

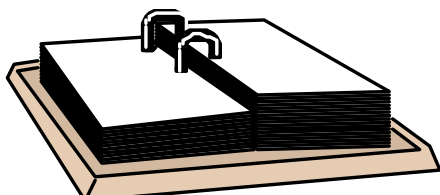
The Strand

The newsletter of PRLS

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PRLS Calendar



<http://www.prls.org/calendar.html>

- 10/4 Basic PRLS, Ventura County
- 10/10 Basic PRLS, Santa Maria
- 10/18 MPRLS 1 (Extemp Speaking), Ventura County
- 11/8 MPRLS 2 (Planned Speaking), Ventura County
- 11/22 MPRLS3 (Facilitation Skills), Ventura County
- 12/6 MPRLS 4 (Situational Leadership), Ventura County
- 1/24 MPRLS5 (Project Mgt), Ventura County

Table of Contents

Aussie Speaking Program	1
The Life of a PRLS Instructor	2
Don't Postpone Joy!	2
Keeping MPRLS 3 Constructive	3
Editor's Musings	3
Assessments	4

AUSSIE ROTARIANS LEARN THE SECRETS OF IMPROMPTU SPEAKING

By Helen Blunden

Editor's note: About half of all the PRLS instruction in the world is going

on in Australia. Expect regular updates on the Aussie program.

On 6th July, new and aspiring Rotary Club Presidents of District 9810 in Melbourne, Australia, willingly gave up their Sunday to attend a course that fired up their enthusiasm and passion for Rotary.

Anticipating their new roles with excitement, six participants from the Rotary Clubs of Monbulk, Mount Waverley, Hampton, Bentleigh Moorabbin Central and Rowville mastered the art of impromptu speaking in the first module of the Master Potential Rotary Leadership Seminars (MPRLS).



Masters at Impromptu Speaking 6th July 2008

Despite the initial fears and anxieties of their upcoming responsibilities as Club Leaders, all understood the importance of 'thinking on your feet' to deliver compelling impromptu speeches as an essential and critical skill for all Presidents to possess.

Of course, there was also nervous anxiety with their upcoming Club Changeover Night and what they were going to say.

Zilla Roth from RC Bentleigh Moorabbin Central was looking forward to her Club Changeover night. She believed that her skills honed in the course would stand her in good stead on her Changeover Night. "I actually enjoy standing up and communicating in front of everyone. It's a lot of fun. But this course is a great foundation. It gives you the courage to stand up and speak. I've learned that it's the big smile in presentation that makes little things mean a lot."

Jennifer Newton from RC Hampton said, "Master PRLS provided me with a structure and strategy that surrounds the mental gymnastics of an impromptu speech. It's taught me that telling stories is a wonderful gift that I didn't appreciate before today. It's these little gems that have been taught that have been useful and I'll put into practice."

Tamara Dennett from RC Rowville saw the benefit of the course to her own personal development. "I have been educated in something which will be used in all areas of my life and Rotary will benefit. This is self improvement. This course has taught me that I have a voice and I can use it; and I'm worthy of being heard by my colleagues."

By the end of the day, everyone had demonstrated an improvement in their presentation style and took risks

with their speeches they wouldn't have otherwise done.

All participants were presented with their Certificates and distinctive pearl lapel badges by DG 9810 John Barnes.

"You're very lucky," he addressed the group. "When I joined Rotary twenty-nine years ago, I flummoxed around and didn't think I could talk. I had to force myself to get up and speak just so that I could improve this skill. As new club leaders, people will expect you to get up and say something on a topic that you may know nothing about. If you can learn this skill in such a course like this one, then you'd develop the skill quickly. While the skills learned here will help you in Rotary, they are also great for you outside of Rotary. If you ever need to promote something and get your message across, then you need to do this course."

The Potential Rotary Leaders Seminar has been running in District 9810 since November 2007. Although relatively new within the District, it has been recognised and acknowledged as a key leadership development program for all Rotarians and has been incorporated into the District Training program.



The Life of a PRLS Instructor

By Wade Nomura (Carpinteria Morning)

District 5240 has long been at the forefront of education in the Rotary World. As a Master PRLS (Potential Rotary Leaders Seminar) instructor, I can attest to the successes of this series and the instant benefits to those who complete the classes.

As instructors, we are responsible for the successes or failures of the curricula we teach. It is our responsibility to convey to the students the information and practical application of what we teach. Instructors have years of experience in the subjects we teach, and each instructor must still go through an internship and evaluation process

before we are certified as instructors in the program.

