# https://www.toastmasters.org/resources/logos-images-and-templates/~/media/10037354E6394C5FA1557D42DF33B482.ashx**PREPARE YOUR CLUB FOR GROWTH**

Do your members look forward to your next Toastmasters meeting? Are most of your guests joining your club? If your answer to either question is “no,” it’s time to find out why. Every club gains a new member now and then. But do those members stay? If not, why not? If new members generally don’t stay with a club, the club is not meeting their needs. For sustained membership growth, make your club worth belonging to! Start by evaluating your club using the Moments of Truth analysis on the following pages. After the inventory is compiled, you have a benchmark – a starting point for club improvements in every factor needed to sustain growth.

**THE MOMENTS OF TRUTH**

A Moment of Truth is a brief window of time in which a critical objective must be achieved. An example of the first moment of truth experienced by a prospective Toastmaster is when he or she walks into the club’s meeting room for the first time. Is the prospective member greeted warmly and introduced to the members of the club and made to feel at home? If the answer is yes, then your club was successful during this particular moment of truth!

The Moments of Truth evaluation is an objective look at club operations and programs to determine how these can be improved for obtaining and retaining members. Experience has shown that clubs that maintain a high standard of excellence in their club programming, operation, management, member participation, and community activities have a large membership.

Watch for areas that need your immediate attention. Improve activities you are already doing. Take prompt action on activities needing improvement. The club president should assign responsibilities to the appropriate member or committee. It requires a coordinated effort of each officer and member to prepare your club for growth.

**MOMENTS OF TRUTH**

Answer each question as a “YES” or “NO” answer. Use your first reaction when you read the question. If you hesitate or your club “sometimes” does this, then mark it as a “NO.”

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| **First Impressions:** | | |
| YES | NO |  |
|  |  | 1. Are guests greeted warmly and introduced to officers and members? |
|  |  | 1. Does your club keep a guest book and provide visitors with name tags? |
|  |  | 1. Is the room arranged professionally? |
|  |  | 1. Do the arrangements meet the speakers’ needs? |
|  |  | 1. Are the guests invited to introduce themselves to the group? |
|  |  | 1. Are guests invited to join? |

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| **New Member Orientation:** | | |
| YES | NO |  |
|  |  | 1. Does your club hold a formal induction, including presentation of a membership pin and manuals? |
|  |  | 1. Does your club assign a mentor for each new member? |
|  |  | 1. Are education programs and the recognition system discussed with the new member? |
|  |  | 1. Are the new member’s needs assessed? |
|  |  | 1. Are speaking roles assigned? |
|  |  | 1. Is the new member given the opportunity to get involved in all aspects of the club’s activities? |

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| **Fellowship, Variety, and Communication:** | | |
| YES | NO |  |
|  |  | 1. Are guests greeted warmly and made to feel welcome? |
|  |  | 1. Are enjoyable and educational meetings planned? |
|  |  | 1. Does your club have regularly scheduled social events? |
|  |  | 1. Do your members participate in area, division, district, and international events? |
|  |  | 1. Are inter-club events encouraged and planned? |
|  |  | 1. Is your club’s newsletter issued on a regular basis and your website kept updated? |

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| **Program Planning and Meeting Organization:** | | |
| YES | NO |  |
|  |  | 1. Are the meeting program and agenda publicized in advance? |
|  |  | 1. Do members know program responsibilities? Are they prepared to carry out all assignments? |
|  |  | 1. Are all projects based on the Toastmasters manuals? |
|  |  | 1. Do meetings begin and end on time? |
|  |  | 1. Are Table Topics creative and entertaining? |
|  |  | 1. Are evaluations given in a positive and helpful way? |
|  |  | 1. Are members working toward their communication and leadership and Pathways awards? |

