

Guidelines To Distinguished Toastmaster (DTM)

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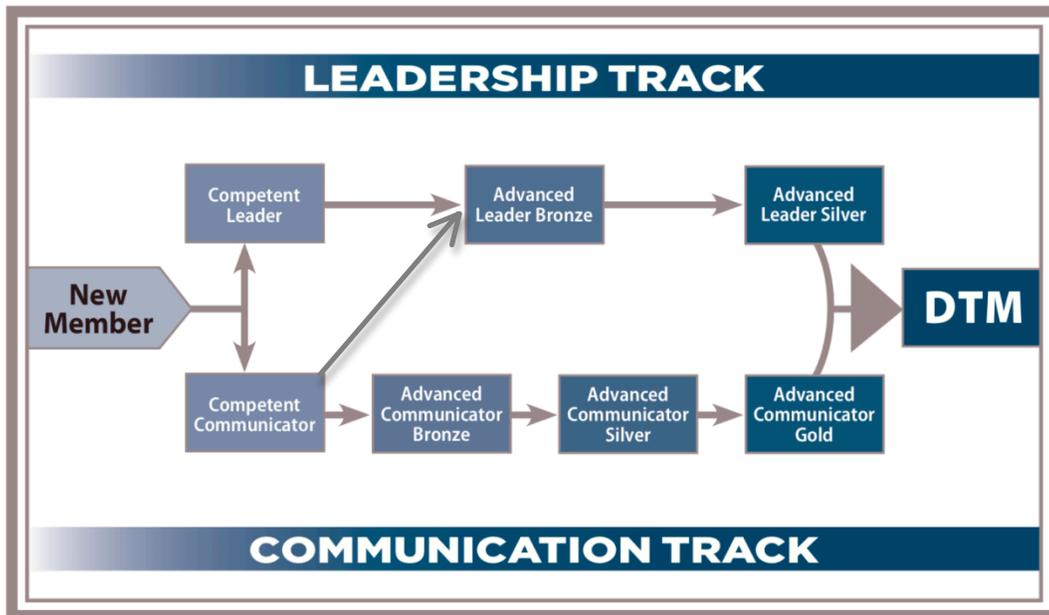
1. Introduction

The Guideline to DTM, also known as the Road to DTM, was first written in 2013 with the assumption that there was no time limit for achieving the DTM award. A Toastmaster could progress through the program at his or her pace, from zipping down the autobahn to strolling down a country lane. With the introduction of the Toastmasters Pathways program, members will have a transition period to earn the current DTM award. After that period, all members will need to earn the DTM, using the Pathways criteria.

A Toastmaster will have two years, after the Pathways program has started, to attain a DTM or any other educational award under the current program. Furthermore, the only educational award that will carry over into the Pathways program is the DTM; no educational awards will be able to be used with the new Pathways program. If a Toastmaster wants to achieve DTM using the current educational program, this guideline will provide you with ideas and opportunities that follow TI educational standards and to also achieve the coveted DTM.

This guideline is broken into the segments between the Leadership track and the Communication track and then by each educational award. It will focus on educational awards that are challenging for members, such as the High Performance Leadership and break these down into achievable “chunks” of information.

I hope that you will be able to use this guideline and join the ranks of District 65’s Distinguished Toastmasters!



2. Competent Communicator (CC) Award

The requirement is to complete all ten projects in the CC manual. While all ten projects must be completed, here are some ideas for completing the projects expeditiously.

First, remember that any two speeches can be completed outside of the club environment. All you need is another Toastmaster to give you an oral and written evaluation. If you speak at a church event, civic function, or work meeting, find a project you can get credit for, arrange to have a fellow Toastmaster accompany you and evaluate your speech, using the speech manual evaluation form.

Second, according to the Toastmasters International (TI) Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) web site, you can repeat the same speech to complete different manual projects as long as you address the specific objective of the speech. For example, one CC speech is entitled “How You Say It” and another CC speech is “How You Show It”. Both speeches could use an identical story but be quite different simply by focusing on the voice one time and the body language the next. This can be quite useful if you visit other clubs, since they most likely not have heard the first speech. The intent is to learn from each of the 10 speeches being developed; it is in your best interest to improve that “same” speech to build a better speech but also to integrate the goals of the module you completing and not simply do the same speech over and over.

Third, remember that the “club environment” includes ANY Toastmasters club, so you may visit other clubs and, for earning speech credits, you may still earn the credit for the speech as if as if you were speaking at your own club.

