

INTERNATIONAL OFFICER/DIRECTOR CANDIDATE BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION



Candidate's Name: **Balraj Arunasalam, DTM**

Candidate's Office: **Past International Director** Region Number: **13**

Toastmasters member since: **1990**

Education:
Advanced Level, General Certificate of Education; MBA program, Australian Institute of Business Administration

Employer and/or position: **Chairman/Managing Director of The Gemtrans Engineering Co**

Served as district governor of district number **82** Term of service: **2008-2009**

In term as district governor, district achieved: Distinguished Select Distinguished President's Distinguished

Toastmasters offices held and terms of service (international and regional level):
International Director, Region 13, 2011-2013
District Treasurer, 2009-2010
District Governor District 82, 2008-2009
Lieutenant Governor Education & Training, District 82, 2007-2008
Territorial Council Chairman for Sri Lanka Chapter, 2003-2006

Toastmasters honors and recognition (international level):
President's Distinguished District Award, Number 1 in the world, 2008-2009
President's Extension Award for outstanding achievement in Club Extension and Retention, 2008-2009
President's 20 Plus Award, 2008-2009
Distinguished Toastmaster Award, 2009, Presidential Citation 2006

Relevant work experience and how it relates to Toastmasters and your role as a Board member:
During my 33-year tenure as head of Gemtrans, precision engineering, the highest quality standards and great customer relations have been the pillars of success for my company. All the skills learned during this period: vision, planning, teamwork, delegation, communication, coping, dealig with difficult poblems and people, adaptability, budgeting and listening, developing and implementing a vision will serve me well on the Board in meeting and exceeding Toastmasters International and personal objectives.

What experience do you have in strategic planning?
I developed a road map for my company detailing the appropriate goals, strategies and success indicators that allowed us to become the number one fabricator of industrial belts in Sri Lanka. In addition, my Toastmaster colleagues and I developed a plan for the Territorial Council of South Asia that led to the formation of District 82. These successful strategic planning skills should serve me well on the Board.

What experience do you have in the area of finance?
Serving as Chairman/Managing Director of Gemtrans for 33 years, provided me with the financial knowledge to oversee our budget process, capital improvements, payroll, taxes and all other expenditures. In addition, I served as district governor and treasurer of a district with a substantial budget of \$85,000 and \$140,000 respectively, ending each year on a sound financial footing and ending the district year as number one.

What experience do you have in developing policies?

Serving as Chairman/Managing Director of Gemtrans, I continually develop numerous policies, including those related to workplace rules, budgeting, hiring, workplace safety, contracts, holiday/vacation policies, and all the policies necessary to run a successful manufacturing company for 33 years. Serving on the TI Board of Directors for the past two years, I played an active role working with other board members, developing policies to advance our organization.

What lessons did you learn from previous leadership positions?

As international Director, as Managing Director for Gemtrans, and as Project Manager for several local organizations, I have learned many principles that will serve me well on the Board: having a clear vision of the desired goal and how to get there; articulating that vision; motivating others to embrace the vision; building a strong team; offering encouragement; coaching and mentoring; inspiring others to press on and adapting to change.

What experience and key strengths would you bring to the Board of Directors?

Key strengths I would contribute are my experiences in identifying new markets, developing strategies to reach and sustain those markets and reinvigorating existing markets. Other strengths include creating teams of diverse people, inspiring people to strive towards their chosen goals and overcome challenges by remaining focused on a compelling vision. In addition, a key strength would be showing how strategic partnerships could be created for mutual benefits.

Why do you want to serve as an international officer/director?

My journey of service leadership started first as club President, went on to DG, and then as ID gave me an opportunity to have a direct positive influence on my Region. I now want to help extend our impact to make Toastmasters a very significant force for communication and leadership development, not just in 122 countries but in all 206 countries in the world. In order to do that, I seek to serve as an officer. For me, this is joy and gives me a sense of fulfillment.

What volunteer experience do you have outside of Toastmasters?

This experience includes the Rotary Club of Colombo West - providing youth career guidance and improving services to the community. I also worked with the Ceylon Estate Workers Trust of the Indian High Commission to provide secondary education to the children of plantation workers. I help returning graduates to the country secure employment. I'm a permanent volunteer for my local temple and Aarunadu Velalar Society, guiding the organization in community service.

Have you worked with other Boards of Directors outside of Toastmasters? If so, describe your experience.

I have served and continue to serve on several business and voluntary boards. This experience has taught me that any group of committed people can have a positive impact on their community. This requires the skills we learn in Toastmasters-communication and leadership. I have learned the importance of working with diverse people, appreciating others, and having an ethical foundation for decision making.

In your opinion, what are Toastmasters International's major objectives and how would you work to achieve them?

TI's major objectives as indicated in the strategic plan are growth and retention of members, introducing the new revitalized learning program to the world, continuing to expand our brand image, and developing and implementing programs to increase our global impact. My local, regional, and board experiences with Toastmasters and with other organizations will help me to contribute to the Board to help advance our organization towards its' objectives.

Additional information about candidate:

The Ministry of Justice in Sri Lanka recently appointed me to the position of Justice of the Peace. My wife, Saru and I have two daughters, Avisha, 24, a Doctor of Dentistry, and Mahishaa, 22, an Engineer. I am interested in management theory, youth counseling, and generally improving the lives of others. I enjoy travelling, yoga and reading.