

# The Er-ly Bird Brief

QUARTERLY NEWS FOR CHATSWOOD EARLY RISERS TOASTMASTERS MEMBERS AND FRIENDS



## In this Issue

Contest tips and comedy p.2  
 President's Desk p.5  
 Club Exec profile p.6  
 Meetings p.7  
 Competent Communicator p.8  
 Presidents Distinguished  
 Review p.9  
 Mentor p.10  
 Member Moments p.11  
 Pathways p.12  
 Birds Eye View p.13

## Contributors

Thank you to Jan Whitten, Jasper Fung, Julie Macken, Keng Loon Yap, Mark Larsen, Melanie Cheong, Melody Braithwaite, Siew-Geck Phua for taking time out of your busy lives to share something with us. Photos by: Alicia Curtis, Colin Wardle, Julie Macken, Melanie Cheong, Suben Subenthiran, Toastmasters

## Editor

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Welcome new members  
 Clara Chan, Felix Leung,  
 Ian Schrader, Isuru  
 Amarasena, Li Lin,  
 Maggie Sun, Nick Russo

## Congratulations

Jan - 30 years service  
 Nick, Ian and Clara -  
[icebreakers](#)

# 30

Happy 30th  
 President Jan and  
 members pose above  
 with our new club banner  
 at our 28 August meeting.  
 Just in time for our  
 September anniversary!

## Mission

We provide a supportive and positive learning experience in which members are empowered to develop communication and leadership skills, resulting in greater self-confidence and personal growth.

# Are you ready for Table Topics Contest?

Melody Braithwaite ACG ALB

In November 2011 I won the District 70 Table Topics contest having won

- Lane Cove Toastmasters (field of 8)
- Area 47 (field of 5) Topic: "I saw red"
- [Hawkesbury Division](#) (field of 8), Topic: "It's just not right" and finally
- [District 70](#) as the first speaker in a field of 10, Topic "To Change Yourself You Need to Take a Risk"



Melody (2<sup>nd</sup> from left) receiving her trophies from district leaders Jan Vecchio, Kaylene Ledgar and Joan Rinaldi

START WITH THE END IN MIND.

What criteria will the Contest Judges be using to rate your speech against all others? The Table Topics Contest [Judges Guide](#) lists the following key speech areas as Excellent, Very Good, Good & Fair. They are weighted out of a Total Score of 100 allocated as follows:

30% SPEECH DEVELOPMENT - Opening, body, close, organization, smoothness

25% EFFECTIVENESS - Logic, directness, enthusiasm, achievement of purpose, audience response

15% PHYSICAL - Body language, appearance

15% VOICE - Flexibility, volume

15% LANGUAGE - Appropriate to speech, purpose and audience. Good grammar, pronunciation and word selection

**TIP Concentrate on SPEECH DEVELOPMENT particularly opening, body and conclusion - love your content, use it to connect with your audience and all the rest will follow naturally**

CONTROL NERVES, NEGATIVE SELF-TALK & DISTRACTIONS

- Leading up to the Contest - Only imagine yourself being excited and delighted to have the BEST Table Topic ever to respond to
- At the Contest Venue - Don't get caught up in other people's emotions, ambitions or nervousness - use any tool necessary to remain neutral and balanced e.g. iPod/MP3 playing music
- Avoid drinking alcohol or coffee
- Just before you Speak - Concentrate on blanking your mind and silencing mind chatter, otherwise to succumb to negativity will rob you of creativity and innovation

**TIP Find or create a tool e.g. a mantra or empowering phrase or breathing exercise that helps you focus on one positive thing, like this moment to the exclusion of all else.**

#### SELF BELIEF

Performing well, and perhaps even winning contests is **NOT** about the other contestants its about the power of your belief in yourself.

Many times I have seen contestants talk themselves out of winning because they have been intimidated by what they perceived to be a more experienced speaker in the competition line up, or like me for many years, for some reason e.g. due to lack of preparation I only deserved 2nd place. I have a display of 10+ 2nd Place plaques to demonstrate be careful what you wish for - you just might get it - again and again and again and again!

