

# Corporate Toastmasters Clubs: Membership Strategies with a Return on Investment

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Toastmasters District 35  
Club Support Seminar

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# Why am I here?



- Toastmaster in corporate clubs since 2015
  - **ROK the Talk**, Mequon (president; past VP PR, treasurer, secretary)
  - **Intel Innovators**, San Jose, CA (online)
  - CC, CL earned; SR1 waiting for VPE signoff
- Area director in 2021-2022
  - 4 out of 5 clubs were company-based
- A few interests beyond Toastmasters...



# What is a corporate club?

- District 35 website definition:  
“... hosted at a company or place of business. Sometimes these are open clubs, and sometimes they are closed to the public. Corporate clubs have many different aspects and environments that can change from club to club. Some corporate clubs are very structured, and focused on a theme, while others are more relaxed and similar to community clubs.”
- **Flexibility** in membership and approach
- Take advantage – but make sure it still feels like Toastmasters!



# Company-based clubs have pluses and minuses

- Existing community of co-workers
- Work creates topics and shared context
- Company support (rooms, time, equipment, maybe funding)
- Pleasant break in the workday
- Reach ends at the office door
- Work stuff takes priority, or becomes the main topic
- People are too busy during the day
- ...or worn out afterwards
- Company politics can rear its head

# Direct publicity: You have a captive audience!

- Posters, mailing lists, meeting invites, personal touch
- Your co-workers are interested in **developing their careers**:
  - Presentation skill seminars
  - Intern readouts
  - Mock interviewing
  - Executive meet and greet



# Indirect publicity: Use the company's machinery to your club's advantage

- High-level sponsor – moral or financial support
- Employee resource groups
- HR newsletters/announcement boards
- **Celebrate** Toastmasters and professional victories publicly!
- Personal development goal setting
- Toastmasters in official bios
- Every presentation counts, both ways



# In the meeting...

- Everybody's a Toastmaster: set aside titles, reputations, office/field/factory
- Bring in members' unique career experiences, and point out how Toastmasters activities and evaluations help people in their careers
- Consider meeting times in relation to work schedules and time zones
- Limit active politicking, but probably still allow:
  - Poking **gentle fun** at work situations
  - Dry runs of presentations advocating a decision
- Consider **club culture**: mold around company's, or make it a breath of fresh air
- Guests are still key; encourage and follow up!



# Pivot: Do you need to be fully closed?

- You might need to be closed if company secrets are discussed
- Would new blood, new topics, new approaches from TM or outside be helpful?
- Check logistics of getting to meetings, in person and online
- Handle publicity **inside and outside** company? VP PR time, resources, IT security...
- Other events might prompt a decision:
  - **Toastmasters in Control** – company split into two
    - Became full community club – anyone can join
  - **ROK the Talk** – active member left the company
    - Now open to current and former workers
  - **Rockwell Automation A-B** – community club, Keith has a story!
  - **Charter Chatter** and **Finest in Speech** – COVID victims
    - Offered support, suggested new clubs for interested members





# Big take-aways

- It's still Toastmasters, but your club and your company can put your own spin on it
- You have the same publicity and recruitment tools and challenges as any other club
- ...plus more! **Use what works** in your company, cater to career development, and stay welcoming for all
- Closed, open, somewhere in between: you have options and can adjust



**Thank you!**

**Questions, comments, thoughts to share...**

