District Strategies
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District Strategies

Welcome District Directors, Program Quality Directors, and Club Growth Directors to your new roles in District leadership at Toastmasters International. You’ve worked hard on your respective campaigns to become elected in your roles, and now this is where an important part of your journey begins. This is where you work on the strategy for your District and how you will become successful over the next year. You may be asking yourself, what is a strategy? And what is a strategy versus a tactic? This document defines both and relates them back to your leadership role.

Building effective leaders and high-performing teams within the District has proven to enhance success in achieving the District mission. As a team, you will create your District Success Plan (DSP). As you develop your DSP, we recommend spending a good amount of time thinking about and creating strategies. A strategy is an approach you take to achieve your goal—it is not a checklist of items. A tactic is the action or method by which the strategy is carried out.

Once you have determined your strategies, the tactics will flow from and support them. We have found that as we work with Districts around the world, those who follow these guidelines have been successful. We look forward to congratulating you for your District’s success at next year’s convention in August at the Hall of Fame Celebration!

Background

During the first half of the 2019-2020 Toastmasters year, the Board of Directors convened a committee to understand the strategies and tactics used by Districts around the world, with a particular focus on strategies that have proven effective in accomplishing the District mission of starting new clubs and helping all clubs to achieve excellence. The goal was to identify, record, and share these identified strategies with District leaders to assist them in meeting the District mission. This committee included current Board members, a Past International President, World Headquarters staff, and recent past District Directors.
The committee reviewed strategies and tactics used by 36 Districts across all 14 regions. The Districts included a wide variety of geographies, cultures, and recent levels of District performance as measured by the District Recognition Program. Committee members interviewed Region Advisors and past District Directors to understand the context of the District, along with the strategies and tactics that were employed. In addition, the Committee reviewed the past three (3) years of District Success Plans for each of these Districts.

After the interview process and DSP review, the Committee identified and recommended 26 strategies along with corresponding best practices to support them. These strategies are available to you as you develop the DSP for the coming year. We do not recommend that Districts attempt to integrate all or most of these strategies into their goal-setting for the year. We do recommend that Districts evaluate the strategies and select a few to focus on to yield success for your members.

**Resources**

Toastmasters International’s website provides a comprehensive list of resources ([www.toastmasters.org/District-management](http://www.toastmasters.org/District-management)) that are available in the creation and implementation of the DSP. During the creation of your plan, please make sure you add your local resources.

**Timeline**

Leaders of successful Districts:

- Engage in a process to develop their DSP
- Review recent DSPs, results, and lessons learned
- Identify the strategies that the District will employ along with the tactics to support those strategies
- Review the completed DSP with their Region Advisor and District Executive Committee
- Complete a draft of the DSP by the time they attend District Leader Training immediately prior to the International Convention

The timeline below may assist you in completing your DSP:

### June - Review Current Year
- Review current DSP
- Assess results
- Discuss lessons learned
- SWOT analysis
- Set goals
  - i.e. +15 clubs, +400 payments

### July - Strategize
- Determine carryover strategies
- Review available Strategies
- Select strategies to achieve goals
  - i.e. Focus on corporate clubs outside Denver
- Determine budget & timelines

### August - Finalize
- Identify and select tactics for strategies
  - i.e. Create target list of corporations
- Cold calling
- Create incentives to support District mission and strategies within budget guidelines
- Review with RA and DEC
- Complete and submit DSP
Why are we doing this?
Each District can fulfill the District mission and achieve excellence. Leaders achieve results for their Districts by giving priority attention to the needs of their members and fellow District leaders. However, there is considerable variation in the results achieved by Districts. It is important to understand why, and to provide support to all District leaders to be successful. We want to provide you with some practical tools that will enhance your performance.

There are many examples of successful strategies across Districts that can provide District leaders with proven tactics to help them be successful. Rather than each District leader having to seek out those best practices, we have undertaken research to identify and collate successful strategies and tactics that provide a range of options that District leaders can apply to their circumstances and member needs.

District strategies will:
1. Help you to plan the future and attain your goals for District success
2. Enable you to reach mutual understanding among the District leaders so they remain focused on the action plans to reach the overall goals
3. Assist you in your efforts to develop passion, enthusiasm, and confidence among your District team members

How does it help me as a District leader?
1. Serving as a District leader provides you a great opportunity to serve the members of your District while developing your own leadership skills through new insights and experiences. To serve the needs of members, successful District leaders adapt and are willing to adjust their direction when needed.
2. You are leaders in an international organization, operating in an environment that is constantly changing. You face numerous challenges in your roles while developing those around you. We have provided 26 strategies for your consideration. Selecting a limited number of strategies to focus on has proven to be most successful.
3. When you work with your team members and leaders from other Districts, the experience can be effective, easy, and fun.
4. Ultimately, you can apply strategic thinking in your professional and personal life that will enable you to become more confident and successful in reaching your goals.

