

CCET Conference Organiser's Guidelines

May 1998

Version 1

This document was produced to help club presidents who wish to host a CCET conference.

It contains guidance, tips, and a checklist to help ensure that the CCET conference runs smoothly and to the satisfaction of organisers and delegates alike.

The CCET executive committee is available for further support and assistance.

If you have suggestions or comments to this document, or find inconsistencies (or even typographical errors), please do not hesitate to send your feedback by E-mail (WriteAngle@CompuServe.com) or fax (+ 33 14 035 9889).

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1 - Introduction

It is an honour and a pleasure for a Toastmasters club to host a CCET conference. It is also a challenge. It requires advanced planning (well advanced), detailed preparation, teamwork, communication, and close co-operation with the CCET executive committee.

That's quite a handful. This guide is aimed at making it less of a burden by describing the process, defining responsibilities, and by giving some concrete tips. Note that it is not a rule book. The only fixed rules are the speech contest rules in the appendix, which define who is eligible, how each contest is run, the timing systems, and disqualification procedures. The rest is advice and guidance. It is the product of the collective experience of past conference organisers, those who had mild heart attacks because they didn't have a handbook such as this one to fall back on (it is also a tribute to them).

Toastmasters is about communication and leadership. The new educational paths focus more now on leadership than in the past. You should know that organising a CCET conference is perhaps the supreme example of leadership skills. You will also be surprised at how organising a conference will test your communication skills, too. That is why every club should see it as an opportunity and embrace it with enthusiasm.

Twice a year

There are two CCET conferences a year. The Fall conference generally takes place early in November. It is the occasion of the Humorous Speech Contest, the Table Topics Contest, and the Council Officers' Speech Contest. It is also the time at which the prizes and awards earned during the previous Toastmasters season are presented.

The Spring conference takes place in the second half of May. It is generally considered as the end-of-year celebration and highlights the Annual Speech Championship, the Evaluation Contest, and the Parliamentary Procedures Contest.

Each conference includes various education and training sessions and foreign language contests (in the Fall, the French and German Table Topics contests; in the Spring, the French and German Evaluation contests). Note that the CCET executive committee defines these contests based on demand. They could change in the future.

Each conference is highlighted by a gala dinner on Saturday evening. This has traditionally been when the main event (Humorous Speech Contest in the Fall, Annual Speech Championship in the Spring) takes place. However, with the agreement of the CCET vice chairman education & training, you can schedule the contests some other time during the day and leave the evening open to enjoyment of the meal and, perhaps, dancing.

Leisure activities are normally made available. They can range from those provided by the hotel to organised guided tours of the local sights. You as the local host will decide what is most appropriate for your guests.

Note that to be selected as host for a conference, a club must submit a bid to the CCET Chairman 15 months ahead of the conference it wishes to host. The winning bid will be selected by a vote of the General Council at the conference one year before the one the club wishes to host. This implies advanced planning that is covered in section 4.

Tip No. 1: Start early

You cannot start preparing the conference too early. More than one year in advance is not an exaggeration. Chapter 5 will give further details of why it is essential to start early.

Tip No. 2: Set up an organising committee

One person alone cannot manage the whole process. Assign specific responsibilities to members of your club and make them accountable for their piece of the action.

Tip No. 3: Establish a single point of contact

Set up a single E-mail point of contact from start to finish. No other form or communication will better serve conference planners. It is economical, fast, and a great way of reaching busy people (and all Toastmasters are busy people, aren't they).

Organising and running a CCET conference is like flying an aeroplane. There is one person in charge, the captain. He/she delegates certain tasks to local club members, but retains total control and has the overview of all activities. Delegation implies follow-up, review, verification, correction. It means monthly meetings at first, then weekly meetings, and as the deadline approaches daily ones (with a few phone calls in between).

Run a CCET conference like a business. Plans, responsibilities, profit/loss. The event will be that much more professional, and appreciated by all concerned.

Perhaps most important of all, aside from all the logistics questions, the host club should tender a **warm welcome** to the delegates coming from all over Europe and from even further afield. So make sure you have a team of people taking care of the visitors. Make them feel wanted. It makes a difference.

2 - Responsibilities

Simply put, the CCET is responsible for the content of a conference; the host club is responsible for creating the framework for that content. The area governor is the relay between the two.

Host club responsibilities

It is the host club's responsibility to provide the facilities for the whole conference. That includes:

- finding a suitable location,
- organising conference facilities,
- booking sufficient accommodation
- providing clubs with appropriate information
- taking reservations for the conference
- ordering materials and contest trophies/certificates
- running the contents
- troubleshooting

All of these activities will be described in further detail in the following chapters.

See section 3.4 of the CCET ground rules for more information.

CCET executive committee responsibilities

The CCET executive committee is responsible for the content of the conference. The CCET executive committee will:

- design and run the educational program
- specify the contests to be held
- designate a chief judge for each contest
- run the General Council meeting (Saturday morning)
- provide input and support to the host club
- order trophies and certificates for non-contest-related awards

Area governor responsibilities

The area governor is there to:

- provide support and guidance to the host club
- act as relay between the host club and the CCET executive committee
- obtain resources from other clubs in the area if required
- ensure that all information concerning contest participants and judges is available to the conference organiser
- troubleshooting - keeping things on track

The area governors of the other areas have the responsibility to provide the host club with all information concerning the contestants and the judges from their areas for each of the contests. This information must be available to the host club not later than one week prior to the conference. **

Tip No. 4: Communicate

Stay in constant contact with your area governor and the CCET chairman and vice chairman education & training. You will need their help and you will need their input.

