



The area newsletter for:

- > Bedford Speakers
- > Cornerstone Communicators
- > Cranfield Toastmasters
- > Eldergate Toastmasters
- > North Bucks Speakers

+44

Beds, Bucks and Beyond

Visual Aids: Averting Disaster

Sue Savage is a toastmaster of five years and a member of Bedford Speakers. Here she shares some lessons learned from working through the advanced communication manuals.

At Toastmasters we don't often use a lot of visual aids in our speeches. Many of us use them for the 'Get comfortable with visual aids' project and then never think of them again. However, the advanced manual 'Speaking To Inform' positively encourages you to use them, and it's proved to be an educational experience. Here are some lessons I learned from my speech, 'Hoopla!'

1. Keep it short. Visual aids are often unpredictable, and time spent wrangling props, projec-

tors and PowerPoint is time that can take you over your time limit and delay the meeting.

"Always have a backup plan"

2. Beware of the projector. It's essential to get the projector set up before the meeting starts and make sure everything is working, but projectors also have a nasty habit of going to sleep if left for a little while, and it's embarrassing to click the button for your first slide, only to have nothing happen. Check the projector is awake before you begin your speech, and make sure someone is ready to press the right button if it isn't.

3. Never let someone else pack

your props. I had three beautiful skirts with hooped petticoats to display during my speech, but when I went to dress my models, I found myself a petticoat short. My husband had packed them for me, but missed out the pocket hoops because he thought they might be crushed, and didn't tell me they weren't in the bag.

4. Always have a back up plan. I was a petticoat short, but my slides included a photo of the same style of dress, so I still had an appropriate visual aid to incorporate into my presentation.

5. Go for it! Using props and photographs in my speech was a lot of fun, and made the subject matter come alive for the audience in a way that words alone couldn't have done.

Flourishing in Glasgow

Seven toastmasters assembled on Milton Keynes Central station on Friday 11th November, ready to catch the 6.22 to Glasgow and the Flourish Conference.

There were already two winners in our midst—Jenny Chalmers had won one of the early bird booking prizes, and Trish Page had won the other. Trish soon went on to win an-

other prize—best female in the Friday night costume contest. While others portrayed ringmasters, lion tamers and clowns, Trish's Big Top costume stole the show.

We all hoped that the big winner of the weekend would be Gayna Cooper and her amazing speech, 'Thank You For the Music'. Sadly it wasn't to be this time, but Gayna remains a

force to be reckoned with in any speech contest.

As with all Toastmasters conferences, we had the privilege of attending inspirational workshops, meeting friends old and new, and of course, staying up until 4am to enjoy the craic!

The next conference is in May: <http://www.wowconference.ie/>

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Christmas Parties 2011

1st December	Bedford Speakers	Christmas dinner and Tall Tales contest
6th December	Eldergate Toastmasters	Christmas party and Tall Tales contest
14th December	Cranfield Toastmasters	Christmas event
15th December	North Bucks Speakers	Christmas Panto

Future Events 2012

7th March	TBC	Area 44 International Speech and Evaluation Contest
21st April	TBC	Division 6 International Speech and Evaluation Contest
11th-13th May	Wexford	District 71 Conference

Something to say?

Want to see your name in print?

If you've got something you want to share with fellow Toastmasters in Area 44, please send it in to +44 as we are always looking for new articles and features.

Achievements

Has anyone in your club achieved an educational award recently? Or done something else worthy of recognition? Let us know and we'll print it in the next issue.

Future Events

Got a special event coming up? Let the rest of the area know about it through +44 and get more support from neighbouring clubs.

Area 44

Division 6

District 71

Toastmasters International

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