



# District Leader

## Biographical Information

Candidate's Name: SEEMA MENON

Candidate's District Number: DISTRICT DIRECTOR 91

Toastmasters member since: 1st MAY 2014

Education:

Toastmasters: Distinguished Toastmaster 1(old education path), Distinguished Toastmaster (Pathways), Effective Coaching Path, Engaging Humor, Presentation Mastery, Persuasive Influence.  
External: MBA (Marketing), BSc (Mathematics), Diploma in Advertising and Mass Communications, Diploma in Personal Performance Coaching & Corporate and Executive Coaching (Pursuant)  
AI-Implications for Business Strategy (course)

Toastmasters offices held and terms of service:

Program Quality Director (D91): July2025 - June2026 (Current)  
Club Growth Director (D91): July2024 - June2025  
Public Relations Manager (D91): July2018 - June2019  
Division Director (D91 DivL): July2017 - June2018  
Area Director (D91 L61): July2016 - June2017  
President (Harrovian Speakers Toastmasters): July2015 - June2016 +  
Treasurer (Harrovian Speakers Toastmasters): July2014 - June2015 +  
Club Secretary (Harrovian Speakers Toastmasters): July2023 - June2024, October2022 - June2023, July2020 - June2021, July2019 - June2020  
SAA (Harrovian Speakers Toastmasters): January 2026 - June2026

Toastmasters honors and recognition:

Distinguished Toastmaster twice (2019 & 2026), Division Director of the Year (2018), Triple Award- 4 times, Speechcraft Lead for D91(2020 - 2021), Division L International Speech Contest Runner up (April 2020)

Relevant work experience and how it relates to Toastmasters and your role as a District leader:

Professional leadership experience across media, AI, cybersecurity and strategy roles (Sony Pictures Networks, Soroco, Cybermindr and as Chief Strategy Officer at Headstride Ltd) has involved leading large teams, managing performance, financial accountability and aligning people to clear strategic outcomes. These roles required balancing long-term strategy with operational delivery directly aligned to the District Director's responsibility for district operations, people leadership, financial oversight, governance and performance management.

Within Toastmasters, service as Program Quality Director, Club Growth Director, District PR Manager, Speechcraft Lead and various Club Officer roles has provided end-to-end visibility of district operations and interdependencies across education, growth, marketing, finance and compliance. As **Club Growth Director**, district growth teams were structured into focused portfolios (Club Coach, Club Mentor, Corporate Clubs, Demo, Marketing, Speechcraft, Incentives, Open House), each with defined goals, KPIs, tracking cadence and accountability. As **Program Quality Director**, focus has been on training quality (Beta COT and Corporate COTs), contests, Pathways engagement, member retention, leadership development initiatives (Drop-In Sessions, Ditch the Nerves Podcast, Mentor Buddy, Conference Director development, Tools to Simplify) and operational simplification.

This combination mirrors the District Director role of integrating strategy, operations, people leadership, financial discipline and execution to deliver sustainable club and member outcomes.

What experience do you have in strategic planning?

Strategic planning has been central to both corporate and Toastmasters roles.

**In Toastmasters:**

- As CGD, developed and executed a district growth strategy aligned to membership, club health and pipeline development.
- Initiatives included Jobs Fair outreach (Bristol, Reading, London, Cardiff), Corporate Summit pilot, Transport for London advertising exploration and structured incentive programs. Built execution frameworks with measurable milestones, owner accountability and regular reviews.
- As PQD, translated district goals into operational roadmaps covering training quality, contests, Pathways adoption, data accuracy, leadership pipelines and member experience improvements.

**Professionally:**

- As Strategy Officer at Headstride Ltd, responsible for organisational strategy, growth planning, capability development and execution alignment.
- Led GTM strategy, market expansion and operational scaling at Sony and Soroco.
- Experience across AI and cybersecurity environments strengthened scenario planning, risk management and execution discipline.

This supports the District Director's responsibility for developing and executing a **District Success Plan**, balancing ambition with delivery capacity while maintaining governance and financial discipline.