** As conference organiser you can simplify this task. Your registration form should include a space for the Toastmaster rank of the delegate (CTM, ATM, DTM) and a question “Are you available to act as a judge and for which contest?” The area governor can then review the list of registered participants and make the choice of judges.

3 - Conference Venue

The trick is to find a venue that can provide satisfactory meeting facilities (including coffee/refreshment breaks), accommodation, meals, and if possible recreational possibilities all on a single site at a reasonable price.

Not easy. Some conference organisers have opted to separate accommodation from the conference proper, or housed the gala event (Saturday evening) at a different location from the other activities. These are possibilities, but they are generally less satisfactory and involve more complex logistics. Why complicate your life and that of your guests?

Meeting facilities

Check-in

The event begins with check-in of delegates. Make sure the check-in desk is visible or clearly marked so that delegates can easily find it on arrival. It would be good if it were located where people can stay and chat with each other or have a drink.

At check-in you need to have available:

- a list of all delegates with club name, TM level, and club position
- a list of contestants per contest, judges, timers, counters, etc.
- pre-printed badges and badge holders
- a document pack including:
 - conference agenda
 - delegate list
 - miscellaneous information (e.g., recreational facilities in the venue complex or nearby, a plan of the venue complex, etc.)
 - tourist information
 - a welcome letter
 - a note pad and pencil
- voting cards for the CCET General Council meeting
- payment records
- block of receipts

Tip No. 5: Surprises

Some people will turn up unexpectedly. Have spare badges and badge holders available, as well as spare document packs.

Tip No. 6: Computer back-up

It is useful to have your records on computer, so that they can be easily and rapidly updated. But make sure there is a back-up copy on diskette and preferably a spare computer at hand. At one conference, the person with the computer was held up elsewhere and arrived very late at the conference, causing considerable panic at check-in.

Tip No. 7: Voting cards

These are needed for voting in the CCET general meeting. They are to be given to presidents and vice-presidents education of member clubs or their designated proxies. As people check in you should ask if they fall in the above category and if so give them a voting card (or more than one if they have proxies). But keep a record! You will have to recuperate the cards after the meeting.

CCET executive meeting

The conference itself starts with a CCET executive meeting on Friday evening. So a conference room that can hold some 20 people needs to be available. It can be one of those used Saturday and Sunday, but does not have to be.

Water and/or coffee should be available. Also a flip chart (or white board) with markers, and overhead projector and screen.

Note: CCET conferences may evolve in the future to include group events on Friday evening. Stay in touch with the Vice chairman education & training to ascertain the need for conference facilities on Friday evening.

Conference rooms

CCET conferences now feature parallel sessions. Usually they are limited to two concurrent sessions, but the CCET vice chairman education & training may want three. Therefore, you should strive to find a venue that offers this flexibility. But above all, clearly establish needs with the CCET vice chairman education & training.

Conferences generally bring together anywhere from 70 to 130 delegates. You can expect to have perhaps 80 delegates during the day if you are centrally located in Europe. Count 50 if you are on the continental periphery. Therefore you need one conference room that will accommodate that number of people (for plenary sessions and the General Council meeting, for example) and another that will hold, say, 30 to 50 people.

Tip No. 8: Banners

The main room is where club banners are usually displayed. Make sure there is some system for hanging the banners along the walls.

Tip No. 9: Contestant gatherings

Remember that during the Table Topics, Evaluation, and Parliamentary Procedures contests, contestants are required to leave the contest room. They should be able to gather close by but out of ear-shot of the contest. Make sure there is a place they can stay. The bar is a possibility.

Tip No. 10: Exclusivity

Try to arrange with the venue management that the Toastmasters conference does not double up with other groups.

General Council meeting

Requirements:

- front table with 7 seats
- lectern
- flip chart and markers
- overhead projector and screen
- microphone
- timing lights
- seats for 80 or so people

Tip No. 11: Timing the General Council meeting

Have the timer time the reports of the General Council meeting. This meeting constantly goes over time. Having the timing lights operating will help keep the meeting to schedule.

Education sessions and contests

A second conference room for parallel sessions should be available and contain the same features. Only the front table needs to be smaller.

Gala event

The Saturday evening gala event is the highlight of the conference. Try to make it special. It is quite in order to specify “black tie” as dress code.

The traditional procedure for the gala event is:

- welcome and introductions (host club president or sergeant at arms)
- meal
- speech contest (unless you have scheduled this for the day-time activities)
- prize giving by the CCET chairman or visiting dignitary
- repair to the bar or dancing

However, note that the contest can be scheduled at another time during the day, leaving everyone the leisure and pleasure of enjoying the evening. But if the contest does not take place during the gala dinner, you must put on a really good show, with dancing for example, to make it a special occasion.

The meal can be a buffet or a set meal. Normally you would want round tables spread throughout the room, each accommodating 8 - 10 people.

Tip No. 12. Waiters

Inform the catering management that the waiters should not serve, clear up, or take orders during the speech contest. Before and after is fine, not during.

The room should have the same equipment as the conference room. However, if you know that none of the contestants needs the flip chart or overhead projector, these can be dispensed with.

Pay attention to the room layout. It should not be too long nor too wide. The speakers should be easily visible by all the attendees and should not have to swing their heads from side to side in order to make eye and ear contact with everyone.

You will need a table for the timing lights and one to hold all the trophies and awards.

Microphones are a problem. A fixed microphone at the lectern is fine for the speakers who stay behind the lectern. But those who stand in front of it or move around will need a lapel mike. Try to have one available, but test it beforehand and make sure the contestants know how to switch it on.