How will the strategies and tactics benefit the members and the District?
1. Enhanced long-term development and sustainability:
   - Successful Districts build on a clear vision and long-term strategies. Recognizing that District leaders serve in each role for 12 months, we are encouraging a strategic approach and having shared goals to promote greater teamwork and continuity without constraining innovation. A successful District establishes a climate in which everyone is committed to the District’s mission.
2. Increased mutual understanding and critical thinking:
   - There are several common issues that District leaders will encounter to various degrees. What may be a problem for one District is not a problem for others. By grouping the strategies by topic, we sought to help District leaders quickly identify the areas where support and creativity is needed to address specific opportunities and to provide practical solutions that have been successful elsewhere.
3. Provision of practical solutions and greater focus:
   - By using proven strategies and tactics, which can be adapted to local circumstances, Districts improve their efficiency. This enables District leaders to focus their efforts on the actions required to deliver the District mission, ensuring that each club effectively fulfills its responsibilities to its individual members.
Format of District Strategies
Each set of District strategies consists of two-plus pages. These pages have been designed to work together

- Page 1 identifies the strategy grouping, such as Training or New Clubs, along with the strategic importance of that topic.
- Pages 2 and beyond identify the proven strategies and tactics associated with that area, along with reasons your District may select that strategy.

Recognition
Districts may choose to recognize club and District leaders for Toastmasters accomplishments outside of the Distinguished program. Because recognition programs that conflict with Toastmasters’ recognition programs are not permitted, Districts are discouraged from creating their own programs. Recognition may take many forms, many of which do not have a cost.

Recognition increases self-confidence. Humans have a psychological need to be recognized in meaningful ways for their efforts. Volunteers may need it even more so than employees. When volunteers feel appreciated and are recognized, they create deeper connections to Toastmasters and continue their involvement. Throughout the strategies, you will find ideas for recognition listed under the tactics, such as recognition at District events, postings on social media or the District website, and mentions in District communications. We encourage you to explore additional ways in which you can recognize your members’ achievements.

Districts have many ways to publicly recognize clubs and members for achievement. The most common ways for public recognition are:
- District website
- Facebook pages
- District newsletter
- District-wide emails
- Personal emails
- Personal phone calls
- Recognition at District events such as TLIs, Hall of Fame, contests, and Annual Conference

Incentives
Incentives can be used as a reward to improve performance. The most effective incentives are those that encourage behavior above what is expected in Toastmasters’ official recognition programs. It is generally not an effective use of limited District finances to incentivize clubs or members to accomplish the expected standards, such as renewing on time. Rather, consider incentives to encourage exceptional behavior, such as clubs renewing 75% of their members or renewing two (2) more members than its base membership. Throughout the strategies, you will find many incentive opportunities listed under the tactics. We encourage you to explore additional incentives that support the club and District missions while rewarding exceptional accomplishments.
Overview of Recommended Strategies

New Clubs
- Use a team model to create new clubs
- Utilize the DEC to generate leads for corporate clubs and gain market penetration in dominant industries
- Support clubs in conducting Speechcraft to stimulate sponsored club leads
- Start new clubs based on geographic areas of need
- Evaluate language-based demand in Districts to help create new clubs
- Utilize specialization to drive new club creation

Communication
- Create a timeline that assists District leaders and teams to be accountable
- Improve member experience by creating a clear line of communication with District leaders
- Create a specific Internal Communication Strategy and an External Communication Strategy using widespread, aligned multi-channel communication
- Use team communication to motivate participation

Leadership and Team Development
- Deliver training by centralizing TLIs and holding Division makeup Club Officer Training (COT)
- Deliver training based on Division-based locations for TLIs and makeup COTs to maximize training
- Implement supplemental Club Officer Training to ensure quality clubs
- Provide District Leader Training in a centralized location for a richer learning experience
- Provide ongoing supplemental DEC officer training
- Provide leadership opportunities for future District leaders
- Utilize the Pathways mentoring program for all District leaders
- Embrace a collaborative, team-based leadership approach

Club Excellence
- Create a strong pool of Club Coaches by utilizing the Club Coach Program
- Build strong relationships with ALL clubs, assess their needs, and proactively provide customized resources early in the year
- Increase participation in the DCP by encouraging clubs to track progress throughout the year
- Actively use available tools like Moments of Truth, the Club Success Plan, and the Distinguished Club Plan with all clubs in the District to promote club excellence
- Strengthen struggling clubs (ones below charter strength) through targeted support based on club needs
- ABCD Club Analysis