What experience do you have in the area of finance?

Financial responsibility has been embedded across corporate and volunteer leadership roles.

**Professionally:**

- Managed P&L responsibility across multiple channels at Sony.
- Strategic financial oversight as Chief Strategy Officer at Headstride Ltd supporting investment decisions, prioritisation and sustainability.

**In Toastmasters:**

- As CGD and PQD, I collaborated with the District Director to set the budget and the Finance manager to manage budgets for membership growth & education initiatives, marketing campaigns, mid-year contest event, annual conference and training events ensuring we maximised value within allocated funds.
- As District PR Manager, worked within allocated budgets for district promotions.
- As Club Treasurer, handled reimbursements and financial reporting at club level.

This experience supports the District Director's responsibility for budget preparation, expense authorisation, financial governance and ensuring district funds are used effectively to support clubs and members.

What experience do you have in developing procedures?

Process design has been critical to scaling both business and district initiatives. The focus has consistently been on creating simple, repeatable systems that volunteers can realistically follow and sustain.

**As Club Growth Director:**

- Designed operating structures for multiple functional teams.
- Defined clear engagement models for Club Mentor assignments.
- Established reporting cadences, success indicators and regular reviews to track progress.

**As Program Quality Director:**

- Established a Trainers Bureau to streamline trainer allocation for Drop-in Sessions to strengthen club quality and member retention.
- Structured and delivered district officer training and ongoing capability development.
- Launched a district Ditch the Nerves podcast to encourage members to step up into leadership roles and engagement.
- Created a simplified system for Division Directors to capture Club Officer Training attendance, reducing manual overhead and improving reporting accuracy.

**Professionally:**

- Designed scalable processes across sales operations, partner enablement and strategic delivery within media, technology and consulting environments.

This experience directly supports the District Director's responsibility for operational consistency, governance clarity, data integrity, risk reduction and continuity beyond individual leaders, while keeping systems practical for volunteer leaders.

What lessons did you learn from previous leadership positions?

Key leadership lessons applied consistently across corporate and Toastmasters environments:

- **Co-create solutions for buy-in:** Working collaboratively with teams to understand challenges ensures ownership, faster adoption and sustainable execution.
- **Servant leadership in volunteer environments:** Leadership style adapts to support, enable and remove friction rather than command and control.
- **Develop leaders, not just results:** Intentional investment in team leads to build their confidence, decision-making and leadership capability.
- **Walk the talk:** Modelling behaviours expected of others - preparation, accountability, responsiveness and integrity.
- **Simple frameworks:** Clear processes, minimal bureaucracy and practical tools.
- **Feedback loops matter:** Regular reviews, course correction and transparent communication prevent drift and burnout.

These lessons align directly with the District Director's responsibility to empower leaders, sustain volunteer energy and maintain operational consistency.

Why do you want to serve as a District leader?

Service in Toastmasters since 2014 has shown first-hand the impact that structured leadership, quality education and a genuinely supportive culture can have on member confidence, growth and retention. Combining corporate leadership experience with district leadership roles has strengthened execution discipline, stakeholder alignment and operational rigour, particularly valuable when supporting clubs and members with practical, scalable solutions.

Serving as **Program Quality Director** and **Club Growth Director** has provided deep visibility into district strengths, gaps and scalability opportunities across training quality, leadership pipelines, engagement and sustainability. Working closely with diverse teams has reinforced the importance of empowering leaders, simplifying systems and building momentum through clarity and consistency rather than complexity.

The District Director role represents the opportunity to integrate these portfolios aligning strategy, people finance and execution, while working within the values of being simple, supportive and sustainable. It is about creating the conditions where leaders feel confident, supported and equipped to succeed.

It is the opportunity to give back to an organisation that has shaped personal and professional growth, to strengthen what already works and to create stability and forward momentum so clubs thrive, leaders grow and members continue to find meaning and belonging in Toastmasters.

In your opinion, what are the District mission's major objectives and how would you work to achieve them?