#### CONTEST FORMAT

1. At the contest briefing, randomly selected numbered cards determine speaking order (I always ask the universe for my preferred speaking position, and even if I don't get it, I accept that its part of my journey. For the record I have consistently been rewarded with my preferred place, either the second or the second last speaking spot)
2. All contestants are lead out of room
3. Each contestant is escorted back into the competition room in speaking order by the Sgt. At Arms
4. The TT Contest Chair will either read out the Table Topic, and/or ask the contestant to read it on the lectern.

**TIP You are being observed as soon as the audience and judges see you. Stand tall, walk confidently and avoid the 'rabbit trapped by headlights' look on your face.**

#### TABLE TOPICS SPEECH STRATEGY

The BEST strategy I learnt during the 2011 Table Topics contest season was give myself permission to

- go up to the stage with a completely blank mind, and
- have the faith and courage to launch into whatever picture came to my mind as a result of the topic given

DON'T FEEL compelled to start speaking immediately. Rather centre yourself on the stage first. Catch an extra 10 seconds of thinking time. However the sooner you launch into the topic the more confident you will appear to the audience.

Make a connection with your audience and start something like (in increasing order of difficulty)

- Repeating the topic verbatim
- A Definition "What is....."
- Rhetorical Question
- A Quotation (if they have one in their repertoire) that is suitable

For example, if the Contest Table Topic was "Stress", a Rhetorical Question would be, "We all suffer from stress at one time or other? Stress is when....."

## Other contest tips:

[Tutorials](#)

[4 essential steps](#)  
[6 rules of humour](#)

**TIP Use your personal stories (fact or made up) as this relaxes you and the audience**

Weave in examples or better still your own personal story which is great to demonstrate STRESS. You only have a few minutes, so after the introduction get straight into your key points or story. As soon as the Green light comes begin to concentrate on your conclusion. If possible, round your speech off with whatever table topic you were given, e.g. “While STRESS has lots of negative attributes, we can also use it as a fighter uses the forward motion of his opponent to deliver the knockout blow. “

**TIP People remember the FIRST thing you say and the LAST. ALWAYS start and end STRONG.**

[Read Melody's journey and more ideas on the link.](#)



[Table topics](#)  
[Winning table topics](#)  
[Table topics contest](#)



## Diary Dates

8 September First virtual [District](#) Council

9 October Humorous Speech Contest - who will take the crown from Julie Macken?

23 October Table Topics Contest - who will take the crown from June Waldenberger?

26 October Area Contest 1

Upcoming themes: Fruit, Fish, Flowers, Advertising.

2 November 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary “Homecoming” Celebration

6 November: Melbourne Cup - [Wear a Hat/Fascinador!](#)

[Previous themes: Travel, Switzerland, Comedy, Pop Culture, Technology, Radio vs TV, Scams, China, Sydney Sites, Tea vs Coffee, Purple, Flying]

**T**oastmasters help you to get job ready but you may not want to follow this interview technique: [a video from our in-house comedy team.](#)

From 2018/19, all 4 division contests are held on a single day: Saturday, 2 March.

# From the Presidents Desk

Janet Whitten ACG ALB IP1

In this Toastmasters year, I am president of Chatswood Early Risers - for the second time in 30 years. So some will call me a "retread". Not quite as good as new but bearing the marks of years of experience and pleasure from being part of our special club.

I well remember the first meeting of Early Risers I attended in 1988 in the swanky boardroom of Deloitte's in Tower B of the Zenith Centre in Chatswood. Yes, we started as an in-house club well supported by the management of this major accounting firm. Incidentally, I was very struck when a young lady came especially to introduce herself to me. "I'm Fiona" she said. She shortly became my wonderful daughter in law.

Early Risers certainly stands out from other clubs. It is not only in our early morning format but holding a meeting every week. These features alone create a unique selling proposition. Those of you who have ever attended a meeting know that the cross sections of members' ages, experiences, professions, countries of origin are broad and interesting.

## WHAT DO I HOPE AND PLAN FOR IN THIS, MY "SECOND TERM"?

No 1 that all members, very new and very long standing, enjoy the experience of being among a supportive and sometimes irreverent group of communicators.

No 2 that we again achieve a [full list of Toastmasters learning and administrative goals set by Toastmasters International](#). This shows our members and the wider organisation that we are on track and members are reaching milestones in their public speaking objectives.