Accommodation

The best solution is to find a conference venue that also offers accommodation. This avoids the need to move from place to place. Most modern hotels and some traditional ones fit the bill. Some military installations are also suitable. And, with hotels, if you book a week-end conference, you can usually negotiate a favourable room rate.

A fairly large proportion of Toastmasters have a limited budget. After adding travel and conference costs, the outlay is already quite substantial for many delegates. They would like to have a choice of low-cost accommodation. Therefore, in addition to the hotel in which the conference is taking place, you should locate lower-priced rooms (B&B, small hotel, etc.) in the vicinity. These should be mentioned in the registration form sent to member clubs in advance of the conference.

To make the overnight stay even less expensive for your visitors, why not put them up in your local members' homes? It makes things cosier as well as cheaper. But it requires co-ordination.

Tip No. 13: Co-ordination

Assign a person to be responsible for lodging, and only for lodging. It takes some juggling, so the lodging co-ordinator should not be burdened with other tasks.

How much?

Most hotels are willing to negotiate a lower room rate if they are assured of volume and know the conference will bring in more money. So bring them down. You can do this by negotiating a block of rooms to be held by Toastmasters until an agreed date. The hotel could then charge a higher rate for late comers.

Tip No. 14: Reservation date

Publish the cut-off date for the lower room rate in the registration material, indicating that thereafter delegates risk not getting a room or having to pay a higher price for it.

A rule of thumb: a single room at the conference hotel should cost the delegate about the same as the full conference package.

Check the following:

- is breakfast included?
- are non-smoking rooms available?
- which credit cards are accepted?
- is use of recreational facilities (sauna, pool) included in the price?
- do they allow pets?

How many?

A good question. The more clubs in the vicinity, the more members will go home for the night. Plus, many of your local members will come for the gala event only.

A rule of thumb: if you are planning on 100 people attending the gala dinner, about 70 need a room. Reckon on 20 singles and 25 double rooms total (that is, at the conference hotel, other accommodation, at members' homes).

Who books, who pays?

You as the host should make provisional block bookings. It is not likely you will have to make a deposit for the rooms, but you will no doubt have to for the conference; so the conference hotel at least is assured of revenue.

When making the block booking, arrange for the code word "Toastmasters" that delegates should use when booking. This will ensure that the lower rate is applied to the Toastmasters delegates.

The individual delegates are responsible for making their own room bookings. That means you must provide them with complete hotel information:

- hotel name
- agreed price
- mailing address
- phone
- fax
- e-mail

The delegates are also responsible for paying their own hotel bills. Your only financial concern with the delegates is the money for the conference itself. Make this separation of responsibilities clear in your communication with member clubs.

Meals

Since breakfast is included in the room cost (or at worst is added to the room bill), you do not have to concern yourself with it. Also, Friday dinner and Sunday lunch are not normally included, since you simply cannot know how many people will be there to eat those meals.

The full conference package should include:

- Saturday lunch
- Saturday dinner (gala event)
- coffee/refreshment breaks

Drinks are normally separate and payable by the individual who orders them. If the catering people have other suggestions, by all means listen to them. For example, if you can, have wine (standard ¼ litre per person) or mineral water and coffee included in the Saturday dinner. If this is not possible, make sure everyone is aware of the arrangements.

You should ensure that vegetarian meals are available, and indeed put an item in the registration form enabling delegates to order vegetarian meals.

It is normal to offer delegates different formulae:

- the full package
- gala dinner only

You can also offer a package that includes the education and contest sessions only (that is, excluding the Saturday dinner) or Saturday only. If you do, be careful. You then have to identify who has paid for what (say, with coloured dots on the badges) and control entry. It is an administrative headache you can probably do without, so be sure you really want to do it before introducing such a matrix of packages. Certainly the two prime ones above should be offered.

Care to dance?

In the past, dancing was often proposed after the gala dinner and speech contest. This custom has been discontinued, largely because the gala event finishes quite late. You might consider reinstating it. If you do, consider the following:

- hold the speech contest separately, possibly in the afternoon.
- is there a discotheque in the hotel or nearby? If so, make use of the facilities.
- if not, and you want to offer dancing, make it easy on yourself. Don't invite an expensive rock group. Why not arrange for a disk jockey with canned music on call. Perhaps one of your members, or a friend.
- it should not be expensive.

Extra-curricular activities

A number of delegates will come with their spouses or partners. The latter will probably not want to attend the educational sessions and day-time contests. Instead, they will prefer to occupy themselves with visiting the sights, or shopping, or at the pool side.

Also, some of the delegates themselves may want to take some time off to visit the local sights. It would be a nice gesture to arrange a guided tour, or at least to recommend certain sights to visit. This can range from an organised guided tour in a rented coach, to a casual walk-about accompanied by a local member. Plus, the hotel may offer certain facilities (sauna, pool, gym, crazy golf, snooker, etc.).

- Give full information in the registration package
- Try to get people to book in advance for organised activities
- Make an announcement on Saturday morning.

Price

For my next trick ... Now you have to show real imagination. As noted before, Toastmasters are not rich. All the above should be affordable.

Do it at the lowest possible cost to delegates. At the same time, do not lose money (the CCET cannot be held responsible for any loss made at a conference). In fact, it is quite permissible to make a little money.

The full conference package at Heidelberg (Fall 1997) cost DM 130, and even DM 110 for early bookers. Use this as your benchmark. It is good price/performance. Others have been less costly, some have been more expensive. A range of DM 120 - DM 150 seems reasonable. If you are under this range, check that you have calculated right. If you are above, see where you can make savings.

