



The French Toast

The newsletter for the Europeans Toastmasters Club n° 8018 Meeting of May 27th 2015
Opening

Paolo G opened the meeting. He introduced our sole guest, **Fleur**, who was here for the third time. **Antoine** was also introduced. He was a member for three years before moving to London last April. He has visited one club in London so far. He said it seems a lot like the Europeans... (*How could another be like us????*)

Alice gave a report on our district 59 conference in Porto, Portugal. "IT WAS GREAT!!!" She was quite enthusiastic. She said Amsterdam is coming up in November and we should all plan to go. The spring conference features the election of all future district officers 2015/16 and Alice was thrilled to be our delegate! She said it was quite interesting and entertaining. She felt the meeting drew a very high level of speakers, and past champions taught the workshops. Peter Zinn an ex-European Champion spoke on filling the gap between where you are and where you want to be... all is possible!

Induction ceremony

Paolo inducted a new member, as VP membership Lenny was not in attendance. The new member, **Nadia**, was unanimously admitted to the club. Her mentor will be **Alain M**.

The meeting



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Sean was welcomed as Toastmaster of the evening. His theme was *temptations and what do we choose to do: resist or succumb*.



Olivier A provided our welcome toast celebrating a business improvement master, **Félix Eboué** who focused on integrity, equity, and freedom. (Reminiscent of France, with Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity)...

Alain P s'est porté volontaire pour la blague - « Je ne suis pas sur Facebook, ma femme y est et je suis jaloux parce qu'elle a beaucoup d'amis. Alors, le matin, je prends des photos de ma famille, j'aborde des inconnus dans la rue, par exemple quand c'est un jeune homme je lui montre une photo de

ma fille. Ne riez pas voyons, ça marche j'ai 3 amis : 2 policiers et 1 psychiatre ! »

Jean described his role as timekeeper.

Gaëlle est la **grammairienne française** - Son rôle est double : relever le bel usage du français et proposer le mot du jour : « *Résistance* » lié au thème de la soirée (résister à la tentation) résistance au sport, électricité : ralentir le passage du courant électrique, dans l'histoire etc.

Patrick was the English Grammarian who gave us the word for the night: "*ghostwriter*", one who writes for someone else and gets paid instead of getting credit (i.e. s/he works in the background, unseen, like a ghost).

Christiane was to provide a speaker's tip. She described her temptation trying to resist opening a chocolate bar for an entire hour. She decided it is better to avoid than to have to resist. Her tip of the day: always use Project # 2 with your speeches: an opening with a catchy phrase, body with 3 elements and a conclusion to wrap up.

(There was an issue whether Christine's answering of the temptation question should count against her speaker's tip time allotment and that question needs to be addressed).

Table Topics

Alice was in charge of table topics. She ran with the *Temptation theme*.

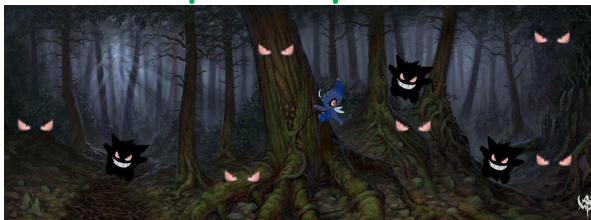
The first speaker was Alicia who was to present on *temptations to avoid when giving a speech*. She listed 5 elements to remember to NOT do which included not moving pointlessly around the stage but to own your space, not to gesture wildly as you might knock the flowers over, not to um um um, and the such.

#2 was Odile on *how to develop confidence during public speaking*. She confidently told us that it is preparation that builds confidence. With impromptu speaking it is experience that helps. Generally: Go For It!

#3 was Nadia who received a George Bernard Shaw quote on, "*I never resist temptations, I give in to them*." Nadia gives in to staying up late even though she knows she should get to sleep. She enjoys private time alone at night.

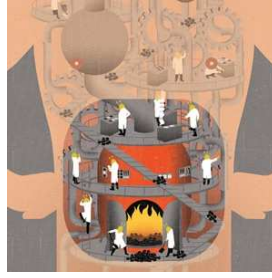
#4 was Ivo who was to *seduce the audience like you are seducing a partner*. Ivo felt the key is with eye contact and the magic of a smile to please everyone.

