



# ICE BREAKER

LEVEL 1 PROJECT



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TOASTMASTERS  
**PATHWAYS**  
— learning experience —

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**TOASTMASTERS INTERNATIONAL**

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# PART 1: GET STARTED

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## FIND SUPPORT

As you work through your Ice Breaker, you may have questions. Your club is likely full of members who have completed at least one Ice Breaker project and speech.

- ▶ Consider contacting to your club Vice President Education or other club officer.
- ▶ Make use of the “Feedback” page on Base Camp to send a message to a mentor or friend in the club.
- ▶ Remember that every member of your club supports your success and understands how challenging that first speech can be.

## INTRODUCTION

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You may have participated in an ice breaker activity at an event sometime in your life. These are activities that are designed to help people connect and get to know one another. Your Ice Breaker speech fulfills the same purpose.

It is your opportunity to share something about yourself with people you do not know well, or in the case of Toastmasters who are delivering an Ice Breaker speech again, to share something new with old friends.

## GETTING STARTED

This project marks the beginning of your new Toastmasters path. It is your opportunity to introduce yourself to the group and share something about yourself. You may choose to share anything from the reason you chose this particular path to something personal about your life.

## BUILDING SKILLS

The Ice Breaker speech is 4 to 6 minutes in length and the first one that all Toastmasters present to their clubs. It is also the speech Toastmasters deliver when they embark on a new path.

As you work through this project, you will begin to recognize skills you already have, build upon those skills to foster confidence, and identify areas you can improve to help you reach your goals.

You will learn to distinguish the basic elements of speech structure and learn about rehearsal techniques that will help you balance preparation and spontaneity.

## YOUR ASSIGNMENT

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**Purpose:** The purpose of this project is to introduce yourself to the club and learn the basic structure of a public speech.

**Overview:** Write and deliver a speech about any topic to introduce yourself to the club. Your speech may be humorous, informational, or any other style that appeals to you.

Throughout this project you will see icons in the margins next to the text. These icons indicate additional resources available online.



**Video:** Sign in to Base Camp to watch a video that supports this project.



**Interactive Activity:** Sign in to Base Camp to complete an interactive activity.



**Resource:** Sign in to Base Camp to view this resource online.



**Weblink:** Return to your digital project when you see this icon to link to a website or Base Camp location.



**For all assignment details and requirements, review the Project Checklist on page 15.**

# ASSESS YOUR SKILLS



Evaluate your current skill level by rating each statement.

Select the appropriate number based on your skills today:

5 EXEMPLARY					4 EXCEL					3 ACCOMPLISHED					2 EMERGING					1 DEVELOPING				
Pre-Project					Statement					Post-Project														
5	4	3	2	1	I feel relaxed when giving a speech.	5	4	3	2	1														
5	4	3	2	1	I understand the structure of a basic speech.	5	4	3	2	1														
5	4	3	2	1	I can easily identify my strengths as a communicator.	5	4	3	2	1														
5	4	3	2	1	I recognize skills I need to develop to improve my communication (listening, thinking, and speaking).	5	4	3	2	1														
5	4	3	2	1	I have clear communication and leadership goals.	5	4	3	2	1														
5	4	3	2	1	I readily accept effective feedback.	5	4	3	2	1														
5	4	3	2	1	I easily apply peer feedback to future projects and goals.	5	4	3	2	1														
5	4	3	2	1	I recognize how this project applies to my life outside of Toastmasters.	5	4	3	2	1														

# COMPETENCIES

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**The following is a list of competencies that you will learn and practice in this project.**

- ▶ Recognize the elements of a basic speech structure.
- ▶ Balance preparation and spontaneity when delivering your speech.
- ▶ Demonstrate self-confidence when speaking in front of an audience.
- ▶ Understand the value of peer feedback.
- ▶ Accept feedback graciously.
- ▶ Identify feedback to apply to subsequent speeches.

