

ALEXANDRIA TOASTMASTERS CLUB

New Members Onboarding Guide Document and Existing Members Awareness Document



Club No.28677263, District 117

Updated -Sept 1st 2025

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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.

Purpose

This document provides an overview on Toastmasters. The onboarding experience sets the tone for your member experiences.

Guests are welcomed and encouraged to attend. Guests will be asked to give a brief introduction in the beginning and will have an opportunity to speak during Table Topics. This is an impromptu speaking opportunity that helps build public speaking skills. As a guest, you will hear speeches and listen to evaluators thoughtfully critique the speakers. Here, we learn not only how to speak, but how to give and receive feedback without judgment. Although you do not need to be a member to attend the meetings, you will see the benefits that members obtain once you fully immerse yourself in Toastmasters Pathways.

Part of being a member means you are willing to take on various roles at the meetings. There are many options (Toastmaster, Grammarian, Table Topics Master, Timer, Evaluator, General Evaluator, and Speaker). More details/descriptions are listed below in the *Toastmasters Roles & Positions* section.

Distinguished club

For a Toastmasters club to be considered "Distinguished," it needs to meet specific goals outlined in the Toastmasters International's Distinguished Club Program (DCP). This program assesses the club's effectiveness in meeting its mission and providing a positive learning environment for members. Qualifying for Distinguished status signifies that the club is active in its various aspects, including education, membership growth, leadership, and club communication.

Meeting Location

5 Laboratory Drive, Sunflower Room

Meeting Dates and Times

We meet on the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Wednesday of each month from 12pm to 1pm. The 1st meeting is virtual only, the 2nd and 3rd meetings are hybrid. The room opens at 11:30am and meetings start promptly at noon.

Toastmasters Dues and Fees

When a person joins MetLife Innovators Toastmasters Club, membership dues is \$60.00 (\$10 per month), plus a \$20 one-time initial fee and applicable sales tax. Dues are collected in April and October. The semi-annual dues are pro-rated for members joining throughout the year. Dues are paid to Toastmasters International directly. If you are interested in joining the Club, you can obtain a membership application at the Club meeting and a Club Officer will assist you in completing the application or please reach out to the Club officers email address below and our VP Membership or any of our officers will get back to you. The VP Membership will help you with the application and how to pay your membership fees.

How to Contact our Club officers?

- Upendra Devisetty - President (ukdevisetty@greenlightbio.com)
- Eric Paynter - Sergeant at Arms (eric.paynter@upl-ltd.com)
- Lilia Koza - Treasurer (liliakoza@tellustherapeutics.com)
- Jiyi Zhang - Vice President Membership (VPM) (jiyizhang@hotmail.com)
- Christian Eisinger - Vice President of Education (VPE)
(christian.eisinger@micro-pep.com)
- Kangmei Zhang - Vice President of Public Relations (VPPR)
(kangmei.zhao@greenlightbio.com)
- Andrew Clarke - Secretary (awclarke@alumni.unc.edu)

Pathways Communications and Leadership Program

When you join Toastmasters, you will be entered into the ***Toastmasters communication and leadership development program known as Pathways***. Your first step is to follow the instructions in a welcoming email from Toastmasters that directs you to Base Camp. This is your online gateway to Pathways, where you will find everything you need on your journey. Here you can work on projects, track your progress, connect with members of your club and view badges and certificates you will earn along the way. Base Camp also features resources to help guide you, including videos, quizzes, interactive activities and more. ***Each of the six available paths has required and elective projects***. Path recognition is achieved when a member completes 14 projects across all 5 levels, a combination of 10 required projects and 4 elective projects chosen from a comprehensive list covering a variety of subjects. Each project includes at least one speech. Though members are required to complete 4 elective projects, they have the option to complete as many as they would like.

