

DRAFT

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WELCOME!

"The destination determines the direction."

Ralph C Smedley – Founder of Toastmasters International

Dear Member,

Congratulations on your exciting decision to launch a Toastmasters club. It is thanks to people such as yourself; that our organisation more than doubled in size over the last ten years in the United Kingdom. By launching a new Toastmasters club you are displaying true leadership and will learn a lot about yourself and your own areas for development as a leader.

Your new club will be helping countless others learn valuable skills that will benefit them in their lives. Thanks to the club you are launching, someone might gain a newfound confidence, conquer their inner demons and discover that they too can become a confident speaker and an inspiring leader.

Launching a new club is a challenge but this guide has been put together to help you in every step of the way. Please read it thoroughly, make notes as needed, ask yourself questions and go back over it at your own leisure. A number of associated tools and files are available to help you alongside this guide. Remember that launching a new club and eventually chartering it are only the initial steps in the life-cycle of a Toastmasters club. These initial steps must involve laying strong foundations for continuous success and club excellence. New challenges and opportunities will present themselves once your club is chartered. This guide will cover these as well, to enable you to grow your club further and build a tradition of continuous success and excellence.

While we strove to make this guide as comprehensive as possible, **please remember that nothing in this guide supersedes common sense!**

Good luck with your new club!

Yours Sincerely,

Florian Bay DTM

District 91 (UK South) Club Growth Director

Tazud Miah & Fahad Alturkait

District 91 (UK South) Club Extension Chairs

Why another manual?

Why write another manual when there are already countless Toastmasters manuals on almost everything?

A manual called *How to Build a Toastmasters Club* indeed already exists. However, during discussions with leaders that recently started clubs in the United Kingdom, Australia and several European countries. The overall consensus was that while this manual provides some solid advice and good starting points. It was nevertheless not sufficient for the task ahead and lacked detailed guidance on each of the steps involved in launching a new club.

Analysis of previous experience in starting new clubs, or in helping new clubs also uncovered several points where further detailed guidance was warranted:

1. **Decisions made at the very beginning of the launch new club will define its long-term future**, either as a successful club or as struggling club.
2. Building a successful club is a process and requires a process oriented approach to the task at hand.
3. Several distinct phases exist in the "life-cycle" of a club and each require a different approach to meet the distinct challenges arising.
4. Financial aspects of starting a new club including basic financial management and accounting.
5. Best practices for marketing, public relations and membership growth.
6. Organising quality demonstration meetings and regular pre-charter club meetings that can inspire both guests and members.

It is hoped that this manual will become a living document and a repository of World's best practice on how to launch successful clubs. Its main objective is to empower founders in the United Kingdom and elsewhere. To start successful clubs even if their previous Toastmasters experience is limited.

How to Use

It is recommended that you familiarise yourself with the contents of this manual thoroughly. Start by reading the chapters that are the most relevant to you. Each chapter is designed to be self-contained, through all will be following the same key principles outlined in the next section.

Do consider reading or scanning the manual cover to cover, making notes and marking pages as you go. This will provide you with valuable insights and a better feel for the bigger picture and the requirements of starting a new club.

Community Clubs & Corporate Clubs

This manual is applicable to both in-house **corporate clubs** hosted by a company or organisation and to **community clubs** open to all. These terms will be **accentuated** whenever they are used in this document.

Some sections of the various chapters have been written to specifically cater for one type of club in the light of their differing requirements.

SUCCESSFUL CLUB 'LIFE CYCLE'

"Continuity gives us roots; change gives us branches, letting us stretch and grow and reach new heights."

Pauline R. Kezer – American educator

A strong Toastmasters club must sit on strong foundations, just like a building or a house. An essential part of the club building process is to build these strong foundations.

Neglecting these foundations could plant the seeds of future challenges affecting the club. Indeed, starting a successful club is a journey with many steps along the way. The core concepts outlined in this chapter can guide you on every step of this journey that could last up to 2 years.

Key tenets of building a successful club

Scalability

A Toastmasters club needs at least 20 members in order to become chartered (a concept we will explore in a later chapter). However, **highly successful clubs typically have anything between 30 to 40 members. This is a membership level you should aim to reach right from the beginning.** Your club meetings, operations and leadership; must therefore be ready and prepared to lead a club of this size from Day 1. *"Start small but aim big"* is a nice way to summarise this concept.

One way to embody it will be "variable geometry meetings" which will be explained in detail in the **Pre-Charter Clubs** chapter.

Vision & Mission

Every Toastmasters club is unique in its own ways, and has a clearly defined club culture and so will any new club in due course. A good way to decide this culture right from the start, is to **think about what the vision of the club will be** and what mission statement will it adopt in order to fulfil its vision.

A possible vision for a new **community club**, could be to be at the heart of the community it represents. Its mission could consequently include building links with other local bodies and organisations, and inviting their members to meetings.

The vision of a new **corporate club**, could be for it to generate an internal talent pool, where future company managers and leaders will be drawn from. Its mission may include reaching out to graduate trainees and to have a special emphasis on leadership in club meetings. This club could even make it its mission to embrace the leadership opportunities Toastmasters offers at District level, or programmes such as *High Performance Leadership* or educational Pathways focused on leadership.

A club with a strong and compelling founding vision, will be more attractive to guests, visitors and achieve higher membership retention. It will consequently **stand out in the wider Toastmasters community both through its vision and through its achievements.**

Systematisation

Running a Toastmasters club can be time consuming and daunting at times. It need not be so, if clubs equip themselves with the right tools to do so, and use said tools right from day one!

A number of tools and systems will be explored in the later chapters of this manual, adopting them will even be one or several actions or “to-dos” for your leaders club as it is set-up. The purpose of these systems and tools. Is to assist club leaders in making better decisions with the minimum amount of time and effort.

Systems also have the advantage of being **easy to pass on from one generation of club leaders to another.**

Consistency

Consistency of offering and consistency of quality, is why some organisations and corporation become household names nationwide and worldwide. These principles can be use by any Toastmasters club to develop, enshrine and maintain a reputation as a continuously successful club.

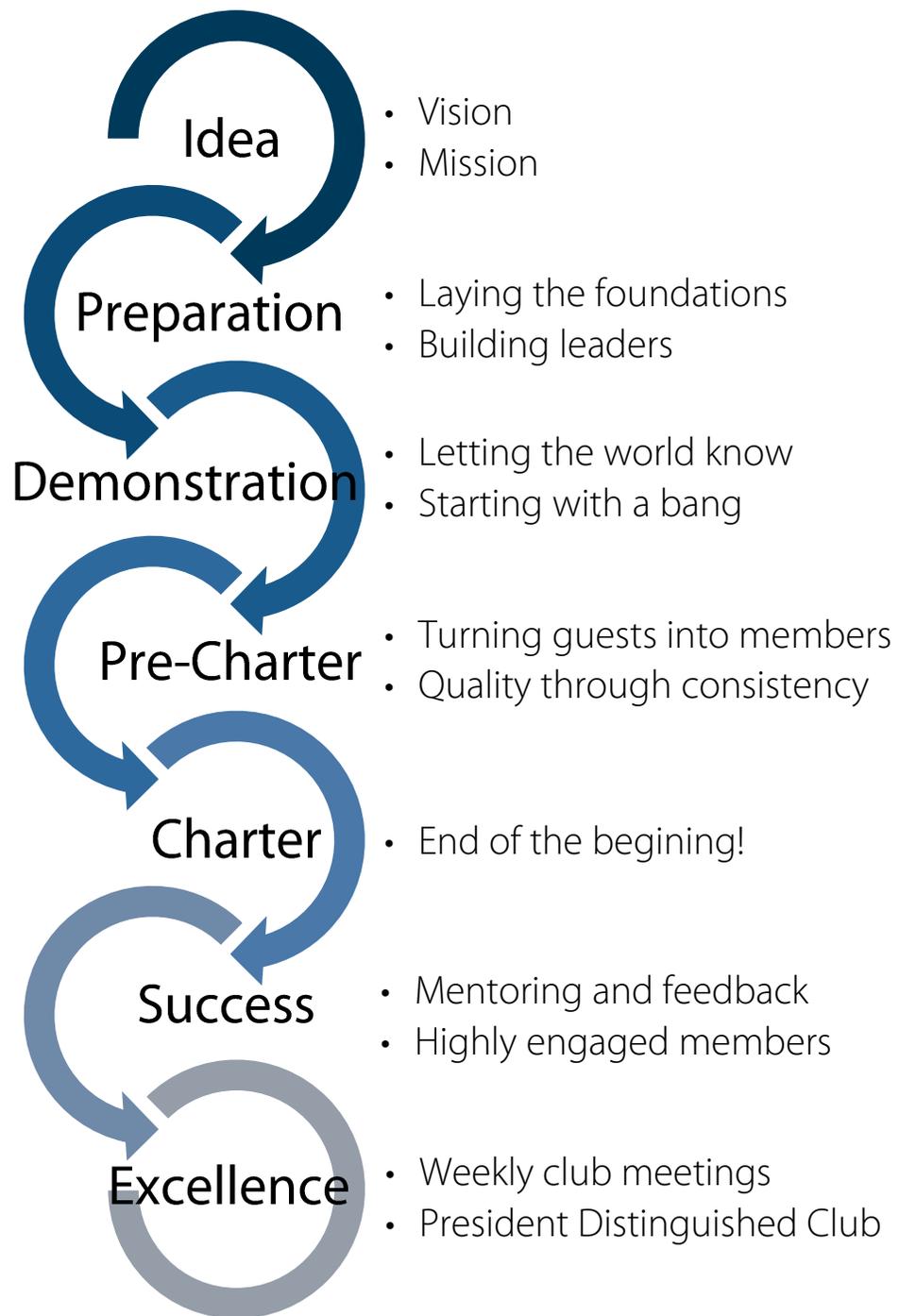
Club leaders must strive to provide marketing updates about the club activities to the wider world at frequent and regular intervals. Club members should always be encouraged to thoroughly prepare for their roles. Meetings must always start and finish on time. Every club member must speak at least once during a meeting.

Always strive to repeat and improve what works wells and make seeking and receiving feedback a part of the club’s culture.

Successful Club ‘Life Cycle’



New Club Timeline



PREPARATION FOR SUCCESS

“Before anything else, preparation is the key to success.”

Alexander Graham Bell – Inventor of telephone

This chapter will outline the essential steps you need to complete before you organise the first meeting of a new Toastmasters club. **Some if not most of these steps can be completed concurrently.**

Step 0: Learn How Toastmasters Work

This step is only relevant if you are looking to start a new **corporate club** and if you have no Toastmasters experience whatsoever. It also applies if you are not yet a member, but aspire to launch a new **community club** in an area that currently doesn't host a club.

Plenty of clubs already exists in our District all over London and Southern Britain. The vast majority of them welcome guests and will be especially interested to learn about your plans and ideas. Ask plenty of questions before and after the meeting, take some notes and open your eyes and ears.

It will be very helpful if you visit clubs perhaps once a week in this initial phase. The information you'll gather and the observations you'll make; will be transferable to the club you are about to launch!