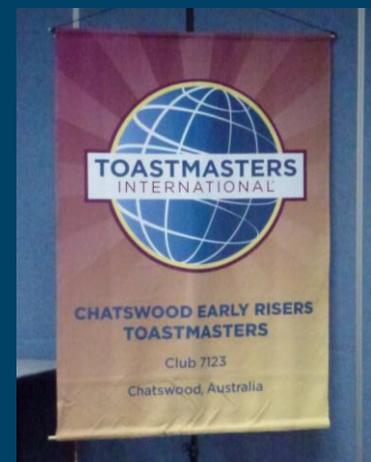
## WHAT HAVE I VALUED MOST IN ALL MY 30 YEARS WITH CERS?

Seeing terrified potential Toastmasters hovering on Victor Street, then finally taking the plunge and finding that they are indeed welcome on the inside.

Finally, I cannot put a value on the skills which Toastmasters has given to me, both in my professional career and now in retirement. To share these benefits with others - that's why I continue to rise early on Tuesday mornings.



Jan in action at the 2017 area contest



[Watch the video](#) when our new banner arrived

# Meet a Club Executive

Keng Loon Yap PM1

## 1. WHEN AND WHY DID YOU JOIN TOASTMASTERS?

I joined Toastmasters in January 2018.

I am comfortable speaking to people when the numbers are small. When the numbers got larger, I have a tendency to get super nervous when speaking in front of many people. I joined toastmasters to improve my public speaking.

## 2. SINCE JOINING TOASTMASTERS, HOW HAVE YOU GROWN?

Since I joined toastmasters, it has been an interesting journey. I have learnt new skills when it comes to communication. It will be a long journey for me as I look forward to challenge myself and extend my comfort zone. On the path to improving my public speaking skills, I have also realised the importance of active listening skills.



Keng opens the meeting engaging with his audience

There have been [other skills](#) learnt along the way such as Timing and Um-and-Ah Counters. These tasks might seem small, but they are vital ingredients that contribute to the overall success of the Toastmaster package.

## 3. WHAT IS THE THING THAT YOU LIKE THE BEST ABOUT YOUR CLUB?

Chatswood Early Risers Toastmasters Club is awesome because of the early start. It helps reinforces my mindset when it comes to time management and responsibilities. It makes me disciplined to wake up to something that matters. The members at the club have been welcoming and supportive.

I am comfortable with being the imperfect me as the vibes at the Club have been positive.

## 4. WHAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING YOU WOULD TELL YOUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY ABOUT TOASTMASTERS?

It is a good platform to help you become a better version of yourself and to share the joy of communication. We are all people. :)

## WHAT DO YOU ENJOY THE MOST ABOUT BEING [SERGEANT AT ARMS](#)?

As the Chatswood Early Risers Toastmasters Club start early in the day, I enjoy trying different approaches in attempting to kickstart the day and to contribute to the positive frequencies in the room.

## WHY WOULD YOU RECOMMEND JOINING THE [EXEC TEAM](#)?

Joining the Executive Committee at the Chatswood Early Risers Toastmasters Club has been challenging at the start for me, but with the patience and guidance of the other members of the Club, you will be taught how to fish and not just given a fish. This will improve your confidence in handling roles in a more formal capacity. I have experienced improvements in skills that I have been neglecting in the past.

## WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED AS A CLUB LEADER?

I have learnt that the club members work with each other for each other. Being a club leader does not mean that there are now less tasks to be done, it means that there is the responsibility to do more. There is also the personal responsibility to commit to learning in order to continue the good work done by previous club leaders.



## MANAGING MEETINGS

Melanie Cheong DTM DL1

In spite of successfully chairing many CER meetings, I found it hard to maintain control over some exec/council meetings with broader scope, input and representation.

After my meeting procedure workshop, I have ideas on how to better run meetings!

- Well run meetings are amazing. They never run late, go off track or are taken over by someone. Does it sound like a panacea? I attended a council meeting that took half the allotted time. The only complainant was one who liked to talk (who didn't show up at the next meeting)!
- A meeting is a final confirmation of thoughtfully considered agenda items and motions by the right people and brought to closure by a quorum who have the right to express their opinion on a topic.
- The right to express is based on their position/portfolio, not personal viewpoint.

Running a meeting well doesn't mean results are representative. Even with a great meeting facilitator, without preparation there is nothing to draw from. Ever thought of the perfect answer to a table topic after leaving? What about those you can't answer! That's like going to a meeting unprepared.

