



## PQD Lessons Learned/Best Practices

*Compliments of Monnica Rose, DTM, PRA*

### WORKING WITH THE TEAM

- You don't need to go it alone. Examples of Program Quality team members include PQD Advisor, Operations Manager, Club Quality Chair, Club Coach Chair, Education and Training Project Manager, Training and Records Project Manager, Registration Project Manager, Awards and Recognition Project Manager, Audio/Visual Project Manager, Volunteer Project Manager, TLI Project Manager, Conference Project Manager, Pathways Project Manager.
- Consider holding regular (say, monthly) conference or videoconference calls with club VPs of Education. One PQD planned a year's worth of topics for her monthly calls with VPEs, including speech contests, Club Success Plan, mentoring, and quality meetings.
- Encourage Division Directors to delegate; to form and utilize committees to aid them in executing their duties (i.e., TLIs, contests, demos/launch meetings) so they can devote more time to qualifying leads, holding demo/launch meetings, and following up with troubled clubs throughout the year.
- Have regular meetings with Division and Area Directors to build relations, learn of potential problems early, encourage progress, and offer accolades.



### CONTESTS

- Ensure all Directors read and thoroughly understand the Speech Contest Rule Book. Encourage them to contact you for a second opinion or clarification before they act. Be available or onsite as much as possible at Division Speech Contests.
- Be aware that after initially introducing regional semifinals of video-recorded International Speech Contest district winners in 2019, WHQ will likely refine its requirements for recording and submitting recordings. Watch for the requirements so your district can comply.

### TRAINING

- Make the most of your own District Leader training at the International Convention and Midyear. Network with peer PQDs about successful aspects of their conferences and trainings. If you already have your 2020 conference keynoter lined up, it's still useful for the future to ask about especially powerful keynote speakers other districts have hosted.
- A clear correlation exists between clubs that train all their officers and clubs that are Distinguished. Make training appealing and efficient and promote, promote, promote.
- Plan and announce in advance of your Conference, club- and district-leader trainings in June. Coordination of TLIs should be by current Division leaders as mentors and incoming Division leaders as protégés to keeps both parties engaged and aid in a smooth transition.

- Remember that Division Directors may have limited experience in promoting TLIs; for maximum turnout, provide District-leader support in promoting TLIs.
- Follow-up on club-officer and district-leader training periodically to check on the concerns of leaders.

## **CONFERENCES**

- Around the time of the International Convention in August, WHQ has its schedule of International Officers and Directors who will be visiting districts at their annual conferences. Find out as early as possible if an international visit is planned for your district. WHQ will expect that you will provide speaking slots for this international visitor, which will affect conference planning.
- Do not appoint an Area Director or Division Director as Conference Chair. The jobs require too much bandwidth to be helmed by one person.
- Resist the temptation to micro-manage your conference chair. Yes, the conference is under your purview, but you need to trust your chair and let him or her have the learning experience.
- Make your Annual Conference fun for your members. Consider incorporating games, music, photo opportunities, fun photo booths, activities to do outside the conference that allow exploration of the host city.
- Attempt to build a rolling two-year conference plan, including locations, theme, and keynote speakers so Club Growth Director can concentrate on closing out the Toastmaster year.

## **EDUCATION AWARDS and PATHWAYS**

- Promote the Toastmasters education program by writing personal accolades to all members who achieve an education award (e.g., through mail, email, postcard, etc.). Pay special homage to first-time CCs, Level 1s, and DTMs. Members appreciate a personal note (use mail merge as a tool).
- If you haven't already, join the Pathways Discussion Forum group on Facebook. It's a very well-run group in which you can get your questions answered.

## **CLUB QUALITY and the DISTINGUISHED CLUB PROGRAM**

- Strongly encourage clubs to conduct Moments of Truth, especially before they embark on their Club Success Plans. Encourage Area Directors to offer to conduct Moments of Truth in their assigned clubs. Area Directors who do so will have especially rich data for the Area Visit reports, and you as PQD will have a better picture of the relative strengths of your clubs, so that you know where to focus your energy
- Promote and encourage clubs to be Distinguished throughout the Toastmasters year with "actionable steps" they can implement, such as holding membership events and ensuring education awards are submitted.
- Remember that members may be enthusiastic about their own club reaching any level of Distinguished status, but they probably are less invested in whether the District achieves Distinguished. Keep your DCP messaging focused more closely on club and member self-interest rather than the District's needs. How will the club benefit from reaching the goals that comprise Distinguished? Help them visualize how membership in a healthy club will enhance their Toastmaster experience.
- A solid initial strategy for reaching your goal number of Distinguished clubs is to first focus on those that were Distinguished last year, as well as those that met all goals except charter-strength membership last year. Most of them are likely to be in a similar situation this year. You can lead your team in nurturing these clubs throughout the year to bring them to Distinguished.

## **SUCCESSION**

- Build positive relationships across your district from Day 1 so you can identify and connect with potential Division and Area Directors for your upcoming District Director year.
- Develop questions; interview, seek out recommendations and references on all potential incoming Area Directors and other leaders.