## PART 2: YOUR ICE BREAKER SPEECH

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### YOU AND YOUR GOALS

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The Ice Breaker is your first opportunity to share something about yourself and your goals with other members of your club. You may want to include the following information in your speech to help club members get to know you:

- ▶ The reason you joined Toastmasters (if a person or incident influenced you to join, share that story)
- ▶ Your previous experiences with public speaking, communication, and leadership
- ▶ Important moments or accomplishments in your life
- ▶ Your communication and leadership goals



If you took the Pathways Assessment, you were asked to identify your basic public speaking and leadership goals—the reason you came to Toastmasters and what you hoped to gain. Even if you chose not to complete the assessment or if this is not your first path, you likely considered similar questions when making your path selection. It may be helpful to begin planning your Ice Breaker speech around those same questions and answers.

You may also use the Ice Breaker Speech Outline Worksheet on page 19 to help you collect and develop your thoughts. A clear, thorough outline will assist you in successfully crafting your speech and delivering it within the allotted time.

### ORGANIZE YOUR SPEECH

Your Ice Breaker is a story about you. The four elements of a good story are:

- ▶ Interesting topic
- ▶ Opening
- ▶ Body
- ▶ Conclusion

Give your speech an opening, body, and conclusion to effectively communicate your overall purpose.

Begin by introducing yourself. In the body of your speech, share information you would like your fellow members to know about you. Conclude with a funny or interesting anecdote that relates to your reasons for joining Toastmasters.

If you have completed an Ice Breaker before, focus on your goals for your current path, the reason you selected this path, or what you learned in your last path that brought you here.

# PREPARE AND PRESENT

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## WRITE IT OUT

Write your speech, memorize the opening and conclusion, and then rehearse everything else until you feel comfortable. Ideally, this combination of memorization and preparation will give your speech a natural and spontaneous feel.

## REMEMBER YOUR OUTLINE

Create notecards or an outline with a few bullet points from your speech on one page. Organizing this way can make it easier to remember the main points of your speech so that you can refer to them when presenting to your club if you have the need. Remember, your goal is to prepare well enough that you are not tempted to read your speech word for word.

## CONNECT WITH THE AUDIENCE

Effective speaking requires you to look up from a written speech and connect with your audience. Your presence and connection with audience members will increase the possibility of delivering a speech with impact.



## TECHNIQUES FOR PRACTICE

Before you give your Ice Breaker, set aside time for practice. There are many ways to practice. Here are a few examples. Choose a technique that works for you or develop one of your own.

### Rehearse with Friends or Family

Rehearse your speech in front of friends or family to get feedback. Listen to constructive feedback and implement productive comments that could possibly work for you.

### Record Yourself

Record yourself giving the speech and watch the footage. Avoid being overly critical. Concentrate on constructive self-talk and changes you can make to improve.

### Use a Mirror

Practice in front of a mirror. The feedback is immediate and you can make adjustments as you go.

### Practice Sections

Divide your speech into sections. First, practice your opening. Then move on to the body of your speech, which will include the main points you want to cover. Finally, practice your conclusion. When you feel comfortable with each section, put them all together.

### Time Yourself

While you practice, remember that your Ice Breaker is 4 to 6 minutes in length. Time yourself. If you are running too close to the time limit, make sure all of your points are relevant and on-topic. If you are running short, re-examine the content and elaborate on topics that are under-represented.

## PREPARE AND PRESENT

### Timing

When you present your speech before the club, the timer will use a signal device or cards as you speak to keep you informed of how much of the allotted time remains.

### Pacing

You will soon become aware of whether you speak faster or slower in front of an audience and can adjust your time accordingly.

### Organization

Whether you end early, on time, or over your allotted time, use the experience to enhance your understanding of how to organize and time your speech.

### Review

If timing was an issue (whether you took more or less than the allotted time to deliver your speech), review the reasons and be aware of why they occurred.

### Learn

After your speech, take time to write down if you became nervous and lost your place, repeated a section, or had to pause for laughter. This is all part of the learning process.



## RELAX, BREATHE, AND ENJOY

Check your pacing as you begin. If nervousness or fear begins to get the better of you, stop, breathe, and relax. Your fellow Toastmasters want you to succeed and begin your journey in a positive way.

Fear and anxiety are typical for first-time speakers. If you're feeling this way, review your goals and focus on your reasons for joining Toastmasters. Remind yourself that your club meeting is a safe, supportive environment established as a place to practice communication and leadership skills. In meetings, you are encouraged to try new things, learn from the evaluations you receive, and celebrate your successes.