Meeting procedure allows one point per "voter" to be made on a motion (=proposal), which means attendees:

- read the agenda (and reports book)
- gather opinions from (club) members most impacted and/or portfolio holders,
- critically analyse

- arrange to prioritise opinions to support or oppose
- work out amendments to make it viable for their (club) members.
- These may become evident:
  - a clear structured speech speaking for or against the motion
  - a need to lobby others to vote with your (club) members.



I watched in fascination as committee/council members spoke up. Brave! Absolutely for those afraid of public speaking. Not so brave when the response didn't achieve a purpose of persuading or informing or seemed like déjà vu - weren't they listening earlier?

I frowned in disappointment after my thoughtfully written exec or area report raised no questions beyond my own. Maybe I should have shared it in advance?!? Hmmmm!

I listened in fear as I moved a motion in the D90 Agenda and Reports book. Waiting... waiting.... Waiting... for a question... an unanswerable question... No question. Motion carried. Phew!

Meetings should shape ideas in the form of proposals.

Run a self evaluation rinse-and-repeat on your daily meetings. A little knowledge and practice (of meetings) goes a long way. Your improved meetings may attract attendance and admiration!



# Our New Competent Communicator

Mark Larsen CC is one of our latest members to complete his Competent Communicator award. He shares some insights on what he learned through the process of his first 10 speeches.



I joined Chatswood Early Risers after years of wanting to deal with my dread of public speaking and wanting to be able to articulate myself more fluidly when having to speak in front of others unprepared.

From the very first meeting I understood that this was a place where I could achieve those goals in a very supportive environment. An environment where feedback was given constructively and is designed to give you the confidence you need to improve.

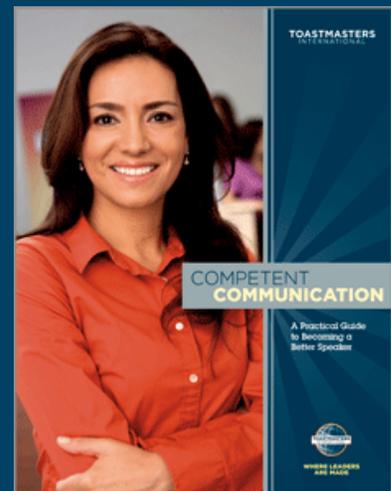
After completing my first 10 speeches I already feel far more comfortable delivering a speech and less nervous with impromptu speaking.

Speech craft is another area I am feeling more confident in. I've learned that confidence in your speech delivery is directly related to how you craft and structure your speech.

Mark giving feedback from the historic CER lectern.



Most of all, I've learned that your audience are just like you and they want you to succeed. Early Risers has created an environment that I never thought possible. An environment where public speaking in public can actually be fun!



Congratulations to award winners: Brian Johnson DL1, Melanie Cheong CL, Keng Yap PM1, Jan Whitten IP1, Louise Rigby PM1 - and end-of-year triple crown: Anthony Low.

[DL = Dynamic Leadership; PM = Presentation Mastery; IP = Innovative Planning; CL = Competent Leader; Triple Crown = 3 awards in 1 TM year]

# Year in Review - 10/10

Jasper Fung ACB ALB

As your Past President of Chatswood Early Risers 2017-2018, I just like to thank you for the wonderful support all of you have demonstrated over the Past year. In that past year, we have had many accomplishment and each of you should feel proud of being part of Chatswood Early Risers Toastmasters.

Below I like to acknowledge those who achieved awards over 2017-2018:

Competent Communicator

Eunice Zhao, Siew-Geck Phua, Jan Whitten, Mark Larsen

Advanced Communicator

Brian Johnson (2), Jill Lamond, Eunice Zhao, Anthony Low, Carol Chen

Competent and Advanced Leader

Eunice Zhao, Anthony Low (2), Jasper Fung (2), Melanie Cheong (2)

Congratulations to all the above members who have contributed to getting awards for our Club!!



If your name wasn't mentioned, don't feel disappointed as your work won't be unnoticed - you may have helped Area or (first time hosting) Division Contest (below), social events, guests, gifts, promotion, executive (L excl. Brian).



I hope that all of you will continue to do your very best for Club as I welcome Jan and her team of executives for 2018-2019. Please support her as we venture on Celebrating 30th Year!

