



Helen Dotson, DTM

District 62 Director, 2018-2019

Distinguished Toastmaster Helen Dotson has been a consistent member of Toastmasters International in District 62 (D62) since 1997. She has served in many club and district leadership roles during that long history. All of these have honed her communication and leadership skills and helped her achieve a deep understanding of the overall Toastmasters Program. This solid foundation will be a tremendous asset during her term as District Director. Helen has a strong interest in personal development and supporting others in their personal growth. Helen's passion for excellence and perseverance will serve D62 well in the upcoming year and beyond. She aspires to leave a positive legacy in all aspects of her life, and is fully committed to the long term success and legacy of D62.

Background

Helen graduated from Northwestern University with a bachelor of science in Chemical Engineering in 1993. She has worked for over twenty-five years in her professional career with The Dow Chemical Company, and has been in a global Dow leadership role since 2004. The leadership and communication skills she's developed within Dow complement the skills she's developed within Toastmasters International (TI) very well. Her experience as part of a Global Leadership Team facilitating and consistently delivering results will enable her to successfully lead D62 in 2018-2019.

Helen has a wealth of Toastmasters experience as a seasoned veteran with over twenty years in TI. In her past club and district leadership roles, she built a strong foundation and understanding of both club and district leadership operations, giving her a solid platform of experience from which to lead D62 to success. In particular with her D62 Finance and Program Quality Director (PQD) experience, she gained the necessary skills and understanding of core district operational requirements that will enable D62 to operate in conformance with TI policies and guidelines, while supporting personal growth in those areas for other D62 Toastmasters. Helen is a two time D62 Evaluation Speech Contest Champion. She is well respected and sought out for her speech evaluation skills, and a solid role model for many D62 members. She continues to hone her evaluation techniques through frequently evaluating speeches and teaching her Art of Evaluation techniques to others. As PQD in 2017-2018, Helen gained experience in a transformational year for TI. She successfully built a team of D62 Pathways Guides that enabled D62 to be in alignment with TI expectations to achieve the Pathways Roll-out timing for Region 6 and 7 by end of October 2017. As of December 13, 2017, one hundred percent of D62 clubs had been visited by their Pathways Guides. Pathways implementation is a journey; ultimately D62 will be implementing this over the coming years as TI completes the full global transition. This year we have established the foundation to build upon for a successful future.

District 62 Leadership Experience

- ✚ District Director, 2018 - current
- ✚ Program Quality Director, 2017 - 2018
- ✚ Finance Manager, 2015-2017
- ✚ Audit Committee Chair and Audit Committee Member, multiple years
- ✚ Division Governor, Northern Division, 2004-2005
- ✚ Area Governor, 2003-2004; Awarded Area Governor of the Year

Club Leadership Experience

- ✚ Midland Toastmasters Club 2399: Treasurer 2016-2017; VP Education 2015-2016
- ✚ Sensational Speakers Club 1031019: Secretary 2012-2013; President 2011-2012; VP Membership, 2010-2011; President 2009-2010; VP Membership 2008-2009
- ✚ Tuesday Talkers Club 5652: President 2006-2007

Ten Leadership Lessons from My Journey to DTM

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- ✚ ***Be authentic.*** We are all people first, leaders second. Make connections with others as people first to build deeper working relationships. Never underestimate the power of a hand written note.
 - ✚ ***Plan ahead for success and rigorously execute.*** Make time to understand the bigger picture and establish a vision. This will help you chart the best course to the finish line. Remember everything is accomplished one step at a time! Schedule activities to meet or beat the plan.
 - ✚ ***Deadlines and paper work are important.*** Finishing the last 10% can mean the difference between a goal achieved and a goal missed. Drive to the finish line. Many accomplishments do not count until the paperwork is completed and submitted.
 - ✚ ***Develop your inner circle.*** An inner circle provides a solid foundation of trusted advisors who can help accomplish marvelous dreams.
 - ✚ ***Ask for help.*** Leaders must understand resource requirements to effectively accomplish the vision and goals. Ask for help until there is enough, and build contingency plans.
 - ✚ ***Face your fear to expand your comfort zone.*** To learn and grow it is essential to take on opportunities outside of your current comfort zone.
 - ✚ ***Help others grow.*** Once you've mastered new skills, lead by example to help others master those new skills as well. Don't hide your talents! Successful leaders build highly capable successors.
 - ✚ ***Evaluate to Motivate.*** Always temper constructive improvement feedback with a healthy dose of positive praise. Provide feedback on an ongoing basis.
 - ✚ ***Prepare well, but don't delay for perfection.*** Give speeches in TI under less than ideal situations to practice and build confidence. There is no perfect speech. Real life often provides a majority of "less than ideal" speaking and leadership situations. Practice under pressure to prepare for successfully dealing with real world pressure situations. Leaders are always in the spot light and on point.
 - ✚ ***Practice the same roles in different situations.*** Seize the day when new opportunities become available to practice your leadership and communication skills. Repeat similar roles under different conditions to hone and deepen your skill sets.
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Ten Tips for Finishing Ten Speeches in Less than Five Years from My Journey to Competent Toastmaster (CTM)

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- ✚ ***Set a goal and schedule your speeches accordingly.*** Remember each educational award achievement happens one speech at a time!
 - ✚ ***Prepare to give your next speech at a moment's notice.*** Seize the day when an earlier speech date presents itself.
 - ✚ ***Plan ahead.*** Read through all projects for your next award now. This helps put your subconscious to work thinking about topics to fit each project, and allows you to see the roadmap to the finish line.
 - ✚ ***Keep an Idea Bin for future speeches.*** Brainstorm topics and align your favorite topics with their most suitable speech projects.
 - ✚ ***Focus speech topics on your everyday life and topics you are passionate and knowledgeable about.*** When topics fit this model, speeches literally seem to write themselves.
 - ✚ ***Sleep on it.*** Give your subconscious some time to massage and improve a speech after you've written and practiced. This will often give you even better ideas for how to present the speech more effectively and dramatically.
 - ✚ ***Practice the "Two for One" concept for every speech.*** Align presentations that you have to give for other personal and professional obligations with your Toastmasters speech projects to make progress toward your educational award and receive valuable feedback in a supportive environment prior to the real presentation.
 - ✚ ***Establish a buddy system for some healthy competition and support working toward a similar educational award.*** Help encourage and pace each other to achievement.
 - ✚ ***Build a series of speeches around a similar theme.*** Many topics have too much depth to cover all aspects in a single speech. Consider ways to subdivide topics across multiple speeches.
 - ✚ ***Prepare well, but don't delay for perfection.*** Few speeches are perfect. Giving speeches in Toastmasters under less than ideal situations is great practice and a wonderful confidence builder. Real life often gives a majority of "less than ideal" speaking situations, especially in significant leadership roles.
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