Membership Growth
- Encourage clubs to host events to help grow membership
- Ensure renewals are submitted in a timely manner
Club Excellence Strategies

Background
Members join Toastmasters to become more effective communicators and leaders. They stay in Toastmasters because the club provides a valuable service and meets their individual needs. As Ralph Smedley said, “The Toastmasters club which has the right sort of program does not lose its members.” A quality club environment is the single most important factor in membership retention. The Distinguished Club Program monitors and measures a club’s achievements. The Club Success Plan is the road map to club success and meeting members’ needs. Moments of Truth is the club’s guide to delivering quality service and outstanding member experiences. Each of these tools support the development of a rich club environment.

Districts are responsible for promoting, training, and supporting District and club leaders in their efforts to achieve club excellence. The District Success Plan shows how the District leadership team plans to support a healthy and growing network of clubs that create positive learning experiences for members. Districts set goals and develop plans, as well as establish and employ strategies to assure accomplishment of their goals.

Strategic Plan Importance
Club Excellence relates to the first two (2) pillars of Toastmasters’ Strategic Plan:

- Club Excellence
  - Districts can promote and influence clubs to ensure that they consistently deliver on the brand promise.

- Member Achievement
  - An excellent club experience is vital to create an environment where members are empowered to achieve their goals.

District Mission Importance
We build new clubs and support all clubs in achieving excellence.

District Officer Accountability
The Program Quality Director is directly responsible for supporting quality club programming efforts and promoting the Distinguished Club Program. The Club Growth Director is responsible for club retention. The most effective Districts also rely on Division and Area Directors, Distinguished Club Program tracking, and Area Council meetings to assist in meeting the Club Excellence goals.
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<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Narrative</th>
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| Create a strong pool of Club Coaches by utilizing the Club Coach Program | By having strong Club Coaches who are integrated with the process of the club early, clubs will be more successful. Create a cohesive unit between the club officers and all the support members to build strong rapport and trust. | • Train and guide all associated support members of the club (sponsors, mentors, coaches, etc.)  
• Recruit past successful coaches, members familiar with Toastmasters documentation, and past leaders to provide training for incoming coaches, sharing past experiences, failures, and successes  
• Incentivize Club Coaches with recognition or rewards beyond Toastmasters leadership credit  
• Implement virtual club coaching as an option and train remote members on effective ways to remotely coach a club  
• Advertise opportunities and benefits, and share success stories on being a Club Coach |
| Increase participation in the Distinguished Club Program (DCP) by encouraging clubs to track progress throughout the year | Successful Districts track DCP throughout the year and not just towards the end of the program year. They publicly recognize clubs that are achieving Distinguished status as an inspiration and motivation for other clubs. They often create incentives for early achievement of DCP goals, for submitting their CSP to the District, and for completing Moments of Truth—all with the focus of increasing the percentage of Distinguished clubs. | Appoint District position to track DCP for District and/or Division  
• Share the value of the DCP with the club and club members  
• Identify milestones for DCP achievement  
• Incentivize early achievement of DCP goals  
• Incentivize clubs to complete the Club Success Plan  
• Incentivize clubs to conduct Moments of Truth  
• Review DCP progress with PQD and Division and Area Directors regularly  
• Publicly recognize clubs that are achieving DCP via social media, District websites, and/or District newsletters  
• Recognize clubs at Area and Division Council meetings  
• Potential incentives for: five (5) DCP points by a specific date, achieving Distinguished by May 1, completing paths in Pathways  
• Potential recognition: DCP accomplishments, educational achievements |
| Actively use available tools like Moments of Truth, the Club Success Plan, and the Distinguished Club Program with all clubs in the District to promote club excellence | Moments of Truth, the Club Success Plan, and the Distinguished Club Program are essential for all clubs to utilize and reference when creating a road map for success. Measurable guidelines within these three (3) tools provide a holistic, focused approach. Clubs that adhere to and utilize these three (3) tools have healthier and more vibrant and sustainable clubs. | • Promote, train, and implement Moments of Truth to all the clubs for self-assessment  
• Area Director to obtain copies of club assessments  
• Club officers review and use the Club Success Plan and adjust on a monthly basis  
• Club officers review the Distinguished Club Program on a monthly basis and adjust strategies and tactics to ensure goals are met |
## Recommended Strategies