The many benefits to members will include:

- A learning experience tailored to your personal and professional goals
- The opportunity to develop many skills relevant to an evolving global marketplace
- Recognition of educational achievements that will come earlier and more frequently
- New technological resources to improve speeches and support meeting roles
- Online access to educational materials
- Videos that model the skills you are learning.

The paths are:

- 1)Dynamic Leadership
- 2)Engaging Humor
- 3)Motivational Strategies
- 4)Persuasive Influence
- 5)Visionary Communication
- 6)Presentation Mastery

Your go-to liaison for everything Pathways will be VP Education. There are sure to be questions, especially in the beginning. So, feel free to reach out to the VP Education or VP Membership. They both work closely together and want to assure you have a fun and successful time here at MetLife Innovators Toastmasters Club. VP Education will schedule a meeting with new members based on the flexibility of the members schedule and share a clear Roadmap of Pathways and any Educational resources.

To select your path and start the Pathways process, refer to the link below and follow the steps:

[Toastmasters International -Pathways Learning Experience](#)

1. Scroll to the bottom of the page and it says to choose a path.
 - a. You will see a comment to see 6 engaging options.
2. Select a path language.
3. Two options to select your learning path - 1) view all paths or 2) take an assessment.
4. Once you have picked your path, if you have any questions, please reach out to our (VP Education)

All paths consist of FIVE levels within each path. The number of speeches delivered within each level can vary.

Getting Started

Please note that you will utilize two separate websites for your participation within Toastmasters. One is the general Toastmaster's International website where you select your pathway (from above), view the steps needed for each speech to include in-depth learning and guidance if needed, and log your progress. The second is Free Toasthost where the agendas are housed for each meeting, where you sign up for meeting roles, and where guides can be found to fulfill those roles. The website links are further below in this document.

(Additional Get Started Details)

Level 1 for any pathway selected consists of 5 speeches in total. Levels 2 through 5 then vary to target more of your chosen pathway. To get you started, here is an outline of Level 1 speeches:

1. This is your Ice Breaker speech where the club gets to know more about you with a 4–6-minute speech goal.
2. This second speech is Writing a Speech with Purpose and can be about anything you choose for any purpose you would like. The goal for this speech is 5-7 minutes.
3. This third speech is Introduction to Vocal Variety and Body Language again about anything you would like while incorporating vocals and body language while delivering it. This could be moving around the room, using your arms or hands, changing vocal tones as your storyline changes, etc. This goal is again 5-7 minutes.
4. This fourth and fifth speech is about your ability to evaluate, be evaluated, and incorporate feedback. This speech can be about any topic you choose and remains a 5–7-minute goal each time.
 - a. Speech 1 you will deliver and receive evaluation/feedback on. Then you sign up to deliver the same speech again at a later date.
 - b. Speech 2 is the same speech to the club, but this time incorporating the feedback you were provided.
 - c. This level has a 3rd component to round out strengths with evaluation and feedback. You must sign up to be an evaluator for someone else's speech and provide that to them.

CONGRATULATIONS! YOU HAVE COMPLETED LEVEL 1!

Please note: Everyone moves at different paces with differing goals so take the time you need to be successful. Also remember, YOU GET OUT OF TOASTMASTERS WHAT YOU ARE WILLING TO PUT INTO IT FOR YOUR OWN PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT!

New Member Mentor/Mentee Program -*TBD*

Our club offers a New Member Mentor/Mentee Program (not all clubs have this). You have the option of being paired with a mentor for the first six months to help you move through your first few speeches. This is a valuable part of Toastmasters that many find quite rewarding. Our team is currently working on a revised Mentor Program for our club.

Welcome Orientation

This session will be scheduled by President and VP Membership. This session provides an opportunity for the new members to know more about Toastmasters and our local club by going through the members guide. This session will be scheduled a few weeks after joining the club.

