

Tips for Incoming Area Directors from Past Area Directors



***that you can use to have
a successful term***

Compiled by Jessica Dukharan

Tips for Incoming Area Directors



One tip for incoming Area Directors is to **take advantage of several Toastmasters International generated reports** before visiting their clubs. The data provided will empower the Area Director with the knowledge to make better decisions about clubs under his/her leadership. These reports are a great time saver and are updated regularly. At the beginning of your Area Director journey, ensure your club officers and members are aware of these reports. An informed club is a successful club, therefore review these reports frequently. Listed below are my four favorite reports out of an estimated 15 district performance reports. I highly recommend these reports for a successful term.

- 1 - **Club Status Report** – Review the current status of the club in order to provide praise and encouragement. Also, acknowledge each club’s anniversary.
- 2 - **Educational Achievements Report** – Lists club members’ educational awards. Use this report to congratulate club members on their achievements.
- 3 - **“Almost Distinguished Clubs” for District 14 Report** – At a glance, this report provides a list of clubs that have achieved four DCP goals.
- 4 - **“Area to Do” Report** – Lists unachieved goals to qualify for area Distinguished, Select Distinguished, or President’s Distinguished for your area.

Cynthia Day, DTM loves to cook. Several times, she has been selected by America’s Test Kitchen to be a recipe tester. She also represented Georgia as a Betty Crocker top-ten contest finalist for her Triple-Crust Peach Cobbler.



Plan small, think big. When you come into your area, plan small engagements over the term. My grandmother used to say, “many try and eat turnips and do great wonders without remembering the greatest wonder was growing the turnips.” So start small, meet each club, and simply listen. Find what they excel at and where they need help, then formulate a plan after you have met all your clubs. Sometimes you will see an answer from the big picture after getting all the small ones into place. What I did once I accepted my post was to check out each of my clubs before meeting them.

In this way, I had a grasp of what each club faced on paper before meeting them and seeing what their thoughts were. At the same time, I was able to cross-reference my entire area’s needs to each club as many times as I needed. While we are a communication and leadership organization, many clubs fall into the idea that they are islands unto themselves, so it is our job as Area Directors to guide them to open up and work as a group. Many times, one group will hold the key to helping another club which is why planning small will lead to the big picture. So stay open to the small things as they build to a larger more complete experience—I know it has for me.

Gary Miller, DTM is a CPA in Central California who has been a part of Toastmasters for 12 years. In his spare time, he enjoys raising goats with his wife of 13 years and working on rebuilding vehicles. Gary is a speaker for multiple groups throughout his area, along with a multitude of charities. www.millermobiletaxservice.com

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I have always believed and practiced that my fellow Toastmasters that I serve in my Area won't care about what I know unless they know that I care about them. At the beginning of my term, I informed them that it's my responsibility as an Area Director to help them get their clubs to a higher level than when I found them. Since I was meeting with the officers, they understood the vision regarding the DCP goals. I provided them with a general idea of how our relationship would be for the year and explained how it would benefit them and their club members. Despite that, I had a challenge with getting their club success plan. I communicated with the officers and followed up about their club success plan but I didn't get a response.

When I attended one of their meetings, I brought the club success template printed on one page and guided them to fill it out. I helped them make it easier to complete that portion and it helped me also to complete that portion of the CVR regarding the club's goals. When I got invited to their open houses, I made an effort to attend and bring a little something to add to their refreshments. I called them and emailed them and asked them how things were and I always tried to offer support. I didn't want to appear pushy so I always communicated that I wanted to support them and I was always available.

Ultimately, it boils down to creating good relationships.

Marian Barilone, DTM is a paralegal working in one of GA's top real estate firms located in Buckhead, Atlanta. She has two degrees: BS Communication Arts (graduated Cum Laude) and Bachelor of Laws. During the 2018-2019 term, she was awarded Area Director of the Month and she helped her area achieve President's Distinguished status. When she's not busy with her Toastmasters duties, you can find Marian looking at the moon or trying to find the Pleiades using her Celestron NexStar6 telescope. <https://www.facebook.com/marian.barilone.98>



Live "A Toastmaster's Promise." It's ALL about the Member. Without the member and his/her commitment to achieving their communication and leadership goals, the club will not succeed. Be present, listen, and utilize Toastmasters International resources to provide what each club needs to achieve Distinguished Club status. For example, each club can order free marketing brochures from Toastmasters International. The brochures can be given to guests and fliers can be posted within the community (e.g. libraries, churches). **Be creative.** Host a roundtable discussion with the clubs in your area. Once a month, I would schedule meetings at a local library.

Invitations were sent to Club Officers, the Division Governor, and club members interested in serving the District. We would review and discuss the Distinguished Club reports and what was working for one club that could help another club achieve its goals. **Show up.** Give the club members an opportunity to get to know you, your communication and leadership goals, and applaud your achievements. Visibility was important to me. How could I ask the clubs to achieve Distinguished Club status or (2) the members to complete educational goals and (3) step up to serve the district if I wasn't living the Toastmasters Promise? Legacy Education Recognition pins were given to club members when they completed educational goals. Today, Pathways recognition pins/tags are presented to members of my home club after completing each level of their individual paths. **The outcome: Area 19 achieved President's Distinguished status. It makes all the difference in the world when the clubs know that you, their Area Director, support their efforts.**

Michele Roach, DTM is the Immediate Past President of the Durham Rescue Mission Toastmasters Club in Durham, NC. She has served as Area Governor and Division Governor, and she achieved President's Distinguished status at both levels. As Past Lt. Governor Marketing, District 66, she is passionate about "Talking Up Toastmasters."

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