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Kit for Chair for Club Launch or Kick Start Meeting

Collateral Essentials:

- 30 Charter Membership Forms
- 30 Ice Breaker Handouts
- 30 Evaluation Handouts
- 30 “A Toastmaster Wears Many Hats” Handouts
- 30 Education Cards
- 30 Benefits/Values Sheet
- Timing Cards
- Gavel
- District Business Cards
- Toastmaster Magazines (current edition and past 3 months)
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Three Parts:

1. Servicing the lead
2. Preparing for the launch meeting
3. The launch meeting

PART 1: SERVICING OUR VALUABLE AND IMPORTANT LEADS

When you receive a lead, respond as quickly as possible with an e-mail or preferably a phone call. You will increase your ability to build a new club if you respond within the hour.

Research the company or community on the Internet. This may give you information on its core values and what they do to make a difference in the world.

Uncover the organizational, community or individual's needs. Ask questions to discover how much they know about the Toastmasters program. Fill in the gaps in their understanding of Toastmasters International's (TI) program to make sure they understand the commitments to developing and creating a club.

Important Points:

- Toastmasters International is a not-for-profit organization
- We exist in 141 countries around the world (August 2017).
- A minimum of twenty members are required to charter a club
- To get 20 people to register they should attract 30 or more people to attend a demonstration meeting
- It costs \$125 USD to complete an application to charter. This will register the club name with TI and initiate the delivery of materials to start a club (i.e., manuals, time cards, gavel, achievement chart, etc.)
- TI charges a one-time \$20 USD fee per person for first time Toastmaster members.
- In addition, there is a membership fee payable to TI of \$45 USD every six months. The first membership payment per person is due upon chartering the club. Subsequent membership fees of \$45 USD per member are due at the next dues period (April 1 or October 1). The original \$45 USD fee for membership in a new club chartering will be prorated during the next dues period after chartering.
- Inquire if there will also be a charge for the meeting room.
- Discover what costs the organization will absorb. Give suggestions of different ways other corporate clubs pick up some of the costs or utilize incentives such as paying a portion of the membership fees, refunding the membership fees after 5 or 10 speeches, or giving a day off when someone earns an educational award etc.
- Recommend a range of dues by estimating base costs and adding an appropriate amount to cover exchange and purchase of small items for the club (i.e., ribbons, name tags, lectern, banner, etc.)
- Explain that part of the Toastmasters leadership training comes through the seven executive officer positions (i.e., President, VP Education, VP Membership, VP Public Relations, Treasurer, Secretary, Sergeant at Arms) whom will be elected to lead the club. Toastmasters provides its members with support in this area through leadership training for these executive officers twice a year and additional support through our corporate structure with Area visits and the Distinguished Club Plan.
- Explain that the new club will receive one or two mentors depending on the club meeting time and location. The inquiring organization may have some staff members with TM experience as well. Ask about these individuals and speak to them about helping with the new club. Uncover the interests and abilities of those with prior TM experience. Hold a discussion to determine the logistics of the new club (i.e., day of week , time, and location).

- Advise the inquiring group that the most successful clubs charter in less than 30 days – providing this information will bring energy and momentum. Having a minimum of 25-30 people at a launch meeting is important to success.
- Inform the inquiring group that we have various options of software to help them manage meetings electronically.

Email the contact person the links to the new club digital kit and marketing posters. Let them know how pleased you were to speak to them. Offer your team's support to help them build excitement and momentum for potential members.

PART 2: PREPARING FOR A CLUB LAUNCH MEETING

Recruit a team of 2-4 other Toastmasters to help during the launch meeting.

The agenda should include:

- Overview of TI program
- One prepared speech - Invite and guide a member of the launch team to deliver a speech on how Toastmasters changed their life. Time: 5-7 minutes.
- Evaluation
- Table Topics (TT)
- Question and Answer Period (5 minutes is recommended)
- Share what the financial investment is to charter a club and become a Toastmaster member
- Brainstorm potential club names. Have people who want to join the new club vote for their preferred choice.
- Elect Officers

If the meeting is projected to run for an hour and a half, you may add another prepared speech, timer report, and grammarian.

Explain to the TT Master before the meeting the need to inform the group about the timing and general description of TT. Recommend that the first question go to a member of the launch team or someone in the audience who has TM experience. Also recommend that questions be geared to a person's past experience.

Examples:

- What is your favorite restaurant and why do you like it?
- What important lesson have you learned from a teacher (or Mom, Dad, friend, etc.)?
- Tell us about your best vacation.
- Share with us a story of a gift you received.

Do not ask questions that require responders to formulate an opinion, such as:

- Do you think women are treated unfairly in the workplace?
- Do you think we should eat less meat?

The audience may not yet have the skills to effectively answer opinion-based questions under stress. We want potential new members to leave feeling successful and having learned something new about each other. There is plenty of time to practice and develop skills in the weeks and months to come.

