

Moscow Free Speakers Club



Dear Toastmasters!

There's an opinion that what makes humankind stand out in the animal kingdom is the ability to learn collectively. People are able to accumulate knowledge with time unlike other species. So we don't have to invent fire, wheel and simplest tools in every generation. That's why many would probably agree that education is a very serious part of our personal and social lives.

This essential part of human life was the theme of the 486th meeting. Along with our traditional program we discussed the importance of life-long education, how the educational systems in Russia and the USA differed and how educational system in Russia had changed with time.

The aforementioned questions are indeed rather commonly talked about. But what made it more interesting in our club was the fact that all of our members and guests are well educated. Not only that, but we also have active and former teachers and scientists in different fields! And at this particular meeting we had two guests from the USA: an American professor Rex Van Almsick and our "virtual" guest Josh Byer.

All in all, meetings of our club are opportunities to learn among interesting friendly people and having fun along the way. Are you sure, you want to miss them? :)

486th meeting, July 1st, 2010

Quote of this issue:

"Anyone who stops learning is old, whether at twenty or eighty."

-- Henry Ford

1. California is the motherland of Toastmasters International, so there are the oldest TM clubs in the world. And it's likely that some of Californian TI clubs are very successful and effective. That was why **Inessa Goldovskaya's, Invocation Master**, mini speech about her visit to a TM club in San Diego, CA was very exciting to listen to. We learned among other things that while in our club people tend to listen to speakers silently, members of the San Diego TM club react rather emotionally: whistling, stomping etc. to support a performer!

Thank you for the useful information, Inessa, who knows, maybe we'll adapt a thing or two :)

2. We learn in kindergartens, schools, colleges, universities and at work. Does it stop there? **Dmitry Chebotarevsky**, the **Toastmaster** of the meeting argued that it didn't, but rather people learn all the time.



Though he received the agenda of the meeting moments before he actually took the stage, Dmitry, known for his ability to take roles on the spot and deliver them on the fly, managed to perform his part well, being a good host.

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3. Just as Dmitry said, we learn all the time. And when one learns a foreign language, it's useful to learn new words every day. And when you are on stage, rich language lets you convey your ideas more convincingly. This is, probably, the reason why Ralph C. Smedley and his followers introduced the **Word of the day** section to the TI meeting schedule. Unfortunately this time the appointed Word Master didn't show up.

Dear members, please, warn the committee beforehand if you can't visit a meeting you have a role at. We all end up winning in the end, if we can come prepared.

4. Imagine the scenario. You're walking silently in a forest. A hunter you are! You have a rifle in your hands. And suddenly you face a big angry bear! Scared? :) **Maxim Tsvetov, the Joke Master** in his great joke described just that situation. Are you interested how the hunter and the bear settled their issue? You can find the story at the end of the newsletter.

5. People in the USSR hadn't much choice of consumer goods and services. Was it good, did you personally like it? On the other hand today we have overabundance of choice. If you need to go to a dentist, for example, it's likely you can find a dozen of dental offices in your neighborhood. And you have to consider the cost, the quality of the service... turning a supposedly simple operation at times into a case of business analysis.

How do you make choices?

How do you choose between two kinds of jam? And what if you have to choose between a jar of jam and a loaf of meat? One can arguably make his or her life

easier, if: 1. he or she establishes criteria of choice before making one; 2. on principle defines time limits to make a choice; 3. once the choice is made, sticks to it. That was what **Kulnevskaya Valeria** told us about in her fourth project entitled **"Freedom from Freedom of Choice"**. Thank you for an interesting theme and an approach to help us relieve some stress, Valeria :)



6. Do you know the name of the guy next door? Do you remember the name of the woman you talked to yesterday? And what about you? What do you prefer: people addressing you by abstract names "Dear sir", "Dear madam", "Hey you!"... or do you prefer people addressing you by your name?

It probably wouldn't be an overstatement to say that many people like being called by their names. So calling people by their names you bring them some joy and establish warmer contact.



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The problem is remembering people's names!

A new but one of very active members **Maseeva Evgenia** devoted her second project **“Remember my name”** to that rather important issue. Be interested, word associations, picture it written ... and other techniques was what Evgenia recommended us to use.

It's worth noticing that while delivering her project, Evgenia named almost half of the members of our club, referred to some recent projects, demonstrating great memory and the techniques in action. And the stories and examples she presented made the people chuckle and laugh every once in a while. Great job, Evgenia!

