

How the New Leadership Manual Fits Your Club

Toastmasters International is making some exciting changes to its educational program (see “TI Introduces New Leadership Manual and Award,” November 2005). Among other improvements, a new manual on leadership will be introduced. The 10-project *Competent Leadership* manual (Catalog # 265) will help members develop leadership skills while serving in various club meeting roles. Beginning in January 2006, everyone joining your club will receive the manual in the New Member Kit. Current members may purchase the manual for \$6 (U.S.) plus any applicable taxes and shipping.

The new manual strengthens the leadership training available in Toastmasters, giving members the opportunity to learn and practice leadership skills in a structured program, in the same way they learn speaking skills in the Communication and Leadership Program manual. The *Competent Leadership* manual also adds a new component to your club and its meetings. Now your club will have members working in both the leadership and speech manuals. The following tips will help your club to integrate the leadership manual into its meetings and culture:

▪ **Purchase a manual for display during meetings.** Devote time during several meetings to talk about the manual and encourage members to complete it. Make sure the vice president education is familiar with it, too, so he or she can talk about it with new members.

▪ **Discuss evaluations.** Members working in the communication rack receive a verbal evaluation during the meeting for each speech project they present. Members completing projects in the leadership manual serve as timer, ah counter, evaluator and in

other meeting roles, and they may receive a written and verbal evaluation for each role. If many club members are working in the leadership manual, providing so many verbal evaluations during a club meeting will require much more time. If your club meets for only an hour or so, adding verbal evaluations for those serving in meeting roles may be difficult. Your club should discuss the matter now and make a decision. Possible options are to:

- a) provide verbal evaluations for leadership projects during meetings,
- b) provide verbal evaluations privately outside of the club meeting,
- c) provide only written evaluations for leadership projects
- d) provide verbal evaluations during meetings for both speech and leadership projects, but allow less time for each evaluation.

Whatever the club decides, you should make it known to those joining your club.

▪ **Educate mentors.** Your club should assign every new member a mentor. A mentor is an experienced member who helps the new member prepare the first few speech assignments. A mentor's role includes helping new members with the first few projects in the *Competent Leadership* manual. Make sure mentors are familiar with the manual and willing to assist members with its various projects.

▪ **Track progress.** World Headquarters will produce charts and forms that clubs and members can use to monitor progress in the manual. When members complete all 10 projects in the manual, they may apply for the Competent Leader award. They'll



receive a certificate and World Headquarters will send a letter to their employer about their accomplishment. Beginning in July 2006, this award will be incorporated into the 2006-07 Distinguished Club Program, so your club will receive credit toward goals number five and six when members achieve the award.

▪ **Include the manual in your “sales pitch.”** When guests visit your club, most likely you emphasize how Toastmasters can help them improve their presentation skills. You may even show them the *Communication and Leadership Program* manual and discuss some of the projects in it. But many people are interested in improving their leadership skills as well. Explain that communication and leadership go hand in hand and promote the leadership training offered through Toastmasters. Show new members the *Competent Leadership* manual and explain how it will help them learn such valuable leadership skills as listening, critical thinking, planning, implementing and team building. You also can promote the manual in your community or company, emphasizing the leadership training available from your club.

The new *Competent Leadership* manual is a great opportunity for your club's members and a new marketing tool for your club. Make the most of it! **T**