The District mission is to build new clubs and support all clubs in achieving excellence. At the heart of everything the District does is ensuring every member feels seen, supported and able to grow as a communicator and leader. District 91 performance trends reinforce the need to focus on membership stability, club health consistency, officer training, education completions and member retention. As District Director, the responsibility is to translate these priorities into clear strategy, strong governance and empowered leadership, while keeping member value visible in every decision. Delivery will be anchored in the vision: **Supportive. Simple. Sustainable.**

### **Supportive - People Thrive When Leaders Are Equipped**

- Build strong attraction, retention and leadership pipelines through new club growth initiatives (eg job fairs, TfL underground & TfL bus campaigns, external marketing initiatives, corporate summit etc) expanding them into district-wide pipelines.
- Invest intentionally in team leads, to strengthen ownership, decision quality and succession readiness.
- Foster collaboration between Program Quality, Club Growth, Finance and Administration leaders to accelerate learning and remove silos.
- Maintain consistent communication, psychological safety and coaching-led leadership to support volunteers performing at their best.
- Strengthen club health through a connected network of Division and Area Directors, mentors and specialists working collaboratively.

**Outcome:** New clubs chartered, Members feel valued and visible, leaders feel supported early and clubs stabilise faster.

### **Simple - A District Where Growth Feels Clear and Achievable**

- Align the District Success Plan to a small number of measurable priorities directly linked to member experience, education quality and club performance.
- Continue to streamline officer training, contest delivery and communications so participation is accessible for busy professionals and corporate clubs.
- Provide practical plug-and-play resources so leaders spend less time on administration and more time supporting members.
- Use existing dashboards, success plans and cadence reviews to maintain visibility, accountability and informed decision-making.

**Outcome:** Less complexity for leaders, better consistency for clubs, stronger experience for members.

### **Sustainable - A District Built for Long-Term Member and Leadership Growth**

- Strengthen leadership pipelines from member → club officer → district leader through structured mentoring, shadowing and leadership rotations.
- Grow strategically through data-led new club charter in corporate, university and community segments, supported by partnerships.
- Apply early intervention models to stabilise at-risk clubs and protect member retention.
- Maintain strong financial discipline, prioritisation and governance to protect long-term district health.
- Embed wellbeing practices and realistic goal setting to reduce burnout and improve leadership continuity.

**Outcome:** Stable clubs, confident leaders, predictable growth and lasting member impact.

Additional information about yourself

- Recognition and Achievements:
  - Shortlisted for the TechWoman100 Award (2023) by WeAreTechWomen.
  - Received the Certificate of Excellence for Inclusion from Sony Pictures Entertainment (2017) for co-founding the ERG group "Meltdowns" and driving the "One Sony" message through cross-vertical collaboration.
  - Awarded the SPN Guru Title (2019) for training Sony's global sales team.
- Diversity and Inclusion Advocacy:
  - Led #UnitedforInclusion, an event at Soroco (2021) promoting D&I culture.
  - Spearheaded Women@Soroco ERG group formation to support women's empowerment within the organization.
- Workshops and Community Impact:
  - Delivered Single Stitch Pitch and The Anxious Being workshops for The King's Trust, supporting young people to build confidence and resilience(2025).
  - Conducted Goal Setting Workshops for the charity Sevasadanam, empowering young women to create actionable plans for personal growth(2025).
  - Led a Communication and Leadership Workshop with Women in Tech, The King's Trust inspiring young people and professionals to excel in their fields(2025).
  - Organized a Speaking Workshop Series at MIND Harrow as part of the Head to Work Project (2017), enabling individuals to gain confidence in public speaking.
- Keynotes and Podcasts:
  - Delivered impactful keynotes and podcasts globally, including:
    - *"Single Stitch Pitch"* (Selling)
    - *"Artificial Intelligence: Impact on Business and Sales"*
    - *"Rediscovering Agreement"* (Conflict Resolution)
    - *"The Anxious Being"* (Anxiety)
    - *"Call Attention To"* (Mindfulness and Communication)

This portfolio demonstrates my commitment to fostering inclusion, empowering individuals, and driving excellence through communication, leadership and community impact.