

Q: I think I've heard of this Toastmasters thing before. Has it been around for awhile?

A: Toastmasters was formed in 1924 by Ralph Smedley. From a single Club, this international, non-profit organization has grown to include over 10,500 groups world-wide.

Q: I don't have a lot of money left over each month after the bills are paid. How much does it cost to join Toastmasters?

A: Toastmasters was designed to be affordable. There is an initial setup fee of \$20.00. Semi-annual dues of \$27.00 are set by Toastmasters International (TI) board of directors. Local Club dues vary from Club-to-Club but generally run around \$3.00 per month.

Q: I'm not sure about all this. If I join, then decide it's not for me, can I get my money back?

A: Sorry, there are no provisions for refunds. If you're unsure about joining we suggest you visit at least one club and attend one or more meetings as a visitor to get a feel for the group.

Q: How often do Toastmasters clubs meet?

A: The majority of clubs meet weekly. The minimum allowed by TI is once a month.

Q: What happens at the meetings; is it like a classroom?

A: Well-run clubs will have a printed agenda to guide the meeting through a one-hour session.. They start on time, make efficient use of meeting time and they end on time. You will likely find a sample agenda on the Club 'Website.

Q: How do I learn to give speeches?

A: When you join Toastmasters part of your initial payment is earmarked for you Competent Communicator (CC) and Competent Leader (CL) manuals. The CC book contains 10 speeches that are designed to help develop good speaking skills, one or two at a time. Each time you present one of these projects one of the club members will give a written and oral evaluation of your progress. After you've completed these 10 assignments you'll have an excellent foundation for public speaking.

Q: Do I have to give speeches...can I just watch?

A: There is no mandatory participation. On the other hand, think about it like this. Did you learn to ride a bicycle... or swim... by watching someone else? Getting comfortable with public speaking is like most everything else. You get better by "doing".

Q: How long do I have to give my 10 speeches?

A: Very much like "pass/fail" referred to elsewhere in this FAQ there is no time limit on completion of any of your projects.

Q: Well, OK, how soon do I have to give my first speech

A: Again, there is no time frame in which you have to perform, or complete, any of the Toastmasters material. Toastmasters suggests you get involved in the meetings within the first month. Depending on the individual this could mean filling one of the supporting roles rather than being one of the featured speakers.

Q: What happens if I don't pass the course? Do I have to start over?

A: There is no "pass or fail" requirement in Toastmasters. After all, you are joining to improve your skills. That improvement will vary by individual.

Q: I want to be a professional speaker. Will Toastmasters teach me how to do that?

A: That, ultimately, is up to you. Toastmasters has several achievement awards above the basic levels. Structured similar to The Olympics there are Advanced Toastmaster Bronze, Silver and Gold. The top award in Toastmasters is Distinguished Toastmaster. Many of the professional speakers that you know and admire are, or have been, members of the Toastmasters family.

Q: Is there someone I can call to get more information?

A: You'll find contact information for most clubs at the TI 'Website "Find

A Club" page. The primary contact will typically be the Club President. Most clubs have a dedicated 'Website and provide a choice of contact methods.