## COMMUNICATE WITH YOUR EVALUATOR

Talk with your evaluator before your speech and request feedback on any specific skills you want to develop. The more specific you are, the more useful information you will receive in response.

Be sure to complete the top portion of the Ice Breaker Evaluation resource so your evaluator has all the information they need to meet your goals and expectations. If you do not know who your evaluator will be, contact to your Vice President Education for information.

## PART 3: AFTER YOUR SPEECH

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### UNDERSTANDING THE TOASTMASTERS EVALUATION

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This section will provide a basic overview of the way Toastmasters evaluations are designed, completed, and delivered to you and your fellow club members.

Be sure to review the evaluation resource and complete the sections that are for you and send it to your club leadership or your designated evaluator before your speech. Reviewing and preparing your evaluation resource ahead of your speech will help you clarify your goals and set the expectations of your evaluator.

Facing feedback can elicit stress in many people. This section will walk you through strategies for hearing feedback after your first speech, suggestions for how to ask questions and get the information you need, and support for choosing and applying the feedback that is most helpful to you.

There are a few excellent places to learn about Toastmasters evaluations. You are always encouraged to talk to your Vice President Education, mentor, or club leadership to understand the process and methods unique to your club.



Return to Base Camp and visit the [Speech Evaluations](#) page where you can access the “How to Evaluate” tutorial to see a Toastmasters evaluation in action. You can also find a link to the page in your digital Ice Breaker project on the “Part 3: After Your Speech” screen.

### ACCEPTING FEEDBACK

Feedback for your first speech may come from multiple sources. Your speech evaluator will deliver a verbal evaluation before the club meeting is finished. The verbal evaluation is in front of the club.

Your speech evaluator will also share a written evaluation with you after the club meeting. Depending on the practice of your club, you may receive written evaluations from other members as well. It is helpful to save these evaluations for future reference.

Accepting a constructive evaluation is an integral part of improving as a public speaker and leader. After the meeting, ask your evaluator questions to clarify anything you did not understand. Talk to your mentor to gain additional feedback you can use in future speeches.

Accepting feedback can be challenging. Be aware of your responses during your evaluator’s speech to the club.

- ▶ Listen carefully to the evaluator.
- ▶ Look directly at the evaluator as they give their evaluation speech.
- ▶ Suspend all judgment or reaction to what you hear.
- ▶ Carefully consider each comment and suggestion for improvement.
- ▶ Take the time later to evaluate your efforts yourself.

## MEET WITH YOUR EVALUATOR

At the close of the meeting, be sure to take time to meet with your evaluator and review your full written evaluation. If you are not able to meet directly after the meeting, set a time to talk as soon as possible.

### USE YOUR TIME WELL

Take steps to make the most of your time with your evaluator.

### BE THOUGHTFUL

Ask for clarification on any points from the evaluator's verbal feedback. You may find, after review, that some comments become clearer and more helpful.

### ENGAGE

Give your evaluator your full attention.

### STAY POSITIVE

When you hear constructive feedback, realize that it is never meant to apply to who you are as a person. It is only intended to help you improve as a public speaker and leader.

### LISTEN

Listen to the feedback without objection and ask any questions you may have.

## APPLY FEEDBACK

Once you receive feedback, apply what you have learned. Each of us has a unique method for adopting new information and integrating it into our behaviors.

Consider converting the feedback into a list and comparing it to a new speech you are writing. Cross-reference the list with your speech as you incorporate the feedback. Any method that works for you is appropriate.

Keep your focus on improvement in your future speeches and projects.

## EVALUATING YOURSELF

When your speech is complete, take time to think about how well you did. Regardless of your feelings—relief, excitement, nervousness, or a combination of emotions—you deserve to be proud. Each new speech is a challenge and an accomplishment.

## REVIEW AND APPLY

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Before you complete the assignment, take a moment to read through the questions you see here. If you are not able to answer them comfortably, review the project.