Step 1: Assemble a Leadership Team & Secure Support

Starting a new Toastmasters club is a big task, but one that becomes **far more manageable if tackled as team**. The minimum number of committee members a club officially needs to be chartered is three. These are a Club President, a Vice-President and a Secretary.

In the beginning stages of a new club, it is to be expected that some committee members will be doubling up and doing more than one role. **The initial starting committee of a club should be as large as possible** and ideally have all seven committee roles filled in (For Descriptions of roles and responsibilities please refer to the *Club Leadership Handbook*). Nevertheless, starting with an initial “shock team” of three to five people is possible along these lines:

- ▶ **Club President** – Must be willing to “step-up” as needed, have a strategic mind, good people skills and always remind others of the club's vision.
- ▶ **Vice-President of Education** – Must be very organised, structured and detailed. Knowledge of the Toastmasters Educational Programme is beneficial but not essential. Having a network of contacts within the wider Toastmasters community is desirable, but it can also be developed later (see below).
- ▶ **Vice-President Membership** – Someone personable and possibly with a sales background, is an ideal candidate for the role as converting guests into members will be crucial.
- ▶ **Vice-President Public Relations** – Marketing and PR are even more important for a new club. A vast online infrastructure will need to be established from scratch. This should ideally be done by a dedicated person but the task can be shared between the initial three founders at first.

- ▶ **Secretary** – Essential role as keeper of club documentation and records. Will need to physically sign the Club’s Constitution. Can be performed by another committee member – **except for President** – initially.
- ▶ **Treasurer** – Performed by President initially. Using the finance tools explained in a later chapter will remove most of the time consuming aspects of the role.
- ▶ **Sergeant at Arms** – Performed by all committee and club members at the beginning as a meeting role.

Free training for all committee members can be arranged via the District. However, being a self-starter will immensely help in the case of new clubs. The *Club Leadership Handbook* provides basic guidance on all officer roles. Further guidance is also available as hyperlinks in Appendix B of this manual.

CORPORATE CLUBS: An additional “to do” here will be to secure support for the club, from internal stakeholders, ideally senior managers and executives within the business. These internal stakeholders may include but are not limited to:

- ▶ Training & Development
- ▶ Human Resources
- ▶ Function Directors
- ▶ Equality & Diversity team
- ▶ Graduate scheme organisers
- ▶ Internal networks
- ▶ Senior leaders and executives
- ▶ Anyone within the business that does a lot of external speaking and presenting.

Step 2: Define the Club’s Vision and Mission

An inspiring Club Vision and its associated Club Mission will be an anchor that current and future club leaders can use to steer the club both now in the future.

Developing a compelling club vision begins with imagining and visualising the end-game for the club. **A successful vision has to be both broad and detailed at the same time.** By way of example, the vision of making a new community club “The best one in London” involves defining what best means. It might mean consistently high quality meetings, high membership retention, strong engagement from members and organising events in addition to regular meetings.

The club’s mission will fundamentally be to fulfil the club’s vision. It will therefore be action oriented and provide specific principles along which the club will operate to be successful for many years to come.

What you are in effect doing in this crucial step is a form of ‘**backwards planning**’ since very specific objectives, milestones and goals; will likely result from this exercise. All of these will be directly relevant to your club and the task at hand.

This concept is derived from Toastmasters’ *High Performance Leadership* manual. Launching a new Toastmasters club can actually be an excellent *High Performance Leadership* project.

Step 3: Identify a Venue

Every new club needs a venue that will both be a focal point for its members and for marketing aimed towards guests and visitors. Beating the pavement while looking for a venue, might very well form part of this step. Potential venues for **community clubs** include:

- ▶ **Pubs** – They may provide a free room with the understanding that members attending will buy drinks/food. Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays tend to be days with better availability.
- ▶ **Hotels** – Typically have high quality meeting rooms available for hire. On site staff ready to help is an asset and will project a more professional image. Can be expensive though.
- ▶ **Churches** – Usually have halls and rooms available for hire. Quality will vary but a good place to start.
- ▶ **Community Halls** – Often based in libraries or buildings owned by local authorities. Contacting your local councillor or alderman might help in securing these.
- ▶ **Parks & Gardens** – A definite option mid-May to mid-October if club meeting time, dates and the notoriously unpredictable British weather make it possible.

Never hesitate to ask for help when looking for a venue, owners of meeting places more often than not, know each other to an extent so ask them for help or advice. **Continuity in venue availability is key to the sustainability of the club.**

While there is no perfect venue for a **community club**, an ideal meeting venue will meet most of the below criteria:

- ▶ FREE or very cheap (less than £50/meeting) – **This is very important** (see Finances chapter).
- ▶ Seating capacity of 20 to 40 people.
- ▶ Clean and airy space.
- ▶ Possibility of storing club equipment.
- ▶ Guaranteed availability when the club meets.

CORPORATE CLUBS: The meeting venue will usually be provided by the company hosting the club. However, do ensure that you can consistently access meeting rooms at the same time and on the same days each fortnight or each week depending on your chosen meeting frequency.

Step 4: Decide Meeting Time and Days

A **Toastmasters club must meet a minimum of 12 times a year**. Most clubs typically meet at the same time on the same day of the week, either every fortnight or every week. Common Meeting timeslots are, in the morning from 7h onwards, lunchtime meetings around 12h lasting 1h and most commonly evening meetings beginning anytime from 18h30 to 20h.

COMMUNITY CLUBS: Check when neighbouring clubs are meeting. If the closest club meets every 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of the month, meet on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays instead or on another day of the week altogether. **Clusters of clubs, meeting at the same time and on the same day; in the same geographic area should be avoided!**

CORPORATE CLUBS: Decide your meeting time and days based on when you perceive people will be more likely to attend meetings. **Operational experience from existing corporate clubs, suggest that varying meeting times can be a good idea.** Consider therefore alternating between evening and lunchtime meetings or between morning and lunchtime meetings. Consider providing refreshments.

Step 5: Establish Management Tools

Successful clubs have in common their use of efficient management tools and of **online document folders shared between all committee members** to ensure transparency and efficient collaboration. Both Dropbox and Google Drive are recommended for the task. Choose the system most committee members are familiar with and which they can access from the devices they most often use.

The club's Dropbox or Google Drive folders will typically cover the following areas:

- ▶ **Chartership Forms** – Folder where all the filled and signed forms needed to charter the club will be stored pending chartering (see **Chartering chapter**).
- ▶ **Contests** – All materials for running a contest should be stored here alongside all documents on internal best practices to organise a successful contest. A List of past contest winners could be maintained here as well.
- ▶ **Finances** – Current and past yearly club budgets and electronic copies of all bank statements, receipts of expenses and invoices made by or to the club will be stored and archived here.
- ▶ **Photographs** – Past photographs of meeting and any professional quality photographs that can be used for marketing materials etc.
- ▶ **Meeting Minutes** – Minutes and agendas of past committee meetings, Annual General Meetings and Extraordinary General Meetings.
- ▶ **Membership** – Lists of members, copies of filled in membership forms and any internal processes regarding guest to member conversion will be stored here.
- ▶ **Public Relations & Marketing** – Will cover club marketing materials, files for logos, images commonly used, copies of official Toastmasters flyers and a copy of the official Toastmasters brand manual & guidelines.

In addition to a file sharing system, create a **WhatsApp group for the committee** as well. This will greatly facilitate discussion and decision making.

Other admin tools include creating a **club e-mail address** and a **planning document** with key tasks and responsibilities clearly outlined for the months ahead.

Blank versions of tried and test club admin tools are provided in Appendix B of this manual.

Step 6: Form 1: Application to Organise a Toastmasters Club

Now that the core decisions regarding the club and admin foundations have been laid, you should fill-in the basic details of this form.

You do not need to send in the \$125 payment for the charter kit at this stage, nor do you need to add details of the club sponsors, mentors or sponsoring clubs yet. All of this information can be amended or added later.

It is nevertheless **strongly recommended to have the club charter kit ready by the time of the demonstration meeting**.

The completed form should be e-mailed to newclubs@toastmasters.org. Once this is done they will tell you what the club number is.

Step 7: Add Club to easy-Speak & Learn the System



Without the right tools, organising club meetings and tracking the educational progress of club members. Can easily become one of the most time-consuming aspects of running a club. **Using easy-Speak effectively will make this considerably easier**, by putting club members in control of their Toastmasters journey. **You should complete this step as soon as you receive your club number from Toastmasters World HQ.** This system is completely free of charge and updated regularly.

Registering a club on easy-Speak can be done at the address below and clicking “send e-mail”:

https://toastmasterclub.org/register_club.php

You can ask for your meeting agenda templates to come from another club.

London Victorians (04138266) – Large range of agenda templates suitable for an evening club.

Connected Speakers London (03025177) – Agenda templates for a lunch-time **Corporate Club.**

Early Birds Speakers (00835375) – Plenty of templates suitable for a morning club.

Once the club is set-up on easy-Speak, it is imperative that every founding committee member become familiar with all aspects of the system. **Especially the Vice-President Education.** Extensive online training resources are available here:

<https://www.smore.com/uqeyd-easy-speak-help-desk>

An online-course with a sandbox version of the system is also available (Click ‘Login as a guest’ and the password is easyspeak):

<https://toastmasterstraining.moodlecloud.com/login/index.php>

Becoming thoroughly familiar with easy-Speak will come with experience, but it is strongly recommended to **spend between 2h to 3h using these training resources to gain a basic understanding of the system.**

The benefits easy-Speak can provide to any club are immense:

- ▶ **Attendance tracking**
- ▶ **Educational progress tracking** for all members
- ▶ **Networking** with fellow community and corporate clubs by exchanging speakers
- ▶ **Possibility of setting goals** to each members
- ▶ **Information at one’s fingertips** & reduced committee workload

CORPORATE CLUBS: Most successful corporate clubs use easy-Speak as well. You may have to request permission from your internal IT department to use the system and get everything cleared. **The only data needed from each club member will be their e-mail address, these are stored securely** and are unavailable to access to anyone apart from club committee members.

Step 8: Open Club Bank Account and Draw Club Budget

NOTE: Extensive information on club finances and on how to establish an initial club budget is available in the **Finances chapter**. **A key initial decision to make, will be how much to charge for membership each month.** The tools explained in this later chapter will help you make this decision easily.

While it is very likely that in the beginning of a new club set-up process, individual members may purchase a club charter kit or do similar purchases from their own funds. Copies of all receipts should be kept with a view of refunding these expenses after the club has chartered.

A club bank account should be opened as soon as practicable and we recommend using MetroBank, Barclays Bank or HSBC for UK based clubs. Each bank will require different documents in order to open an account, but typical requirements are:

- ▶ Two named signatories on the account.
- ▶ Proof of identify and proof of address for each signatory.
- ▶ Copy of the signed Club Constitution (Form 6A).
- ▶ Copy of the signed minutes of initial committee meeting with reference to decision to open a bank account, names of signatories on the account and signing arrangements.
- ▶ Information on how money will be collected from members and how it will be spent.

The timescales for opening an account vary, it can take as little as 24h with MetroBank but can take up to a fortnight with other banks requiring an appointment with a business adviser.

Online banking access is a must to run a club efficiently and so is having a club debit card for payments.

