

# High Performance Leadership

Many Toastmasters believe that the High Performance Leadership project, or HPL, is difficult to complete. It is my belief that this one leadership program does more to enhance an individual's leadership style than any other two programs combined. Let's look at the program and assess how easy it really is to earn your Excellence in Leadership award.



## **Goal #1: Evaluate Your Strengths and Weaknesses as a Leader**

As with our speaking skills, we can improve our leadership skills only when we learn, through the evaluation process, what elements need enhancement. In the HPL program, the first thing we do is evaluate ourselves in certain areas of leadership. Once we know our areas of strength, and which areas need improvement, we can design our program to have the best outcome. We may choose to work on our weaker areas or we may choose to delegate those areas to others.

## **Goal #2: Establish a Guidance Committee**

Mentors are invaluable. Whether you are working on a Toastmaster project or a project for your community or job, a team of mentors with specialized information and knowledge is necessary. This committee should be composed of individuals whose opinions you respect and whose experience will help you with your specific project. The goals of the committee will be to help you get organized, focus on your project, and evaluate your leadership style and decisions as you work.

## **Goal #3: Develop a Vision and Mission Statement**

No project will succeed unless everyone knows what they are doing and why. By developing a mission statement and setting a clear vision, you will be able to design a project that is inspirational, organized, and successful. Remember, all good leaders have a clear vision, and all good projects have a clear purpose.

## **Goal #4: Create a Strategic Planning Committee**

This is the team that will make your vision and mission come to life. The members of this committee are the workers of your project and the ultimate measure of your project's success. During this process, you will work on your ability to be a team leader through delegation, planning, conflict resolution, and many other leadership skills.

## **Goal #5: Evaluate What You Have Learned**

The beauty of the HPL is that you do not have to have a successful project to be successful. The purpose of the HPL is to improve your leadership style by engaging in a project involving others. If the project is successful, you discuss why you believe it was. If the project did not have the desired result, you discuss where it went wrong and/or the leadership lessons learned in the process. Ultimately, the goal of the HPL is to learn more about yourself as you work with others.

Now let's get some ideas about projects (over)...

# High Performance Leadership Project Ideas

If you are a **Club Member**, several projects can help your club achieve success in the Distinguished Club Program. If you want to focus on member recruitment, then organize a club Open House. If your focus is publicity, talk with the Vice President of Public Relations about producing a club newsletter or helping to develop a speakers bureau. If you like the excitement of a speech contest, then work with the Vice President of Education to put on a great contest. Your guidance committee for all of these ideas could consist of your club officers, club members and your Area Governor, if they are available.

If you are a **Club Officer**, a fantastic HPL project is helping your club achieve President's Distinguished status. Your vision is clear, and the mission goals are the guidelines of the Distinguished Club Plan. Your guidance committee can be the club's past officers, your Area Governor, and even club officers from other clubs in your Area. Your strategic planning committee consists of your club officers since they are the people working with you to be President's Distinguished.

If you are an **Area Governor**, a good HPL project is earning President's Distinguished status for your Area. Your guidance committee can be either other Area Governors in your Division, past Area Governors, and any other leaders whom you respect. Your vision is clear, and your mission is set by the Distinguished Area guidelines of Toastmasters International. Your strategic committee is made up of the Club Presidents in your Area. These individuals will ensure dues are paid on time, CCs and ACs are completed, clubs are Distinguished, and membership in the clubs are Charter 20 or better. If you visit your clubs at least twice a year, and develop a team to start a new club, you will be President's Distinguished in no time! Use your Area Council meetings to serve in part as your HPL guidance committee meetings for your Club Presidents.

If you are a **Division Governor**, a terrific HPL project is earning President's Distinguished status as a Division. Since all Districts require club growth, the minimum standard should be President's Distinguished. Your guidance committee can be composed of other current or past Division and District Governors. Your strategic planning committee is composed of your Area Governors. The purpose is to set a clear vision of your Division and to ensure each Area Governor develops as a leader through your clear purpose and ongoing training. Use your Division Council meetings to serve in part as your HPL guidance committee meetings for your Area Governors.

If you do a project outside of the Toastmasters experience, remember to include at least one Toastmaster on your guidance committee. You will deliver two specialized speeches that must be evaluated by a Toastmaster, but the rest of your guidance and strategic planning committees may be composed of non-Toastmaster individuals (but feel free to invite them to your next club meeting!).



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