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| **Membership Strength:** | | |
| YES | NO |  |
|  |  | 1. Does your club have 20 or more members? |
|  |  | 1. Are current members retained? |
|  |  | 1. Is your club promoted in the community or within its organization? |
|  |  | 1. Are club meetings varied and exciting? |
|  |  | 1. Are new members’ sponsors recognized? |
|  |  | 1. Does your club hold a regular membership-building program? |

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| **Recognizing Accomplishments:** | | |
| YES | NO |  |
|  |  | 1. Are award applications immediately submitted to World Headquarters? |
|  |  | 1. Is a progress chart displayed and maintained? |
|  |  | 1. Are member achievements formally recognized with ceremony? |
|  |  | 1. Are club, district, and international leaders recognized? |
|  |  | 1. Are club and member achievements publicized? |
|  |  | 1. Is the Distinguished Club Program used for planning and recognition? |

Analyze the results of your evaluation and plan to improve any problem area. The *Moments of Truth (Item 290)* is available from World Headquarters. This contains visual aids and handouts for all members. You can also download the materials for free at [www.toastmasters.org/mot](http://www.toastmasters.org/mot).

SUGGESTION FROM KRIS POOL: have all club members (and any guests in attendance) answer the questions in Moments of Truth. Break the group into six small groups and have each one focus on one of the six areas of MOT. Brainstorm ideas on any of the questions within that area that were marked as “NO” with as many ideas as possible to help resolve that issue. Give a time of 5 minutes, then ask each group to move and answer another set of questions. Continue this until all six groups have an opportunity to brainstorm ideas in each of the six areas of MOT. Once this is done, bring the group together and discuss ideas that could be easily implemented into your club program. For other ideas that may require planning and coordination, prioritize what your club wants to concentrate on. Set SMART goals for this year and mark others for the future. Include these goals in your Club Success Plan and review progress throughout the year.

**TOASTMASTERS CLUB SWOT ANALYSIS Club: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

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| *Examples:* | **STRENGTHS: Internal attributes that are helpful**  **1** | **WEAKNESSES: Internal attributes that are harmful**  **1** | *Examples:* |
| *Volunteering spirit* | **2** | **2** | *Lack of experience* |
| *Dedication of officers* | **3** | **3** | *Apathy among members* |
| *Talents of members* | **4** | **4** | *Bad meeting location* |
| *Financial health* | **5** | **5** | *Lack of support* |
| *Membership level* | **6** | **6** | *Low educational achievement* |
| *Meeting location* | **7** | **7** | *Low financial reserves* |
| *Achievement level* | **8** | **8** | *No district support* |
| *Experience level* | **9** | **9** | *Unengaged officers* |
| *Area Director relationship* | **10** | **10** |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| *Examples:* | **OPPORTUNITIES: External possibilities of enhancement**  **1** | **THREATS: External elements that can harm club**  **1** | *Examples:* |
| *Recruitment sources* | **2** | **2** | *Low population* |
| *Increased retention* | **3** | **3** | *Discouraged members* |
| *Club quality enhancement* | **4** | **4** | *Low speaking opportunities* |
| *Speaking opportunities* | **5** | **5** | *No free meeting location* |
| *Achievement increases* | **6** | **6** | *Low resources* |
| *Marketing opportunities* | **7** | **7** | *Proximity to other clubs* |
|  | **8** | **8** | *Officer burn out* |
|  | **9** | **9** | *Unorthodox meetings* |
|  | **10** | **10** | *No structure in meetings* |

**If you have a question… ASK**

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| **Strengths**—capitalize on and leverage these!  **Weaknesses**—Improve and shore these up!  **Opportunities**—Capitalize by investing in these!  **Threats**—Seek and destroy! (or at least minimize) | Strengths – Opportunities = Pursue opportunities that fit your club’s strengths  Weakness – Opportunities = Overcome weaknesses that block the club from opportunities  Strengths – Threats = use club strengths to overcome external threats  Weakness – Threats = Define a plan to prevent weaknesses from making club vulnerable to threats |

**This is a beginning point – use this to create a membership growth plan then execute it throughout the year**