CORPORATE CLUBS: This step may or may not apply in your case. It could be that all club related transactions will be done via internal cost codes or internal credit cards. Or alternatively, you may have to open a bank account and run your finances in the same way as a community club would.

Funding arrangements for an in-house corporate club can take three main forms:

- ▶ **All membership fees are paid by the company** & additional funds for club expenses are provided on a per-capita basis or once a year.
- ▶ **Employees' paid their own fees into a club bank account.** They then claim these back via the expenses process.
- ▶ **Employees' fees are refunded via expenses after completing educational milestones** in the Toastmasters programme, attending X number of meetings, or doing X number of speeches or meeting roles.

Step 9: Establish marketing presence

It is an imperative to market your new club as much as possible and to reach out as far and wide as you can. Templates for posters and flyers can be obtained from www.toastmasters.org. It is also possible to design fliers or posters as well, **by using the Toastmasters brand guidelines**.

All marketing should be "you" focused, heavily emphasise the benefits that a new member will gain by joining Toastmasters and **provide essential info to anyone wishing to attend a meeting**. Less is more in the early stages so go straight to the essentials in your club marketing.

Most club marketing takes place and is based online for **Community Clubs** but things can be very different for **Corporate Clubs**.

COMMUNITY CLUBS

- ▶ **Create a website** – The earlier the club has a website up and running the better. Use the website to promote your initial and future meetings via a calendar feature.
- ▶ **Put yourself on Google Maps** – This is a crucial step as it'll literally put your club on the map. A Google 'My Business' page will need to be created and Google will send a physical code to the meeting venue to verify the club's address.
- ▶ **Create a Meetup.com page** – This social network is a good way to generate interest in a club on an ongoing basis. An organiser subscription is \$14.99/month. **Since each organiser can have three groups, you may be able to use another club's organiser account.**
- ▶ **Create a Facebook page** – Useful addition and can be linked to the website. Typical updates will be links, pictures or videos.
- ▶ **Local media** – Build an ongoing relationship with local media outlets.
- ▶ **Using existing clubs and networks** – These can be local gyms, choirs, religious groups and any other group that you can think of.
- ▶ **Leafletting** – Nothing prevents you from putting leaflets in letterboxes in a neighbourhood. However, this method is very labour intensive.

CORPORATE CLUBS

- ▶ **Avoid using "club"** – Do **NOT** describe Toastmasters as a club but rather as "skills development platform" or a "leadership development programme". **Match your language to the one used internally by the company** and emphasise the professional and corporate benefits Toastmasters will bring to the company.
- ▶ **Link with Learning & Development** – Build as many bridges with internal Learning & Development or Training department as they might be able to do a lot of marketing on the club's behalf.
- ▶ **Reach out to HR** – Ensuring buy-in from Human Resources or Training departments is a good way to build up momentum for the club and its benefits.
- ▶ **Secure endorsement from senior management** – Invite them to club meetings and if they are Toastmasters alumni, ask for a testimonial from them.
- ▶ **Create an Intranet page** – May not always be possible in every company but worth doing.
- ▶ **Use internal publication and newsletters** – This may require permissions, but is a good way of reaching out to a large number of people quickly.
- ▶ **Use internal networks** – Women networks, ethnic minority networks, and LGBTI networks may exist in your company.
- ▶ **Hold meetings in an open space** – Will increase the chance of people walking by and stopping to investigate.
- ▶ **Use posters and hand out flyers** – The more the merrier if possible.

In all cases remember that **marketing a Toastmasters club is an ongoing process**. The earlier the process starts and the **more marketing channels are occupied earlier on**. The easier it'll be for your club to be successful.

Step 10: Network within the Toastmasters community

In the weeks preceding the demonstration meeting and following the constitution of the founding committee of the club. **Network as much as you can in all corners of the Toastmasters community.** Make as big as possible a list of people willing to help you to do the following:

- ▶ Become mentors for the club.
- ▶ Visit the club to do functionary roles (evaluator, toastmasters, general evaluator).
- ▶ Visit the club to do speeches including repeats of speeches done elsewhere.
- ▶ Offer their subject-matter specialist expertise or help (workshops, marketing etc.).

The Directors of the Areas and Divisions where your club will be assigned to, can assist you as well and building a strong relationship with them is advisable. Same for the District's Club Growth Director. The more prepared the club is ahead of launching, the more impressed they will be.

Step 11: Organise Demonstration Meeting

The demonstration (demo) meeting is when the new club will be officially launching and open to new members. Organising a successful demo meeting requires a lot of preparation, some of which is linked to previous steps and can be done concurrently to them. In order to **make maximum impact**, a specific method for organising high quality demo meetings is **outlined in a separate chapter**.

Step 12: Begin Planning Regular Club Meetings

By now, the club's Vice-President Education should be thoroughly familiar with **easy-Speak and use it to plan ahead regular meetings of the club after the initial demonstration meeting**. The first regular meeting of the club should be **timetabled to take place one to two weeks after the demonstration meeting**.

Because of the limited pool of members available to the club, it is recommended to follow a principle called "variable geometry meetings", which will be **detailed in the Pre-Charter Clubs chapter**. It can be summarised as follows:

- ▶ Removing less important meeting roles such as grammarian, ah-counter or harkmaster.
- ▶ Aiming to fill two or preferably three speaking slots only.
- ▶ Variety and creativity in designing meetings.
- ▶ Allowing more time for table topics and impromptu speaking.
- ▶ Optional table topics evaluation.
- ▶ Interactive evaluations to build-up members' speech evaluation skills.
- ▶ Frequent educational presentations.

Community Club Checklist

STEP	TASK	OWNER
1	Assemble founding committee (President, VPE, VPM, Secretary)	
1	Founding committee role familiarisation and training	
2	Define club vision	
2	Define club mission	
3	Venue identified and secured	
4	Decide meeting time and meeting day	
5	Club Dropbox or Google drive folders ready	
5	Basic club admin tools filled and ready for use	
6	Form 1: Application to Organise sent	
7	Club added to easy-Speak	
7	Committee members trained on how to use easy-Speak	
8	Club bank account application made	
8	Club bank account open, internet banking & debit card ready	
8	Monthly membership fees decided & club budget drawn	
9	Club website online	
9	Club Meetup.com page online	
9	Club location added to Google Maps	
9	Club Facebook page ready	
9	Club business cards and flyers ordered and available	
10	Meet and invite 10+ potential guest speakers and functionaries	
10	Contact established with Area/Division/Club Growth Directors	
11	Organise demonstration meeting (see later chapter)	
12	Schedule first 3 months' worth of club meetings	
12	Invite guest speakers and functionaries to fill first few meetings	
12	Prepare meeting roles guidelines for new members	

Corporate Club Checklist

STEP	TASK	OWNER
0	Attend a few Toastmasters meetings over a month	
1	Assemble founding committee (President, VPE, VPM, Secretary)	
1	Founding committee role familiarisation and training	
1	Secure support for new club from internal stakeholders	
2	Define club vision	
2	Define club mission	
3	Meeting room secured	
4	Decide meeting time and meeting day	
5	Club Dropbox or Google drive folders ready	
5	Basic club admin tools filled and ready for use	
6	Form 1: Application to Organise sent	
7	Club added to easy-Speak	
7	Committee members trained on how to use easy-Speak	
8	Founding arrangements for the club agreed internally	
9	Club Intranet page online	
9	Links established with HR	
9	Links established with internal communications	
9	Endorsement secured from senior management	
9	Club business cards and flyers ordered and available	
10	Meet and invite 10+ potential guest speakers and functionaries	
10	Contact established with Area/Division/Club Growth Directors	
11	Organise demonstration meeting (see later chapter)	
12	Schedule first 3 months' worth of club meetings	
12	Invite guest speakers and functionaries to fill first few meetings	
12	Prepare meeting roles guidelines for new members	

DEMONSTRATION MEETINGS

The world needs demonstration more than it needs teaching

Wallace D. Wattles – Author of 'The Science of Getting Rich'

The primary purpose of a demonstration (demo) meeting is to inspire all audience members present and to create enthusiasm that will lead to the successful formation of a new Toastmasters club.

Prior planning and preparation is essential if a demo meeting is to be successful. However, the main ingredient of a successful meeting is an audience that's highly engaged with the meeting itself, so that it sees the benefits of Toastmasters first-hand.

A typical demo meeting will last no more than 1h15 mins but meeting length will vary depending on whether the target club is a **corporate club** or a **community club**.

Meeting Planning

Logistics

"Amateurs talk about tactics, but professional study logistics" as the saying says. The first step in organising an amazing demo meeting is to arrange the basic logistics of the meeting. Exact arrangements will vary somewhat between **community** and **corporate clubs** but this step is essential for both.

Key things to plan for are:

- ▶ **Meeting date and time** – This step should be done 4 weeks beforehand. The exact time of the demo meeting should match the envisioned regular meeting time of your club if possible.
- ▶ **Meeting length** – A good demo meeting can be done in 1h but don't forget to plan extra time for networking and post-meeting debrief and questions. As a rule of thumb, add at least 15mins either side of the meeting itself for this.
- ▶ **Securing a venue** – A good meeting venue will seat between 30 and 50 people, offer provision for using audio-visual equipment and be of the highest possible standards of neatness and cleanliness.
- ▶ **Catering and refreshments** – This is optional but recommended if possible. Budget conservatively and remember that not providing enough drinks or nibbles can tarnish a positive first impression.

Marketing

It is an imperative to market a demonstration meeting as much as you possibly can and to reach out as far and wide as you can. Templates for posters and flyers can be ordered or obtained from www.toastmasters.org. You also have to the possibility of designing your own fliers or posters as well. Just remember to adhere to the Toastmasters brand guidelines.

All marketing should be "you" focused and heavily emphasise the benefits that a new member will gain by joining Toastmasters. Using second person "you" is also far more direct and catchier.

CORPORATE CLUBS

- ▶ **Avoid using “club”** – Do **NOT** describe Toastmasters as a club but rather as “skills development platform” or a “leadership development programme”. **Match your language to the one used internally by your/the company** and emphasise the professional and corporate benefits Toastmasters would bring to your/the company.
- ▶ **Invite executives and senior management** – Provide them with an opportunity to speak for a few minutes at the beginning of meeting (they may have other commitments shortly afterwards).
- ▶ **Use internal publication and newsletters** – This may require permissions but is a good way of reaching out to a large number of people quickly.
- ▶ **Reach out to HR** – Ensuring buy-in from Human Resources or Training departments is a good way to build up momentum for the club and its benefits.
- ▶ **Reach out to apprentices and graduates** – This may not be relevant to your organisation but if specific training schemes exists, use them to emphasise the benefits of learning public speaking skills early-on in one’s career.
- ▶ **Use internal networks** – Women networks, ethnic minority networks, and LGBTI networks may exist in your company.
- ▶ **Use posters and hand out flyers** – The more the merrier if possible.