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<td>Build strong relationships with ALL clubs, assess their needs and proactively provide customized resources early in the year</td>
<td>By identifying areas for club improvement early in the year, a customized improvement plan can be created to meet that specific club’s needs. Struggling clubs, especially, benefit from assigning resources early in the year. By encouraging clubs to have more members for a richer experience, more clubs benefit from the richness of multiple perspectives. It will be easier to fill meeting roles, leading to an engaging experience.</td>
<td>• Provide suitable Club Success Plan examples&lt;br&gt;• Clubs below charter strength and below 13 members will be offered specific help&lt;br&gt;• Identify and assign a Club Quality Chair who ensures Club Coaches are assigned early&lt;br&gt;• Encourage and implement membership drives to have more members for a richer experience; participate in Smedley Award, Talk Up Toastmasters, and Beat the Clock membership-building programs&lt;br&gt;• Enlist a retention team to focus on non-renewing members to see why members leave, and work to renew at least 20%&lt;br&gt;• Adopt a Club Program (Members/clubs adopt a struggling club)&lt;br&gt;• Pair strong clubs with struggling clubs&lt;br&gt;• Reinvigorate struggling clubs by having a new demo/sample meeting&lt;br&gt;• Train DEC in how to look for struggling clubs and how to support them&lt;br&gt;• Provide specialized marketing plan for struggling clubs with information relevant to their local area&lt;br&gt;• Train the officers of struggling clubs at Club Officer Training&lt;br&gt;• Clubs below charter strength and below 13 members will be approached and offered specific help&lt;br&gt;• Potential incentives for: Five (5) DCP points by a specific date, renewing 75% of members, top performers in membership drives, recruitment incentives, base + two (2) at renewal, Club Open Houses&lt;br&gt;• Potential recognition: DCP accomplishments, educational achievements, membership-drive participation, member recruitment</td>
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<td>Strengthen struggling clubs (below charter strength) through targeted support based on club needs</td>
<td>Identify and focus on strengthening struggling clubs. Struggling clubs can especially benefit from this by assigning resources early in the year.</td>
<td>• Clubs below charter strength and below 13 members will be offered specific help&lt;br&gt;• Identify and assign a Club Quality Chair for the District who ensures Club Coaches are assigned early&lt;br&gt;• Adopt a Club Program (Members/clubs adopt a struggling club)&lt;br&gt;• Pair strong clubs with struggling clubs&lt;br&gt;• Reinvigorate struggling clubs by having a new demo/sample meeting&lt;br&gt;• Train DEC in how to look for struggling clubs and how to react&lt;br&gt;• Provide specialized marketing plans for struggling clubs with information relevant to their local area&lt;br&gt;• Train the officers of struggling clubs at Club Officer Training&lt;br&gt;• Clubs below charter strength and below 13 members will be approached and offered specific help&lt;br&gt;• Potential incentives for: Five (5) DCP points by a specific date, renewing 75% of members, top performers in membership drives, recruitment incentives, base + two (2) at renewal, Club Open Houses&lt;br&gt;• Potential recognition: DCP accomplishments, educational achievements, membership-drive participation, member recruitment</td>
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| ABCD Club Analysis | ABCD Club Analysis comes from analyzing five-year trends of the club performance:  
A = Always President’s Distinguished  
B = Distinguished or Select Distinguished  
C = Distinguished or not (going up and down)  
D = Never Distinguished | • Categorize clubs as ABCD  
• Trio meets with Area and Division Directors to review C clubs to create a plan to move them to B, support them, and create accountability  
• Assign club coaches to D clubs and create specialized efforts designed to meet their specific challenges to achieve Distinguished status. Provide training to help the club leaders meet those challenges. Maintain communication with coaches, District leaders, Club President and VPE  
• Area and Division Directors analyze B clubs and support them accordingly to help them move to A  
• Recognize A clubs at Division and District events, newsletters, and social media  
• Find ways to recognize success in all clubs at public events |
Communication Strategies

Background
Communication is a key component of the Toastmasters experience. Districts create communication strategies which positively reinforce the benefits of membership and provide members with motivation and encouragement to achieve individual, club, and District goals. Districts benefit from considering communication strategies from an internal perspective—communicating with existing members—and from an external perspective—attracting prospective members and others outside of the Toastmasters community.

The most effective communication strategies are designed to encourage and reinforce positive behavior while informing people of Toastmasters programs and services.

Strategic Plan Importance
Communication Strategies relate to all three (3) pillars of Toastmasters’ Strategic Plan:

- **Club Excellence**
  - Communication strategies around club excellence raise awareness regarding programs and encourage clubs to achieve goals early or to exceed the previous year’s accomplishments

- **Member Achievement**
  - Districts can create communication strategies to encourage member achievement

- **Awareness, Engagement, and Participation**
  - Districts can establish communication strategies to assist clubs in creating consistent messaging through the District so that clubs have consistent and cohesive marketing and public relations efforts

District Mission Importance
We build new clubs and *support all clubs in achieving excellence*.

