

Toast *of the* Park

THE OFFICIAL TOASTMASTERS OF LINCOLN PARK NEWSLETTER | November, 2009



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Toasting Business

On the surface, our club appears blissfully simple. It's a group of people who get together and practice public speaking. Sounds easy enough.

Underneath the surface, Toastmasters is a thriving business. We have a bank account, balance sheet, sales, marketing, customer service, events, regulations, rituals, real estate, and officers. The only difference between Toastmasters and a normal business is that our customers are also our workers.

Being an officer gives you a front row view into the business side of Toastmasters. As an officer, I've learned about the process of transforming concept into reality within an organization. Our club is

malleable, so we're constantly coming up with new ways to improve our club.

I have also learned innumerable lessons about leadership, tact, teamwork, accountability, organization skills, and interpersonal skills. I will carry these lessons with me for the rest of my life. You could too.

If you haven't considered being an officer, I suggest you give it some serious thought. If you have already served, consider running again. It's a rare opportunity to hone your professional skills outside the workplace.

- Chuck Hamman
President



An Unexpected Edge

IF YOU'RE LIKE MOST MEMBERS OF TOASTMASTERS OF LINCOLN PARK, YOU JOINED THE GROUP TO IMPROVE YOUR PUBLIC SPEAKING SKILLS. BUT SOME MEMBERS HAVE LEARNED IT'S NOT JUST ABOUT THE SPEECHES YOU GIVE, BUT THE VALUABLE CONNECTIONS THAT YOU MAKE.

The job search process is easily one of the most daunting ones a professional can undertake. Whether you've been impacted by the sloping economy, or are just ready to make a transition in your current position, the skills you learn as a member of Toastmasters International will help you every step of the way.

A Pro-Active Search

When Priscilla Rose found herself unemployed this past summer, she took the time off to reevaluate her career goals, and focus on breaking into the industry she has always dreamed about. She knew making the transition into medical sales would not be easy, but she was determined. Quickly realizing that posting resumes on online job boards alone

is not enough, she rounded out her job-search by connections and promoting herself through online networks such as Linked In.

The Perfect Conversation Starter

In a recent blog entry on www.toastmasterslp.com, Priscilla mentions the serious advantage her membership at Toastmasters of Lincoln Park has given her in her networking conversations. She writes, "I included Toastmasters on my resume and my LinkedIn page. Every single person I talked to asked me about Toastmasters. No joke, every single person who saw my resume asked about my Toastmasters membership... I can't say for certain that Toastmasters will get you hired but it sure is an excellent conversation starter."

“No joke, *every single person* who saw my resume asked about my Toastmasters membership”

Networking is all about the exchange of ideas and information, and making connections over common goals or interests. If you are able to offer something of interest to others (such as information about Toastmasters!), you’ll likely stand out from the competition.

Built-In Support System

After just two and a half months of job searching, Rose landed an ideal opportunity. She is now the Sales & Marketing Manager at ResCare Home Care, and is staying busy with her new responsibilities.

She credits part of her success to the support and help she received from friends and fellow Toastmasters Adrian Pyk and Mark Hendrickx.

Between proofreading application materials and practicing interview questions, Priscilla found that having a support system during the job search process kept her focused and on-track.

Being a member of Toastmasters allows you to meet and interact with people outside your usual circles. This diverse pool of backgrounds and experiences is a great resource for all professionals, job-seekers and otherwise.

[A PERSONAL REFLECTION]

Toastmasters has allowed me to break out of my shell, take more risks and make some great friends in the process.

My original reason for joining Toastmasters was to polish my presentation skills so I could present without my voice quivering and gluing my eyes to my notes. I had been invited by a consulting company to present at a breakout session of a Human Resource Management Association conference. I’d never spoken on that scale before and realized that I needed to get ready.

New friends from Toastmasters gave me feedback on my presentation one night at my apartment. I ordered in dinner and they shared my strengths and growth opportunities. It seemed like a fair exchange!

On the day of the presentation, though I was still nervous, the butterflies in my stomach were more or less “flying in formation” as they say in Toastmasters.

In 2003 I lost my job as a Training Manager at a bank and all of a sudden was ‘in transition’. My experience in Toastmasters made it easier to pick up the phone and call people to ask for informational interviews. This ultimately led to several stints as a training consultant. The role of Evaluator in meetings also helped me give other job seekers feedback in a way that was supportive and still direct.

Last spring I began exploring employee wellness, an area that combines my background in training and development and my interest in fitness and nutrition. I heard about an internship opportunity and got an informational interview with the Director of Wellness Strategies for a senior living not-for-profit in Evanston. As we talked in his office, I noticed several hula hoops on the back of his office door. I asked him if he used them to stay fit. He suggested I try one out. It was a classic Table-Topic moment. I didn’t hesitate and grabbed one. Instead of putting it around my waist, I did a Walk the Dog move by rolling it along the carpet and flicked my wrist before letting it go so it came back to me.

Ultimately, I got a chance to interview for the internship and landed the opportunity. While the hula hoop challenge may not have clinched it for me, it definitely helped break the ice!

Thanks Toastmasters of Lincoln Park!!

-Meg Mattsson
CTM (now CC)

[MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS]

LISA DORIN invites members of Toastmasters of Lincoln Park for an insider's tour of the Art Institute's newly built Modern Wing. Help Lisa practice her public speaking skills, and visit the museum for free with a small group. (An \$18 Value!)

MARK HENDRICKX is performing in the improv show *"The Best of Times in the Worst of Times"* at Second City's Donny's

Skybox. Catch him each Saturday at midnight from December 19-January 16.

SCOTT MOCHINSKI is on the air on WIIT's radio show *"What the *Bleep* Are You Talkin' About?."* He encourages members to tune in from 10pm-midnight every Monday night on 88.9FM.

KATHY PRAMPIN will replace Kit Thurman as the *Vice President of Education*. Kathy

accepted her nomination after Kit announced his move to Kentucky. Welcome aboard Kathy!

PRISCILLA ROSE is now the Sales & Marketing Manager at **ResCare HomeCare**.

If you would like to submit an announcement for the next issue, contact Inga Evenchik via e-mail at ingaevenchik@gmail.com



[INFORMATION & RESOURCES]

Toastmasters of Lincoln Park meets every 1st, 3rd, and 5th Thursday of the month from 6:30 - 8:00pm.

Meetings take place at the Illinois Masonic Medical Center, T. Howard Clark Auditorium (7th Floor, Main Entrance on Wellington) 836 W Wellington, Chicago, IL 60657.

Guests are always welcome!

Toastmaster of Lincoln Park:
www.toastmasterslp.com

District 30
ww.toastofchicago.org

Toastmasters International
ww.toastmasters.org