COMMUNITY CLUBS

- ▶ **Create a website** – The earlier your club has a website up and running the better. Use the website to promote your initial and future meetings via a calendar feature.
- ▶ **Local media** – Contact local media as early as you can and invite a journalist to your demo meeting.
- ▶ **Invite your local MP and Councillors** – While there’s no guarantee that they will be able to attend. **Local politicians have lots of contacts** and starting a relationship with them may be highly beneficial.
- ▶ **Use Meetup.com** – This social network is a good way to generate interest in your new club on an ongoing basis.
- ▶ **Use community noticeboards** – These are typically present all over the place from churches, to supermarkets, to post offices and pubs.
- ▶ **Using existing clubs and networks** – These can be local gyms, choirs, religious groups and any other group that you can think of.
- ▶ **Leafleting** – Nothing prevents you from putting leaflets in letterboxes in a neighbourhood. However, this method is very labour intensive.

Speakers & Functionaries

While a demo meeting is in some respects very similar to a normal club meeting, less functionaries are required and some roles may be omitted altogether. You can reach out to your Area Director, Division Director or Club Growth Director to help you there.

- ▶ **Introducer** – This person will be opening the meeting and will also introduce Toastmasters to the audience. An experienced Toastmaster should fulfil this role, the more senior the person the better.

- ▶ **Toastmaster of the meeting** – An experienced Toastmaster should facilitate the meeting to keep it as smooth as possible.
- ▶ **Timekeeper** – This can be done by anyone as long as the person is briefed beforehand.
- ▶ **Speaker** – Secure a good speaker that's either close to complete their Competent Communicator manual or Pathways Level 2 or is already an advanced speaker.
- ▶ **Evaluator** – The more experienced the evaluator the better!
- ▶ **Table Topics Master** – The Table Topics session will follow very specific rules (see below) and an experienced Toastmaster should conduct it.
- ▶ **Sergeant at Arms (multiple)** – Anyone can help here but ensure that all of them are appropriately brief beforehand.
- ▶ **Reserve Functionary** – Must be able to set-in and do any of the above roles at short notice if needed.

Note: 2 speakers and 2 evaluators can be scheduled if time allows. It is recommended to allow at least 20 mins for table topics in all circumstances.

A General Evaluator can also be scheduled if time permits to highlight the evaluation aspects of Toastmasters. Ditto for a Table Topics Evaluator.

Scheduling a Grammarian, Ah-Counter or Harkmaster in a demo meeting is not recommended but trust and follow your intuition here.

During the Meeting

District 91 uses a version of the demo meeting method pioneered by Rick Furbush in the United States and successfully used to start 100s of new clubs in 3 years. Proper briefing of all speakers and functionaries is essential for this method to be used effectively.

Sergeants at Arms

A team of Sergeant at Arms should set-up the room at least 15 mins before the meeting is due to start and pay particular attention to the following aspects:

- ▶ **Agendas on each chair**
- ▶ **Joining instructions and forms on each chair**
- ▶ **Introductory leaflets on each chair if available**

Someone should stand at the door to greet guests as they arrive to the meeting and take their names and details as well. As the guests come into the meeting **ask all of them to fill in on a piece of card:** "Something about yourself that is very interesting, adventurous or that you are proud of. That few people know about."

Collect all cards before the meeting starts, these will be used later in the Table Topics session.

Interactive Evaluation

This meeting segment will immediately follow a prepared speech. Its purpose is to "prime" the audience to the concept of evaluating speeches and to make them feel that they too can evaluate a speech. The interactivity also enables the audience to get more involved in the demo meeting, ahead of the table topics session. Before the speech, the Toastmaster of the meeting will very briefly

introduce the concept of evaluating speeches and ask the audience to listen. He/she should remind the audience that we will be asking their opinions on what they liked about the speech and suggestions for improvement to make it a better speech.

After the speech is delivered, the speech evaluator will lead an interactive evaluation of the speech. By putting forward suggestions for commendations, and recommendations from the audience to the speaker. The evaluator should emphasise the value of what audience members felt, saw or heard that they liked or which could have been done differently. If you are the evaluator, don't hesitate to coax the audience by asking leading questions such as "This speech had a 3 parts structure, why was it so effective?"

Table Topics Session

This is where the card that each guest filled in earlier comes into play. **Introduce the table topics session as a game that everyone in the room will be playing** and briefly explain the concept of table topics and impromptu speaking.

The Table Topics Master should then pull out a card at random and read it out loud to everyone present. **Once the card is read you should pause for a moment** to let the audience guess who it might be. Then say: "Will the person who wrote the card please stand up". Once the person that wrote the card stands up, just say "Please tell us about this".

This approach is guaranteed to **drive up audience participation** and avoids having unfamiliar participants speaking on a topic they know nothing about. After all, we all know how to speak about ourselves and this method harnesses this to maximum effect. It is also quite likely that participants may have told this story before to friends and acquaintances. Thus making them even more familiar with the material and confident to talk about it to an audience.

Run as many Table Topics as time allows, ideally a dozen or even more if time permits; so that as many people as possible get a chance to take part and speak.

This "card game" can be run alongside classical table topics questions as well. If so **make the questions as easy as possible to answer**, or use a technique such as the "bag of tricks" where someone has to talk about an object they've pulled out of a bag.

Meeting Close

By the time the demo meeting is organised, financial arrangements for the new club should be clear if it's a **corporate club**. For a **community club**, the fees structure should already have been decided as well.

When closing the demo meeting 3 keys points must be emphasised:

- ▶ **Being a charter member of a club is a big deal** – A club only has a limited number of charter members and the charter members of a club, will always be remembered as those who made it possible to start the club. Emphasise that for this time only, the usual limitation of 20 charter members has been lifted, if audience members take fast action.
- ▶ **There is more to Toastmasters than just public speaking** – Briefly highlight leadership opportunities and that Toastmastering a meeting is a big deal as it involve leading a 10+ persons team.

► **The next meeting is taking place on ...** – This is crucial to **maintain momentum** and engagement from anyone present. While this does require some organisation beforehand it's a crucial step that mustn't be ignored. **A demo meeting is merely the start of a new club's journey.**

Post-meeting

Follow-up

Contact all attendees to the demo meeting the day after the demo meeting, thank them for attending and remind them to the procedure to follow if they wish to become member. Additionally, **highlight the date and location of the first club meeting and that speaking opportunities will be available in it.**

Mentoring

Arrange for your club mentors and your Area Director to get in touch with the committee of the new club; to provide assistance and training as needed. You may also find it highly beneficial, to **arrange for experienced speakers and evaluators to be invited to future meetings.** This will maintain momentum and train the new members of your club.

Organising an evaluation workshop or educational, might also be very beneficial in this regard.

Sample Demonstration Meeting Agenda

17:00	Introduction: What is Toastmasters?	Florian Bay	03:00	04:00	05:00
17:07	Toastmaster of the Meeting	Jill Segal	02:00	02:30	03:00
17:10	Timekeeper	Andy O'Sullivan	01:00	01:30	02:00
17:12	Speech: Once upon a December <i>Competent Communicator – 7 – Research Your Topic</i>	Joe Bloggs	05:00	06:00	07:00
17:20	Interactive Evaluation	Terry Pullin	06:00	08:00	10:00
17:30	Table Topics Master 10 - 12 Table Topics Speakers	Yvonne O'Garro	02:00 01:00	02:30 01:15	03:00 01:30
17:49	Timekeeper report	Andy O'Sullivan			01:00
17:50	Questions and Answers Session	All	06:00	08:00	10:00
18:00	Meeting Close & Networking				

Corporate Clubs Checklist

TASK	DEADLINE	DONE
LOGISTICS		
Arrange meeting date and time	T - 6 Weeks	
Secure meeting venue	T - 4 Weeks	
Organise catering provision	T - 2 Weeks	
MARKETING		
Invite Executive/Managing Director/Senior Managers	T - 6 Weeks	
Contact HR & Training Dept	T - 6 Weeks	
Prepare flyers and posters	T - 4 Weeks	
Contact internal networks	T - 4 Weeks	
Promote via internal newsletters & intranet	T - 3 Weeks	
Hand out flyers	T - 2 Weeks	
Send reminders and follow-ups to contacts	T - 1 Week	
Invite team members and colleagues	T - 1 Week	
ORGANISATION		
Get in touch with Area/Division/Club Growth Director	T - 6 Weeks	
Secure speaker & functionaries	T - 4 Weeks	
Begin organisation of initial post demo club meetings	T - 2 Weeks	
Brief visiting Toastmasters on travel and security arrangements	T - 1 Week	
Brief and train Sergeant at Arms	T - 3/5 Days	
Final agenda ready	T - 3 Days	
Agenda printed	T - 1 Day	
Membership forms ready and printed	T - 1 Day	
Cards ready	T - 1 Day	
Room ready	T - 1 Hour	
Visiting Toastmasters start arriving	T - 30 Mins	
POST-MEETING		
Follow-up with guests	T + 1 Day	
Send thank you notes as needed	T + 1 Day	
Collate membership forms	T + 2 Days	
Prepare chartership paperwork	T + 3 Days	

Community Clubs Checklist

TASK	DEADLINE	DONE
LOGISTICS		
Arrange meeting date and time	T - 6 Weeks	
Secure meeting venue	T - 4 Weeks	
Organise catering provision	T - 2 Weeks	
MARKETING		
Club website online	T - 6 Weeks	
Facebook page online	T - 6 Weeks	
Invite local politicians to meeting	T - 6 Weeks	
Identify local websites and community publications	T - 5 Weeks	
Club is on Google Maps & Google +	T - 4 Weeks	
Metup.com page online	T - 4 Weeks	
Contact local media	T - 4 Weeks	
Request list of members living locally from Club Growth Director	T - 4 Weeks	
Contact local organisations & clubs	T - 3 Weeks	
Begin to publicise on local websites and noticeboards	T - 3 Weeks	
Design and order marketing materials	T - 2 Weeks	
Invite members of neighbouring clubs to attend	T - 2 Weeks	
Send reminders and follow-ups to contacts	T - 1 Week	
Invite team members and colleagues	T - 1 Week	
ORGANISATION		
Get in touch with Area/Division/Club Growth Director	T - 6 Weeks	
Secure speaker & functionaries	T - 4 Weeks	
Begin organisation of initial post demo club meetings	T - 2 Weeks	
Brief visiting Toastmasters on travel and security arrangements	T - 1 Week	
Brief and train Sergeant at Arms	T - 3/5 Days	
Final agenda ready	T - 3 Days	
Agenda printed	T - 1 Day	
Membership forms ready and printed	T - 1 Day	
Cards ready	T - 1 Day	
Room ready	T - 1 Hour	
Visiting Toastmasters start arriving	T - 30 Mins	
POST-MEETING		
Follow-up with guests	T + 1 Day	
Send thank you notes as needed	T + 1 Day	
Collate membership forms	T + 2 Days	
Prepare chartership paperwork	T + 3 Days	

PRE-CHARTER CLUBS

"The best preparation for tomorrow is doing your best today."

H. Jackson Brown, Jr. – Author of 'Life's Little Instruction Book'

The Pre-Charter Clubs covered in this chapter, are clubs where an initial demonstration meeting took place, but whose **membership is still below charter strength (20 members of which 17 must be new to Toastmasters or not be members of another club)**.

This pre-charter phase will most commonly apply to new **community clubs** but can also affect **corporate clubs** as well. Club leaders should aim for this phase to last for no more than six months. A longer time period could lead to a loss of momentum for the club.