- Jan Whitten - President
- Colin Wardle / Julie Macken - Vice President Education
- Louise Rigby - Vice President Membership
- Melanie Cheong / Anthony Low- Vice President Public Relation
- Siew-Geck Phua - Secretary
- Estelle Renard / Jasper Fung- Treasurer
- Keng Loon Yap - Sergeant @ Arms



# Memories of 2017/18

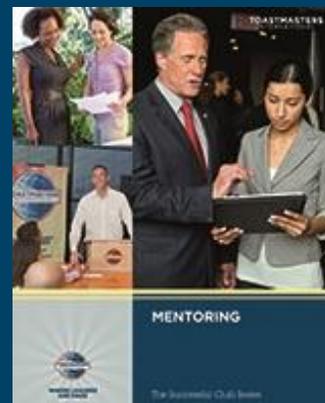


District director Shirley Childs visit for Division Director of the Year; Melbourne Cup Breakfast; Area 6 Contest Chair Anthony; Jasper thanks at Division Contest + helpers; Julie's 10 years; Changeover BBQ & Bowls; Eunice and Jasper's triple crowns; Area 6 evaluation (3<sup>rd</sup> place) and international speech contestants; Debate against Chandos; Jill's ACB; MC at District 90 conference farewell lunch Melanie; Hawkesbury Division contest toastmaster Julie

# Mentored!

Siew- Geck Phua CC, Why did you join Toastmasters?

I have been afraid of speaking in front of an audience. I attended a CER meeting in 2014 and didn't come back! However I felt it was time for a new challenge and joined in mid-2017.



HOW DID YOU CHOOSE YOUR MENTOR EUNICE?

Actually Eunice chose me!

TELL US ABOUT EUNICE

Eunice is a very experienced speaker and is very methodical.

WHAT HAVE YOU ACCOMPLISHED BECAUSE OF HER?

After showing Eunice my Icebreaker draft, she advised me to select a few topics and save the other topics for later speeches. The end result was a speech which was crisp and to the point and kept within the time limit. Eunice helped me to understand that less is more!



Eunice receiving her [2016 division contestant](#) certificate from contest toastmaster Melanie

WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED ABOUT MENTORING?

A good [mentor](#) can give the [mentee](#) some important tips that one can not get out of reading the manuals. Nothing can beat experience!



Geck receiving her Competent Communicator certificate from president Jan

### Scenes from June - August



First meeting in July



Debate Master Jan facilitates Radio (Ian, Ali, Brian) debate against TV (Colin, Anthony, Jasper)



Hawkesbury Division Director, Alicia Curtis presents (L) 'Home Club of the Area Director' ribbon to area 6 director Brian and president Jan & (R) Distinguished Toastmaster award to Melanie. Our area director visited us in early July.



Julie and Colin Communicating on Video interview project talking about Trump-et Towers



Members learning about Pathways from Alicia, first Level 5 in D90 - yes, we can!



Members and friends past and president at changeover dinner in Crows Nest organised by Julie  
**Follow our facebook or meetup for news hot off the press.**

## Have you seen our video?

**C**lub members responded to our former co-VPPR's (Colin) call and shared thoughts on our club. [Take a look at what made the director's cut.](#)

If you loved our club, please spread the message with a [facebook](#) or [google+](#) review, [meetup](#) comment or reshare one of our posts.

Visit us - Tuesday, 7:15am at Dougherty Community Centre, 7 Victor St, Chatswood or join us at our anniversary celebration.

## Who said these phrases at our club meetings? [What are they?](#)

**I**nspire to aspire

Coffee is a temptress

Out of the starting blocks

Cool, calm & collected

Luscious lawn

### Who used this support material?

An undersized suit jacket

Silver bangle

Governor general images

Jim Rohn quote

Treadmill to happiness

Seeing is believing (for TV)

No brainer

Millennial Dogs

Kinesthetic

Grief Curve diagram

Backpack

A pilot's jacket and glasses

Song

# Acronym Central

Melanie Cheong DTM DL1

**C**ompetent Communication project 4 teaches us not to use jargon. So what's the new language about?

DL1, PM1, IP1 - say what?

It's the awards of the new [Toastmasters educational program](#) that launched in our district in December.

Focused goal-based learning i.e. all about you!

What have you enjoyed most about the [Pathways program](#)?

