



ICE BREAKER

LEVEL 1 PROJECT

INTRODUCTION

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 relax and get to know one another. Ice breaker activities that are well-designed and well-executed engage an audience and encourage them to invest in the success of the event.

BEGINNING

This project marks the beginning of your Toastmasters journey. It is your opportunity to introduce yourself to the group and share something about yourself.

CULMINATION

This project culminates in you giving a 4- to 6-minute speech, the first one that all Toastmasters present to their clubs.

As you work through this project, you will learn how to recognize skills you already have, build upon those skills to foster confidence, and identify areas for improvement.

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

YOUR ASSIGNMENT

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.

(For all assignment details and requirements, review the Project Checklist on pg. 13)

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.

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 am confident and calm when speaking in front of groups.					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 am aware of my strengths as a communicator and leader.					5	4	3	2	1
5	4	3	2	1	I am aware of where I need to improve my communication (listening, thinking, and speaking) and leadership skills.					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 recognize how this project applies to my life outside of Toastmasters.					5	4	3	2	1

COMPETENCIES

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.
- Identify your communication and leadership skills.
- Define communication and leadership goals.

YOU AND YOUR GOALS



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 communication and leadership goals



When you took your 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. It may be helpful to think back to that experience and share some of those goals in your “Ice Breaker” speech.

You may also use the Ice Breaker Speech Outline Worksheet on page 17 to help you collect and develop your thoughts. A clear, thorough outline will assist you in crafting your speech and sharing your communication and leadership goals with the audience 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 desire to become a better speaker and leader.

If you have completed an Ice Breaker before, focus on your goals for your current path.

PREPARE AND PRESENT

WRITE IT OUT

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

REMEMBER YOUR OUTLINE

Create notecards or an outline with a few bullet points from your speech on one page. This makes it easier to remember the main points of your speech, and you can refer to it when presenting to your club. The goal is to remember your outline and not 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 the audience members increase the possibility that your message has 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. Do not be overly critical. Concentrate on constructive responses.

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.

RELAX, BREATHE, AND ENJOY

When you give your speech to your club, follow the steps in the *The Navigator* for addressing the Toastmaster or other person introducing you and club members.



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.

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

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.

Moment to Moment

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.

OVERCOME ANXIETY

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.

AFTER YOUR SPEECH

You receive feedback from your evaluator before the club meeting is finished. The evaluator gives your verbal evaluation in front of the club, and provides you with written feedback in the agreed-upon way.

Listen to your evaluator, be courteous, and be open to feedback. Thank your evaluator and consider all feedback as you work toward your next project and speech. Depending on the practice of your club, you may receive written evaluations from the other members. It is helpful to save these evaluations for future reference. After the meeting, ask your evaluator questions to clarify anything you didn't understand. Talk to your mentor to gain additional feedback you can use in future speeches.

You can read about the evaluation process in the *The Navigator*, but it is helpful to review some elements outlined in this section.



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—be proud. You took a chance and challenged yourself. It may be helpful to meet with your evaluator to discuss feedback or ask any questions that you have.

REVIEW AND APPLY

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 communication and leadership skills do you want to develop?
- List your immediate goals for communication and leadership.
- What are the elements of basic speech structure?

COMPLETE YOUR ASSIGNMENT

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

Review: Return to page 1 to review your assignment.

Organize: Use the Project Checklist on page 13 (online) 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 14–16 (online) and share all resources with your evaluator before your speech. You may choose to share your evaluation resources online.



RESOURCES

Online, in Pathways Base Camp > Your Path > Level 1 > the Ice Breaker project, you will find the following resources:

- Ice Breaker PROJECT CHECKLIST
- Ice Breaker EVALUATION FORM and Evaluation Criteria
- Ice Breaker SPEECH OUTLINE WORKSHEET

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