Club Marketing

By this time, the club should have most if not all of its marketing channels online and updated regularly. Think of a club website, Facebook page, Meetup.com page or leaflet as a shop windows. **First impressions matter immensely**. Out of date information, no recent updates, poor layout, spelling and grammar can put potential guests off visiting the club.

Marketing channels

Core marketing channels

1. **Club Website** – Information on meeting times, dates and location should be immediately visible on the website front page. Compatibility with mobile devices is a must!
2. **Meetup.com page** – All relevant information should be clearly visible. Interacting with group members as they join and sign-up to attend meetings is highly recommended.
3. **Google Maps** – Very important for search engine optimisation and Google search rankings. Focal point for reviews from guests and members.
4. **Word of mouth & referrals** – If guests feel welcome, join and become members they'll definitely talk about the club in their social circles. A punctual 'bring a friend to a meeting' initiative can also boost guest attendance.
5. **Facebook page** – Useful for adding pictures, videos and short blog posts. Building a large number of page likes will take time. Carefully targeted adverts can be attempted, although they can become very expensive very fast.

Secondary marketing channels

6. **Local media** – Will require contacts but can be very powerful if done well and if linked to special events etc.
7. **Business cards** – Useful to hand-out to people when talking about the club. Will be very cheap if purchased on a large scale e.g. 1,000 for ~£25.
8. **Leaflets** – Professional printing is incredibly cheap when done on a large scale, 1000s of flyers can easily be ordered for less than £50.

9. **Twitter page** – # Hashatgs # should be used whenever possible to encompass both local terms and terms like #leadership, #publicspeaking etc. Automation of updates is possible. Nice to have but not essential.
10. **Partnerships** – Partnering with other groups so that they refer potential members to the club might be effective as long as the relevant relationships are built beforehand.

All of the core marketing channels must be occupied if possible. Secondary marketing channels save for perhaps business cards, are better left for a later phase of the club expansion. However, if time and circumstances permits they should be occupied as well.

Note: District 91 has access to ready-made customisable templates for business cards and flyers through our partnership with Helloprint.

Marketing Top Tips

Bear these in mind at all times when marketing the club and occupying a marketing channel.

- ▶ **Visitors on a webpage are just two-clicks away from leaving it!** – Make sure that essential information on meeting logistics, key benefits of joining, what happens in a meeting etc. Is clearly visible!
- ▶ **Focus on “YOU” i.e. the visitors** – Visitors wants to know what to expect from a club meeting and if they can visit as guests free of charge. They are also interested in what they will gain in terms of skills, experience and benefits by becoming members.
- ▶ **Less is more!** – The temptation to tell the history of Toastmasters in detail and everything else in between can be great. Make sure that essential information on meeting dates, times, locations and what visitors will gain by becoming members is clear. **Everything else is secondary** and shouldn't require any more than 400 words in a separate “About Us” section.
- ▶ **Pre-charter what's that?** – NEVER use any terms like “pre-charter” or “chartering” in any of the club's marketing documents or channels. This is essentially jargon, will confuse people and can devalue the club as well.
- ▶ **New is good** – Positively frame the fact that the club is new and that potential members will have the chance to be part of something new and exciting!
- ▶ **Update regularly** – Once a week at minimum. Blog posts on the website reporting on previous meetings can add to its value. Any blog content on public speaking and leadership is good. **Pictures and videos are always great additions** to a blog post, Facebook update, Twitter update or to past Meetup.com meetings.
- ▶ **Follow the brand guidelines** – Extremely high quality documents can be produced by following the official Toastmasters brand guidelines. Documents using non-standard fonts, clip-arts and inconsistent colours may project an unprofessional image and devalue the wider Toastmasters brand.
- ▶ **Automate updates!** – Various apps and plugins can be utilised to automatically update a Facebook, Google + or Twitter account when a blog post is created on a website. Some plugins also exists to “cycle” through pre-defined Twitter or Facebook updates.

Marketing effectiveness

The effectiveness of club marketing operations can be measured via some metrics. It will however always be difficult to explain why 10 guests suddenly turned-up to a meeting; when the previous meeting only saw 2 guests attending. **As a rule of thumb**, some times of the year like New Year,

autumn and spring tend to be more favourable for meeting attendance. While on the other hand meeting attendance is lower in summer and winter.

Three main measurements metrics are available:

- ▶ **Asking guests 'How did you found us?'** – Consider designing a standard guest card that each guest will fill-in with information on how they found or heard about the club. Measure the responses over time.
- ▶ **Website visits statistics** – The more unique visits per day the merrier; 10+ is a good number.
- ▶ **Facebook & Twitter statistics** – The more the merrier; 50+ views for a Facebook post is good.
- ▶ **Meetup.com activity** – How many members are in the group and how active are they?

Membership Building

Converting guests and visitors into members is a journey that already began when they first learnt about the club. This journey can be broken down into distinct steps, each of which the club's, its members and the committee have significant control over.

1. Decision to visit
2. Welcome in the club
3. Quality of the meeting
4. Club Atmosphere
5. Guest Introduction
6. Table Topics
7. Post meeting socialisation
8. Follow-up

Do not under-estimate the importance of warmly welcoming guests in the meeting. The ideal configuration is to have one or two members standing at the door, welcoming the guests as they arrive and asking them to provide some contact details. **Introduce guests to fellow club members and ensure that guests sit next to a member** if possible. This way, all of their questions will be answered and the meeting format can be explained to them live. Serious consideration should also be given to **creating a welcome pack or a guest booklet aimed at guests.**

The guest introduction segment conducted by the Sergeant at Arms **should avoid complicated or awkward introduction questions** at all costs. Stay on familiar ground by asking about favourite foods etc. Alternatively, ask them to describe the meeting in one word.

Guests can and should take part in table topics if they wish to and there is space available for them. As for the guest introduction segment, **complicated questions or subjects should be avoided.** This could intimidate guests by giving them the wrong impression. Especially if they are very nervous about public speaking or if English isn't their first language.

After the meeting finishes, **the club President should stand by the door thanking guests**, for coming to the meeting and inviting them to any post meeting socialisation with the members. Use this opportunity to receive feedback from the guests and to ask them if they would like to consider joining the club.

It is essential to follow-up with any guests a couple of days after the meeting. A short e-mail thanking them for joining and inviting them to the next meeting is fine. Tailor the e-mail to each guest

if possible, mention any interests or goals they may have said to the Sergeant at Arms, President or VP-Membership. Guests that have expressed a willingness to join should be contacted with a different e-mail containing all the joining instructions in an easy to understand format. **Every new member will need to sign a membership form** as well, but these can be prepared in advance by a committee member and handed to the member to sign at the next meeting.

After reception of a new members payment. **Send a welcome e-mail** to the club containing their easy-Speak username, a copy of the Icebreaker project, the easy-Speak manual and cc the VP-Education to begin this member's educational journey.

Note: The 'Club Membership List' spreadsheet will allow you to keep a record of guests attending, calculate your guest to member conversion rate and know your retention rate at each renewal period.

Club Leadership

Shortly after the first regular club meetings are held, **the club committee should be formalised to occupy all 7 club officer roles**. As mentioned in a previous chapter, training can be arranged by the District to train the new club committee. The Club Leadership Handbook also provides useful guidance.

In the early stages of a new club it is normal that not every committee member will initially know what's expected of them. Some officers may be self-starters and hit the ground running, but others may not!

It is the role of the Club President to ensure that every officer is aware of what's expected of them.

Consideration should be given early on to create a VP-Mentoring role very early on to develop an internal club mentoring programme. This role can be done by an existing committee member at first, but will likely develop into a fully-fledged role later on.

Note: It is important to perceive the club committee as a leadership team rather than as a committee. The fundamental purpose of the committee is to **drive the club forward by taking actions and implementing decisions**. **AVOID** at all costs delaying complicated decisions or endlessly discussing the pros and cons of an option.

It is not recommended to have one person doing multiple club officer roles on a long-term basis. However, this may work for **corporate clubs** under the right circumstances. If so, ensure that the club committee is at least made-up of 5 members, any fewer and the workload may become too significant for some of them.

Organising high-quality Meetings

A common challenge for pre-charter clubs is running meetings with a limited number of members. This is where scalability through variable geometry meetings, will be very handy by varying meeting format and length according to the number of members attending.

The initial meetings of a new club with few members might look like the agenda on the next page.

AGENDA

17:00	President's Introduction	Florian Bay	03:00	04:00	05:00
17:05	Toastmaster of the Meeting	Jill Segal	02:00	02:30	03:00
17:03	Timekeeper	Andy O'Sullivan	01:00	01:30	02:00
17:10	Speech: The story of my life <i>Competent Communicator – 7 – Icebreaker</i>	Jane Doe	04:00	05:00	06:00
17:17	Speech: Once upon a December <i>Competent Communicator – 2 – Organise Your Speech</i>	Martin Lynch	05:00	06:00	07:00
17:25	Timekeeper report	Andy O'Sullivan	00:30	00:45	01:00
17:26	Evaluation of Jane's speech	Olga Francis	02:00	02:30	03:00
17:30	Evaluation of Martin's speech	Terry Pullin	02:00	02:30	03:00
17:34	Timekeeper report	Andy O'Sullivan	00:30	00:45	01:00
17:35	Guest Introduction	Steve Mossop	03:00	04:00	05:00
17:40	BREAK				15:00
17:55	Table Topics Master	Yvonne O'Garro	02:00	02:30	03:00
	10 - 12 Table Topics Speakers	Each speaker	01:00	01:30	02:00
18:24	Timekeeper report	Andy O'Sullivan	01:00	01:30	02:00
18:25	General Evaluation	Catherine Gamester	03:00	04:00	05:00
18:30	Awards & Closing Remarks	Florian Bay	03:00	04:00	05:00

This pared down agenda allows a full meeting to be organised with only 11 speakers and functionaries. The extra time allotted for table topics still allows for plenty of speaking by members and guests.

If the general evaluator comes from another club and the President and Sergeant at Arms each take a role in addition to their officers' responsibilities. Then **a full meeting can be run with just 8 members.**

Doubling-up roles should be avoided if possible but if unavoidable, the Table Topics Master can double up as an Evaluator or a Speaker can double-up as Timekeeper. **The Toastmaster should only do another role as a last resort.**

Speech evaluations can be turned into 10mins interactive evaluations by opening them up to the floor after the Evaluator has delivered his/her evaluation. This allows everyone present to take part in the meeting and additionally fosters awareness and build-up of speech evaluation skills.

As the club grows and new members gain experience, the following agenda changes can be made in stages:

1. Including the Grammarian role.
2. Scheduling 3 speeches and 3 evaluations.
3. Adding a Table Topics Evaluator.
4. Scheduling 4 speeches and 4 evaluations.
5. Adding the Harkmaster role.