- The new discoveries with some improvements to the old material

- The pre- and post-assessment
- The speech outline worksheets
- The videos
- The new projects like blogging and networking - well not yet enjoyed, but eagerly anticipated and wanting to move ahead so I can unlock the material



What has been your biggest challenge?

- My internet speed
- Completing speeches to unlock projects and levels (I like to jump to the conclusion in articles and books 😊)
- Finding things in the beginning and knowing where to click

I completed Level 1 of my Dynamic Leadership (DL) path and am excited about how each path will help me grow!

## MASTERING FUNDAMENTALS

A Guide to Level 1 of Pathways

**SELECT AND ACTIVATE LEARNING PATH**

#1	Ice Breaker	Prepare and deliver a speech introducing yourself to your club	4 to 6 mins.
#2	Evaluation & Feedback	A. Prepare and deliver a speech on any topic	5 to 7 mins.
		B. Prepare and deliver a speech on any topic OR repeat your previous speech, incorporating feedback received in Part A	5 to 7 mins.
		C. Serve as a speech evaluator for another member	Per Club Program
#3	Researching & Presenting	Prepare and deliver a speech on a topic you are not already familiar with or wish to learn more about	5 to 7 mins.

**SUBMIT LEVEL 1 COMPLETION REQUEST**

Base Camp

OR

Level Completion Verification Form  
(Print Members)

**BASE CAMP MANAGER APPROVES REQUEST**  
(Level 2 Unlocked)

**VPE SUBMITS LEVEL 1 AWARD IN CLUB CENTRAL**  
(Award Registered on Member Profile)

Produced by Mark Snow DTM, District 69

## LEARNING YOUR STYLE

A Guide to Level 2 of Pathways

**LEVEL 1 COMPLETION REQUEST APPROVED**

#1	Required Project #1	Prepare and deliver speeches and/or fulfil other activities as required by the project	Per Project Description
#2	Required Project #2	Prepare and deliver speeches and/or fulfil other activities as required by the project	Per Project Description
#3	Introduction to Toastmasters Mentoring	Prepare and deliver a speech about a time when you were a protégé.	5 to 7 mins.

**SUBMIT LEVEL 2 COMPLETION REQUEST**

Base Camp

OR

Level Completion Verification Form  
(Print Members)

**BASE CAMP MANAGER APPROVES REQUEST**  
(Level 3 & Pathways Mentor Program Unlocked)

**VPE SUBMITS LEVEL 2 AWARD IN CLUB CENTRAL**  
(Award Registered on Member Profile)

Produced by Mark Snow DTM, District 69

# Birds Eye View

Melanie Cheong DTM DL1

**A** general evaluator is described on p. 71 of the Competent Communicator manual and p.7 of [The Navigator](#) as: an evaluator of everything at a meeting which hasn't received feedback. They are responsible for the evaluation team - timers, grammarian, ah counter, CL, Table Topic and speech evaluators. In our club, the chairman introduces these roles, rather than the general evaluator.

According to the Competent Leadership manual, the role develops skills on Critical thinking, Feedback, Planning and Teamwork - facilitation, motivation, teambuilding.

How?

- When you receive the agenda,
  - o contact rapporteurs and evaluators to confirm their preparation and your standard.
  - o Inform your VPE/chairman if there are team/approach changes.
- At the meeting,
  - o check each evaluator has the manuals of the person they are evaluating
  - o Help the VPE by providing substitutes "voluntold" for missing team members
  - o Confirm other changes e.g. speaker's time to timer
- During the meeting:
  - o Write notes for general aspects of the meeting (e.g. room setup, distractions) and each role except the prepared and impromptu speeches.
    - what you liked (strengths/skills developed), why you liked it;
    - what you didn't like, why you didn't like it, how you would do it differently
- Pulling it into a speech
  - o Select a common thread or theme to focus on as your key message e.g. CL aspects like planning or motivation or CC aspects like voice, introductions and conclusions or movement.

