

# International Officer/Director Candidate Biographical Information

**TOASTMASTERS**  
INTERNATIONAL®

Candidate's Name: Theo Black

Candidate's Office: Current Office: Past International Director

Region Number: 4 and 11

Toastmasters member since: 1999

Education: Bachelor of Arts - Chemistry  
Masters Business Administration

Employer and/or position: Six Sigma Master Black Belt, OptumHealth (A Division of UnitedHealth Group)

Served as district governor of district number 6 Term of service: 2005-2006

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 2009-2011, elected from Region 4 for 2009-10, and appointed to serve Region 11 for 2010-11.

Toastmasters honors and recognition (international level):

2005-2006 District Governor - Select Distinguished District, 2004-2005 Lt. Governor Education and Training - Excellence in Education & Training, Presidential Citation 2007, Panelist 2007 International Convention, International Director 2009-2011

Relevant work experience and how it relates to Toastmasters and your role as a Board member:

As a Six Sigma Master Black Belt I run enterprise-wide quality improvement, Lean, and transformational initiatives. I manage IT system implementation projects, construct statistical models to describe current state and future capabilities, author cost-benefit analyses, and work with senior leaders to charter strategic improvement projects. As a quality leader, I make frequent presentations to senior managers, facilitate cross-functional teams, and lead change initiatives. As a skilled facilitator, I focus on achieving consensus when faced with difficult decisions.

What experience do you have in strategic planning?

I routinely work with Company Divisions to identify key and core processes (which may seem obvious, but can be difficult). I work with business champions to create balanced scorecards, identify Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), conduct SWOT analyses, employ Porter's Five Forces model, identify organization distinctive competencies, resources, and capabilities, and refine business strategies. I run projects that yield significant hard dollar savings that can only be achieved through strategic planning and benefit forecasting.

What experience do you have in the area of finance?

I conduct cost-benefit analyses, design cost models, analyze balance sheets, conduct value stream analyses, and manage project budgets. These projects often require Net Present Value (NPV) calculations to estimate the value of quality improvements. Six Sigma drives improvements by identifying hard-dollar cost opportunities. I have also managed department budgets and corporate event budgets. I have a minor in economics and a Masters of Business Administration (MBA) from the University of Minnesota, Carlson School of Management.

What experience do you have in developing policies?

As a Board Member, I have experience developing Toastmasters Policies. In my career, I work with business leaders to identify process controls and control plans that often include developing policies, processes, and procedures. I generally adhere to the wisdom of creating as few policies as are feasible and necessary.

What lessons did you learn from previous leadership positions?

I was LGM for District 6 when we missed becoming a Distinguished District by 28 membership payments. That was a tough way to end an otherwise successful year. I became DG in 2005-2006, a year of dues increase. I was determined to use what we had learned to ensure the district achieved the membership payment goal. Our efforts were rewarded when we achieved Select Distinguished District recognition.

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

My Strengths Finder 2.0 top strengths are: Communication, Woo, Arranger, Futuristic, and Learner. I enjoy meeting other people, and am energized by the process. I am a big picture thinker and have the unique ability to visualize different possibilities. I am adept at creating a shared vision. I excel at creating strategies for success and then 'connecting the dots' for others to see the value. I bring strong analytical and process management skills, and am constantly challenging myself to learn new skills. I am a lifelong student of Servant Leadership.

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

I believe we have the opportunity to achieve unprecedented growth through marketing, brand identification, and strategic leadership. The recent branding initiative is a first step toward achieving our growth and retention targets. I believe we have an opportunity to reignite growth in mature markets such as North America while managing growth in other parts of the world. I want to be at the table as we plan and implement strategies that will transform Toastmasters into an organization with significant global impact.

What volunteer experience do you have outside of Toastmasters?

I am a past director of the Minnesota Frisbee Association and a past Minneapolis Aquatennial Event Chair. I am an usher with Wayzata Community Church. In the past, I have participated with Feed My Starving Children and with Hired! (a not-for-profit that assists displaced workers).

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

In the 1984-1987, I was the Director of the Minnesota Frisbee Association, an educational organization focused on increasing awareness and skills of disc sports. We were a new and fledgling organization at the time, yet managed to successfully write annual corporate sponsorship proposals that enabled our organization to run large national disc sporting events and pay out thousands of dollars in prize money for competitors.

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

Our strategic plan focuses our efforts in the areas of growth and retention, education programs, revenue, and global impact. We need to remain focused. Achieving our goals will require making choices with our limited resources. We must choose to use them wisely. I will encourage finding ways to quantify our achievements in measurable terms. We need to look to the future and have the courage and flexibility to change our course when new opportunities arise.

Additional information about candidate:

In my spare time, I play keyboards in a band, I am a duplicate bridge player, and I play Frisbee sports and games.