I consider the certification process the easy part, because once you are certified you then become responsible for all of the class handouts, audio/visual equipment, class team partnering, room environment, layout and time management. All these items are evaluated by the attendees and can result in a low (or high) instructor evaluation. Plainly, preparation is crucial if you plan on being successful.

I would like to share with you the behind-the-scenes preparation that go into giving our classes the best effort we have to offer.

I start preparing for a class weeks before I am scheduled to teach. There is the reviewing of the curriculum; the PowerPoints, handouts, practical exercises, equipment and supplies needed for the class. I then find out the anticipated number of attendees in order to know how many handouts and exercise charts I will need, along with the number of "teams" I will be working with. I then confirm with the site coordinator the list of items and equipment I will need for the class. The site coordinators are the unsung heroes of PRLS, as they have the responsibility of making the students comfortable, and having items the instructor will need available (or what they forgot to bring). My check list is reviewed a dozen times to make sure I did not forget anything.

A week before the event, I look over the "unforeseen" potential failure points, such as weather (I have had to plan around snow on the passes a few times now), or heat (confirm the air conditioning and solar exposure). I will evaluate the curriculum, and make improvements on items that I feel will benefit the student. I usually review all this the night before I teach, along with the many "walk-throughs" that seems to keep me awake most of the night.

I will try to get to the class location at least an hour before the class is to start (if not the night before) in order to inspect and confirm all

equipment and facilities are available and functioning.

I always give 100% effort to teaching a class, which is something that I enjoy doing. The students in my classes deserve my efforts, as they have sacrificed a Saturday in order to gain the skills I am teaching, which in turn will benefit Rotary. A day of teaching is as exhausting as anything I have ever done, as it is actually a two-week process for a six-hour class.

I thoroughly enjoy teaching these classes, as the benefits from teaching are only accentuated by the preparation that it takes. I have enjoyed meeting and working with the many attendees, all of whom share a passion for Rotary. The most rewarding aspect of teaching is in having the opportunity to share with them the curricula we have developed here in District 5240's PRLS program.

If you have not yet taken PRLS, please consider doing so. There is a reason Rotary International has recognized PRLS as one of the best leadership training programs in the Rotary World. You will be amazed at all we have done to make this as beneficial for you as possible.



Don't Postpone Joy

Did you ever notice that poor leaders never smile, never compliment, never plan and never communicate? The start of curing that disease of negative vibes is to celebrate whenever possible.

If there is a reason—even if there is *no* reason—to celebrate, do it now! Don't wait until next week, next month or next year to congratulate those who have worked hard for you. Don't put off an anniversary celebration of the founding of your club. Don't hesitate ten seconds to commemorate your club's 50th or 100th or 200th (or 17th or 82nd) Paul Harris Fellowship. Your Club Service Director joined the club five years ago tomorrow? Celebrate it! Your club is fifteen years old? Throw a party!

Then, when life returns to your club, when your members start

Page 3

blowing away the community with their activism, when the Governor calls your name at the annual awards dinner, remember that it was because you toasted your high performers and honored your club for its spirit.

Master PRLS 3 / Facilitation Skills

Keeping It Constructive

By Wade Nomura (Carpinteria Morning)

Of all the Master PRLS classes I teach, I find the most rewarding is Master PRLS 3 (Facilitation Skills). In Master PRLS 3, we give you ALL the tools you will need to develop a solid working group of individuals — how to deal with “issues” quickly and efficiently, and how to deal with real and potential conflict situations. Can everyone imagine not having to deal with conflict and always having your club willing and able to get things done? Can everyone imagine what it’s like to be part of the leadership of a club willing to take on new ventures, improve and add onto the old activities, and then to be happier than ever to have progressed so far in such a short time?

The key to being successful at facilitating is being able to relate to people with all types of backgrounds, interests, personalities, cultures, educational and professional fields, age groups, genders, and leadership levels. This is all possible by being objective and

open minded. As a facilitator, you must be able to tap into the individuals’ personalities and be able to extract everything they have to offer and know in experience and knowledge.

As club president, I found that the skills from Master PRLS 3 really helped in dealing with conflict situations. How many times have you witnessed an individual who seems to be impossible to work with; being outspoken, agitated, or just not caring? Human nature is to become defensive yourself in this situation, and take on the same traits being exhibited by your counterpart. Is that constructive? Definitely not! The solution starts to appear in understanding the situation. As a facilitator, your job is to find out why a person is behaving this way. You will find that he usually feels that he is not being heard; in other words, he feels there is a lack of communication in the club. In this situation, your best solution might be to make certain that the individual is given the opportunity to speak out about what he has to say.