Prepared Speeches



Michel told an original personal story [Storytelling N°2]. *Walk in a Forest* - He told us of his five days adventure trekking in Vercors. He and his girl friend Claire were trekking where several weeks earlier an older woman was mistakenly thought to be a bear and shot. There were also tales of wild dogs or wolves who roamed the area. These stories got the best of Michel and Claire and they were very anxious during the trip. They let their imagination run wild with fear of what could happen. The moral of the story was: know that imagination is the source

of fear and don't lose control over what could happen, focus on what is happening.



Yamina gave speech # 3 from CC manual, *Get to the Point*. Her title was "*Mind Your Gut*". Apparently each gut is full of over 100 trillion bacteria. The gut is very important hence the terms: gut wrenching, gut feeling, gutreaction. The gut has the same number of neurons as a dog or cat brain. There are more bacteria in the gut than stars in the sky or cells in our bodies. The bacteria in our guts weigh about 1-2 kilos. The Vagus nerve allows for constant communication between the gut and the brain. Digestion releases serotonin, which is the happy factor and looks after our emotions. There is some evidence that Parkinson's disease and Alzheimer's start in the gut. Obese people lack one bacterium that non-obese people have. Research has shown that you can manipulate the bacteria to develop cravings, change moods, etc. So really... we are what we eat. And we should be eating probiotics and fermented foods.



Olivier S did speech # 2 from CC manual - Organize your speech. "*Do you Like Hot and Spicy Food?*" He talked about the importance of knowing first aid and to be able to reanimate a person and using a defibrillator. He wanted to get people interested in taking a first aid course and at the end, 4 to 5 people were interested.



And last but certainly not least was **Alain P** who is redoing CC manual speech # 5 - Your Body speaks. His topic was "*Watch Your Comfort Zone!*" It was a delightful speech about his father and his father-in-law. His father grew up in a small town and was very bright and went on to be a schoolteacher. The government, in their wisdom, recognized how bright he was and offered to send him to the university to become a high school teacher, or even a university teacher. He declined the offer because he was happy where he was. His father-in-law has an almost similar story. He grew up in a rural area, became a schoolteacher, was very bright and the government, in their wisdom, offered to send him to a special program to be a German teacher. He accepted the offer and worked at his job all his life. In the end, he said he would have been happier if he had just stayed where he was. Alain asked us what a successful life is. What are the conditions for a successful life? Will making this decision move me closer to my life objectives? He warned us to choose our own modes of progression and to step out of our comfort zones only when it is right for us. And to remember that life is always an adventure.

Evaluation session

Philippe L, évaluateur général : vous avez peut-être cru que la partie la plus importante de la soirée

est passée. Mais non, l'évaluation est extrêmement importante...il n'y a pas d'évaluation type, chaque évaluation est unique, une évaluation, c'est un ressenti entre une personne et un discours.

