

D21 Toastmasters Month Proclamation Tutorial Speaker's Notes

Opening Slide:

Introduction:

Let's *jump* right into our presentation.

The *concept* is asking the Mayor of your Town/City to make an *official* proclamation declaring the month of *February* as Toastmasters Month in your community.

When: The entire month of February.

You should also know that this is a D21 initiative.

Other Districts around the world celebrate it at different times throughout the year, if they celebrate it at all.

Why should we do it? It is a *good* opportunity to raise *awareness* of Toastmasters in your community and *hopefully* create some curiosity so that guests come to your clubs where *you* can convert them to members.

Logistics:

I would suggest *contacting* the Town/City's Administrative Assistant to find out what their process is for asking for a mayorial proclamation.

It may be different from community to community.

Some communities may not do it.

Find out how much *lead time* you need to have it prepared.

You want to make sure that you have given everybody enough time to complete the task, without creating *undue pressure*.

Be clear as to *what happens* when it is complete i.e. will they send you a digital copy, a physical copy via the mail or a physical copy that you need to pick up?

If you have *multiple Toastmasters clubs* in your community, it would be helpful to have someone liaise with the other clubs and develop a joint strategy.

It could be the club's *VP Public Relations* that takes the lead, but it doesn't have to be.

Some communities have more than one Area, so it might be worthwhile having the Area Directors take *a lead* on the initiative.

Photo Ops: Some Toastmasters have had *good luck* with approaching their town/city council and arranging to have an official presentation of the declaration.

This is where the Mayor, or their designate presents the document to a Toastmasters representative.

This only takes a *few moments* to do.

It could be in an official session of the council, or a staged one.

Like anything else, it needs some *preparation*.

Have somebody that is handy with a camera and that *actually* has a good camera.

You won't have the opportunity for a do over.

Consider *videoing* the presentation.

Don't forget to ask for permission to take photos or videos.

You can't *assume* that they will let you.

Some people have personal quirks about having their picture taken, however politicians are *known* for liking to get publicity wherever and whenever they can, so you should be okay.

You are going to own the photos, so make sure you get the names and correct spellings of their names for everyone in the photo.

Consider *creating and publishing* a media release to highlight the *official* proclamation and the *presentation* ceremony if you had one.

This can help gain some community attention.

Smaller communities tend to have better luck at getting *'human interest'* stories published in their newspapers, than the larger communities do.

Send the media release to reporters that report about business, life style and/or self-development.

You can send the entire proclamation to a reporter that you know, but odds are slim that they will include it in an article.

You are probably better off excerpting key sentences or phrases from the declaration in preparation of your media release.

Your media release can look very similar to the proclamation, highlighting a local tie in and why it is important.

If you aren't up to asking your local mayor for a proclamation or that time is working against you ... here is an Alternative Plan.

The District traditionally requests the Province of BC to declare February as Toastmasters Month in BC.

You could leverage and promote this initiative in lieu of having it declared Toastmasters month in your community.

Marketing & Promotion: With promoting anything, you have to think of what your desired end result is.

In this case ... we are promoting awareness of Toastmasters and our Communication & Leadership Program in our communities.

When **marketing** your product or service it can be helpful to break it down to **Target Markets**.

Keeping it simple, we can consider our **internal and external** markets.

Our **internal** market is our fellow Toastmasters members.

And our **external** market is the general public.

Future members if you will.

Bearing in mind that they need to be over the age of 18 and be able to pay for their membership.

We'll look at them separately over the next couple slides.

Starting off with Internal

This involves marketing to your **fellow** club members.

Declaring the month of February as Toastmasters month can be a good **rallying point** for your VP Education to plan meetings around.

Meeting themes should create **excitement** about Toastmasters.

Perhaps the VP of Education could issue a challenge to their club members to deliver a speech during the month about the history or culture of Toastmasters.

External Marketing takes a little more time and strategy.

Some clubs have had good luck with conducting Open Houses i.e. opening their club to the general public, leveraging their publicity from the TM month declaration.