District Officer Accountability
The District Director, Program Quality Director, and Club Growth Director work collectively to create the communication strategies. They work closely with the Public Relations Manager to ensure that these strategies are delivered in a consistent manner.
## Recommended Strategies

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| Create a timeline that assists District leaders and teams to be accountable | A timeline is important to keep District leaders and club members engaged and on track. Successful teams have a clear vision, specific goals, and mechanisms to track their progress towards their goals. It is essential that club and District leaders set clear goals in their Club/Area/Division/District Success Plans. By regularly tracking progress, leaders can motivate their team members to stay engaged and to participate actively. | • Involve as many team members as possible when setting up the Success Plan  
• Articulate the benefits of achieving those goals  
• Meet regularly to monitor and report on progress towards goals  
• Use tracking sheets, surveys, or third-party platforms to provide updates and to track progress  
• Validate and celebrate progress towards goals  
• Change tactics as necessary |
| Improve member experience by creating a clear line of communication with District leaders | A great relationship between District leadership and the members is a club excellence multiplier. Ensure membership has several methods to contact their leadership so that all members can use the one most comfortable to them. Offer periodic virtual and in-person town hall meetings that allow members and club leaders to get answers to their questions from the source instead of allowing rumors and hearsay to permeate. Charge District leaders at all levels to contact a random member and ask them about their experience and offer to get answers to their questions. When communication is open and transparent, the team works best. | • Provide a variety of access methods to District leadership  
• Direct District leaders to contact a member at random to hear their experiences with their club and the District  
• Conduct periodic virtual or in-person town hall meetings to answer questions from members and quell rumors |
### Recommended Strategies

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| Create a specific Internal Communication Strategy and an External Communication Strategy using widespread, aligned multi-channel communication | District messages and TI messages align with each other and are consistent in branding and content regardless of platform, while also considering geographic and language factors. This will minimize confusion and reinforce why this organization is important to an individual's and club's success. | • No matter the platform, the District message should be the same to minimize confusion  
• Utilize a variety of methods to communicate (web, social media, press releases, etc.), with the messaging clear and consistent  
• Consider geographic, language, and any other potential obstacles to ensure the communication reaches the member or officer  
• Promote annual renewals through the PR team—remind members why they joined Toastmasters |
| Use team communication to motivate participation and action towards achieving the District mission | Successful Districts communicate regularly with Division and Area Directors, plus the District leadership team. Leaders regularly attend calls/meetings. The District mission, goals, and progress towards achieving those goals are regularly communicated to leaders, clubs, and members. Trio communicates well—no one is left out. Team communication is multi-faceted: Calls, social media chat platforms, emails, and in-person meetings are used regularly. Leaders continually engage members using every opportunity to promote goals and progress towards achieving the club mission. Celebrate every step. Promote team spirit. Successful Districts often have a leader who is inspirational and who regularly communicates with the clubs. This communication includes personal visits, phone calls, and emails. | • Use many different channels for team communication: personal calls, social media chat groups, emails, and in-person meetings  
• Refer to the District mission regularly  
• Provide regular updates on progress towards achieving District goals  
• Validate team members and celebrate incremental progress  
• Promote team spirit  
• Plan to contact clubs regularly via personal visits, phone calls, and emails  
• Use social media and the District website to share success stories and to validate members |
Leadership and Team Development Strategies

Background
A critical element to creating a successful District is providing effective training for club officers and Division and Area Directors. When club officers are well-trained to perform their duties, club members are better served. Knowledgeable officers make the member experience more positive, which leads to a quality club experience and increased member retention. Without properly trained leaders at every level, Districts and clubs cannot meet members’ needs or introduce the benefits of Toastmasters to others.

Districts promote and market both club- and District-sponsored leader training as a vital means to develop leaders and encourage maximum attendance and participation at these sessions. Training events are included in the District calendar and published in District communications, including the District newsletter, social media, and website.

Strategic Plan Importance
Leadership and Team Development relates to the first two (2) pillars of Toastmasters’ Strategic Plan:

- Club Excellence
  - Well-trained leaders are more able to create and sustain excellence within the club experience
- Member Achievement
  - Clubs with well-trained leaders provide better support to their members in achieving their personal goals

District Mission Importance
We build new clubs and support all clubs in achieving excellence.

