

Role of the Club Sponsor, Mentor or Coach

Why *YOU* want to be a club sponsor/mentor/coach!

Successful mentors and sponsors consider themselves a personal coach. Coaching involves a variety of skills which includes assessing, demonstrating, motivating, and tutoring. Successful mentors and sponsors are counselors and leaders and become role models to their mentees. By being willing to try your skills as a mentor/sponsor/coach, you are challenging yourself to higher leadership potential and acquiring leadership skills for any and all your future endeavors – in your community, church, non-profits, your workplace and your home.

Club Sponsor

A sponsor helps start a new club. Each new club may have up to two sponsors. The sponsor is responsible for organizing the new club, including selling the new club idea to prospective members; helping to set up regular meetings, completing paperwork, and planning the charter presentation. Sponsors receive a certificate and credit toward the DTM in Pathways. **Note:** Sponsors must apply for credit no later than 90 days after the club's official charter date. Any changes or additions to the sponsor assignments must be made no later than 60 days after the club's officer charter date. The Pathways program requires you to complete one of the following: Serve as Club Sponsor or conduct a Speechcraft or Youth Leadership Program to get to DTM.

The sponsor offers encouragement and advice and attends **the new club's charter presentation. The sponsor works with the new club to:**

- Arrange inter-club meetings and exchange of speakers and evaluators
- Invite new club officers to attend meetings of the executive committee
- Invite the new club's members to attend speech contests, club officers training and other special meetings and encourage participation at these events

Sponsoring clubs:

Occasionally, an entire existing club may help to start a new club. The sponsoring club offers the new club encouragement and advice and its members attend the new club's charter presentation. Sponsoring clubs earn the "Founder's Award" club banner ribbon.

The sponsoring club works with the mentor after the new club charters to:

- Arrange inter-club meetings and exchange of speakers and evaluators.
- Invite the new club's officers to attend meetings of the Executive Committee.
- Invite the new club's members to attend anniversary meetings, speech contests, and other special meetings.
- Remind the new club about District training programs, Area Speech contests and other District meetings and functions and encouraging their participation at these events.

Club Mentor

Each new club may have up to two mentors who are appointed by the District Director. Mentors need to be experienced Toastmasters who actually join the new club, providing guidance during the first six months to one year of the new club's existence. The mentor receives a certificate and credit toward their DTM in the Pathways program. You need to serve as a Club Mentor or Coach to get to DTM.

Note: Mentors may apply for credit no sooner than six months after the club's official charter date. A "mentor" is a trusted counselor or guide: tutor; coach. Your task, therefore, is to serve as a coach and advisor to the newly formed club. As a Mentor, you have the opportunity to share your wisdom, knowledge, and experience with new Toastmasters who want to learn, grow, and achieve. Your responsibility is not to run the club, but to allow the club to learn and grow while gently guiding it toward excellence. By being a resource person, you can ease the growing pains of a new club and get it started on the right foot.

The duties and responsibilities of a Club Mentor:

1. Build a personal rapport with the club
2. Provide the new club with an overview history of TI, the organization structure, and the relationship between the organization and the club member
3. Explain the entire Pathways educational system
4. Acquaint the members with all of the educational programs and activities TI has to offer (i.e. Speechcraft, Youth Leadership, speech contests, debates, etc.
5. Work with club officers explaining their duties and responsibilities
6. Help Club members build positive habits (these are the kinds of behavior you want to display long after you left the group.) Emphasize these positive habits:
 - a. Regular attendance at meetings
 - b. Pathways speeches
 - c. Diligent preparation
 - d. Excellent evaluations

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- e. Positive, enthusiastic attitude. In all of TI's most successful clubs, members gain strength from a shared commitment to a worthwhile goal: self-improvement for all members.
- f. Special attention to guests and new members. Plan joint meetings with other clubs so the members will have an opportunity to see how other clubs operate.
- g. Review TI's Online Shop with the club and explain how they can benefit from the materials offered
- h. Encourage Club members to attend Area, Division, District, and International meetings
- i. Keep your District Director informed of your progress

Remember: No position description can fully outline the total duties and responsibilities of the Mentor. So, feel free to enlarge on this list. Being a club mentor offers you the opportunity to further develop and practice your leadership skills.

Club Coach

Coaching is the process of guiding and encouraging team members to achieve superior performance results. Your purpose as a coach is to ensure team members do what they are supposed to do, perform better, and reach their full potential. To perform effectively, team members need to know what is expected of them. Specifically, they need to know:

- What they are supposed to do
- Why they are supposed to do it
- How they are supposed to do it
- How well they are expected to do it
- How well they are doing

A coach's responsibility is to provide team members with the direction and feedback they need. Specifically, a coach:

- Sets high but achievable expectations
- Guides team members
- Offers support
- Gives advice
- Provides feedback
- Encourages team members

All coaches use similar tenets and tools to help others excel. Coaches might implement these tools in different ways, but the common denominators present in most coaching relationships can have lasting effects on club members'

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performance, as well as on your own. In the Pathways program you need to serve as a Club Mentor or Coach to get to DTM.