- ▶ What are some strategies you can use to balance preparation and spontaneity when delivering your speech?
- ▶ List your strongest communication and leadership skills.
- ▶ What are the elements of basic speech structure?
- ▶ How will you approach receiving a speech evaluation from a peer?
- ▶ What communication and leadership skills do you want to develop?
- ▶ How will you choose feedback to apply to your next speech?
- ▶ List your immediate goals for communication and leadership.

## COMPLETE YOUR ASSIGNMENT

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Now that you have read through the project, plan and prepare your speech or report.

**Review:** Return to page 3 to review your assignment.



**Organize:** Use the Project Checklist on page 15 to review the steps and add your own. This will help you organize and prepare your assignment.

**Schedule:** Work with the Vice President Education to schedule your speech.



**Prepare:** Prepare for your evaluation. Review the evaluation resources on pages 15–23 and share all resources with your evaluator before your speech. You may choose to share your evaluation resources online.

## PART 4: COMPLETE YOUR PROJECT

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Once you complete your Ice Breaker speech you may be ready to dive into the next project and schedule your next speech right away or you may need time to reflect before moving on. Trust yourself and know that your Toastmasters journey is unique to you. Work at your pace and your comfort level.

Return to your digital Ice Breaker project and complete “Assess Your Skills—After.” Like “Assess Your Skills—Before,” this screen will help you identify what you know and what you have learned. It also serves another purpose. It tells Base Camp that you have finished all the steps in this project.

### BEFORE YOU MOVE ON

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Be sure you have completed all components of this project. Once you do, it will show “Complete” in your transcript on Base Camp.

If you have:

- ▶ Reviewed all the material in the Ice Breaker project
- ▶ Delivered your speech to your club
- ▶ Received an evaluation from a fellow club member
- ▶ Completed the “Assess Your Skills—After” screen in your digital Ice Breaker project

Congratulations! You have completed your Ice Breaker project and are ready to move on to your next project.

# PROJECT CHECKLIST

## Ice Breaker

**Purpose:** The purpose of this project is to introduce yourself to the club and learn the basic structure of a public speech.

**Overview:** Write and deliver a speech about any topic to introduce yourself to the club. Your speech may be humorous, informational, or any other style that appeals to you.

**This project includes:**

- ▶ A 4- to 6-minute speech

Below are tasks you will need to complete for this project. Please remember, your project is unique to you. You may alter the following list to incorporate any other tasks necessary for your project.

- Schedule your speech with the Vice President Education.

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- Write your speech.

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- Rehearse your speech.

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- Communicate with your evaluator about your goals for this speech. Be sure to share your most important concerns and ask any questions you have about the evaluation process.

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- Meet with your evaluator to review your evaluation.

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- Applying feedback is the most important step to improve public speaking skills. Create a plan for applying the feedback you received.

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- Choose one piece of feedback that is reasonable to apply to your next speech.

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- Share with your mentor, a friend, or your next evaluator the feedback you received that you plan to apply to your next speech.

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- After you have completed all components of the assignment, log in to complete the second portion of your self-assessment on the “Assess Your Skills—After” screen.

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# EVALUATION FORM

## Ice Breaker

Member Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Evaluator \_\_\_\_\_

Speech Length: 4 – 6 minutes

Speech Title \_\_\_\_\_

### **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this project is for the member to introduce themselves to the club and learn the basic structure of a public speech.

### **Notes for the Evaluator**

This member is completing their first speech in Toastmasters. The goal of the evaluation is to give the member an effective evaluation of their speech and delivery style. Because the “Ice Breaker” is the first project a member completes, you may choose to use only the notes section and not the numerical score.

If you know you will be the evaluator ahead of the meeting, communicate with the speaker to learn about them and their goals for their first speech. Be sure to set aside enough time in your schedule to meet with the speaker after their speech to review the evaluation and answer any questions they may have.

### **General Comments**

You excelled at:

You may want to work on:

To challenge yourself:

For the evaluator: In addition to your verbal evaluation, please complete this form.