District Officer Accountability
The Program Quality Director is directly responsible for District Training and Leadership and Team Development results. The most effective Districts also rely on Training Chairs, District Trainers, Division Directors, and Area Directors to assist in training club officers and leaders.
## Recommended Strategies

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| Deliver training by centralizing TLIs and holding Division makeup COTs | Districts with smaller geographic areas tend to have one (1) or two (2) major TLIs with division-based Club Officer Trainings to maximize training opportunities. | • Central location(s)  
• Use quality trainers  
• Follow guidelines for TLIs  
• Use TI-provided resources  
• Survey clubs for additional training topics, such as Moments of Truth (MOT), club contests, speaking skills  
• Offer sessions in multiple languages, as required  
• Use outside experts where appropriate  
• Rotate locations so all members feel they belong and have opportunities near to them  
• Provide focus on club officers as a team  
• Use visualizations to help with training  
• Train as many as possible in June and November  
• Potential incentives for: 7 officers trained; 7 officers trained both terms |
| Deliver training based on Division-based locations for TLIs and makeup COTs to maximize training | Districts with larger geographic areas tend to offer multiple TLIs geographically based around Divisions. They then hold makeup Club Officer Trainings as needed. Some Districts use the same core training team for each location, while others recruit trainers for each TLI separately. | • Multiple TLI locations  
• Use quality trainers  
• Follow guidelines for TLIs  
• Use TI-provided resources  
• Survey clubs for additional training topics, such as MOT, club contests, speaking skills  
• Offer sessions in multiple languages, as required  
• Use outside experts where appropriate  
• Provide focus on club officers as a team  
• Train as many as possible in June and November  
• Potential incentives for: seven (7) officers trained; seven (7) officers trained both terms |
| Implement supplemental COT to ensure quality clubs | Many Districts offer ongoing supplemental training throughout the year, either live or via webinar, to cover single topics such as marketing for members, meeting scheduling, Pathways Base Camp, or running a contest. | • Live in-person events  
• Web-based training  
• Distribute work across Divisions  
• District education summit in first half of year, complying with Protocols 3.D, 4.C and 7.0 |
# Recommended Strategies

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| Provide District Leader Training in a centralized location for a richer learning experience | Most Districts train as many of the incoming DEC officers as possible at a single time and location. | • Use TI-provided resources  
• Focus on Area Director visits to clubs (how and what to communicate, etc.)  
• District trio to provide training  
• Past District leaders provide training sessions  
• Train prior to July 1  
• Potential recognition: District leader appointment announcement, District leader press releases |
| Provide ongoing supplemental DEC officer training | Successful Districts provide ongoing training opportunities for District leaders, primarily as a part of their DEC meetings. | • Schedule training sessions during DEC meetings  
• Offer webinars/phone conferences for District leaders |
| Provide leadership opportunities for future District leaders | Many successful Districts have formalized leadership development, designed to create a talented pool of candidates available for future District leadership positions. | • Utilize assistant positions at Division and Area (i.e., Assistant Area or Division Directors)  
• Assign participants to assist with District events, such as TLIs and District conference  
• Assign participants to assist with club launch, mentoring, and coaching  
• Assign past leaders as mentors  
• Allow assistants |
| Utilize the Pathways mentoring program for all District leaders | Successful Districts embrace the power of mentoring. They recruit and assign mentors for all District positions. Mentors are selected from those who have performed well in the role and are a good fit for the protégé. | • Clarify expectations of mentors and protégés.  
• Check in with mentors and protégés as to the success of the program  
• Reassign mentors and protégés as needed |
| Embrace a collaborative, team-based leadership approach | The most successful Districts embrace a collaborative, team-based leadership approach that recognizes individual assignments while not operating in isolation. | • Embrace the core values  
• Make District leaders available to all members and engage at all levels  
• Embrace RA and peer calls  
• Regularly scheduled District leaders calls  
• Stay focused on the District mission  
• Town Hall meetings  
• Include all Executive Team meetings  
• Regular calls with District Director, Program Quality Director, and Club Growth Director and Division Directors  
• Division Team calls with Area Directors  
• Utilize Division and Area Councils |
Background
Attracting new members to Toastmasters and retaining existing members means that more people are learning the vital skills of communication and leadership. Your District promotes and influences both membership and retention.

Membership-building and retention are club functions. People join clubs—they don’t join Areas, Divisions, or Districts. Districts support clubs by providing the motivation, training, resources, and public-relations assistance necessary to help attract and retain members.

District success is tied directly to membership payments. When membership renewal dues are submitted on time, everyone benefits. Most importantly, members continue to enjoy the benefits that Toastmasters offers. Clubs receive credit toward one of the goals in the Distinguished Club Program. Additionally, the District receives a portion of each membership payment to support the District mission.

The District may appoint a Club Coach to support a club as it rebuilds membership and restores quality to the club environment.