You will find that having the facilitation skills taught in MPRLS 3 will help develop results quickly and easily when working with any group. You will be able to resolve conflicts efficiently, and you will enjoy using these newly found skills.

During my year as club president, I found that communicating with everyone in my club was the key to success, and Master PRLS 3 gave me the skills I needed. It also gave me the insight and

The Strand, The Newsletter of PRLS

understanding on how to use these skills. When you apply these new tools, you will discover that everyone feels part of the team and is willing to participate.

The BEST thing that you will walk away with is the ability to reduce conflict in your life, thereby reducing stress, by being objective and interactive with others. Master PRLS 3 gives you the skills to work with and to enjoy people in all walks of life. Take this class! You will see why I enjoy teaching it.



“May the meditations in my life find a welcome in your eyes.”

Reforming the Culture

We’re on a quest in Rotary, it seems to me—a quest for the Holy Grail of ethical business dealings in a society which treasures the individual while at the same time, in some of its public figures, remains hell-bent on pursuing nothing but personal pleasure. As author Tom Wolfe said a few years ago at West Point, “Some of the sentinels are deserting their posts.”

Many out there in the society we all represent seem at a loss for what to do. We do the best we can, I think, in trying to imbue in our members and in

Page 4

those we touch through Interact, Rotaract and RYLA the restoring of ethical values one person at a time.

First, however, we all have to understand that we are not, never have been and never will be, social engineers thinking that we're going to reform the world through Rotary. Though our primary function is "Service Above Self," that doesn't mean that even the best of us will ever achieve the state of mind that allows totally selfless enterprise in the name of charity. We'll continue to try, as we have for almost 104 years now.

The Commandant of the US Marine Corps wrote in an article for The Armed Forces Journal: "I want my legacy for the Corps to be, literally, a transformed American. When our Marines return to their cities and towns, they will be drug-free, not alcoholics, and they will care for their families."

Well, we don't have that kind of physical control over our members and those others in the community whom we touch, but we do have a sort of moral control. The kiss of Our Four-Way Test and our motto, "Service Above Self," put a major, visible hickey on our necks, because we start with good citizens and make them better by example. Our mental core values are pretty major to us, and they're just as important as the public successes we have in guiding young people as they grow in our society.

We have, in effect, joined in a fight to preserve the outlook of our members while simultaneously encouraging

The Strand, The Newsletter of PRLS

their upward moral progression in Rotary. We have standards that are substantive; we have goals that will stand up to anyone's scrutiny. We take a keen interest in the intellectual and moral development of our members.

You don't see any advertisements soliciting new members; you don't see any promises of business preferment. All we say to those whom we invite to associate with us is, "Do you want to be challenged mentally and morally? Join Rotary and we will guarantee you'll be changed. If you stick around us long enough, we guarantee that change will last forever." That's our commercial; that's our advertisement.

Does it work? Sometimes, it really does; sometimes it doesn't; it depends on the kinds of people we bring in to become part of the culture. Because that's absolutely what we do—we recognize and treat the symptoms of sickness, disease and hunger. To do that, we need to find great **people**, not necessarily great movers of mountains. Then even those who have to leave us, for whatever their reasons, will go back into society knowing that there's at least one organization that can be counted upon to look askance at weak morals in our society, that will go back to their families and jobs better for having been associated with

always assessing our resources, both personally and for Rotary. What is it that we have or can get to do what we want to do?

Club leadership can't possibly predict everything needed, nor can it determine our willingness to provide time, money and effort in support of Rotary goals.

We're all tempted to pack it in when we're forced to face our commitments. We have to decide for ourselves how much of our personal resources we're going to give to Rotary's projects and goals. Sometimes it's tough to give another dollar, another hour, another Saturday morning.

Regardless of what choices we make, one thing stands paramount in helping us to decide what to give: We determine to represent Rotary so that people won't come down hard on the institution as a result of having come across someone who doesn't conform to its public image.

District Governor

Anil Garg

anilgargdg0809@sbcglobal.net

Director, Education and Training

David Gore

david@davidcgorecfa.com

PRLS Director

Bonnie Cameron

bonniec@tcsn.net

Strand Editor

PDG Jock MacKenzie

jocko717@yahoo.com



Assessments

A perpetual action we all take as leaders is that we are