The same rules and principles of meeting organisation used in existing clubs apply in new clubs in order to ensure high-quality meetings:

- ▶ **Every meeting is a demo meeting** – Reproduce the energy and atmosphere of the initial demo meeting in every meeting. Quality, organisation and energy always yield powerful dividends!
- ▶ **Start and finish on time** – Never underestimate the importance of timekeeping.
- ▶ **Prepare the room in advance** – Someone should be ready at the venue up to 30mins before the scheduled start time.
- ▶ **Agendas on each chair** – Both members and guests can then follow what's going on.
- ▶ **Ensure functionaries are well prepared** – Each functionary should know what will be expected of them during the meeting and be as prepared as they can for their roles. Extensive guidance on meeting roles is provided in the member guide and in the videos linked in Appendix B of this manual.
- ▶ **Use themed meetings** – A really strong and time relevant theme can add a lot of spice to a meeting as well as extra consistency.

Maintaining & Regaining Momentum

If a pre-charter club does everything well, market itself consistently and regularly and has high quality high-energy meetings. **Chartering a club in a few months is eminently possible.** Losing momentum and falling into a circle of doubt can happen in a club stays pre-charter for long.

Consistency in routines, procedures and standards will help to maintain high momentum for the club. This will also allow the committee members responsible for them, to do them more efficiently as they gain experience in their roles and tasks.

Avoid falling into the trap that the club is somehow different from other Toastmasters clubs out there because of its "pre-charter" status. **It isn't any different from a well-established club; bar the fact that club members are not yet officially members of Toastmasters International.**

Regaining lost momentum can be challenging if apathy takes over, but several ways to regain lost momentum exist and can be used if needed:

- ▶ **Holding another formal demo meeting** – Finding functionaries for it will be easier than the first time round and marketing systems will already be in place. Make this meeting as energetic as possible.
- ▶ **Varying meeting format** – It could be via holding a workshop, a table topics night or even a speeches and evaluation only evening (this is called a speakathon) with members of other clubs attending and speaking.

- ▶ **Varying meeting times & dates** – Experiment with this carefully, but worth doing if there's feedback from guests and members about inconvenience etc.
- ▶ **Changing venue** – If a better and cheaper or similarly priced venue can be found then why not try this?
- ▶ **Ask for feedback** – Solicit feedback amongst committee members on what went well and what didn't go so well, as an agenda point in a committee meeting. Request similar feedback from current members and from guests to identify any areas for improvement as a club.
- ▶ **Occupy more marketing channels** – If the club limited itself to only some of the channels identified earlier, now is to time to start a marketing blitz on other channels as well.

CHARTERING

"We can lick gravity, but sometimes the paperwork is overwhelming."

Wernher von Braun – German American rocket scientist

In order to successfully charter a new Toastmasters club. No less than 7 forms must be sent to Toastmasters International New Clubs team. Mistakes in filling these will delay the club's charter by weeks and possibly even months. This chapter will cover each form in turn and how these should be filled.

In order to charter a club you need a minimum of 20 members of which 17 must be new to Toastmasters or not be members of another club at the time of charter.

Form 1: Application to Organise a Toastmasters Club

One of the easiest forms to fill-in. Amended versions can be sent as many as time as needed to the New Clubs team right up to the moment the club charters.

Tick "yes" to have your club's details listed on Toastmasters International "Find a Club" page.

It is not necessary to pay the \$125 charter fee immediately after completing the form. Nevertheless, paying it early will give early access to a charter kit containing:

- ▶ 20 copies of the Competent Communicator & Competent Leader manuals
- ▶ 20 copies of the Toastmasters magazine
- ▶ 7 copies of the Club Leadership Handbook
- ▶ Timing cards
- ▶ 250 feedback slips
- ▶ Educational progress wall charts
- ▶ Gavel

Two Club Sponsors & Two Club Mentors

These members will assist the club before it is charters (Sponsors) or after it charters (Mentors). In practice, all will be involved in helping the club from its inception to the moment it becomes a Distinguished Club.

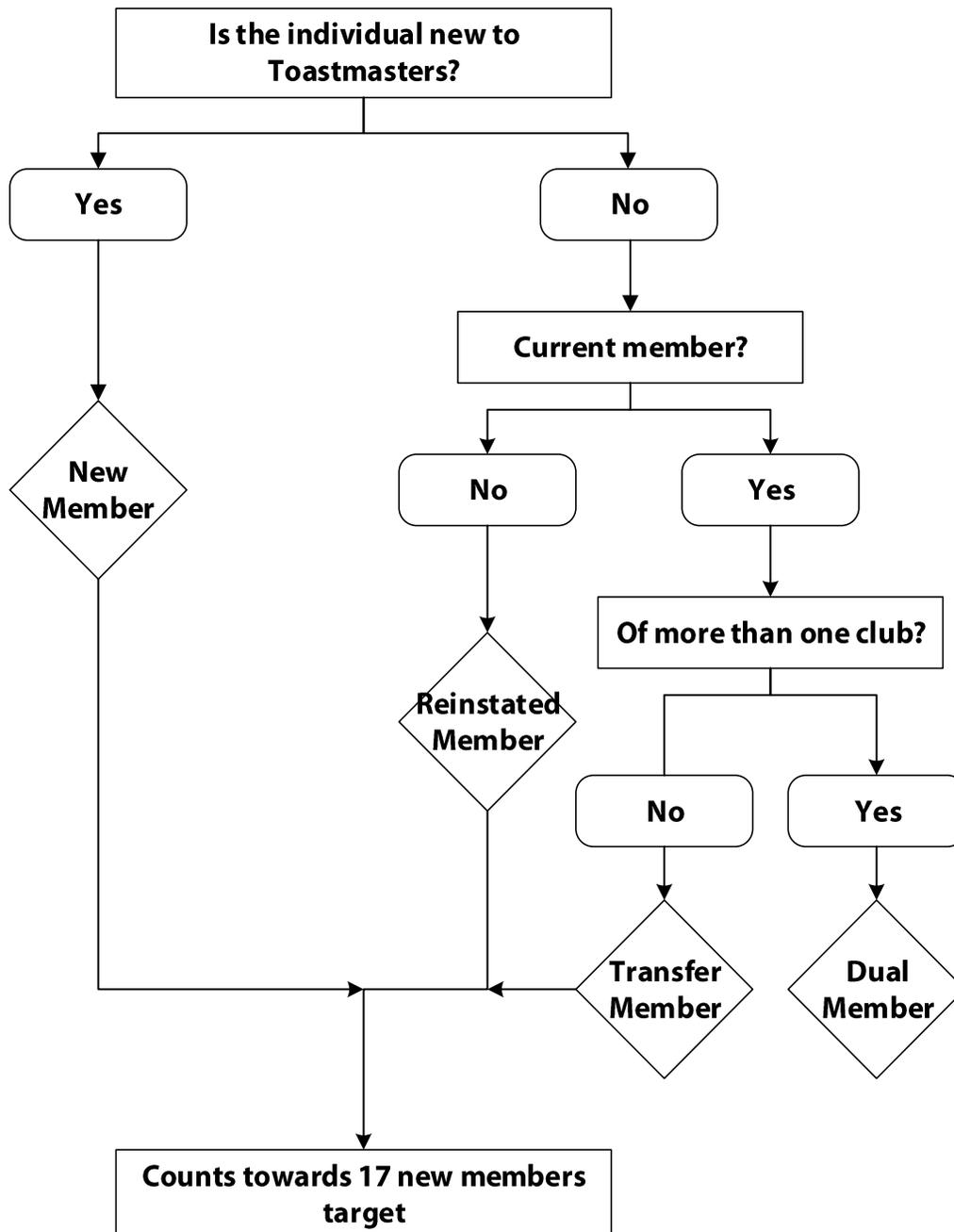
This section can be amended as many times as needed before the club charters. Each mentor and sponsor will be e-mailed a form, the club President will need to sign to certify their roles and involvement. They can send scan and e-mail or fax their completed form back to Toastmasters World HQ to gain the relevant credit for the Advanced Leader Silver award. Up to 90 days after the club chartered, the District Director or the Club Growth Director can also assign sponsors or mentors directly by contacting the New Clubs team.

The sponsoring clubs will be the clubs that will provide the most support to the new club before and after it charters. This could be financial support or sending members over to do speeches and roles.

Form 2: Charter Payments

This form must be hand-signed by the club President and Secretary.

The main challenge in this form is to ascertain the status of each charter member of the club. Use the flowchart below to guide you.



Transfer members will transfer their membership to the new club and leave their current club.

The new joiner fee of \$20 must be paid by all new members but is optional for all other members.

The numbers in the form will update automatically when numbers are typed. The club will most likely be in a District so the initial 6 months fee will be \$45 per member.

Renewals can be added onto the form now to bring all members in line with the two renewal cycles of 1st April to 30th September and 1st October to 31st March. The amount in \$ per member are shown in the table on the next page. Multiply these by the number of charter members.

	Months to pay	Amount
May or November	5	\$ 37,50
June or December	4	\$ 30,00
July or January	2	\$ 15,00
August or February	3	\$ 22,50
September or March	1	\$ 7,50

Form 3: Charter Member Application

These forms must be filled-in and sent to Toastmasters HQ **by each charter member joining the club** and completed copies should be archived by the club.

Use the flowchart in the previous page to ascertain the Membership type of each new joiner.

There is no need to complete the Toastmasters International Dues and Fees section and the Payment Information sections.

The Verification of Applicant and Verification of Club Officer sections **must be manually signed by the member joining the club and by a Club Officer.**

Highlight the Toastmaster’s Promise on the form and make sure that all new members joining are familiar with it.

Form 4: Charter Club Officer Information

Very straightforward to fill with the names, e-mails and membership numbers (leave blank for new members) of all officers. Can be sent to Toastmasters New Clubs team as soon as all club officers have been identified.

Form 5: Club Information

Fill this form with as much information as possible regarding the club. Club contact email and club website are especially important for your club to be listed in Toastmasters International website “Find a Club” listings.

CORPORATE CLUBS: Tick the relevant boxes about sponsoring organisation. Add the relevant information in the “Sponsoring Organisation Information” section. This information will help Toastmasters International in their corporate outreach efforts.

Form 6A: Club Constitution

Must be manually signed by both the Club President and Secretary. Everything else can be filled in electronically.

Form 6B: Addendum of Standard Club Options

2. Membership Composition: “No restrictions” if community club, corporate clubs should add something like “to (Company Name) employees”.

3. Put 0

4. Convert new joining fee in £ to \$ using 1.25 £ to \$ exchange rate.
5. Convert monthly membership fees in £ to \$ using 1.25 £ to \$ exchange rate. Such dues shall be payable in advance or on “the first of each month”.
6. Put 0
7. Put 0
8. Put US\$0 per person per month. Such dues shall be payable in advance or on “the first of each month”.
9. Add relevant pieces of information from Form 5
10. This is the frequency of committee meetings, bi-monthly is recommended.
11. Leave bank for now. Later after chartering the club extra information for roles like Vice-President Mentorship or Vice-President Events can be added via club central.
12. Tick relevant box
13. Robert’s Rules of Order apply in the United Kingdom and in Europe.

Finish by adding the date at which it was completed and hand over to the Club secretary to manually sign.