Let's start off by considering advertising.

Many clubs have the budget to do some advertising with their local media.

Many don't.

Advertising is expensive and it can be hard to determine your return on investment.

It is often said that 50% of marketing works.

The problem is that its hard to tell which 50% worked!

Sometimes, the clubs in a community or an Area will pool their financial resources and purchase a print or radio ad.

Let's look at Publicity: Publicity is marketing initiatives that cost you little or no money.

There is an investment of your time, though.

It takes time to put together a publicity initiative that costs you nothing or very little.

The photo op and media release that we talked about earlier are examples of publicity.

Another easy to access publicity measure is to leverage social media.

Social Media: Every Toastmasters club should have a social media presence. Facebook & Twitter seem to be the more effective ones.

Developing an effective Facebook strategy for your club is beyond the scope of this session but I will give you a quick few tips here.

1. Develop a Facebook Page, rather than a Facebook Group. Think Page=public, Group=private.
2. Encourage all of your club members to Like your Club Facebook Page.
3. Post relevant items to your club's Timeline promoting your events during Toastmasters Month as well as the declaration itself and any photo ops.
4. Encourage your fellow club members to share your Club's Facebook posts on their pages.

5. Research & locate other Facebook Pages in your community that allow unrestricted posting.

This can include networking groups, business groups, health and wellness, new comers and self-development.

6. Create a posting campaign i.e. create an eye-catching post that will draw the readers attention.

They need to be crafted with a 'call-to-action' in mind and that CTA is to come out and visit your club.

The campaign should be submitted spaced out with new information so that don't wear out your welcome with the Facebook Page's owners.

It is also said that you need to touch your customer some 7 to 11 times before they will make a purchasing decision.

The same applies to your Toastmasters marketing.

The potential new member has to see the Toastmasters concept multiple times before making a decision to visit a club meeting.

So how do we create the Proclamation in the first place?

Here is an example of a proclamation from the City of Vancouver.

It's one of the more colourful one's I have seen.

Don't worry about trying to read the content.

We'll go over every clause on the document so you can see what it looks like.

Let's look at the proclamation details.

As mentioned earlier, you will need to find out what your Mayor's process is for creating the document.

They usually include 4 to 6 Whereasz, if that is such a word.

I'm going to go through each one and make some comments as to amendments that may need to be made.

Whereas

Toastmasters International, a non-profit educational organization, is a leader in making effective oral communications a national and international reality for all persons;

This is a general statement that sets up the rest of the document.

And Whereas,

The ability to speak clearly and effectively is a powerful and important skill that can help individuals overcome barriers to effective performance in virtually every endeavour and line of work;

Note the addition of the and Whereas

And Whereas,

The first Toastmasters club outside the United States was chartered in 1935 in Victoria, British Columbia, and today, after more than seventy-five years, Toastmasters in British Columbia has grown to serve more than 4,500 members in 268 clubs;

This clause would need to be updated. There is close to 300 clubs in BC and as for the number of actual members you can get an up-to-date number from our District leaders.

As well, the sentence about “after more than seventy-five years” would have to be updated to more than Ninety.

And Whereas,

The Toastmasters program helps people develop skills in speaking, listening, giving feedback, decision-making, effective meeting management, delegating and mentoring, vital skills that promote self-actualization, enhance leadership potential, foster human understanding and contribute to the betterment of humankind;

This is another benefit clause that should be okay to use as it is.

And Whereas,

By helping people develop essential communication and leadership skills, Toastmasters International and its member Toastmaster Clubs perform a valuable service to its members and the community:

This is another benefit statement that sums everything up.

Here's the conclusion of our document...

▶ **NOW, THEREFORE,**

I, XXXX Mayor of the City of XXXXX, DO HEREBY PROCLAIM the month of February, 20XX as
"TOASTMASTERS MONTH"

in the City of XXXXX.

This is another benefit statement that sums everything up.

This concludes the video portion of our presentation.