7. There are members of our club who deliver projects very often, and there are others who have rather long periods of “silence”. Very active or not, it's probably that many of us have a



problem once in a while of choosing a topic to talk about in our projects. **Margarita Ryndina, AC-B** is one of if not indeed the most active and prolific speaker of our club. Margarita in her educational program called **“Selecting your topic”** talked about ways and principles of choosing and developing topics. The theory was useful by itself, but Margarita shared with us her personal examples, which was no less useful. It's always interesting to learn from the best :)

8. Do you remember that times when you “had to study well at school”? You didn't know why. You even didn't know what to study for. But you were led to school and probably to additional study classes. That



was the very beginning of learning process for every child. The older we become, the more purposeful learning turns to be. All of us came to Toastmasters with his own goal: to learn art of public speaking or improve leadership skills. And how could one possibly correct weaknesses and enhance strengths of speaking if he even doesn't know what one's pros and cons are? So an integral part of every Moscow Free Speakers meeting is giving feedback. That's exactly what the **General Evaluator, Alla Oganova, CC**, did that time. Every participant heard praising and gentle indication of drawbacks from the lips of Alla in addition to the personal evaluations.

Evaluations:

9. The Personal Evaluator of Valeria's Kulnevskaya speech was, interestingly, the namesake - **Valeria Kholodkova, CC, AL-B**, who among others pointed out the following:

- + *good organization of the speech;*
- + *inclusion of personal experience to help convey the ideas;*
- + *gestures & vocal variety that enhanced the speech;*
- *many lingering pauses.*

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10. Henry Norman, AC-S, who usually becomes a winner of the word of the day championship, broke the tradition this time and acted as a Personal Evaluator of Evgenia's project. Indeed, a member with such a rich experience in 'Toastmastering' bases not only on objectives of a speech in his evaluation, but notices also many other factors:

- + *the presentation was personal;*
- + *references to some June contest speeches captured audience's attention in a moment;*
- + *contact with the people was made;*
- *small lack of preparation in terms of transcription usage was seen.*

11. The situation was taking a dangerous turn in point of the Margarita's speech evaluation. Owing to the dispute about rules of giving feedback to educational speeches, we could lose the evaluation itself! Fortunately, our VP Education, Margarita Ryndina, knows what is what! In the long run, Personal Evaluator of the 3rd, very thorough, speech, **Denis Shevchuk**, took the floor with no less than a thorough evaluation of Margarita's project:

- + *the poster with the essence of the speech made the perception easier;*
- + *vocal variety added zest to the educational speech;*
- + *personal examples and funny stories diversified the speech greatly;*
- *some visual aids were hardly seen;*
- *the question-session spoiled the impressions of the speech.*

12. So far as "learning" was the main theme of the 486th meeting, the Table Topic discussion perfectly fitted into its outline. **Ekaterina Sidorenko**, the **Table Topics Master**, put forward for the



consideration educational problems. We discussed the quality of education in Russia and abroad, it changing during the years, new system of exams and new educational standards. Professors and students, recent graduates and their parents took part in the discussion, since everyone faces education one way or another. The title of the winner was divided between two members: Alla Oganova, CC, who was proving the declining quality of education from the perspective of professional teacher and from the perspective of being a mother of her children; and Igor Vinogradov with the answer on how to broaden one's horizons – a personal story of getting himself into situation where hasn't been yet.

Our Birthdays!



**OUR WARMEST
CONGRATULATIONS
TO OUR DEAR FELLOW**

Inessa Goldovskaya (July 12th)



Points:

| | |
|--|------------|
| Dmitry Chebotarevsky (<i>Toastmaster</i>) | 8.6 |
| Valeria Kulnevskaya (<i>Speaker 1</i>) | 8.7 |
| Evgenia Maseeva (<i>Speaker 2</i>) | 9.1 |
| Margarita Ryndina (<i>Speaker 3</i>) | 8.6 |
| Valeria Kholodkova, CC, AL-B (<i>Personal Evaluator 1</i>) | 9.3 |
| Henry Norman, AC-S (<i>Personal Evaluator 2</i>) | 8.2 |
| Denis Shevchuk (<i>Personal Evaluator 3</i>) | 8.6 |
| Alla Oganova, CC (<i>General Evaluator</i>) | 9.3 |
| Ekaterina Sidorenko (<i>Table Topics Master</i>) | 8.7 |
| Meeting as a whole | 8.7 |

Our next meeting is on July, 15th!

We are going to hear three projects from the Competent Communication manual, one of which is an Ice-Breaker by Vladislav Chendev, and the other two will be delivered by Natalia Narynian and Denis Shevchuk!

See you soon!

Joke of the meeting:

Once upon a time in North America man went hunting to the forest. After several hours he met a huge bear. He was so scared and shocked so his rifle slipped out from his hands. And then he started running like hell and bear followed him. After running for several minutes he saw a hill and started to climb. When he was at the top of the hill he fell to the earth with despair, and started praying: "Lord, I'm sorry for all my sins. Please forgive me and save me! Lord, please make that bear a Christian." Suddenly, the clouds parted and a ray of light went down on the bear. And then bear fell to its knees, clasped its paws together and said, "God, bless this food which I am about to receive."

By Maxim Tsvetov



1. **Personal Evaluator** for project #1 by **Vladislav Chendev**
2. **Personal Evaluator** for project #5 by **Denis Shevchuk**

Who wants to take one of these roles, please, email to moscowfreespeakers@gmail.com