

Guide to Sponsor Acknowledgment Visits



A guide to successful meetings with corporations and other organizations that support Toastmasters.

What is a relationship visit?

A relationship visit is a planned meeting between a Toastmasters representative (an experienced district officer and international director, or the International President) and a high-ranking official of a corporation or organization that sponsors the Toastmasters group.

The organization may sponsor the club by paying all or part of the membership dues, providing meeting space, allowing employees to attend meetings during work hours, etc.

What is the purpose of a relationship visit?

The purpose of the visit is to reinforce the relationship between Toastmasters and the sponsor. Many sponsored Toastmasters groups report that they are not officially recognized as employee development and may even be viewed as a social club. The visit should:

- ▶ Enhance the sponsor's understanding of how membership in Toastmasters by their employees contributes to their organization's overall success.
- ▶ Enhance the sponsor's understanding of the skills individuals gain from the Toastmasters program – communication and leadership.
- ▶ Reaffirm the organization's high-level support for Toastmasters.
- ▶ Provide the organization with tangible recognition of Toastmasters International's appreciation for its support.
- ▶ Create positive public relations after the event in the sponsoring organization's publication or Web site, in the local press, and in local Toastmasters publications.

Be sure to select an appropriate Toastmasters sponsor. The following factors should be considered during the selection process:

- ▶ A sponsor that supports more than one Toastmasters club, whether locally, regionally, nationally or internationally.
- ▶ A sponsor that has the potential to sponsor more clubs.
- ▶ A sponsor that has a high profile in the local community, such as a major employer, a local government agency, etc.

How Toastmasters contributes to an organization's success by building employee skills

During this visit, the Toastmasters representative should reinforce how the Toastmasters program directly benefits the sponsoring organization. Use the following table as a resource to guide your comments.

Make sure that you fully understand the nature of the organization so that your comments are appropriate to its structure and culture. The district team should conduct this research with the assistance of the on-site club.

Reaffirm the organization's high-level support for Toastmasters

Based on the discussion of the features, benefits and value of the Toastmasters' program, the Toastmaster representatives should express Toastmasters International's gratitude for the sponsoring organization's ongoing and continued support.

It may also be appropriate to ask for suggested improvements to the Toastmasters program or to inquire about other ways Toastmasters could help their organization. Significant responses should be sent via e-mail to corporaterelations@toastmasters.org.

Provide the organization with tangible recognition of Toastmasters International's appreciation for its support

A sponsor's award has been designed to demonstrate Toastmasters' appreciation during the visits, which says the following:

"Toastmasters International Recognizes [Corporation/Organization Name] For Enhancing Employee Engagement Through Continuing Support of the Toastmasters Communication and Leadership Program [Month and Year]."

Each international director or district officer is authorized to request up to two awards per district visit. You may send a request for a sponsor's award via e-mail to corporaterelations@toastmasters.org, at least four weeks prior to the scheduled corporate visit. Please include the following information in your request:

- ▶ Exact name of corporation/organization (as it will appear on the award).
- ▶ Date of corporate sponsor visit.
- ▶ Name, member ID and address to where the award should be sent.
- ▶ Name of presenter.

At an appropriate moment near the end of the visit, present to the appropriate sponsor representative the award as a token of the organization's thanks. Note that the award recognizes the sponsoring organization, not the individual and is meant to be displayed in a public place, perhaps in the sponsor's lobby where it can be seen by employees and visitors alike.

Make sure that good quality photographs are taken of the award presentation. For publication purposes, the best photo will likely be of the highest ranking officials from both Toastmasters and the sponsoring organization. This photo should be made available to the sponsoring organization's public relations and publications personnel, along with suggested text that commemorates the event.

Create positive public relations after the event in the sponsoring organization's publication or Web site, in the local press and in local Toastmasters publications

What do local business journals, local newspapers, organization newsletters and Toastmasters newsletter all have in common? Their editors are regularly looking for content to fill the pages of their publications. Adding a high-resolution digital photo dramatically increases the chances of publication.

Follow up

Make sure to follow up the visit with a thank-you letter that confirms Toastmasters' appreciation for the sponsor's continuing support.

Do these visits count toward the "five marketing visits" required for international director and International President visits?

Yes! These visits may be included in the "five" count. Districts must arrange these visits in advance, and coordinate early arrival of the International President or director to allow time for the visits.

Relating to Customer Needs

Preparing for Toastmasters Visits

Features “We have ...”	Benefits “Results in...”	Individual Value “Which means ...”	Company/Organization Value “Which means ...”
A self-paced program	Flexibility	Unlimited personal growth	Employee goal achievement
Speech writing and presenting	Critical thinking Effective presentation delivery	Clear communication Confidence	Effective employee communication Better leaders
Weekly interactive meetings	Ongoing experience Overcoming fears	Skill reinforcement	Improved morale Enhanced performance
Table Topics	Thinking quickly	Self-confidence	Better customer communication
Evaluations	Keen listening skills Constructive feedback	Increased self-awareness Positive mentoring	More productive teams
Participation in meeting roles	Ease in front of a group	Improved leadership skills	Effective meetings
Opportunity to conduct meetings	Time management skills Self-confidence and poise	Effectively led meetings	Increased productivity
Small groups	A supportive environment A positive atmosphere	Relationship building	Better teamwork Improved retention
Opportunity to fulfill officer roles	Leadership development opportunities	Leadership growth Career advancement	Better leaders
Affordable dues	Cost effectiveness	Positive return on investment	Positive return on investment