3. Competent Leader (CL) Award

As in the CC award, all ten projects must be completed in the CL manual to earn this educational award. Ensure you review the requirements for each project to understand clearly what needs to be accomplished. Below you will find ideas that can enable you to move through the CL manual more expeditiously.

First, remember that any project in the CL manual may be done in any Toastmasters club. Just as you may earn credit when speaking at a club being visited, you may also earn credit for projects in the CL Manual. I recommend that you always keep your CL manual close by, as part of your Toastmasters inventory of material. If you perform one of the CL roles, you will need to be evaluated on how you met the project objectives. TI has made it very clear that credit cannot be earned at a later date for roles filled at meetings that were not also evaluated at that meeting.

Second, remember that you can (and should) work on your CL while you are working on your CC (or any other communications manual).

Third, in Projects 4 and 5 of the CL, you may earn credit for speaking from the CC manual but can also earn credit for one of the leadership projects.

Fourth, Project Number 8 relates to Membership and Publicity. You do not need to be an officer in the role of Vice President Membership or Vice President Public Relations to work on these projects.

Fifth, sometimes, we make the assignments harder than they may need to be. As an example, a membership drive project may be as simple as giving a \$5.00 gift card to the TI store to any member brings a guest during a 2-month period, such as during the Smedley Award time period.

Challenges

First, you cannot get credit for more than one role per meeting. For example, if you are the WAG master (word-of-the-day, grammarian, and ah counter), you can get credit for either grammarian or ah counter, but not both.

Second, for Project 9, you cannot get both Competent Leader credit and Advanced Communicator Gold credit for mentoring a news member through the first three speeches. A possible alternative is to mentor the new member through the next three speeches (“mentor an existing member”) or mentor the member through three CL projects.

4. Advanced Communicator Awards

Once a member earns a CC award, he or she must now complete two advanced manuals for the next three ranks (Advanced Communicator Bronze, Advanced Communicator Silver, and Advanced Communicator Gold). While any of the 15 available manuals can be used to earn credit, some may be easier, in terms of speaking at club environments. This is also dependent on an individual’s background. As an example, an engineer may have an easier time using the Speaking to Inform manual than the Storytelling manual.

The following eight manuals are most suitable since most of the presentations are 10 minutes or less and do not require any special equipment, participation from other members, etc. They are

- The Entertaining Speaker
- Speaking to Inform
- Humorously Speaking
- Storytelling
- Speeches by Management
- Special Occasion Speeches
- Specialty Speeches
- Public Relations

Any six of these can be done in any order, but The Entertaining Speaker and Speaking to Inform are probably the best to start with, as many people consider these to be easier and serve as a lead-in to other manuals. Appendix A of “Guideline to DTM” explains the manuals in more detail.

4a. Advanced Communicator Bronze (ACB)

The requirements for ACB are to complete any two advanced manuals. Similar to the CC guidance, remember that any two projects in each manual can be completed in your home club, while visiting another club, or outside of the club environment, corporate speaking event, etc. (This holds true for the next two communication ranks also). Remember that the speech must be evaluated to earn the educational credit.

4b. Advanced Communicator Silver (ACS)

The requirements for ACS are to complete two additional manuals and complete any two presentations from either the Successful Club series or Better Speaker series (or one from each). Below you will find ideas that can enable you to move through the ACS program expeditiously.

The Successful Club series can be used for both ACS and Advanced Leader Bronze (ALB), so choosing projects from this series can be used for either the educational award of ACS or ALB. Also, you can do the same project more than once as long as it is in a different setting. Therefore, you can do a project such as “Moments of Truth” at 4 different clubs and get credit for ACS and the ACB

Challenges

Remember that you have to complete two different advanced manuals for ACS than you did for ALB. (The same holds for Advanced Communicator Gold – the two manuals must be different than those you use for ACB or ACS).

4c. Advanced Communicator Gold (ACG)

The ACG is the highest communication educational award. When a member attains both ACG and Advanced Leader Silver (ALS), he or she is eligible for Distinguished Toastmaster (DTM).

The requirements for ACG are to

- Achieved ACS
- Complete two more advanced speech manuals (not the same as you did for ACB or ACS)
- Coach a new member through his or her or her first 3 speech projects
- Conduct a presentation from the Success/Leadership Series, Success/Communication Series or a Youth Leadership

Below you will find ideas that can enable you to move through the ACG program expeditiously.

First, although SpeechCraft and Youth Leadership are worthwhile endeavors, it may be somewhat easier to get five or more people together and do a 1 ½ hour presentation from the Success/Leadership or Success/Communication series. Conducting a presentation from the Leadership and Communication Youth Leadership or SpeechCraft series involves establishing, promoting, and conducting a community program that could last up to two months.