Toastmasters Roles & Positions

When you attend your first few meetings it will be helpful to know the cast of characters. Other than the Sergeant at Arms, members volunteer to fill all meeting roles. *Once you have attended a few meetings and you have decided to sign up for a role, please read the role descriptions and ensure you are comfortable with the role. If you have any questions, please reach out to an officer, mentor, etc.*

Sergeant at Arms: Opens the meeting, greets members, and guests, and introduces the Toastmaster of the Day. *This is an elected officer role and will be filled by the Sergeant at Arms or Assistant to Sergeant at Arms of the club.*

Toastmaster of the Day (TMOD): The Master of Ceremonies; The Toastmaster ensures roles are filled prior to the meeting, sets a desired theme for the meeting, introduces the various participants in the meeting, ensures the meeting is running on time and leads the meeting. [Toastmasters International -Toastmaster Script and Log](#)

Table Topics Master: The Table Topic Master helps members practice thinking and speaking on their feet. Topics of general interest are selected, and questions asked by members in the audience (you may be asked to participate).

Speakers: Typically, there are two speakers. Each speaker gives a prepared speech, usually 5 to 7 minutes. Each speech has specific objectives that are listed on Pathways.

General Evaluator: Provides constructive feedback on the meeting in general. He/She will provide input on individual evaluators, timer, and the grammarian. [General Evaluator Checklist](#)

Evaluators: The purpose of the evaluator is to motivate the speaker to continue speaking and to improve. The evaluator lets the speaker know what areas he/she excelled in and offers a few constructive suggestions to help the speaker improve. [Evaluation Form](#)

Timekeeper: Because one of the purposes of Toastmasters is to ensure our members learn how to express a thought within a specific time, the timekeeper times, records and reports the time used by each table topic speaker, speaker, and evaluator. [Timer Script and Log](#)

Grammarian: This person counts the misuses of words and the use of words and sounds, such as umm, and uh, and so, but, etc. A report will be given during the evaluation period for each of the participating speakers. They also present a word of the day, gives the definition and uses it in a sentence asking the audience to use it in their speeches. This person also praises participants for using the word of the day. [Toastmasters International -Grammarian Script and Log.](#) *Grammarian evaluates the following roles i.e. Toastmaster of the Day, Table Topics Speakers, Speakers, Evaluators by using the Grammarian/Script Log.*

You may also refer to the link below on Free Toasthost, to access it, go to Free Toasthost link -1) Member Downloads (left side of the page)-2) Meeting Reports and you will find a list of useful reports.

President: Conducts the business meeting at the end of the meeting.

Toastmasters' website link

[Toastmasters International -Home](#)

**If you do need a form for any of the roles above, please go to [Toastmasters.org](#) (see link above) and type in the role in the search engine and it will populate, and you can print out the form.*

How to get to Free Toasthost? This is the tool used to sign up for roles in our club meetings.

District 117 link

d117.toastmastersdistricts.org

[district calendar](#)

Regular Check-ins and Feedback Mechanism

VP Membership to periodically check in on all members, especially new members.

VP Membership and Secretary to discuss how to obtain feedback from our members i.e., what are we doing well and what can be improved and how we can help them on their personal journey to be a better leader and a great communicator?

Club Meeting Flow Steps

Prior to meeting: (TMOD = Toastmaster of the Day)

1. TMOD ensures all roles are filled for the meeting.
2. TMOD brings copies of the agenda to the meeting.
3. Attendance sheet is needed for meeting (Club Secretary)
 - a. If Secretary is unable to attend the meeting, please reach out to Sergeant of Arms or his assistant and ask him to bring a few copies of the attendance sheet to the club meeting (sheet is on [TM.org/search club sign in sheet](#))
 - i. Sergeant at Arms:
 - b. [Toastmasters International -Club Sign In Sheet](#)

Meeting Tasks:

