



# The French Toast

The newsletter for the Europeans Toastmasters Club n° 8018 Meeting of November 26<sup>th</sup>. 2014

## Opening

Paolo congratulates **Alain's** participation at the 2014 French Humorous Speech contest, first winning the division level in Paris on November 15 and then representing Division A at the district finale in Lyon on November 22.

He tells us that our next meeting will be postponed to **December 17<sup>th</sup>** because all Parisian Toastmasters clubs are invited to a **common Christmas meeting** organized by Eiffelturm at Le Café du Pont Neuf on



**December 10<sup>th</sup>.**

The Europeans will celebrate their own Xmas party on **December 17**. *Please don't forget to bring a small gift (maximum 5€) for the occasion.*

Then Paolo asks our guests to introduce themselves: **Gulay, Sonia, Jana, Marc, Igor, Colleen**, all of them Toastmasters except Jana.

## Induction ceremony of a new member by VP membership Lenny

Our new member, **Olivier A.** said "I will" to six TM promises. Lenny told him what the club and its members would do to help him improve his communication and leadership skills. He was then unanimously voted in. Olivier's mentor will be **Lenny**.

## The meeting

**Yassine** is the Toastmaster of the evening

The theme tonight is "**anniversary**", because 1) last month was Toastmasters 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary, 2) soon comes Yassine's 9<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary, and 3) next month will be his and his daughter's birthdays.

Toast : **Christian** parle du travail de tous les bénévoles qui font beaucoup de choses pour les autres. En particulier Alain va aider la banque alimentaire à collecter des produits dans les supermarchés samedi prochain. Christian demande de lever son verre : « **A tous les bénévoles!** »

**Peter** tells the joke: A man knocks at a butcher's door late before Thanksgiving saying "I forgot to buy my turkey, do you have any left?" The butcher has only one very small turkey left. But the customer says "No, it's too skinny!" The butcher goes back to the freezer, comes back with the same turkey as if it were another one. The customer says "No! No! No! That one doesn't look better, give me both of them!"

Time is money; money is time - Timekeeper Igor explains the timing

English Grammarian Pamela warms up the audience with pronunciation exercises building up to the word of the day "**auspicious**" (*good, timely, fortunate, providential*). We had to pronounce each syllable of the adjective.

La grammairienne française Alice annonce le mot du jour "**prolix**". C'est un adjectif qui définit les gens *qui parlent un peu trop, sont bavards*.

Speaking tip by Lenny

He chose to speak about mentoring. The mentor is someone who knows more and agrees to help you. He should be available, a good listener, generous and supportive. Mentees should be grateful, open to Toastmaster ideas; never hesitate to ask for help and remember the magic words: "Please" and "Thank you!"

## Table Topics led by Patrick

"Respected chefs, we are at a special workshop called the Brillat Savarin Symposium. It's a yearly event focused on the latest achievements in gastronomy. This year we celebrate Thanksgiving and the turkey."



"As a prerequisite we need to understand the nutritional value of the turkey. To tell us more about that, let's call the most knowledgeable nutritionist professor **Marc**, an eminent researcher on turkey." Marc says that turkey is very good for our health. People sometimes gain weight during Thanksgiving, not because of the turkey, but because they drink wine and eat too much dessert. Turkey is very juicy and tastes wonderfully. Not only is it nutritious and healthy, but without it there would be no family reunion. "If you think I am healthy, do as I do and let's have turkey tomorrow!"



"What is the best way to cook turkey? - Let's call the famous cook **Colleen** to share with us her favorite recipe!" "I am an esteemed cook, but I would prefer to be known as a cheffesse!" says **Colleen**, "like a goddess!" "That's because I take the recipe in my head and I see a turkey, and inside it I see the bones, and inside the bones I see the marrow. I think supernaturally! Gently put the turkey into boiling water. Chop up carrots, celery, onions, parsley, sage... Let cook for one hour and a half. It is not just a recipe; it is food of the gods!"