4 - Communication

You are bidding against other clubs for the honour of hosting a CCET conference. This means you must make a presentation to the CCET General Council one year before the event you wish to host. The sequence of communication is therefore as follows:

- 15 - 13 months before the event: provide the CCET chairman and vice-chairman education & training with your proposition
 - event
 - date
 - location
 - approximate price per delegate
 - attraction/interest of the city (including city brochures/leaflets)
 - why delegates should want to make the trip
 - contact person and co-ordinates

The CCET chairman will review the proposal and may ask for further details.

- 12 months before the event:
 - Make a presentation (slides or transparencies and/or flip chart) providing the above information. This is an exercise in selling. Make it exciting. Convince your audience to vote for you.
 - It would be wise to ask the current conference hosts to include information on your project in their conference pack.
 - Do a bit of lobbying among the delegates present (especially club presidents/vice presidents education, who are the ones who will vote).
 - If you are selected by the CCET General Council to host the conference in one year's time, make sure they leave with the name and co-ordinates of the contact person.
 - Provide the Clarion editor with enough information to place a short article in the next issue, inciting members to come to your city.

- 6 months to go:

At the semi-annual CCET conference immediately preceding yours, have a detailed package available for the delegates present. It should contain:

- an agenda (details of the educational sessions do not have to be included, but by all means specify those that are already arranged)
- access plan (plane, train, car)
- conference venue and accommodation data
- tourist information
- hotel leaflet, with booking information
- registration form (including accommodation rates)
- name and co-ordinates of contact points
- conference package prices and mode of payment
- welcome letter

At this point the Clarion editor should also be given a copy. Provide him/her with a short article for insertion in the next issue of the Clarion touting the conference and your city. Also ensure that all area governors have at least one package and encouragement to publicise your conference. That means you will need their names (and addresses, if they are not attending the preceding conference). You can find them in the CCET directory.

This is also the time to send details to Toastmasters International for inclusion in “The Toastmaster” magazine. Send them the same or similar article you gave to the Clarion editor. “The Toastmaster” might well publish it and bring you guests from the world over. It has been known.

- 3 months to go

Order the contest trophies and materials. Also arrange for the tour guides at this point.

- 2 months to go

Send out the same, updated package again. This time with a final agenda showing times of events, education workshop subjects and presenters. A note should urge members to sign up quickly. If you can add an incentive for members to sign up rapidly (a discount or a gift for those who sign up before a specified date), do so. You need to have a good idea of the numbers attending as soon as possible.

One additional item should be included in this package: a proxy form, to be filled out by a club president and vice-president education who will NOT be attending and will give the voting proxy to another club member or other Toastmaster of that person’s choice.

- 1 month out

Have the trophies engraved. Reproduce all delegate materials and assemble the conference packages. Make the name badges. Check the equipment and make sure you have a back-up for any mechanical device (especially timing lights and bulbs for overhead projectors).

- 3 weeks away from the big day

Panic. You have established your budget and break-even point based on a certain number of attendees. Only 20% of the number expected have registered so far (Unfortunately this is normal. Toastmasters will never learn). Set up a phone committee of four or five people and start calling around.

First call the area governors to have them contact the clubs in their areas. Then call the club presidents/contact points to find out how many people in each club are planning to attend. Urge them to urge their members to sign up immediately. Keep following up until you are confident you will have the numbers you need to make the conference a success.

It is important that delegates register and pay in advance. You cannot afford to let people pay on arrival. Some will, of course, but these should be the exception, not the rule. Assign someone the responsibility to receive the payments and registrations, keep a checklist (see the “Checklist” section of this document) of who has registered and paid (and how), and inform the rest of the team of the status.

Tip No. 15: Mode of payment

Eurocheque is the best method of payment, since it costs nothing to the receiver. However, Eurocheque is not common in all countries. Bank transfer is acceptable, provided the transferring party assumes all bank charges (you must include all bank details – account number, account holder, bank name, branch name, city – on the registration form). Be aware that your bank may charge a fee for receiving the transfer. Check with your bank as to how much they will charge and tell people paying by bank transfer to add this to the amount to their registration fee. Postal order is also a possibility and is inexpensive for the sender. Cash through the mail is dangerous. Checks drawn on foreign banks are to be avoided. Do not suggest that people pay on arrival. If they do not turn up, you have no recourse. Advance payment is a must.

Communication with the CCET

Other than the initial proposal sent to the CCET chairman 15 - 13 months in advance, your prime interface to the CCET is vice-chairman education & training. He/she is responsible for communicating to you:

- how many educational workshops will be held
- the time and duration of the workshops
- the time and duration of the contests
- the name of the chief judges for the contests

Be sure you are aware of all the events planned. There could be Area Governor training, club officer training, and other sessions for specific audiences. Get the details of all of these from the vice-chairman education & training.

Your own area governor is an important resource. Avail yourself of it to act as a relay to the CCET executive committee and to the other area governors. Also use your area governor to help out in the planning and execution of the conference.

Tip No. 16: Escalation

If you are receiving insufficient, inconsistent, or incomplete information from the vice chairman education & training, do not hesitate to escalate your concern to the CCET chairman or your area governor, asking for immediate resolution.

Area governors

The area governors are responsible for providing you with

- the names (and TM levels) of the area contestants for each contest;
- the names of the area judges for each contest

These names should all be available to you at the latest one week before the conference. If you don't have them by then, start calling the area governors to obtain them urgently (or E-mail them a fill-in-the-blanks form to be completed and returned to you). If you want to use some coercion, inform the area governors that their contestants will not be permitted to compete if that area does not field a judge. That should do it.