Second, if you conduct a session from the leadership and/or communication series, you can help train club members by conducting projects such as “Effective Evaluation” or “Parliamentary Procedure,” allowing members to use the learned skills to improve the quality of the club environment, while fulfilling your ACG requirement.

Challenges

As mentioned in the CL award, if you are earning program credit for mentoring a member, you cannot use the same 3 speeches to earn credit in two different programs. Specifically, you could not receive credit for mentoring a member and obtaining ACG credit and also obtain Project 9 credit in the CL manual. You could mentor that member for the next 3 speeches, though, and get credit for the CL Project 9 option of mentoring an existing member for 3 speeches!

5. Advanced Leadership Awards

Once a member has completed both the CC and CL, he or she can work on the Advanced Leader awards to further enhance his or her leadership skills. Ideas for completing the two leadership ranks will now be discussed:

5a. Advanced Leader Bronze (ALB)

ALB is relatively easy to attain once a Toastmaster attains his or her CC and CL awards (remember, you have to have both!). This educational award can be earned by serving as a club officer for six months and complete two presentations from either the Successful Club series or Leadership Excellence series (or one from each).

The Successful Club series can be used for both ACS and ALB. As discussed for ACS, choosing projects from this series can be used for either award. Also, you can do the same project more than once as long as it is in a different setting. Therefore, you can do a project like “Moments of Truth” at 4 different clubs and get credit for ALB and ACS.

5b. Advanced Leader Silver (ALS)

The ALS is the highest leadership award. When a member attains both ACG and ALS, he or she is eligible for Distinguished Toastmaster (DTM).

The requirements for ALS are:

- Achieved ALB
- Served successfully as a club sponsor, mentor or coach
- Completed the High Performance Leadership program
- Served a complete (1 year) term as a District Leader

Below you will find ideas that can enable you to move through the ALS program manual expeditiously.

First, for the club sponsor/mentor/coach requirement, many members have found that serving as a sponsor and/or mentor is easier than the club coach. To be a club sponsor, you must help a club charter helping with public relations, setting up regular meetings, facilitating the charter process of 20 members, etc. The time period is usually 3-6 months. As a club mentor, once you have a club chartered, you serve as the mentor for that club until the next dues period. At that time, the club must remain at 20 members to earn the credit. In each of these cases, the Club President must identify that you were successful in this effort to TI.

Some members view the club coaching as a challenge as you will be working with a club that has already been identified as having low membership. The club coach must help get the club to 20 members, or an increase of 5 members, and to be a Distinguished Club or better by the June 30 date. You may get that time extended for a single year.

The next requirement is to serve as a District Officer. The District has officer roles available starting July 1 of each year. As you will need this requirement, it is in your best interest to obtain a DTM to submit your name and/or nomination to the District Director and/or Nomination Chair to be considered for this role.

Challenges

As there are only 35 officer roles in the District Executive Council, there may be more members seeking opportunities to be a DEC member than there are openings, especially as the Pathways transition period approaches.

One of the most challenging projects for members is the High Performance Leadership (HPL) project. Members often challenge themselves to high goals that far exceed the requirement for the HPL.

The HPL includes:

- identifying a project to complete
- conducting a leadership self assessment
- forming a committee of 3-4 other Toastmasters and/or a non Toastmaster
- briefing the committee routinely
- obtaining committee feedback
- completing the project
- Assessing and reporting with the committee, yourself, and your club on your project and lessons learned. Note that your club reporting may also obtain you credit for another speech project.

Next Steps

By providing this guide, I hope I have given you encouragement that the DTM is well within your reach. Take the time to self-assess your current educational status and make a plan, including projects and dates and you will provide yourself with a roadmap to obtain the DTM.

As in any educational and/or learning community, members always learn and achieve more with the help of a mentor/coach. There are many opportunities to help you to partner with a DTM coach and/or to reach the DTM:

- Reach out to your Area Director for recommendations of Distinguished Toastmasters who may be able to work with you on your own plan
- Partner with another member who is at a similar pace in the DTM program to partner and work together
- Join the Close to DTM Networking Group, meeting on the 3rd Sunday of each month at 7PM. The call in number is 1-712-775-7031. Access Code is 227-392.
- Reach out to me and I can work with you and/or help find you find a DTM mentor/coach and or help to find other resources.

I hope you are able to earn your DTM. It is truly an accomplishment in the Toastmasters Organization and one you will continually cherish. Once you earn that DTM, take time to remember the help you received and pass this help on to the next person in your own environment.

Good luck and I wish every one of you a successful DTM journey.