1. Sergeant at Arms greets the members and guests and reads club mission and introduces Toastmaster of the Day (TMOD)
2. TMOD takes control, introduces General Evaluator, and asks him/her to explain their role.
3. General Evaluator explains his/her role.
4. TMOD takes control, introduces Timer, and asks him/her to explain their role.
5. Timer explains his/her role.
 - a. Timer times the following:
 - i. Table Topics (1-2 minutes)

- ii. Prepared Speeches (Ice breaker 4-6 minutes, other speeches 5-7 minutes)
 - iii. Evaluations (2-3 minutes)
- 6. TMOD takes control, introduces Grammarian, and asks him/her to explain their role.
- 7. Grammarian explains his/her role.
- 8. TMOD introduces Speaker 1
- 9. Speaker 1 speaks.
- 10. TMOD introduces Speaker 2
- 11. Speaker 2 speaks.
- 12. TMOD introduces Table Topics master.
- 13. Table Topics master takes control and runs the Table Topics speeches - calls upon 3-4 table topics speakers (according to time available in that meeting)
- 14. Table topics master ends the session and passes control back to TMOD.
- 15. TMOD introduces General evaluator and passes control to him/her.
- 16. General evaluator then calls upon Evaluator 1 to give his/her evaluation.
- 17. General evaluator then calls upon Evaluator 2 to give his/her evaluation.
- 18. General evaluator takes control and calls upon Grammarian for his report.
- 19. General evaluator then calls upon Timer for his report.
- 20. General evaluator then gives his/her overall evaluation of the meeting and after completed, passes the control back to TMOD.
- 21. TMOD thank everyone, then closes the meeting and calls upon president for any club level updates.
- 22. President adjourns the meeting.

A Toastmaster's Promise

As a member of Toastmasters International and my club, I promise:

- To attend club meetings regularly
- To prepare all my projects to the best of my ability, basing them on the Toastmasters education program
- To prepare for and fulfill meeting assignments
- To provide fellow members with helpful, constructive evaluations
- To help the club maintain the positive, friendly environment necessary for all members to learn and grow
- To serve my club as an officer when called upon to do so
- To treat my fellow club members and our guests with respect and courtesy
- To bring guests to club meetings so they can see the benefits Toastmaster's membership offers
- To adhere to the guidelines and rules for all Toastmasters education and recognition programs
- To act within Toastmasters' core values of integrity, respect, service, and excellence during the conduct of all Toastmasters activities

Toastmaster's Core Values

The order that Toastmasters lists these is *Integrity, Respect, Service and Excellence (IRSE)*. Below the values are listed in order to help you remember them. Think about these core values as you RISE in the club and take on new roles as leaders yourself.



These four values are values of leaders. Leaders RISE to opportunity and overcome challenges. We believe in the strength of each one of you. We believe that there is a leader in each of you.

Please take a moment and learn how you can incorporate RISE, in one of your speeches. Get creative.

Respect: Here at Toastmasters, we learn to respect others, their differences, and their beliefs. We may hear speeches from time to time that do not connect with our own feelings/beliefs however we show respect by listening, giving non-judgmental feedback, hearing what others say without feeling judged and appreciating each other for their own unique backgrounds, histories and what they bring to this world and our club.

Integrity: Different ways to act with integrity are to keep promises, avoid gossiping, and take accountability when necessary.

Service: We are here to help one another achieve our goals. There are many ways that you can participate in being of service. Sign up for roles! Speak! If you want to take on a leadership role, let someone know. It is more than okay to raise your hand and say, "pick me" and when someone taps you on the shoulder, be prepared to say yes! You can serve on The Executive Committee or a District Committee. You can begin to check off your boxes toward your DTM (the highest learning achievement in Toastmasters).

Excellence: When you do anything and everything, please do your best. Follow through on projects, commitments and be there to applaud your fellow club-mates as they achieve so they will be there for you when you do! We all deserve excellence.

After thinking about these four values, think of your own values and how they play an integral part in your life. Then share it in a speech.



July 1, 2025- June 30, 2026

Club Officers/Assistants:

List your officers