Tip No. 17: Foreign language contests

The German and French contests are not subject to the same rules (one contestant per area). You would be well advised to assign the full co-ordination of these contests to an area governor. The area governor of Area 10 can be made responsible for the French contests (including finding the target speaker for the French evaluation contest). The area governor of area 2, 3, 6, 8, or 9 can do the same for the German contests. But make sure these responsibilities are fully understood.

The purpose of this advance communication is to ensure that all arrangements have been made and all names are known before the event begins. You should not have to run around frantically looking for contestants and judges as delegates arrive.

Your own club

Your club members need to be kept up to date on the progress of the conference. Give a status report at each of your club meetings. Your members might come up with subjects that have been overlooked or volunteer to help.

Feedback forms

Have feedback forms for each educational session and one overall feedback form. Samples are shown in the appendices; The purpose of the former is to ascertain the quality of the content and of the presenter, how useful the workshop was, and how it could be improved. The latter's aim is to find out the overall quality of the different aspects of the conference – organisation, venue, accommodation, education, contests, meals – and to establish the different and additional needs of delegates. The objective of all this is to do a better job next time. It is a Toastmaster principle to seek constructive feedback with a view to gradual improvement. Your conference is no exception.

The educational session facilitator should remind delegates at the end of the session to fill in the individual feedback forms. The CCET chairman or vice-chairman education & training or the conference organiser should remind delegates to fill in the general feedback form before they leave.

Post conference report

Otherwise called a post-mortem, this should highlight how you organised the conference, what went right, what went wrong, what should be taken into consideration in the future. It should also summarise the results of the evaluation forms.

This document is important for future conferences. Send it within a month to the CCET chairman and to the organiser of the forthcoming conference. Above all, be objective.

A sample post-conference report is included in the appendices.

5 - Schedule

The conference schedule is well established, though it does allow some flexibility. The Fall conference takes place early November, the Spring conference late May.

Tip No. 18: Fixing the dates

Verify with the District 71 Co-ordinator the dates of District 71 (UK & Ireland) conferences. You want to avoid overlap, because the CCET chairman and other CCET Toastmasters may want to attend District 71 conferences and vice versa.

The following schedule is for guidance only. It is to be confirmed with the CCET vice-chairman education & training.

Fall conference agenda

Friday p.m.: - check-in
 - CCET executive committee meeting
 - delegate gathering (generally informal, but you may
 want to organise a party, or dance, or something)

Saturday am: 9.00 Welcome by the host club president
 General Council meeting
 10.30 Two educational sessions (in parallel)
 11.45 English Table Topics contest
 12.45 Lunch

Saturday p.m.: 14.00 French Table Topics contest
 (Third education session in parallel)
 15.00 German Table Topics contest
 (Fourth education session in parallel)
 16.00 Education session (optional) or recreation/tourism

 18.30 Cocktails
 19.00 Dinner
 21.00 Humorous Speech Contest (or during the afternoon)
 23.00 Prize giving
 Dancing (?)

For non-participating guests (spouses, partners, children ...), arrange extra-curricula activities for the morning and the afternoon.

Sunday am: 9.00 Education session
 10.00 CCET officers' speech contest
 11.35 Awards and close

Tip No. 19: Keeping to time

Allow at least 15 minutes free time between each session. Toastmasters speakers are notorious for going overtime. So you will need the buffer. If, by an amazing coincidence, the speakers keep to their schedule, the extra 15 minutes will be useful for coffee breaks and networking among delegates.

Ensure that there is someone responsible for herding people into the correct room and starting each event on time.

Spring conference agenda

- Friday p.m.:
- check-in
 - CCET executive committee meeting
 - delegate gathering
- Saturday am:
- 9.00 Welcome by the host club president
General Council meeting
- 10.30 Two educational sessions (in parallel)
- 11.45 English Evaluation contest
- 12.45 Lunch
- Saturday p.m.:
- 14.00 French Evaluation contest
(Third education session in parallel)
- 15.00 German Evaluation contest
(Fourth education session in parallel)
- 16.00 Education session (optional) or recreation/tourism
- 18.30 Cocktails
- 19.00 Dinner
- 21.00 European Speech Championship (or some other time)
- 23.00 Prize giving
Dancing (?)

For non-participating guests (spouses, partners, children ...), arrange extra-curricula activities for the morning and the afternoon.

- Sunday am:
- 9.00 Education session
- 10.00 Parliamentary procedures contest
- 11.35 Awards and close

Note that 15 minutes before each contest, the judges must be brought together by the contest chief judge for a briefing session. The contest chairman must do the same with the contestants. It is at this point that contest chairman will ensure that the sequence of speakers is determined by their drawing numbers from a hat. **These briefing sessions need to be announced clearly plenty of time before they take place.**

You, the host, are responsible for running the contests. You need to supply the contest chairmen, the timers (two per contest), counters (two per contest), and the sergeant at arms (two each for the Table Topics, Evaluation, and Parliamentary Procedures contests). This does not mean they all have to come from your club, but you do have to assign them. They should all preferably be experienced Toastmasters (especially the contest chairmen) and they should all have a copy of the speech contest rules so that they are familiar with their roles. The CCET vice-chairman education & training is responsible for providing the judges (one per area per contest), but will do so in co-operation with the area governors. The latter will communicate their names to you.

Note that foreign-language contests are a recent development and the rules have tended to be more flexible. In principle, anyone has been allowed to compete (with a maximum of 10 contestants). But the responsibility rests with the area governors and the vice-chairman education & training.