Now **Gülay**, the General Secretary of the Turkey Protecting League comes to promote the well being of the bird. Poor **Gülay**, who comes from Turkey, doesn't know what to say. She is replaced by **Sonia**, the President of the League, who says that 80% of the birds sold in the USA are genetically modified. We should avoid eating them, for they bring us an excess of protein and lots of unneeded chemicals. She gives lots of reasons not to eat those beautiful birds.

## Prepared speeches



**Yamina** - Icebreaker - I come from a place of shyness, of timidity. As a kid I wouldn't engage with anyone, go red each time I was asked to speak. As a young woman, I didn't accept compliments. I would never speak about myself! Being here today in front of you is daunting, for I am still shy. I love yoga, hiking and travelling. I am delighted to have joined this club to shed away my shyness.



**Olivier A.** - Icebreaker - *Why am I here?* I have a friend called Peter who is a charismatic speaker and eloquence for me is kind of a magic power. During a seminar I came to realise that it was possible to learn eloquence, but you have also to practice on the long term. How to practice? My friend Peter told me he had been a Toastmaster in Nairobi for five years and that made him a good speaker. That's why Olivier is with us now!



**Paolo G** - Advanced Manual Persuasive Speaking, project 2 "Conquering the Cold Call" - *Fitness Coach*. In this project Paolo explains that he has to sell an expensive product/service to a customer who didn't ask for it. He has to reach out for a potential buyer, making him discover a need he wasn't even aware of. In order to acquire the customer's trust, he must ask open questions, listen carefully to the answers, be honest and show self confidence. The project includes a role play with Patrick as an entrepreneur and Paolo will try and sell him gym sessions for his employees within the enterprise during lunch time. He speaks about employees' wellbeing boosting their productivity etc. Alas the customer isn't ready to pay for his personal's leisure time! If they want to exercise, they are free to do so outside the work place! - After the role play

comes the audience's feedback, which concludes Paolo's project.



**Jean**- Advanced Manual Technical Presentations, project 4 "Presenting a Technical Paper" - *How Meditation Changes our Brain*. Jean presents a paper by Mathieu Ricard, a PHD at Pasteur Institute turned Himalayan Buddhist monk, a close friend of Dalai Lama, who took advantage of his scientific background to study the benefits of meditation on the human brain and body. He explains the different methods used to study the human brain during meditation and gives us some of the conclusions of those studies. Not so surprisingly, meditation brings serenity, calmness, enhances the brain's capacities; and it is good for the body's general health. All those studies are the promising start of a full-fledged science on meditation.

### Evaluation session

**Peter** is the General Evaluator. He presents the evaluation team: Table Topics and speech evaluators, grammarians/English/French; stumble catcher (Ah counter, which Peter is against) and the timer.

#### Table Topics Evaluator is **Alain**

We had an exceptional table topics session with brilliant, original, timely subjects easy enough for everyone.

**Marc** - what is the nutritional value of the turkey - Great assertiveness, good arguments, even statistics! Smiling, many adjectives (tasty rich sweet). You spoke too quickly for this audience, including Alain. Suggestion: give us some time to reflect, you are almost too prolix.

**Colleen** - What is the best way to enhance the cooking of a turkey - You were inspired (goddess), we all saw the turkey boiling in the pot, it was mouth watering! You used repetition and gesture to reinforce what was being said. Beware of the danger of some words in a French audience (chefess, for example).

**Gulay** didn't know what to say on the subject: it happens to everyone. Suggestion: come in with one little story, saying to table topics master: "That reminds me of a story...."

**Sonia**: took the question seriously, no playing with her! She was very structured, gave three realistic arguments. Alain liked the conclusion about the "beautiful birds". Suggestion: introduce some fun in the development.

**Dan** evaluates **Yamina** (Icebreaker) who gave all kinds of excuses before actually starting her icebreaker! However, she has a magnificent grasp of English; she engaged with the audience, her body language showed confidence. We learned about her shyness and her activities: yoga and hiking. She didn't use notes. Dan suggests she should speak slower and pace the words.