- **Paolo G** was first, evaluating the Table topics. He recommended to Alice that she have clearer questions for the table topics and to choose people who were not already speaking during other parts of the evening. For Alicia he said to remember that even in a table topic one still needs the opening, body and conclusion and she forgot a conclusion. Paolo recommended to Odile she should repeat the question so that we are all clear on it and to build a conclusion as well. Nadia was strong and confident as a speaker. She just needs to be conscious that she shifts from the left to right frequently. Ivo was advised to use eye contact more with people in the audience.
- **Odile** évalue Michel - « A walk in the Forest » - Une évaluation en français pour équilibrer l'usage des 2 langues. L'objectif du discours est complètement satisfait: raconter une histoire personnelle pour transmettre un message. Ne laissez pas votre imagination prendre le pas sur votre raison. L'histoire était bien organisée pour faire monter la tension. Elle correspondait remarquablement à l'objectif grâce à des descriptions précises des bois, de l'atmosphère, et à un vocabulaire riche. Mais si le vocabulaire était très bon, la prononciation l'était moins ; Odile conseille à Michel de préparer avec un anglophone. La seconde proposition d'amélioration concerne la conclusion, qui aurait pu être plus forte. « Quoiqu'il en soit, Michel aujourd'hui en te voyant raconter des histoires, utiliser des variations vocales, des gestes, tu as énormément progressé sur les 2 dernières années, merci à toi et Toastmasters ! »
- **Alain M** evaluated Yamina. He liked the rich, dense topic and specific examples Yamina used. He recommended defining right in the beginning 2-3 points that she was talking about. He liked all of her examples because they were easy to understand. He recommends summarizing the key points at the end.
- **Peter** évalue Olivier S « Do you like hot and spicy food » - Olivier a très bien préparé son discours, la preuve : les documents de description des premiers gestes de secours qu'il a apportés et ses gestes sont naturels. Avec le temps il coordonnera encore mieux les gestes et la parole. Très bonne conclusion : « call to action », communiquer avec l'audience est une technique très efficace. Suggestions : 1) tu avais tendance à parler à Sean qui est assis dans le coin et pas à l'auditoire. 2) Ne pas baisser la voix à la fin de la phrase 3) Ne pas distribuer les aides visuelles car cela distrait l'attention, le public ne peut pas entendre et lire. Bravo pour les progrès par rapport à ton 1er discours.
- **Christian** evaluated Alain. The speech was about body language. Alain had confident body language and moved well to support his speech, imitating the men well with great vocal variety. His suggestion is to step out of your comfort zone more! Move in more advanced ways or do unusual things with his body since he is such an advanced speaker. The content of the speech was good with the stories. Get out of your comfort zone, but not too far out, to follow what you think your true-life path is and don't let a ghostwriter write your life speech! Conclusion: Resist not getting out of your comfort zone!
- **Patrick** gave an excellent grammar lesson on the use of English present perfect where French is using the present tense. The present perfect is used for something that has started in the past and is still true today VS something that started and finished in the past. For example: I have been a member of Toastmasters for 3 years (in French this is in present tense) vs. I was a member of Toastmasters for 3 years. (In French, this is in past tense).
- **Gaëlle** - rapport du grammairien- a relevé des belles expressions « plier bagage, l'histoire sous-tendait l'objectif » - Merci aux « résistants » Alicia et Christian pour l'usage de resist en anglais.

- **Antoine** - rapport sur ces parasites, les pires ennemis des orateurs, les hésitations : « J'avais décidé de faire mon discours en anglais »... mais la résistance s'impose alors son discours est en français.
- **Jean** presents his timekeeper's report with his usual accuracy.

Philippe L évalue la soirée : « Je suis en pleine forme, cette soirée m'a dynamisé. Cela commence par notre animateur de ce soir, Sean, son humour, sa présence ; grâce à sa présentation, il a redonné une impulsion à l'introduction des orateurs. Attention il faut rester bref.

Olivier on apprend des choses grâce à ton toast, tes mots étaient bien choisis.

Paolo a fait une évaluation des improvisations construite, sa voix manquait un peu de force...

Odile a bien construit, c'était excellent... tu as passé un peu de temps à reprendre l'histoire, raconte plutôt ce que tu as ressenti. J'aurais souligné la succession de rires et de peurs. Merci pour le compliment final

Alain M a fait une évaluation bien construite.

Peter a fait preuve d'humour. Une petite longueur, attention !

Christian : tu t'es lâché, tu as utilisé de l'humour. Attention, à la fin il n'y a pas de discussion à avoir. C'est bien d'être sorti de ta zone de confort

Antoine - tu nous as montré qu'on pouvait avoir une introduction originale en présentant le rapport sur les hésitations et gaffes !

J'ai passé une excellente soirée et je suis ravi !

Who won the ribbons?



Best Table Topic: **Alicia**

Best Speech : **Yamina**

Best Evaluation : **Christian**

Mots de conclusion

Paolo : merci pour cette soirée. Quelques remarques et compléments :

Antonio Meza, du club ami Speech Masters, a gagné la finale du district 59, il est donc sélectionné pour la demi-finale mondiale à Las Vegas en août prochain.

Ce soir on fait une boucle : on accueille un nouveau membre Nadia. Et Antoine, un ancien membre nous rend visite.

Merci à tous ceux qui ont fait l'effort de parler en français - Voici un nouveau défi pour le bureau : équilibrer français et anglais au cours de nos réunions !

Qu'ont pensé nos invités de leur soirée ?

Fleur en a bien profité, elle a trouvé les discours touchants.

Antoine : on retrouve le même esprit international partout, c'est la force de Toastmasters.

ET

A la prochaine, le 10 juin pour soutenir Yamina dans sa première en tant qu'animatrice de soirée !

Notes: **Ivo** and **Alicia**- Edition and Illustration **Odile**

Next meeting: June 10th, 2015