Special note on Parliamentary Procedures contest: This is a rather special contest and not easy to prepare. Traditionally it has been in the form of a script, “played” by Toastmasters acting as a club committee, with the contestants playing the role of the chairman of the “pretend” committee meeting. This means the script has to be prepared by a Toastmaster experienced in Parliamentary Procedures to include a number of different types of motion. It also requires that the “committee” rehearse the script and know what to do in the event the contestant gets it wrong. Not easy. Solicit the advice and support of the CCET vice-chairman education & training. He/she should help (or find help to) prepare the script – or may indeed propose a different format for the contest. He/she may even decide to replace the Parliamentary Procedures altogether with another contest. So stay close to this issue.

Tip No. 20: Rehearse timing

Before each contest, rehearse the operation of the timing lights with the timers. At the beginning of each contest, run through the timing procedures, showing the lighting intervals, so that the contestants know exactly what to expect and feel comfortable with the procedure.

Tip No. 21: Contest folders

Create a folder for each contest. It should contain:

- *the speech contest rules*
- *judge’s ballot (including a tie-breaking judge’s ballot) and judges briefing notes*
- *timer sheets*
- *counter sheets*
- *speech contestant briefing notes listing do’s and don’ts*
- *a list of judges for the contest showing which area each judge represents*

The folder should be given to the chief judge plenty of time prior to the contest in question. The chief judge should then:

- *distribute timer/counter forms*
- *confer with the contest chairman and ensure he/she has the list of speakers and speech titles as well as the sequence of speakers (which needs to be communicated to the judges)*
- *ensure that there is a fair representation of all areas among the judges*
- *distribute judging ballots to judges during the judges’ briefing*
- *appoint a tie-breaking judge*

6 - Materials

There are materials you absolutely must have to run a good conference. And then there are materials that are nice to have. The latter depend on the atmosphere you wish to create and the budget available.

The Toastmasters supply catalogue contains all you need (and lots more). Use it with abandon.

Tip No. 22: Order early

Be sure you leave yourself plenty of time to order materials from Toastmasters International. They send packages by surface mail (unless you specify otherwise), which can take months to arrive rather than days. Stay in close touch with Toastmasters International to know when items were sent and when you can expect them to arrive.

If you have an APO address, use it. It is faster and cheaper. Otherwise, remember that you may have to pay customs duty as well as mailing costs. Keep a tab on all these costs. They are part of your budget.

Trophies

You need to order trophies for first, second, and third places for each of the three English contests. You can buy the same trophies for each of the foreign language contests if your budget stretches that far, but you do not have to. An alternative is a trophy for first place and certificates for second and third place.

It is recommended that you buy the trophies from Toastmasters International. There is sufficient variety, they are good, and they are relatively inexpensive. But, if you have a local supplier, by all means use it. However, Toastmasters International rules state that trophies must be non-consumables (so no champagne and no box of chocolates) and appropriate. So if your region is famous for its crystal or porcelain, you can opt for that. It gives a special, local flavour.

All trophies must be engraved with

- the event (e.g., CCET Humorous Speech Contest)
- the date (e.g., Fall 1999)
- the position (First Place, Second Place, ...)

Tip No. 23: Engraving

When ordering trophies from Toastmasters International, it is wise to order without engraving. Do the engraving locally, but leave yourself time to do it.

The trophies for “Toastmaster of the Year,” “Most Promising Toastmaster of the Year,” “Best Club Bulletin,” and “Area Governor of the Year” are the responsibility of the CCET executive committee. The CCET chairman and/or vice-chairman education & training will order them, have them engraved, and bring them to the conference. The host club needs to be aware of their existence, but has no involvement in their ordering.

Certificates

It is advisable to order these from Toastmasters International. A wide selection is available to fit all needs. They are also inexpensive.

You need:

- certificates of second and third place in the foreign language contests (if you have opted for not having trophies, see above);
- certificates of participation for all contestants per contest (that means, a total of 50);
- optionally, certificates of appreciation, for those people you want to single out for having made a major contribution to your conference.

Note: an alternative to ordering certificates from Toastmasters International is to create personalised certificates, if you have a computer and laser printer at your disposal. It is a nice touch. However, check spelling carefully.

Badges and badge holders

Each delegate should have a conference badge with his/her name, TM level, home club printed on it. You should also supply the badge holders. Have a few extra of each to be on the safe side.

Contest judging forms

You should order an ample supply of the appropriate contest judging forms. Samples are shown in the appendices. You need:

For the Fall conference:

- Humorous Speech Contest judges guide and ballot
- Humorous Speech Contest tie-breaking judges guide and ballot
- Table Topics Contest judges guide and ballot
- Table Topics Contest tie-breaking judges guide and ballot
- Speech Contest judges guide and ballot (for the CCET officers' contest)
- Speech Contest tie-breaking judges guide and ballot (ditto)

For the Spring conference:

- Speech Contest judges guide and ballot
- Speech Contest tie-breaking judges guide and ballot
- Evaluation Contest judges guide and ballot
- Evaluation Contest tie-breaking judges guide and ballot
- Parliamentary Procedures Contest judges guide and ballot
- Parliamentary Procedures Contest tie-breaking judges guide and ballot

Note that there is no official Parliamentary Procedures Contest judges guide and ballot from Toastmasters International since this contest is no longer on the Toastmasters International agenda. A sample form is attached. You can photocopy or re-format it.

For all contests, you also need

- counter's tally sheets
- timer's record sheets.

