personal. I have become more open-minded, embraced change, and developed a better understanding of leadership. Most importantly, I have learned to view constructive criticism as a tool for improvement rather than a setback.

Public speaking was once my greatest fear. Standing before an audience felt intimidating, especially knowing they expected to learn and be inspired.

While I am still building confidence, I have seen steady progress each speech replacing fear with purpose.

One of my most defining moments came during my first speech when I froze. Instead of judgment, I received encouragement and applause. That support transformed a moment of vulnerability into one of growth.

This experience taught me that growth comes from discomfort. Today, I continue my Toastmasters journey committed to learning, improving, and becoming a more confident communicator, one speech at a time.



Thabiso Chabangu
Vice President Education

Gauteng Department of e-Government Toastmasters club

Pursuing Excellence: Angie Kidvido's Approach to Achieving Multiple Toastmasters Awards

By Leya Musunga

For many Toastmasters members, completing one educational award is a meaningful milestone. For Angie Kidvido, however, the journey is about sustained growth and meaningful contribution.

Angie approaches her Toastmasters journey with a clear purpose: to complete her Distinguished Toastmaster (DTM) in a responsible and impactful way. Rather than focusing only on completing requirements, she has intentionally set goals that ensure every step of the journey contributes to the growth of others as well as her own.

"My goal is to complete my DTM in a responsible manner," she explains. "To do that, I aim to take on a role, deliver a speech, or mentor a new member during my club meetings and beyond. I want the impact of my journey to be meaningful."

This mindset has been a powerful driver in her pursuit of multiple awards. Instead of viewing awards as individual achievements, Angie sees them as a natural outcome of consistent participation and commitment to the Toastmasters program.

What keeps her motivated is her deep confidence in the Toastmasters educational system and her commitment to living the Toastmasters Promise. By showing up consistently, contributing to the learning environment, and supporting fellow members, she ensures that progress happens naturally.

For members who aspire to complete two or more awards before the deadline, Angie offers simple but powerful advice: focus on personal development first.



"Personal development is an investment that yields results over time," she says. "Stay focused, even when days become challenging, and continue to show up for yourself. The awards will follow."

Angie's approach reminds us that success in Toastmasters is not just about collecting awards — it is about embracing the journey of growth, service, and meaningful impact along the way.

"Personal development is an investment that will yield results over time."

From Hesitation to Momentum: A Toastmasters Journey of Growth

By Leya Musunga

For many Toastmasters, the journey begins with a simple goal: to become a better speaker. For Lucelle Delport of Winelands Toastmasters Club, that journey became a story of courage, consistency, and transformation.

Her path to multiple awards was never planned it began with hesitation.

"I had written my Ice Breaker," she recalls, "but I didn't have the courage to deliver it." Like many, stepping onto the stage felt overwhelming. But when she finally did, everything changed. The experience was exhilarating and sparked a desire to return again and again.

That moment became her turning point.

Lucelle began to see Toastmasters as a safe space to grow, experiment, and even fail without judgment.

With each speech, her confidence grew and the impact extended beyond the club.

She noticed changes in her professional life: greater composure, stronger communication, and confidence in situations that once intimidated her. That real-world impact became her fuel.

Momentum followed.

Instead of waiting to feel ready, Lucelle embraced every opportunity. She leaned into discomfort, knowing growth rarely comes with perfect timing. Even now, she still feels nervous before each speech but the nerves have become excitement, not fear.



Her motivation runs deeper than achievement. Public speaking had been a lifelong challenge, and she wanted to overcome it not just for herself, but to show her children that persistence matters more than talent.

Supported by a club that encouraged growth, she realized that stopping at "good enough" was no longer an option.

Her advice is simple: start before you feel ready. Use every opportunity, stay consistent, and trust the process.

Because once you begin, momentum takes over and growth becomes inevitable.

Breaking the Ceiling: Finding My Voice Through Toastmasters

By Modieng Ramekosi

For many, Toastmasters is a platform to improve public speaking. For me, it became something far more profound, a deliberate journey toward self-actualization, visibility, and personal evolution.

I joined driven by a deep commitment to growth. As a leader, writer, and communicator, I had long recognised the power of my ideas, yet my voice often remained in the background. Public speaking became the missing link the frontier I needed to cross to fully embody my message.

What defines this journey is my relationship with limitations. Guided by the philosophy of the Ouroboros, the ancient symbol of cyclical renewal I embrace growth as continuous. Each version of myself must give way to the next.

Toastmasters became my arena, a space to confront my edges and evolve. Personally, the transformation has been profound. I became aware of my tendency to “fawn,” prioritising comfort over authenticity. Recognising this pattern was a turning point. Today, I meet challenges with intention. I no longer shrink in moments that demand my voice.

Professionally, the impact has been equally powerful. I communicate with clarity, set firm boundaries, and lead with authenticity without aggression or apology. I've also learned to embrace feedback as a tool for growth rather than chase perfection.

Perhaps my greatest realisation is this:

**my deepest fear was never
speaking it was being fully seen.**

There is vulnerability in visibility. To own your voice is to invite judgment. Yet within Toastmasters, I found the safety to face that fear. I stopped apologising. I stopped shrinking.

One defining moment came after a personal setback. I chose to speak—not perfectly, but honestly. That experience reaffirmed that audiences connect with truth, not perfection.

Toastmasters is more than a programme it is a proving ground where I continue to redefine myself. I may get knocked down but I will never count myself out.



Dr Ramona Baijnath
Moving Forward Toastmasters
Vice President Public Relations

District 74

SOUTHERN AFRICA TOASTMASTERS

CLUB ANNIVERSARIES

April 2026

Division

A

Sasol Energy - 3 Years

Division

B

Rhodes University Toastmasters - 1 Year

Division

C

The Grove Club - 32 Years

Division

D

Nedbank Next Gen Toastmasters - 8 Year
Highway Club - 35 Years

Division

E

SAP Toastmasters - 19 Year
Gaborone Toastmasters - 34 Years
Transformers Toastmasters Club - 45 Years

Division

F

Bloemfontein Toastmasters Club - 10 Years
Bacon & Egg - 14 Years

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