**Philippe P.** évalue le Briser la glace **d'Olivier A.** qu'il félicite pour ses talents d'orateur et son aisance : il a prononcé un discours bien mené sur a forme et intéressant sur le fond. Il est à l'aise, a un bon contact visuel et une voix chaleureuse. Philippe lui conseille la prochaine fois de conserver tous ses talents en donnant plus de contenu personnel, en disant davantage ce qu'il ressent, en dévoilant qui il est, ce qui est l'objectif de ce premier discours.

**Odile** évalue le discours de **Paolo** : ce projet est un des plus difficiles parmi les manuels avancés : il s'agit de vendre quelque chose à quelqu'un qui n'a rien demandé en lui faisant prendre conscience d'un besoin ignoré. La partie théorique de l'exposé était très au point, les choses se sont gâtées lors du jeu de rôles, car Patrick n'a pas facilité la tâche de Paolo en étant très prolix et en l'empêchant de poser les bonnes questions. Elle lui conseille d'éviter les questions ouvertes pour entrer en matière, car elles donnent à l'interlocuteur l'occasion de mener le jeu : dans ce genre d'exercice, il faut être moins « gentil », moins conciliant, plus ferme, décidé, assuré, voire légèrement agressif.

**Philippe L.** évalue le discours de **Jean**, dont l'objectif est de présenter un article, une revue scientifique, en utilisant un support visuel. Le sujet tombe à pic pour Philippe, qui a organisé une journée de vulgarisation sur le cerveau le weekend dernier ! Philippe n'a pas lu l'article dont parle Jean et se pose des questions sur le choix des illustrations fait par l'orateur, qu'il n'a pas trouvé très judicieux ni très explicatif. Son conseil : si les images de l'article ne sont pas bonnes, il faudrait aller sur Internet voir les références et chercher des

diapos de meilleure qualité. Le sujet était intéressant, Philippe a appris une ou deux choses, il aurait été utile de donner aux auditeurs l'envie d'aller eux-mêmes lire cet article.

English grammarian Pamela reports on the use of the word of the day (not bad) and on some misuses of the languages and some mispronunciations. She complains that 3 minutes are too short for the Grammarian's report!

La grammairienne française Alice fait son rapport disant qu'elle a repéré ce soir un « bon » (Philippe L.) une gentille « brute » (Philippe P.) et un « truand » (Alain). Alain et Odile ont employé le mot du jour « prolix ».

Stumble catcher Gulay tells the group what she heard. She admires speakers who avoid filler words or hesitations. She begins with those who used no filler words and moved to individual stumbles.

Timekeeper Igor related all the times in a list.

Peter presents his general evaluation. He compliments Gulay because she named those who didn't have stumbles: this is a positive way of reporting. He comments on the room acoustics, saying that all speakers should project their voice and articulate, especially if English is not the native language. He recommends all speakers to slow down and make pauses instead of adding "you know", "ahs" and other filler words.

### Who won a ribbon?



Best Table Topic: **Sonia** (a guest)  
First Speech & Best Speech: **Yamina**  
Best Evaluation: **Odile**

#### Clôture :

Paolo rappelle que notre prochain rendez-vous des Européens sera le 17 décembre au Bar de l'Echelle et que nous sommes invités à apporter chacun un petit cadeau pour la traditionnelle célébration de Noël.

Il demande à nos invités de faire un bref commentaire sur leur soirée.

\*Igor: thanks for a nice evening; the highlight was the high level evaluation session. I wish some of you would come and evaluate us at my club La Défense.

\*Colleen found the meeting very animated and the atmosphere nice.

\*Marc: thank you very much for the learning experience. I am working on my French to be able to join your club!

\*Jana comes for the second time and learned a lot through all speeches. It is very useful.

\*Sonia found the performances very impressive and congratulates all those who spoke tonight.

\*Gulay had a great evening, much fun and learned a lot thanks to Alain's and Peter's comments.

Note Takers: Christian and Colleen- Edition and Illustration **Odile**