For all speech contests, you need a Speakers Certification of Eligibility and Originality for each contestant. Note that a contestant who has not completed the latter form cannot participate in the contest.

You should also have Biographical Information Sheets for all contestants. The contest chairman will use this in introducing the contestants.

Feedback forms

You can create these yourself. A sample is in the appendices. You need one for each educational session and one general feedback form for the whole event.

Speech contest rules

Have a copy of the latest version of the Toastmasters International speech contest rules available. They explain eligibility, procedures, timing, disqualification, etc. A copy is included in the Appendix.

Miscellaneous

If your budget allows, you can order from Toastmasters International:

- place mats and place cards for the dinner
- menu holders
- a Toastmaster gift such as a bumper sticker, a mug, a tee shirt, etc.

Tip No. 24: Raffle

You can also provide some special gifts that can be the object of a raffle or tombola. It adds a little spice and can generate a little extra revenue for the club. However, do not overdo this, it can be time consuming.

7 - Budget

In budgeting for your conference be aware that the CCET cannot be held responsible for any losses incurred in hosting a conference.

Elements to be included

- Saturday evening meal price (cocktail, three/four course meal, coffee, wine(?)). DM 50 per person is a good benchmark for this meal
- Saturday lunch price
- Coffee/refreshment breaks during the day
- Trophies/certificates/other materials
- Mailing costs (yours for sending out information, Toastmasters International for sending materials)
- Phone expenses for your members
- Rental of conference rooms and equipment (try to get this free of charge – or at least the equipment rental – since you are paying for a significant number of meals)
- Guided tour, if arranged
- Repro costs (you will have to make a few copies at the hotel, ask the hotel management for repro charges)
- The conference attendance fee to be paid by you for each person attending the conference/dinner. See the CCET Ground Rules for the amount of this fee.

Add it all up and divide by the number of delegates you expect to attend to arrive at the total conference fee per person.

To calculate the cost per person of the gala dinner only, add up the following:

- Saturday evening dinner
- Trophies and certificates for the evening event
- Mailing and phone costs
- The conference attendance fee to be paid by you for each Toastmaster attending the conference/dinner.

Divide by the number of people you expect for the dinner to arrive at the total dinner cost per person.

Tip No. 25: Buffer

Add an additional buffer of up to DM 10.00 per person for the full package and up to DM 5.00 per person for the dinner. This will take care of the surprises.

If you find that the per person price is high, that is, more than DM 150 for the full package, you need to review your costs and make cuts somewhere. The most obvious is cocktails and drinks during the meals. You can also separate out the guided tour, if there is one, and have it paid for individually.

You should be able to make a small profit for the club. The profit grows as the number of delegates attending exceeds the number you expected and on which you based your calculations.

How many people will attend

Conferences generally bring together anywhere from 70 to 130 delegates. Expect three quarters of them to attend the full conference, with the fourth quarter attending only the gala dinner (most of these being from the host club).

The more centrally you are located, the more delegates will attend. Numbers go down the further you are located from the area between Kaiserslautern and Frankfurt. Also note that if you are within this area, there will be more people from neighbouring clubs who will attend only the gala dinner.

8 - Checklists

You should have several checklists. These are essential to ensure you do not forget even the smallest detail of conference management.

Material checklist

This checklist is to ensure you have a complete list of materials you need and to give you a status overview. For example:

Item	Responsible	Date ordered	Date received	Cost	Comment
3 speech contest trophies	Fred Smith	12.2.98	15.3.98	\$66.00	Catalogue item 1940
Certificates of participation	Fred Smith	12.2.98	15.3.98	\$15 total	From catalogue pages 38/39
Engraving	Joyce Jones	25.3.98	3.4.98	DM 25	Schmidt & Co.
etc.					
etc.					

Individual checklist

This checklist shows the responsibilities of the individual club members and the status of the tasks they are to fulfil. For example:

Person	Responsibility	Status	Complete	Comment
Fred Smith	Ordering trophies and certificates	Ordered on 12.2.98	en route	Catalogue item 1940
Joyce Jones	Engraving trophies	awaiting arrival of trophies	pending	Schmidt & Co. to do
Mike Brown	Meal co-ordinator	fixed with hotel	10.4.98	3-course meal with coffee and cocktail arranged for DM 47 per person.
Mary Lamb	CCET co-ordinator	awaiting input from CCET	pending	Escalate. No response to calls
etc.				
etc.				

Delegate checklist

This checklist shows which delegates have booked and paid.

Club	Person	CTM/ATM	Paid	Room	Participation
Hedgehog	Jim Huggard	CTM	check received	main hotel	judge French TT
Paris	Peter Kenton	ATM	transfer (not yet received)	staying with F. Jones	judge Humorous Speech Cont.
Stammtisch	Payton Fletcher	ATM	check received	main hotel	CCET officers' Speech Cont.
Munich	Chris Magyar	ATM	postal order received	annex	judge German TT
Munich	Denise Magyar	CTM	postal order received	annex	German TT
etc.					
etc.					

You may decide to have other checklists, for example, showing the sequence of events and the contests and who is responsible for what. But be careful not to have too many, otherwise your good management may become unmanageable.

9 - Appendices

Attached you will find copies of the following useful documents.