Ensure you have the Toastmasters title and educational designation of each launch team member. Obtain an introduction for speech project.

Create the meeting agenda using the template from the District's marketing department to get the potential club off on the right foot. Email the agenda to the organization to print off or bring 30 or more (depending on potential number of attendees) copies.

Research all relevant meeting information to send to launch team members: date, time, address, floor number, parking, where to meet you, requirement to check in at reception if necessary, and who to ask for.

PART 3 – THE LAUNCH MEETING

Day of Club Launch – launch team should arrive 30 minutes early. Attendees may start coming in 15 minutes before allotted time. This will give you 15 minutes to set up the room and brief the launch team about last minute details. Place agendas and benefits handout on tables or chairs and other materials on a table to the side or back of the room - these materials can be distributed at the end of the meeting. Make sure the timer has timing cards and a timing device. Place CC and CL manuals near the lectern for you to hold up at an appropriate time in the meeting.

Fifteen minutes prior to the start of the meeting, situate yourself closer to the door so you can shake hands when people arrive. Smile, welcome them and introduce yourself. Ask their name but keep new people moving into the room. Invite people to enter and take a seat if needed.

Two minutes before the start of meeting, go to the front of room to prepare to lead the meeting. Use the gavel at the appointed time. Do not delay the start of the meeting even if people are arriving - sometimes the need for more effective meetings is the reason Toastmasters has been proposed to the organization.

Start by saying hello or welcome, share your name and Toastmasters title, and thank potential members and your launch team for being present.

1. Ask who has previously attended a Toastmasters meeting. (This cues the Table Topics master about possible participants.)
2. Introduce your demo team, announcing their designation before their name (if corporate club) - Example -- Advanced Communicator Silver, Ellen DeGeneres. Area Director, Tom Cruise. (Launch team member rises, smiles and waves)

3. Share a two minute story about your first Toastmasters meeting. Be willing to be vulnerable and paint a picture of how you went from _____ to _____, thanks to Toastmasters. Why? People listen more to people they know something about. It removes any question in their mind about 'Who is this person?'
4. Give a brief overview of TI. This could include:
 - Not-for-profit - all volunteers
 - Been in existence since 1924
 - 365,000 current members in 141 countries (August 2017 update)
 - Self-paced program
 - Empowers people to develop communication and leadership skills
 - Foundational program has 2 manuals, Competent Communicator (CC) and Competent Leadership (CL), which they can work on simultaneously or one at a time. The CC manual has 10 projects that help people become more effective speakers.
 - Upon completing CC and CL manuals, members may work on advanced levels
 - Share the Mission of TI: "We empower individuals to become more effective communicators and leaders."
 - Share TI's four core values: Integrity, Respect, Service to the Member and Commitment to Excellence
5. Review the meeting agenda, point out the timer's location and explain that timers have three colored cards, green, yellow and red, to keep the meeting on track.

Proceed as a regular Toastmasters meeting, while adding information along the way such as:

- How to introduce a speaker, giving time allotted, designation and full name
- Explain shaking hands to identify change in control of the platform
- Why we never leave the platform unattended
- That we clap to reinforce willingness to step up and as a way to say "thanks"
- That nervousness is good - it means a person is stepping out of their comfort zone and about to grow

At Q & A time ask "What questions do you have?" (Rather than "Do you have any questions?")

When all questions have been answered, ask a series of questions pre-supposing a 'yes' answer:

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1. Do you think Toastmasters is a place where people can grow? (Pause, wait for nods or hand raises, and you can nod as well)
2. Do you think this is a place where you can grow? (Nod and watch for their head nodding).
3. Raise your hand if you would want to join Toastmasters? Do a head count - if more than 20 hands are raised, go to the next step - naming the club and electing club officers.

(Sometimes the date and timing of meeting still needs to be determined. Other times the meeting date has been pre-determined by their HR department or the club initiator)

If less than 12 are interested, recommend you help those people find a club nearby to join. If 12-20 are interested, ask if they can get the balance of the 20 members in the next 6 weeks.

4. Fill roles for the next meeting. Inquire: Who would like to give their Ice Breaker at the next meeting? Who would like to evaluate?, etc. The launch team, with the help of a sponsor, mentor, Area Director, and Division Director, fill roles of Chair and General Evaluator for the first 3 meetings to model these roles. If more team members are available they can be evaluators or take on another role.
5. Conclude the meeting by thanking the launch team and potential members for their time.
6. Adjourn meeting. Close with a relevant quote or closing thought. Strike the gavel.

At end of the meeting, have Launch Team members stand by the exit door to shake hands as people leave. The Chair remains at the front to distribute handouts to those taking on roles for the next meeting and to debrief with people who initiated the lead or who are in charge.