5 EXEMPLARY	4 EXCELS	3 ACCOMPLISHED	2 EMERGING	1 DEVELOPING	
<b>Clarity:</b> Spoken language is clear and is easily understood					Comment:
5	4	3	2	1	
<b>Vocal Variety:</b> Uses tone, speed, and volume as tools					Comment:
5	4	3	2	1	
<b>Eye Contact:</b> Effectively uses eye contact to engage audience					Comment:
5	4	3	2	1	
<b>Gestures:</b> Uses physical gestures effectively					Comment:
5	4	3	2	1	
<b>Audience Awareness:</b> Demonstrates awareness of audience engagement and needs					Comment:
5	4	3	2	1	
<b>Comfort Level:</b> Appears comfortable with the audience					Comment:
5	4	3	2	1	
<b>Interest:</b> Engages audience with interesting, well-constructed content					Comment:
5	4	3	2	1	

This criteria lists the specific goals and expectations for the speech. Please review each level to help you complete the evaluation.

### Clarity

- 5 – Is an exemplary public speaker who is always understood
- 4 – Excels at communicating using the spoken word
- 3 – Spoken language is clear and is easily understood
- 2 – Spoken language is somewhat unclear or challenging to understand
- 1 – Spoken language is unclear or not easily understood

### Vocal Variety

- 5 – Uses the tools of tone, speed, and volume to perfection
- 4 – Excels at using tone, speed, and volume as tools
- 3 – Uses tone, speed, and volume as tools
- 2 – Use of tone, speed, and volume requires further practice
- 1 – Ineffective use of tone, speed, and volume

### Eye Contact

- 5 – Uses eye contact to convey emotion and elicit response
- 4 – Uses eye contact to gauge audience reaction and response
- 3 – Effectively uses eye contact to engage audience
- 2 – Eye contact with audience needs improvement
- 1 – Makes little or no eye contact with audience

### Gestures

- 5 – Fully integrates physical gestures with content to deliver an exemplary speech
- 4 – Uses physical gestures as a tool to enhance speech
- 3 – Uses physical gestures effectively
- 2 – Uses somewhat distracting or limited gestures
- 1 – Uses very distracting gestures or no gestures

### Audience Awareness

- 5 – Engages audience completely and anticipates audience needs
- 4 – Is fully aware of audience engagement/needs and responds effectively
- 3 – Demonstrates awareness of audience engagement and needs
- 2 – Audience engagement or awareness of audience requires further practice
- 1 – Makes little or no attempt to engage audience or meet audience needs

### Comfort Level

- 5 – Appears completely self-assured with the audience
- 4 – Appears fully at ease with the audience
- 3 – Appears comfortable with the audience
- 2 – Appears uncomfortable with the audience
- 1 – Appears highly uncomfortable with the audience

### Interest

- 5 – Fully engages audience with exemplary, well-constructed content
- 4 – Engages audience with highly compelling, well-constructed content
- 3 – Engages audience with interesting, well-constructed content
- 2 – Content is interesting but not well-constructed or is well-constructed but not interesting
- 1 – Content is neither interesting nor well-constructed

# SPEECH OUTLINE WORKSHEET

## Ice Breaker

Use this outline to help you organize the information you want to include in your speech.

Speech Title \_\_\_\_\_

### **About Yourself/Main Points**

List two to four things about yourself that you would like fellow club members to know.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

### **Reasons for Joining Toastmasters (Optional)**

If it's relevant to your speech, you might want to tell the audience your reason(s) for joining Toastmasters.

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### **Goals (Optional)**

Do you have goals that you would like to achieve in Toastmasters? If so, list them here.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

## Opening

### A. Greeting

You may thank the Toastmaster or person who introduced you and acknowledge fellow Toastmasters and guests.

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### B. Capture audience interest

Begin with something about yourself that will capture the interest and attention of the audience.

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### C. Introduce yourself

Following your opening, provide a brief introduction. You might want to include why you joined Toastmasters.

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### D. Transition

Write a brief statement to transition smoothly from your introduction to what you'll discuss next.

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**Body**

**A. Main point 1**

Use some of the About Yourself/Main Points from page 1.

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**Transition**

This is a sentence or two that connects main point 1 with main point 2.

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**B. Main point 2**

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**Transition**

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C. Main point 3

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**Transition**

Signal that the conclusion of the speech is approaching.

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**Conclusion**

D. Restate the main points of your speech

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E. Close with impact

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