- form to submit to the CCET chairman as part of your bid to host a conference
- a sample evaluation form
- contest forms
- conference announcement in The Clarion
- post-conference report
- a sample registration form
- speech contest manual
- speech contest rule book
- the appropriate section of the CCET ground rules

Request for Proposal

To be used by clubs in submitting a Bid to Host a CCET Conference

Instructions for submitting a Proposal

1. The information requested below is to be submitted by a bidder to provide the CCET General Council with enough information to select the “Best” proposal.
2. This form is also intended to be used as a guide to clubs in planning a conference to make their work easier. It will help you by outlining the kind of planning that goes into organising a conference that is not only great from the view point of the attendees, but one that runs smoothly from the viewpoint of the organisers too.
3. In completing this form you will in effect be obliged to organise the conference. You will need to:
 - pick a date;
 - get offers from hotels and select one based on size, facilities, location and cost;
 - consider how people will get to your conference;
 - select price ranges for meals;
 - negotiate with hotels for better deals;
 - determine advertising and mailing costs;
 - keep costs down yet still provide a package that will entice the members to come to your conference.
4. Providing this information does not oblige the organising committee to organise the conference exactly as described. For example, if the CCET Executive requests that extra facilities be provided, the cost or even the location may change.
5. In doing your negotiations with the hotels, please **DO NOT** commit yourself or your club financially until your bid has been officially selected. The CCET shall not, in any way, be held responsible for any costs incurred by any group in preparing a bid.
6. The decision as to which conference bid is accepted will be taken at a CCET conference approximately one year in advance of that conference.
7. If you have any questions please contact your Area Governor or other member of the CCET Executive for assistance.
8. Your bid is to be submitted to the CCET Chairman at least one month in advance of the conference where the decision as to which club will host the conference will be taken, i.e. approximately **13 months** in advance of the conference you wish to host.

Appendix 1

The Following Information is submitted in Solicitation of being Requested to Host a CCET Conference

Information Required in Submitting a Bid to Host a CCET Conference:

1. **Conference being bid for:** _____
i.e. Spring or Fall and Year

2. **Date:** _____

3. **Location:**
 - 3.1.1. City: _____
 - 3.1.2. Hotel: _____

4. **Host Club(s):** _____

5. **Costs:**
 - 5.1. Total Package: _____
(Including the following:
Provide price if available separately, indicating if TMs may attend that function separately)

 - 5.1.1. Noon Saturday Meal: _____

 - 5.1.2. Saturday Evening Meal: _____
This meal will include: _____
(i.e. cocktails, wine and . . .)

 - 5.1.3. Hotel Room Costs: _____
(Double & Single)

 - 5.1.4. Overhead Costs to Organisers:
 - 5.1.5. Overhead projector, screen: _____
 - 5.1.6. Trophies: _____
 - 5.1.7. Advertising & mailings _____
 - 5.1.8. CCET Contribution per attendee:
 - 5.1.9. Registration Package (name tags etc.) _____

6. **Conference Facilities Available:**

	Near by	On Site
6.1. Dining room(s) (no. of places)	_____	_____
6.2. Lecture Room (no. of places)	_____	_____
6.3. Lecture Room (no. of places)	_____	_____
6.4. Lecture Room (no. of places)	_____	_____
6.5. Lecture Room (no. of places)	_____	_____

(If the cost of providing the lecture rooms is not included in the over all cost, please provide any additional costs for each room if the CCET wishes to use it)

7. Organising Committee:
Conference

TM &

Attending /

Organising
Name

Address:

Phone:

Experience

- 7.1. _____
- 7.2. _____
- 7.3. _____
- 7.4. _____
- 7.5. _____

8. Transportation:

8.1.1. Please provide travel distances and methods to the conference from the following cities:

- Munich _____
- Paris _____
- Berlin _____
- Gothenburg _____
- Luxembourg _____

8.1.2. Distance, travel time and cost from hotel to:

- Airport (name) _____
- Train Station (name) _____

9. Other Aspects of Location:

9.1.1. Other Facilities available in Hotel:
(i.e. bar, pool, sauna)

9.1.2. Attractions of Surroundings: _____

10. Please provide any other information you believe will help identify this proposal as the best. For example, TM and Conference Organising experience of the Organising Committee or social and cultural events going on at the same time.

This form is to be sent to the CCET Chairman at least 4 weeks ahead of the conference where your bid will be considered.

Appendix 2

A sample evaluation form for the conference.

Appendix 3

The forms you will need for the contests:

- Humorous speech contest judges' guide and ballot + judging criteria
- Humorous speech contest tie-breaking judges' guide and ballot
- Evaluation contest judges' guide and ballot + judging criteria
- Evaluation contest tie-breaking judges' guide and ballot
- Table Topics contest judges' guide and ballot + judging criteria
- Table Topics contest tie-breaking judges' guide and ballot
- CCET Parliamentary Procedures contest judges' guide and ballot

The speech contest manual in Appendix 7 contains the following forms:

- International speech contest judges' guide and ballot + judging criteria
- International speech contest tie-breaking judges' guide and ballot
- Speaker's certification of eligibility and originality (this form must be filled out before a speaker is allowed to compete)
- Speech contestant biographical information (this information needs to be available to the contest chairpersons so that they can introduce the speakers AFTER the contest - during the contest, only the name and speech title are announced)
- Speech contest time record sheet and instructions for timers
- Counter's tally sheet

The last three of these forms are needed for all contests.

Appendix 4

A sample conference announcement in The Clarion.

Appendix 5

An example of a post-conference report.

Appendix 6

A sample conference registration form.

Appendix 7

A copy of the Toastmasters International speech contest manual containing all the procedures.

Appendix 8

The speech contest rules explaining the sequence of events, eligibility, procedures, timing, and the protest procedure for all contests.

Appendix 9

The section of the CCET ground rules pertaining to CCET conferences and contests