Recommended Order of Completion

All forms can be completed electronically, saved and then e-mailed to the New Clubs team at newclubs@toastmasters.org

1	Form 1: Application to Organise	Needed for charter kit & getting club number
2	Form 6A: Club Constitution	Important! Needed to open bank account
3	Form 5: Club Information	Marketing help via “Find a Club” search engine
4	Form 6B: Addendum of Standard Club Options	All relevant info should be available by now
5	Form 4: Club Officer Information	Send as soon as all officers named
6	Form 3: Charter Member Application	Send in one batch after reaching 20 members
7	Form 2: Charter Payments	Send alongside batch of Forms 3

FINANCES

“Rule No. 1: Never lose money. Rule No. 2: Never forget Rule No. 1.”

Warren Buffet – Self-made American investor

Sound financial management is essential to the well-being of any successful organisation. This applies to Toastmasters clubs too. While the financial management and accounting tasks needed to run a club successfully are not onerous. **They are somewhat more complex for new clubs**, as there are fewer members to cover the costs of ongoing expenses, and a reserve of money must be constituted to cover the costs of chartering the club.

Note: This chapter will make many references to various Excel spreadsheets used to perform various calculations. While examples will be provided in the text. ‘Playing’ and using these spreadsheets while reading this chapter will greatly facilitate understanding.

Links to the spreadsheets are available in Appendix B.

Key principles for strong club finances

These principles apply equally to both new and existing clubs.

1. Budget conservatively.
2. Know how many members the club needs to break-even.
3. Aim to have slightly more money than the club needs.
4. Don't do it “on the cheap”, aim for quality!
5. Create a club budget every year.
6. Use the tools provided to make decisions quickly and efficiently.

Club Expenses

Operational expenses:

- ▶ **Dues to Toastmasters International** – These are \$45 per member for 6 months or \$7.5 per member per month. The dues period are 1st April to 30th September and 1st October to 31st March. Dues are pro-rated on a monthly basis for new joiners.
- ▶ **New members' dues** – One off \$20 payment for each new member joining the club. Covers the costs of manuals and admin.
- ▶ **Venue hire** – These will significantly impact your costs each Toastmasters year and determine your overall membership dues charged to the members.
- ▶ **Marketing** – Website hosting charges, Meetup.com subscription and printing materials (flyers, guest booklets, business cards etc).
- ▶ **Consumables** – Stationery, award ribbons, feedback slips and other supplies from Toastmasters WHQ. Won't exceed £150 to £200 per year per club. Printing your own certificates is possible.

In addition to these regular operational expenses, **the club may purchase with the agreement of members**; extra items of equipment that qualify as capital expenditure and **should be inventoried**.

Capital expenses:

- ▶ **Banners** – The cost of the initial club banner will be refunded by the District. Additional ones could be used for e.g. the venue door or be custom made roll-up banners for advertising purposes.
- ▶ **Timing lights** – Will typically be either made locally by a craftsman or purchased from the United States.
- ▶ **Lectern** – Models and costs vary greatly. Folding ones take the least space but are the most expensive.
- ▶ **Audio-visual equipment** – Would typically only apply to an already established club that decides to entirely record its meetings for added educational benefit.
- ▶ **Camera** – Same as above, useful for marketing and PR purposes.

Club Income & Cash Reserves

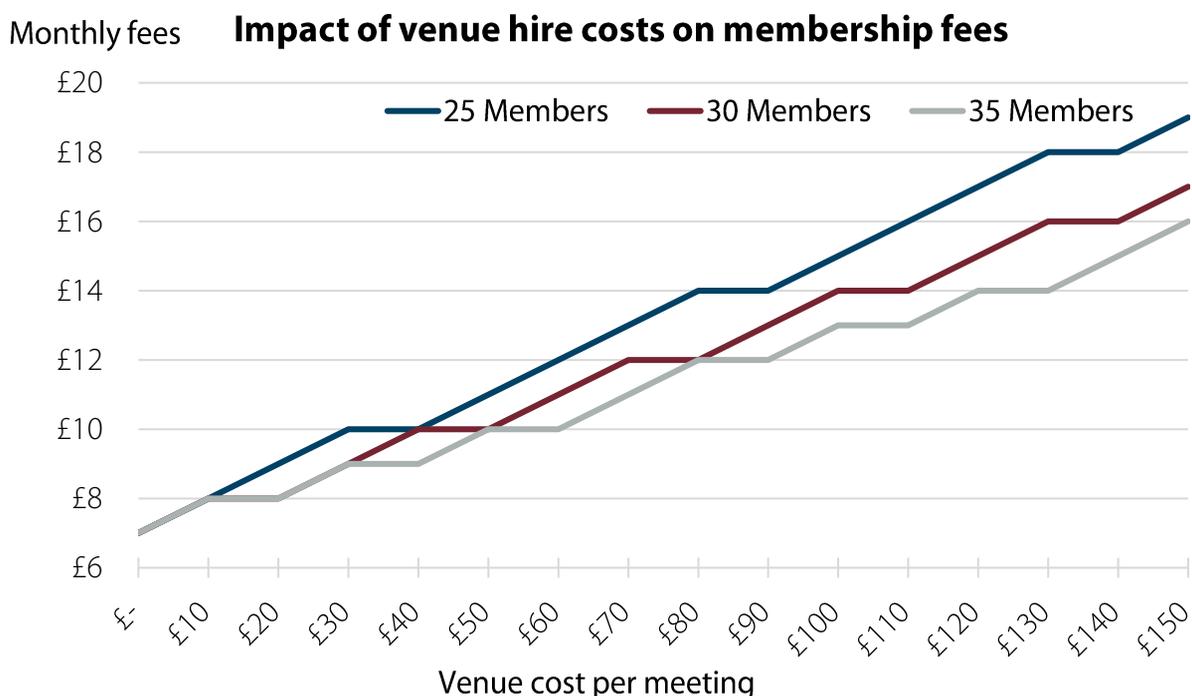
The vast majority if not the sole source of income of a Toastmasters club, comes from membership fees. It is worth remembering though that according to Toastmasters International Policies & Protocols, up to two-thirds (2/3) of club income can come from other sources. These income sources could be:

- ▶ Delivering and charging for Speechcraft courses.
- ▶ Organising events and charging for entry to cover costs and generate a surplus.

How much you should charge each month for club membership will be determined by the club’s venue hire costs and the club’s average membership via the below formula:

$$Club\ monthly\ fees = \frac{Monthly\ running\ costs}{Number\ of\ club\ members} + \frac{\$7.5}{\$ to\ £\ exchange\ Rate}$$

The significant impact of venue hire costs on membership fees is illustrated by the graph below.



Another metric useful to know when setting membership fees is the number of members required to breakeven during one renewal cycle this is also known as a club breakeven point.

$$\text{Breakeven} = \frac{\text{Operational expenses for 6 months}}{\left(\text{Monthly membership fees} - \left(\frac{\$7.5}{\text{\$/£ exchange rate}} \right) \right) \times 6}$$

The significant impact of venue costs on club finances can also be measured via this metric. The table below assumes that club membership fees are set at £12/month.

Numbers of members required to break-even depending on venue hire

Expenditure		£ -		£ 30,00		£ 50,00		£ 100,00		£ 150,00	
Total venue costs	£	-	£	360,00	£	600,00	£	1 200,00	£	1 800,00	
Consumables	£	100,00	£	100,00	£	100,00	£	100,00	£	100,00	
Marketing	£	100,00	£	100,00	£	100,00	£	100,00	£	100,00	
Total	£	200,00	£	560,00	£	800,00	£	1 400,00	£	2 000,00	
Income											
Membership fee	£	12,00	£	12,00	£	12,00	£	12,00	£	12,00	
\$/£ Exchange Rate		1,25		1,25		1,25		1,25		1,25	
TMI dues (\$7.5)	£	6,00	£	6,00	£	6,00	£	6,00	£	6,00	
Net fees for 6 months	£	36,00	£	36,00	£	36,00	£	36,00	£	36,00	
Breakeven point		6		16		23		39		56	

It will be noted that these two formulas are extremely conservative as they do not take into account income from new members paying their joining fees. A club's break-even point is a crucial metric of financial health. Ideally, club membership should be above it at all times after each renewal cycle. However, income from new members will often carry a club through to the next renewal cycle, if fewer members than the number needed to break-even renewed their memberships.

How much money should a club keep in reserve?

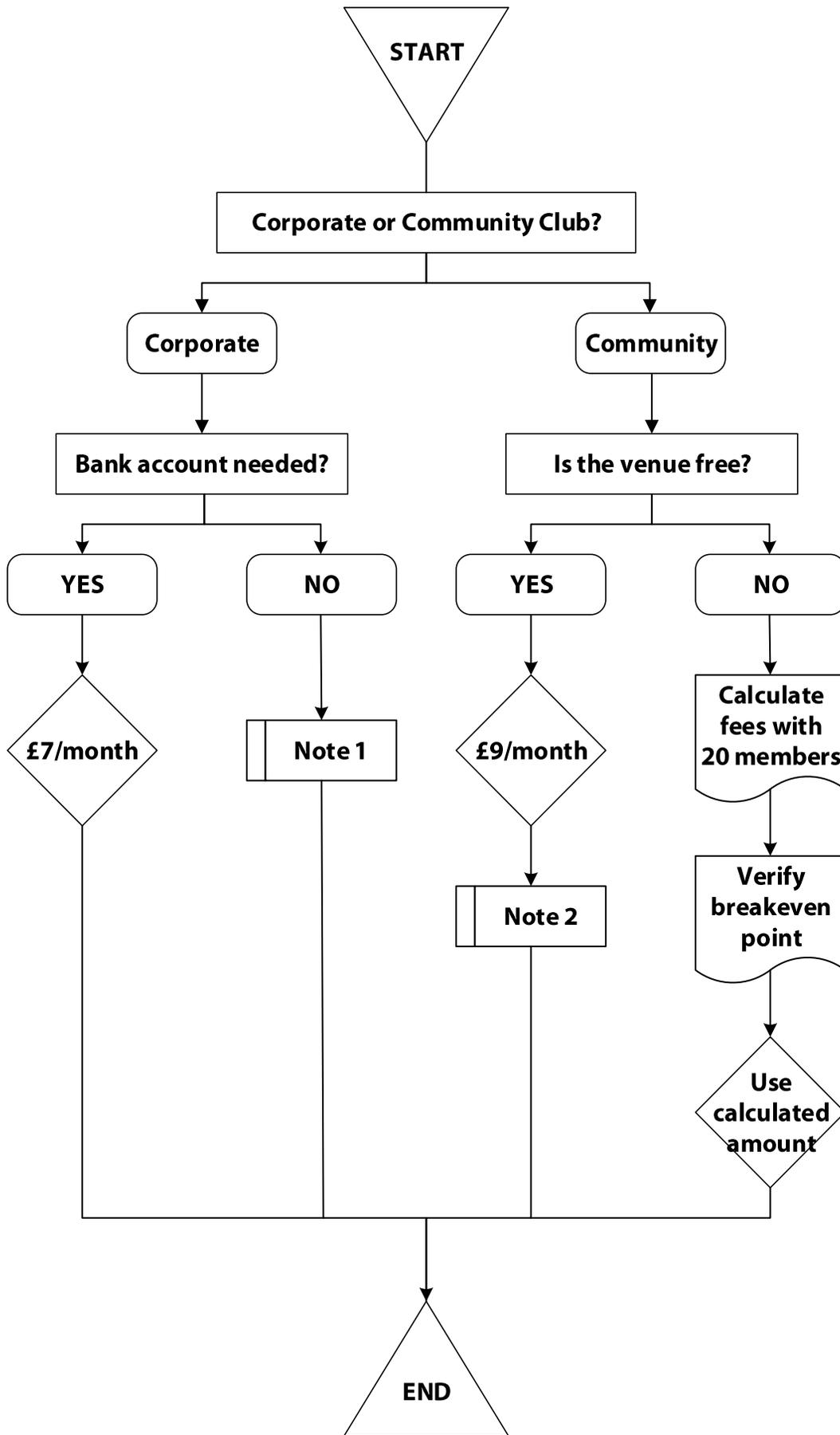
A club should aim to build-up up to 6 to 12 months' worth of expenditure in reserve. This is mainly to provide a significant financial buffer if venue hire costs are increased and if membership numbers drop. This reserve will avoid having to raise monthly membership fees immediately. It might be a good idea to pen a separate savings account for this reserve of funds

What should you do if there is too much money in reserve?