Strategic Plan Importance
Membership Growth relates to two (2) pillars of Toastmasters’ Strategic Plan:

- Club Excellence
  - Clubs with a strong and growing membership provide a vibrant and positive environment that generates a culture of excellence
- Awareness, Engagement, and Participation
  - Marketing activities to support membership growth help to raise the brand awareness and increase the level of participation

District Mission Importance
We build new clubs and support all clubs in achieving excellence.

District Officer Accountability
The Club Growth Director is directly accountable for membership growth results. The Program Quality Director is accountable for member retention. Together, with the District Public Relations Manager, they develop a District Marketing Plan. The most effective Districts also rely on a Club Extension Chair, Club Quality Chair, and Club Retention Chair. These positions form the District marketing team to assist in meeting the District’s membership growth goals.
## Recommended Strategies

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| **Encourage clubs to host events to help grow membership** | Districts encourage net membership growth using focused club events, such as Open Houses, Lunch & Learns (corporate clubs), and Speechcraft. | • Educate and train club officers on Open Houses and Speechcraft  
• Share success stories  
• Coordinate timing of Open Houses within an Area or Division for maximum impact  
• Reimburse clubs for Open Houses, up to a pre-determined amount  
• Collect data from Open Houses to evaluate the program  
• Get quotes from renewing Toastmasters in your District and post them to social media. Follow the guidelines of the #MyWhy Campaign  
• Potential incentives for: Top performers in membership drives, recruitment incentives, base + 2 at renewal, club Open Houses  
• Potential recognition: Membership drive participation, member recruitment |
| **Ensure renewals are submitted in a timely manner** | Clubs sponsored by other organizations: Work with organization/accounts payable department so that payment is made on time for renewals.  
Community clubs: Share the value of Toastmasters membership to increase retention. | • Contact clubs early to understand their timetable for the approval of payments  
• Generate club invoices two (2) months before the deadline (or sooner based on timetable)  
• Meet with organization’s club leadership and HR to measure progress, celebrate success, and outline the benefits to the company  
• Get quotes from renewing Toastmasters in your District and post them to social media during renewal time. Follow the guidelines of the #MyWhy campaign  
• Potential incentives for: Renewing 75% of members, renewing base+2 members  
• Potential recognition: Recognize top-performing clubs in retention in District newsletter |
New Club Strategies

Background
One of the most stimulating and rewarding ways to introduce the benefits of Toastmasters membership to others is by organizing new clubs in your District. This offers more people the opportunity to benefit from the Toastmasters education program. Organizing new clubs also provides District leaders with an opportunity to develop and extend their own leadership skills.

The District’s mission is to build new clubs and support all clubs in achieving excellence. Successful Districts strive to have a net increase of clubs and membership payments each year to become Distinguished or better. The Club Growth Director (CGD) and the chair of the Club Extension Committee coordinate club-building efforts within the District, and any member can participate in the club growth process.

Strategic Plan Importance
Building new clubs relates to two (2) pillars of Toastmasters’ Strategic Plan:

- **Member Achievement**
  - Building new clubs increases member understanding of available opportunities and fosters accomplishment of members’ personal goals

- **Awareness, Engagement, and Participation**
  - Heightened awareness in external target markets results in prospective member engagement and participation

District Mission Importance
*We build new clubs* and support all clubs in achieving excellence.

