

Jury out on “buying or renting”

If you'd been in the Linden Room at Parramatta RSL, last Thursday night between six-thirty and nine-thirty, you would have been in attendance at the Parramatta Toastmasters meeting—and the question on your mind would have been “renting or buying?”. Even if you'd been paying close attention during the evening, you would have left to go home that night, with a lingering feeling that the question was not resolved. If you'd been paying close attention, you would have heard Dave Griffiths suggest that it was time for resident Kiwi's to ‘buy’-in to supporting the Wallabies, you would have heard Tom Woods suggest that his decision was based on what would most please his wife, and you would have heard Ron Marriot explain that buying a sports-car would make him cool. You would have noted, that although there was broad exploration of the question, no definitive answer was unearthed.

Did this ultimately matter?—no, it made absolutely no difference. It made not difference because the point was never to answer the question, but for each speaking Toastmaster to have the opportunity to speak to a theme.

So, now that we've cleared that up, we have to say—the evening went splendidly well. Our presence was graced with a large complement of guests, a diverse line-up of speakers, and a very welcome visit by veteran Parramatta Toastmaster Tom Woods, and his lovely wife, Elaine Woods.



When you're not sure, ask someone who knows! Long time buyer—Cheryl Piper

DON'T FORGET!

- **16 September — Anniversary Meeting**
- **23 September — Area 13 Humorous and Table Topics Competition**



Blue Ribbon speaker—Laurance Nicolas now almost as many “Best Speakers” as the number of speeches she has delivered

Rookie nails it again

Rookie Toastmaster Laurance Nicolas was on the bill again last Thursday night, and went home with another strike on the board, by taking out the evenings Best Speaker ribbon. This is her third in almost as many speeches. Interviewed after the meeting, she admitted, “I spent about 20 hours on writing and rehearsing that speech”. We know Laurance as a positive and easy-going Toastmaster— she is in fact an ambitious and disciplined student of the soap-box.

Last year, Robyn Peck presented an educational titled “The Value of Transitions”—due to popular demand we have printed an essay version in this weeks Natta—see Page 2

Natta Photos by *Suben Subenthiran*

Chick reveals sailor within

Ian Chick is known to many as an upright and respectable Toastmaster type. It is less well known that Ian is an amateur sailor with a penchant for the extreme. Audience members were treated to a relaying of events from one of Ian's more fantastic, but less successful voyages—for fear of damaging his reputation we are unable to divulge details here, but if you have a bottle of rum at home, and you're looking for the right time to drink it, head on over to Ian's place and ask him about the Whitsunday's.



Sinbad's got nothing on this sailor—extreme Captain, Ian Chick explains.

Recidivist guest turns herself in

After repeat visits over a period of months, habitual guest Suzanne Buckley finally took the proverbial plunge last Thursday night. Suzanne stood before us and promised to give it her best, after we voted to accept her application for membership. We warmly welcome Suzanne, and look forward to her Ice-breaker.



With mentor Linda Snalam, and President Dave Griffiths, Parramatta's newest Toastmaster Suzanne Buckley

The Value of Transitions

Robyn Peck

Careful transitions are an important part of preparation. Most speakers have problems with using "um," "and," "and uh," and "you know" or some similar nonsensical utterance as they falter toward their next point. This is primarily because they don't have a smooth manner of getting to their next point. That's why transitions are so important. A transition is a bridge from Point A to Point B—a connection between two points. If you learn to use specific transitions, you will improve the fluency of your speech as well as avoiding the verbalized pauses and unnecessary words. Good transitions demonstrate a command of language, thus enhancing your credibility.

1. The simplest transition is **numbering your points**—giving your audience signposts along the way. Say, "My first point is..., my second point is..., and so forth. All you have to remember is which point you are on so you don't say the wrong number.
2. A second method of transition is the **internal summary**—when you summarize what you have just said and preview your next point. "Now that we have covered signposts, let's move on to internal summary." You can use this anytime in your speech. If you have a feeling you are losing your place, simply repeat what you said and tell what you plan to say next. That will usually give you the spark you need to maintain continuity in the flow of your speech.
3. **Introduce the next point with a question.** For example you might ask, "Now you may say, 'why is the transition important to the speaker?'" One answer is that transitions create a bridge between one point and the next. Thus the answer is your next point. Any question draws in the audience to the speaker.
4. The last transition is **the interjection**, which is a way to motivate the audience to listen while highlighting a specific point. A common interjection might be, "You may forget everything else I say, but remember this next point!" Of course you can only use that once in the presentation. Other interjections could be, "Put a star by this next point," or "Underline this next point in your mind." This is an especially appropriate transition if you are losing the audience.

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Make sure you keep the transition short .

For most speakers, the best way to move smoothly from point to point is to have in mind effective transitions.

Areas within a Toastmaster meeting you might look at sharpening your transitions:

Prepared Speeches & Minor Assignments: to link points, or to, bounce from a point into a different direction (all of the above methods appropriate)

Chairman 1 & 2: to link assignments as you progress from speaker to speaker (method 2 would work well)

Table Topic Master: if your session is themed and you are prepared well you could make a brief summary of last presenters' comments and link to your next question this may take a little practice.

Toastmaster: (method 2 would work well) between speakers try making a very brief comment on the last speaker then simply introducing the next speaker as "Ladies & Gentlemen our Next Speaker is..." In this instance next possibly works a little better than numbering the speakers and try not to use "last" as this is not one of the most positive words we can use.

General Evaluator: need to be careful not to 'overdo it' and take up too much of your time but very effective when introducing the evaluators in the second half of the meeting.

Add fluency to your speakers toolkit by realising the value of Verbal Transitions Statements

Parramatta Toastmasters - Club 2274

Meeting Details

Parramatta Toastmasters meet fortnightly on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of each month, in the Linden Room of the Parramatta RSL.

6pm for a 6:30pm start

Dinner is available during the meeting
Guests and visitors are always welcome

Enquiries / Correspondence

Snail-mail: PO Box 623 PARRAMATTA NSW 2124 Australia

Email: info@parramattatm.org.au

Speechcraft Spot

Do you suffer from human-kind's most common fear?

Public speaking is a fear held by many people. For some it is a mild discomfort, while others break out in a cold sweat at the mere thought of standing in front of an audience!

If you have decided it's high time to break free of the powerful fear of public speaking, Toastmasters may be an excellent place to get the knowledge and practice that will allow you to speak both confidently and competently in public.

Looking to advance yourself professionally or personally?

Public speaking is both a skill and an art form. Whether you are a novice speaker or a seasoned presenter, there is always something you can do to improve your skills.

Toastmasters can show you new ways to invigorate your existing presentation style; to put that sales pitch over the top, help you nail that job interview, or make your daughter's wedding toast worthy of the tears and applause!

Do you enjoy sharing ideas and meeting new people?

Toastmasters may be the club you've always been searching for. Toastmasters are people from all walks of life, nationalities and professions who are working to better share their ideas with others.

Each meeting provides an opportunity for a wide range of perspectives on any number of topics, and give/receive positive, constructive feedback on how those ideas were expressed.

**Start the ball rolling - come to a meeting or enroll in a Speechcraft course!
Enquiries at speechcraft@parramattatm.org.au**