A cash reserve amounting to more than 12 months' worth of expenditure should be spent on capital expenses for the club. It could be purchasing equipment to video meetings, a tablet for signing up guests on the day, sponsoring members' attendance to events or by financially supporting the launch of a new Toastmasters club. All of this should be approved by a vote of the club's members.

Clubs funds must never be used for social events such as meals or evenings out.

Membership fees setting flowchart



Note 1: Membership dues to Toastmasters WHQ will then likely be paid via the relevant internal processes for expenses etc. **It is recommended to always pay dues to Toastmasters HQ both for renewals and new members by credit/debit card.** Using wire-transfers typically incurs hidden transaction fees.

Note 2: This level might seem high when compared by the £7/month for a corporate club but it is recommended to adopt it. **Free meeting venues can be unsustainable in the long run** and short-notice demands for payment are not uncommon unless a strong relationship exists. Building up a cash reserve for these eventualities is therefore advisable.

New joiners' fees should be set at £20 or £30 per person.

Membership periods should be in-line with the two renewal cycles of 1st April to 30th September and 1st October to 31st March just like in well-established clubs. It is recommended to ask new members to join for between 7 and 12 months, possibly with discounts, in order to accumulate enough funds to charter the club in due time.

Month of joining	Joining Until	Months to pay
January	30 th September	9
February	30 th September	8
March	30 th September	7
April	31 st March	12
May	31 st March	11
June	31 st March	10
July	31 st March	9
August	31 st March	8
September	31 st March	7
October	30 th September	12
November	30 th September	11
December	30 th September	10

An alternative is to ask members to join between 3 to 8 months. This option can be beneficial if the club chartering only decides to pay the minimum of 6 months of membership dues.

Month of joining	Joining Until	Months to pay
January	31 st March	3
February	30 th September	8
March	30 th September	7
April	30 th September	6
May	30 th September	5
June	30 th September	4
July	30 th September	3
August	31 st March	8
September	31 st March	7
October	31 st March	6
November	31 st March	5
December	31 st March	4

Club Budget

The typical yearly budget (July 1st to June 30th) for a Toastmasters club should look like the table below. **Actuals will be derived from a ledger where club financial transactions are individually added as lines of credit or debit.** This ledger also allows cross-checking the budget against bank statement and for club finances to be audited as well.

Numbers in the Above or Under budget column are derived by subtracting Actuals against the expected Budget at a given time during the year. For example, half-way through the year, Actuals will be subtracted against 50% of the amounts budgeted.

Key Variables			Notes & Explanations		
Monthly fees	£	12,00	Per month		
Average membership		25	Across entire year		
Joining fee	£	20,00			
Number of joiners		20			
Venue hire cost	£	50,00	Per meeting		
Number of meetings		24			
\$/£ Exchange Rate		1,25			

Category	Actuals	Budget	Above or Under Budget	Notes
Income				
Membership fees	£ 60,00	£ 4 000,00	£ (401,54)	1
Total Income	£ 60,00	£ 4 000,00	£ (401,54)	
Spending				
TMI dues	£ 24,00	£ 2 120,00	£ 220,62	2
Consumables	£ -	£ 150,00	£ 17,31	
Venue hire	£ 80,00	£ 1 200,00	£ 58,46	3
Marketing	£ -	£ 200,00	£ 23,08	
Equipment	£ -	£ 200,00	£ 23,08	
Total Spending	£ 104,00	£ 3 870,00	£ 348,31	
Balance	£ -44,00	£ 130,00	£ (59,00)	
Cash in Bank	£ 6,00			4
Start of club Year	01/07/2017			
Current date	12/08/2017			
End of TMI Year	30/06/2018			

Note 1:

Membership fees

$$= \text{Monthly fees} \times 12 \times \text{Average membership} + \# \text{ of joiners} \times \text{joining fee}$$

Note 2:

$$TMI \text{ dues} = \text{Average club membership} \times 12 \times \left(\frac{\$7.5}{\$ \text{ to } \pounds \text{ exchange rate}} \right) \\ + \text{Number of joiners} \times \left(\frac{\$20}{\$ \text{ to } \pounds \text{ exchange rate}} \right)$$

Note 3:

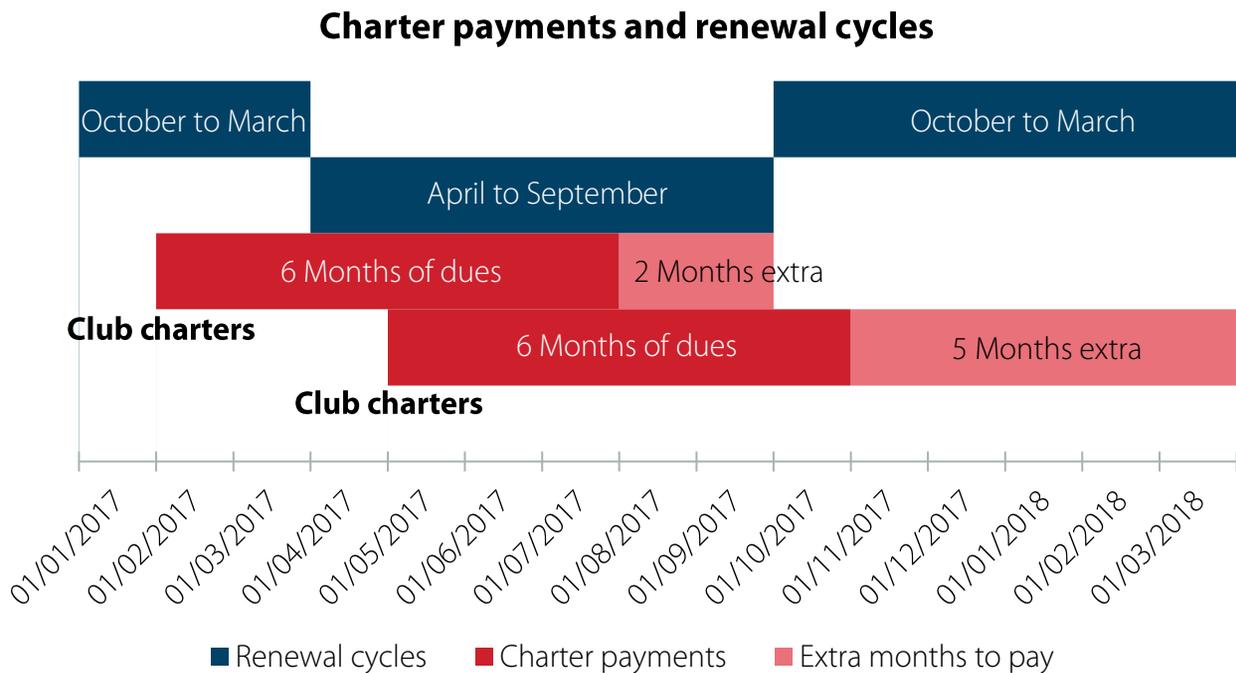
$$\text{Venue hire} = \text{Venue hire costs} \times \text{Number of meetings in a year}$$

Note 4: A new club will start with £0 in the bank unless an external source of funding has been secured such as a grant from another club.

Budgeted amounts for consumables, equipment and marketing should be conservatively set based on expected expenditure in these areas.

Charter payments

Charter payments will include both the \$20 joining fee for each charter member that is new to Toastmasters but also a minimum of 6 months of membership dues per charter member. This 6 months of membership dues will not align with a renewal cycle, unless the club charters in April or in October. The graph below illustrates this situation.



It is very strongly advised to pay the extra months, needed to bring charter payments in line with the next renewal cycle, when chartering. Doing this will also put the club on a much firmer administrative footing.

If the decision is made to only pay the minimum of 6 months of membership dues per charter member. The extra months will be paid to Toastmasters at the time when renewals are traditionally collected, so March for the of 1st April to 30th September and 1st October to 31st March.

How much does it cost to set-up a corporate club?

It is not uncommon for corporate clubs to charter shortly after a demonstration meeting has been organised. Set-up costs and charter payments can therefore be presented together. The table below assumes a \$ to £ exchange rate of 1.25 and that 5 extra months of membership dues must be paid to bring the club in line with the next renewal cycle. This is a very generous estimate and referring to the 'Corporate Club Start-Up' Spreadsheet is recommended.

Item	Expenses for		
	20 Members	35 Members	45 Members
Chartership kit*	£ 100,00	£ 100,00	£ 100,00
New joiners dues	£ 320,00	£ 560,00	£ 720,00
Membership dues	£ 1 320,00	£ 2 310,00	£ 2 970,00
Consumables	£ 150,00	£ 150,00	£ 150,00
Timing lights	£ 100,00	£ 100,00	£ 100,00
Lectern	£ 50,00	£ 50,00	£ 50,00
Extra equipment	£ 100,00	£ 100,00	£ 100,00
Total	£ 2 140,00	£ 3 370,00	£ 4 190,00
Cost per member	£ 107,00	£ 96,29	£ 93,11

* Assumes \$ to £ exchange rate of 1.25

Some of the items of equipment are optional but having them will strengthen the club's image and make the club more efficient to run.

How much does it cost to set-up a community club?

These will vary depending on how much money can be invested into the club initially either by the founding members or another club. The table below provides a very generous estimate of the set-up costs.

Item	Expense
Chartership kit*	£ 100,00
Consumables	£ 100,00
Marketing materials	£ 100,00
Club website	£ 60,00
Meetup.com account*	£ 70,00
Lectern	£ 50,00
Total	£ 480,00

* Assumes \$ to £ exchange rate of 1.25

Set-up cost can be spread over the first few months a club meets. It is recommended that all expenses made by someone else for the club be refunded from club funds after chartering.

The cost of the club banner and stand will be refunded by the District after the club charters.

FUTURE CHAPTERS

CONTINUED CLUB SUCCESS

"Success is not final; failure is not fatal: It is the courage to continue that counts."

Winston S. Churchill

APPENDIX A

Clubs spawned from existing clubs

Clubs spawned from a Speechcraft course

Advanced clubs

Specialist clubs

APPENDIX B

Marketing Tools

Membership & Guest Management Tools

Educational Tools

Financial Tools

Toastmasters District 91

UK South

www.d91toastmasters.org.uk



www.toastmasters.org