District Officer Accountability
The Club Growth Director is directly accountable for membership growth results. The Program Quality Director is accountable for member retention. Together, with the District Public Relations Manager, they develop a District Marketing Plan. The most effective Districts also rely on a Club Extension Chair, Club Quality Chair, and Club Retention Chair. These positions form the District marketing team to assist in meeting the District’s membership growth goals.
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| Use a team model to create new clubs          | The CGD works with the Club Extension Team and Division Directors to start new clubs. While initial contact will come into the CGD, the CGD trains, mentors, and supports Club Extension Team and Division Directors in starting new clubs in the Divisions. | • CGD leads to develop and train New Clubs Committee/Team; can involve every District leader, including a marketing expert to develop a new-club marketing plan and marketing campaigns. Use media. Involve club sponsors and mentors.  
• CGD provides budget and incentives to create new sustainable clubs and to identify club sponsors and mentors.  
• CGD leads team to provide extensive training and guidance to cover all stages of club formation.  
• Division Directors lead new-club efforts.  
• Division Directors/Area Directors organize teams to conduct demo meetings.  
• Divisions complete a “mapping” exercise to identify places where new clubs could be launched.  
• CGD communicates with Division teams to get updates and maintain information within the Toastmasters Lead Management System.  
• Divisions conduct Club Officer Training prior to launch. |
| Start new clubs based on geographic areas of need | Districts identify geographic areas that are unserved or underserved by Toastmasters clubs. Efforts are made to create both corporate and community clubs within those geographies. | • Visit and explore new areas where Toastmasters does not exist, is unknown, or does not have a strong presence.  
• Build a team of people who can support new clubs in those areas.  
• Provide additional resources using technology.  
• Have a sustained intervention/assistance plan in place over a few years to ensure success.  
• Effort may be made to expand the borders of the District through the forming of clubs.  
• Public Relations (PR) team proactively works to reach remote cities and organize bigger and larger PR events.  
• Look for opportunities to build areas in geographies where we have one (1)/two (2) existing clubs.  
• Develop leaders and teams in new areas.  
• Conduct “Toastmasters Road Shows” in selected cities. |
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<td>Utilize the District Executive Committee (DEC) to generate leads for corporate clubs and gain market penetration in dominant industries</td>
<td>Generate leads for corporate clubs by using contacts already in the DEC. Ask DEC members where they work and encourage them to start a club there. Create a specific team to work exclusively with corporate clubs. Create corporate events, invite corporate leaders, and share how Toastmasters fills the unique needs of a corporation’s leadership and communication skills development. Attend job fairs and promote Toastmasters to garner the skills needed to speak, lead, and advance corporate goals. Survey your District and look for prominent industries (technology, pharmaceutical, banking) and start a club in that industry. Leverage that club for other corporations in the same industry (or the same corporation) to set the example and start similar clubs.</td>
<td>• Generate leads from where DEC members work  • Hold corporate gatherings where you can share the benefits of Toastmasters  • Focus on competencies  • Attend job fairs alongside other corporations and advertise how the skills learned in Toastmasters make better employees  • Start clubs in a corporation representing a dominant industry in your District. Leverage it to start clubs in other similar organizations  • Utilize the Toastmasters sponsorship list, available on <a href="http://www.toastmasters.org">www.toastmasters.org</a></td>
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<td>Evaluate language-based demand in Districts to help create new clubs</td>
<td>Districts identify commonly spoken, and supported, languages within their geography and create either single-language or bilingual clubs to meet the needs of those populations. These are typically community clubs, or a club sponsored by a community association.</td>
<td>• Identify commonly spoken and supported languages in the District  • Identify opportunities to create single-language and bilingual clubs in the District  • Assign responsibility to team members to market and charter the new-club opportunities</td>
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<td>Utilize specialization to drive new club creation</td>
<td>Districts identify specializations that are not present within their existing Divisions, such as professional speakers, advanced clubs, humor clubs, and other advanced clubs. These are then used to try to create new clubs, often from existing members who would like to specialize beyond what is offered at their club.</td>
<td>• Identify unfilled specialty-club needs in the District  • Identify opportunities to create advanced clubs in the District  • Assign responsibility to team members to market and charter the new-club opportunities</td>
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The Leader’s Journey: Your Opportunity

5. Outcome
You emerge more-confident and skilled as a leader. You’ll become a person of influence with the ability to drive change and motivate others. As you continue your journey, you’ll be able to attain higher levels of success in Toastmasters, as well as in your personal and professional life.

1. Start
Develop skills and competencies to advance your career. Learn soft skills that are in high demand so that you become more marketable. Transform your future – build confidence and self belief. Learn to mentor others so they too can transform.

2. Learning Environment
You don’t need experience to take on a leadership role – just be willing to learn. We offer a learning laboratory – a safe environment to practice or experiment with new skills.

3. Training
Advanced training and support is offered multiple times a year, in-person and virtually. You learn by doing. We offer a unique opportunity to lead teams, and manage projects & finances. Learn to develop strategic plans and manage key performance indicators for your teams.

4. Mentors
Mentors are available every step of the way to help you succeed. You’ll receive constructive feedback and guidance in all aspects of leadership. You have access of international leaders and global thinking.
## Motivation

### Why use these strategies and tactics?

| Learn proven success strategies | These strategies and tactics will result in increased effectiveness for you and your team. The combined experience of successful Districts worldwide is made easily available to you. These strategies allow you to focus on leading without having to lose time figuring out solutions to known challenges. |
| Empowers you to make successful choices | These strategies and tactics have been successful globally. You have them at your fingertips. Choose those that best suit your District. Implementation of these strategies will increase the number and quality of your clubs. Success as a District and as a leader will become easier to attain as a result. |
| Simplify Planning – move to action | These strategies and tactics will help streamline the planning phase for your teams. You’ll be able to get them focused on taking action. As you make progress toward your goals, member satisfaction will increase. As membership grows, so do District resources, which can be used to inspire and motivate members. |
| Boost confidence and results | These proven strategies and tactics help remove any fear or uncertainty about trying something new. Know that top District leaders around the globe have achieved and even exceeded their goals using these strategies and tactics. |