

## 2018-2019 Executive Team

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Meeting on the 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month between 6:30pm and 9:30pm at Parramatta RSL

[www.parramattatm.org.au](http://www.parramattatm.org.au)

### Club Mission

We provide a supportive and positive learning experience in which members are empowered to develop communication and leadership skills, resulting in greater self-confidence and personal growth.

## HOW TOASTMASTERS CHANGED MY LIFE

Henry Ford once said “Whether you think you can, or think you can’t, you’re right”. Before I joined Toastmasters, I was of the firm belief that I could not speak in front of a large audience. I also believed that this was why I had not progressed far in my career, while close colleagues conquered the world.

Speechcraft was my first step towards turning this negative self-belief around. And the first thing I learnt? JUST SAY YES. Saying NO was giving in to fear. The more I said YES, the more empowered I felt. With empowerment came confidence, and with confidence, success. A few months after I joined Toastmasters, I was asked to deliver the eulogy at my mother-in-law’s funeral. Had I been asked six months earlier, I’m sure I would have said that I’d rather be in the coffin than deliver any eulogy, let alone that of my mother-in-law! But I did it, and did it well!

Since then, I have been asked many times to speak in front of large audiences and the more I said yes, the better I got. Recently I realised why this is so. It’s not just about saying yes. It’s about stage time and it’s about constructive feedback, both of which you get in spades at Toastmasters. Toastmasters has changed my mind-set from I’M NOT VERY GOOD AT THIS to I’M PRETTY GOOD AT THIS! Now, every time I’m asked to address an audience, be it five, fifty or a hundred, I just treat it like another Toastmasters assignment. And just like any Toastmasters assignment, the feedback I got was nearly always positive.

I never thought I’d hear myself say this, but I now *enjoy* speaking in front of an audience, no matter what the size or what the subject. In that sense, Toastmasters has, literally, changed my life!



# THE PARRA-NATTA

## PARRAMATTA TOASTMASTERS CLUB

Welcome to the August edition of the Parra-Natta where we revisit the highlights and club achievements that have occurred since July. We have had an exciting set of events over the last month with two great meetings! Our first meeting of the month was Bring Back Summer and our second meeting was out Table Topics Competition!

### TABLE TOPICS COMPETITION

Our table topics contest held on the 19th of July saw record number of 21 Individuals participating. With this record number of individuals the rounds were conducted over two heats with a final round at the end. Our questions in the first two heats included: What scares you the most? and What is better—being a parent or child? There were a range of answers which made for a heated competition! And the final round comprised of Alicia Leise, Alison Mariott, Anu Vijayan, Matt Tonkiss and Ron Mariott.

In the final round the question posed was “What is Look into the future—what do you see?” The contest was exciting to watch with participants coming from various angles on the topics - some took us into the very private spheres of their worlds and told us about their futures whilst others explored what the world might look like. Matt Tonkiss took first place, Alicia Leise took second and Vicki Sheehan took third place on the night.

Unfortunately Matt Tonkiss will not be representing Parramatta Toastmasters in the next round instead Alicia Leise will be representing Parramatta Toastmasters. We wish them both the best of luck!



Parramatta Toastmasters Club  
August Edition

#### Inside this issue

- Table Topics..... 2
- Matt Tonkiss’ Top Tips... 3
- The impact of Toastmasters 4

#### Upcoming Meeting Dates and Themes

- **August 23:** Ride The Wind
- **September 6:** Humorous Speech Competition

**NOTE: THE DATE OF THE HUMOUROUS SPEECH COMPETITION HAS CHANGED FOR THE 23RD OF AUGUST TO THE 6TH OF SEPTEMBER!**

## OUR WINNERS FOR THE TABLE TOPICS COMPETITION



## TABLE TOPICS TIPS BY MATT TONKISS

**Tip #1: Go with the first thing that enters your head.** The surest way to get “brain freeze” and not be able to think of anything, is trying to come up with “the best” answer. You don’t have time and you’re under pressure. Let go of trying to think of “the best” answer. Instead, tune in to your inner thoughts when you first hear the topic. You will have an initial reaction, an initial opinion, an immediate memory, that flashes into your head. Go with that.

**Tip #2: After you identify your initial thought on the subject or question, pick the speech structure that best suits the question.** In Table Topics, structure is king. It is the framework that acts as a guide to help you flesh out your answer and provide detail and content. For Table Topics, the most pertinent structures are:

**PREP** – Make your point (Point). State your reason for making the point (Reason). Give an example to justify your reason (Example). And then drive home the point again (Point). Restating the point links the conclusion back to the opening.

**Cause, Effect, Remedy** – The cause of the problem facing us today is X. The effect of the problem is Y. The remedy for the problem is Z.

**Past, Present, Future** – First you talk about what happened in the past or reflect on a past issue. You discuss what is happening today. You put forward what will or could happen in the future.

**Tell A Story** – Move through the dimensions of: What, Why, When, How, Where, and Who.

**Plus & Minus** – This is where you don’t initially take a position on a particular subject. You discuss “On the one hand, but then on the other hand”. So you discuss both sides of an issue or concept, potentially talking about the respective pluses and minuses. Then you can either come down with a preference or leave it up to the audience.

**Tip #3: Give an introduction.** Even though it’s impromptu, it’s still a speech. Start with a strong opening that captures interest immediately. Instead of going straight in to answer the question or the scenario, say a few words about the *broader* subject matter or area that the question is drawn from. For example:

If the question is: “What is your greatest fear?” the subject matter is fear. So say a few words about fear *before* moving on to answer what your particular greatest fear is.

If the question is: “What is your favourite holiday destination?” the subject matter is holidays. Say a few words about holidays *before* moving on to answer what your particular favourite destination is.

**Tip #4: Start by speaking slowly.** If you begin by speaking fast, it’s hard to slow down later. So before you begin, remind yourself to speak slowly from the start. Speaking slowly is important because:

It’s just a good idea in general, for any speech.

It helps reduce “um’s” and “ah’s”.

It chews up time. Obviously, the faster you speak, the quicker you finish. Start and continue at a relaxed pace, it will be easier to fill the time.

It allows your subconscious to work in the background come up with fresh ideas and a conclusion.

**Tip #5: Don’t forget delivery.** As mentioned above, an impromptu speech is still a speech, so don’t forget the delivery aspects:

Body gestures.

Facial gestures.

Vocal variety (volume, pace).