Apply these six (6) strategies to boost the effectiveness of your coaching:

Have a game-plan: A clear vision and action plan ensure that all "players" are focused on the same end-result: a vital and dynamic club. As the coach, this will help you more quickly see when the group is off-course and needs to re-calibrate its efforts. What happens if you lack a vision and action plan? Just imagine a football coach trying to coordinate each player's movements without a predetermined play.

Associate the game-plan with individuals' goals: A personal coach is only as effective as the client is motivated. A coach can recommend approaches and tools until she is blue in the face, but if the client isn't genuinely focused on attaining the expressed goals (rather, his boss told him to go to the coach), little change will be made.

Do drills: Isolate the key skills required to succeed and develop exercises that hone those specific skills through practice. Use the exercises provided in the *Successful Club Series*, the *Success Leadership Series* and/or the *Better Speaker Series*.

Put people in roles that suit their aptitude: Discuss natural propensities with club members. Learn what they like to do and why. Then ask them to carry out some of the tasks of a successful club officer.

Use appropriate communication modes and content: The best coaches in any arena know how to mold their communication style and content to befit the person they are coaching -- leading to greater understanding, better rapport, and longer retention. This applies to word choice, voice tone, personal space boundaries, and the way you explain required actions and expectations. For example: When explaining how to cup your hands properly when swimming, a coach might toss out all explanations and visuals directly relating to swimming and instead say, "Pretend you're petting a cat." Since they have stroked a cat before, the person will better understand how to use the correct swimming form.

Celebrate: Achieving goals and surpassing milestones deserve credit. Celebrating these accomplishments underscores the value that each person brings to the table and confirms expected behaviors -- all while serving as motivators for future learning. As the club improves, invite district leaders (Area and Division Directors, members of your District Trios (District Director, Program Quality Director and Club Growth Director) and show off the club and celebrate (not your) but the members' achievements.

The difference between a successful club and an unsuccessful club is the quality of leadership within the club. Leadership abilities are not inherited. Just like communication skills, leadership skills are learned and honed through experience: facing challenges and learning from failures and successes.

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As a leader, you are recognized and rewarded not for what you do, but for the achievements of the people you lead. You are measured by the accomplishments of your team.

Ideally, your team will function effectively and make great progress toward its goals (no less than distinguished club). But what to do if one or more team members are not performing to your expectations? In these cases, your role as a club coach becomes even more important. Your responsibility is to help the member or members perform to your expectations. Many leaders are uncomfortable with this aspect of coaching. They don't like to give what they consider to be "negative" feedback. But coaching is important since it results in better performance.

Five (5) Steps to Effective Coaching:

1. Compare performance with expectations

Take an informal survey and note where the team member is not meeting your standards, and then try to determine the reason. Does the team member know what is expected? If not, tell him or her. Is the problem beyond his/her control?

2. Meet with the team member

If the problem is within the control of the team member, meet with him, explain the problem as you see it, and the effect it has on the team and its goals. For example, suppose our Club's Vice President Membership was not sending applications for membership and dues to TI when new members joined. As a result, new members were not receiving their materials to help them get started in the educational program. As coach, you would meet with the VP Membership, point out this fact and give specific examples.

3. Ask for acknowledgment

For coaching to be successful, both parties must agree a problem exists. When the team member acknowledges a problem, determine why he or she is not performing to expectation. You may suspect the cause, but you could be wrong. Listen to the team member's response

4. Work toward a solution

Both you and the team member should work together on a solution. What actions can the team member take to resolve the problem? What actions can you take to resolve the problem? For example, if the VP Membership needed funds for purchasing envelopes and postage stamps for mailing membership applications, you could help by speaking with the Club Treasurer. Discuss the possibilities and agree on an acceptable course of action.

5. Follow up

Monitor the team member's performance to ensure the problem is resolved.

In your discussion with the team member show care and concern. You will be more effective – and avoid making the team member defensive if you:

- Talk *with* them, not *down* to them.
- Admit when you've made a mistake.
- Keep it simple. Elaborate descriptions are not necessary.
- Listen. Don't interrupt.
- Keep it short and specific. Address the issues directly.
- Be sincere.
- Be timely. Don't wait weeks or months to address a problem.

Again, COACHING RESULTS IN IMPROVED PERFORMANCE — but, there are other benefits too:

- **High morale.** When everyone is working together and achieving goals, team members feel good about their work.
- **Empowerment.** People feel confident and willingly accept more responsibility.
- **Development.** Team members learn and improve. As they grow, they become more creative and are able to contribute even more.

As a leader, you benefit from coaching. Team productivity increases and the team completes tasks to your expectations. As their skills increase, you can delegate more so you have more time for other leadership responsibilities.

You have a duty as a leader to ensure you do everything possible to improve team members' performance. Few things motivate people more than praise or help from their leader. As a leader you can always show them how they can help themselves and their clubs do better.

Remember Always:

The key to successful leadership is influence, not authority!! As well: leaders see problems not as problems but as challenges and opportunities. Are you willing to be challenged? If "Yes" ask to be appointed a club sponsor, mentor and/or coach. What do you have to lose? You have everything to gain!