- o The theme should not compete with your team members' feedback e.g. time or language.
- o Choose a structure. The simplest is time or role-by-role i.e. start at top of agenda and end at bottom.
  - Use the Commend-Recommend-Commend (CRC) sandwich method for larger roles and RC for smaller ones.
- o Add an introduction explaining your role and the structure of your report
- o Work out what to cut out without missing out key items or your message.
  - Prioritise/Highlight your top 2-3 points for praise and improvement, with more overall positive points.
  - Add numbers to the points, so you know what order you want to announce them.
- o Another method to reduce time
  - Summarise e.g. both speech evaluators did...,
  - Generalise e.g. all roles were efficient
- o Add a conclusion summarising and motivating everyone for the next meeting
- o In future, challenge yourself by:
  - adding some spice e.g. incorporating the theme, working on a speaking aspect like pauses or interesting language
  - memorising as much as possible

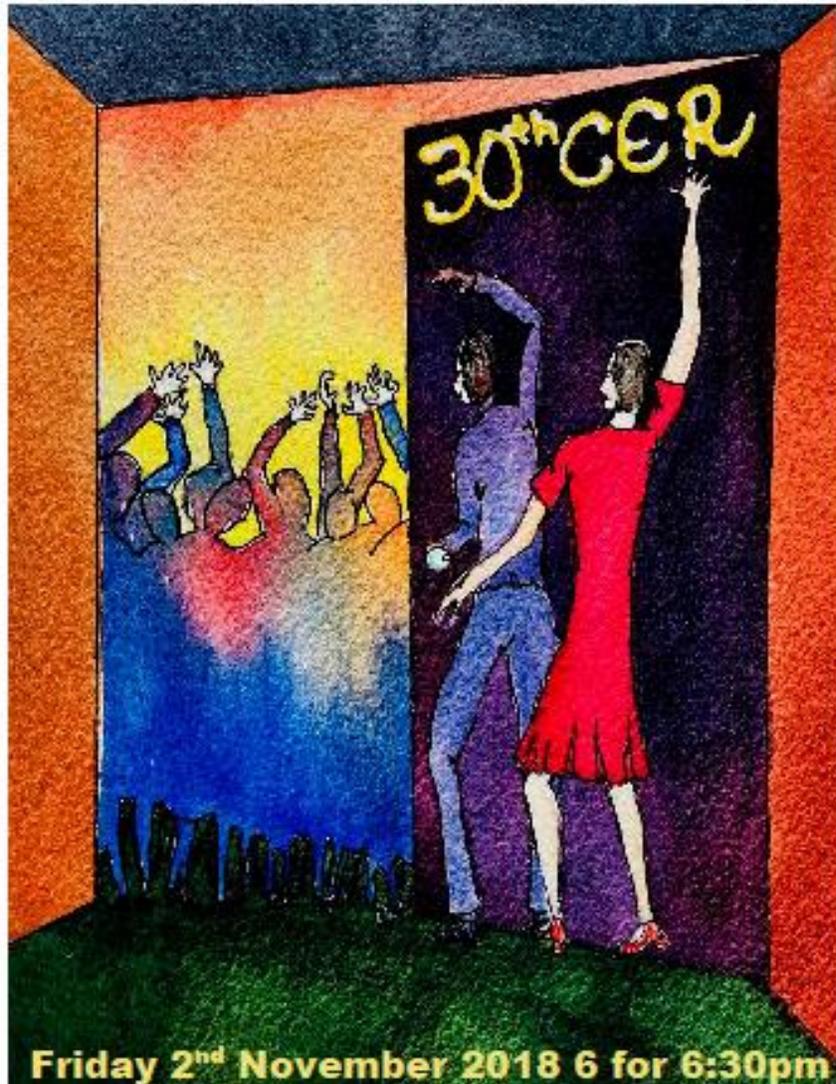
Take the challenge of being a general evaluator. It gives you a bird's eye view of the meeting, which puts your own role into perspective.



# Chatswood Early Risers Toastmasters

You are invited to join us at our  
**30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

## **“Homecoming” Celebration**



**Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2018 6 for 6:30pm**

**Waverton Bowling Club, Woolcott Street, Waverton**

Only \$55 per person (incl 2 course meal, bubbly & cake) pay by 19 Oct,  
Cash bar, Smart casual

**All welcome to join the fun and laughter! Share your memories.**

RSVP/Special Dietary Reqs: Jan, Julie or Melanie E: [info@earlyrisers.org.au](mailto:info@earlyrisers.org.au)

Payment – Cash at club meeting to Estelle or

EFT – Please include your name in description and send a confirmation email

Bank: Bendigo Bank • Account: Chatswood Early Risers • BSB: 633-000 • Account No: 146544 754

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