

LEEdership LEGACY SERIES™



**M.I.C. Check:
3 Ways to Use
Area Director Visits
to Support Clubs**

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The “D.I.V.A. of Dialog™”
1st District Director for
District 103 Toastmasters**

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PUBLISHER’S NOTE

Cassandra “D.I.V.A. of Dialog™” Lee provides regular tips on professional development and personal growth via her FREE newsletter, *Dialog Digest™* each month. Want to receive a personal copy? Sign-up at <http://www.divaofdialog.com>. As a bonus, you’ll get a complimentary copy of “101 Ways to Have a Rewarding Career.”

ABOUT US

THE REPORT

The **LEEdership LEGACY SERIES™** is a collection of informational, leadership resources created from the perspective of Cassandra "D.I.V.A. of Dialog™" Lee. She is a distinguished Toastmaster and the first-ever District Director for District 103 Toastmasters. Each report in the series contains details, strategies, tips, and/or plans which can be used for the educational achievement of club members and the distinguished success of club leaders, Area Directors, Division Directors, and District TRIO members of Toastmasters International.

THE AUTHOR



Cassandra "D.I.V.A. of Dialog™" Lee, DTM, PDD is a Career Advancement Strategist™ who uses "Divine Inspiration Vocally Applied™" to educate and empower professional audiences toward workplace satisfaction and career success. She has presented over 2,000 keynote speeches, enrichment seminars, empowerment programs, training sessions, and educational workshops for close to 100,000 participants worldwide.

She became exposed to Toastmasters International in 1996 as a member of a Speechcraft class sponsored by a Toastmasters club in Evanston, IL. However, her career as a Toastmaster started in January 1998 when she became an official member of the ABA SPEAKeasies #9424. She credits her growth as a person and development as a professional to the communication and leadership training of Toastmasters.

Her professional career flourished from administrative professional to mid-level manager to full-time entrepreneur thanks to Toastmasters. At the same time, her involvement in Toastmasters shifted from member to club officer to Area Governor to Division Governor to Club Sponsor, Club Mentor, Charter Member, Division Governor again, Club Retention Chair, Program Quality Director, and then as the first-ever District Director for District 103 Toastmasters.

As Sponsor, Mentor, and Charter Member of the award-winning Wrightwood-Ashburn Overcomers (WAO) Toastmasters club #771880, she has successfully managed a club environment which has influenced over 40 out of 75 members to earn educational awards.

Besides "Pivoting Towards Pathways" for 2020, she is working to become certified as an Accredited Speaker (AS) by Toastmasters International. To learn more information about her, visit www.divaofdialog.com; <http://wao.toastmastersclubs.org> and/or <http://www.d103tm.org>. To access her other reports in the **LEEdership LEGACY SERIES™**, visit www.divaofdialog.com/Toastmasters.

INTRODUCTION

Area Director visits are an essential responsibility of the Area Director role. Area Director visits:

- Help Area Directors to motivate, inform, and connect with the clubs they support;
- Allow an Area Director to learn first-hand information about the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of each club they support;
- Reveal to Area Directors the uniqueness of each club they support; and
- Provide an Area Director with the opportunity to inspire the clubs they support to participate more, stretch beyond comfort zones, and become a Distinguished club or higher.

From my experience, I've observed how an Area Director visit can either connect or disconnect a club to the area, division, district, and international levels of Toastmasters.

Thanks to former Area Governor, Robert McKenzie, my home club has its own theme song. It was during his second-round Area Director visit in which he informed us of the D30 Banner Parade. He motivated us to attend the conference and compete in the Banner Parade. He also complimented us on our progress as a club. The clincher was when he connected with us as he sang what is now our theme song, "WAAy-Oh, WAAyyy-Oh!" *Think Harry Belafonte*. Thank you, Robert, for doing a M.I.C. check during your Area Director visit. Your support led us to distinguished success!

That is why I say Area Director visits must not be taken lightly or be done with a sense of drudgery!

Area Directors must make a commitment to use their time, energy, and effort to adequately prepare for and conduct this important responsibility.

When done with the intention to motivate, inform, and connect, Area Director visits become an extremely important resource which aids the success of an Area Director.

In the *District Leadership Handbook*, Toastmasters International recommends a specific schedule for Area Director visits. The first round of Area Director visits AND the submission of the required *Area Director's Club Visit Report* form must be done between July 1 – November 30. The second round of Area Director visits AND the submission of the required *Area Director's Club Visit Report* form must be done between January 1 – May 31.

Most Area Directors will visit their assigned clubs the required two (2) visits: once in the first round (July – November) and once in the second round (January – May).

However, a motivated Area Director will visit clubs in their assigned area at least two or more times – extra – within each round of visits.

I know that's what I did when I served as an Area Governor.

That's also what my Area Governors did when we served on the 2014-2015 District 30 South Division Team.

My Area Governors dedicated themselves to visiting the clubs in their area multiple times each round. These multiple visits allowed them to get to know their clubs; build relationships with their clubs; inform their clubs of area, division, and district events; be a cheerleader for their clubs; and help to resolve issues faced by their clubs.

Thanks to their efforts, four out of six Area Governors had 50% or more of their clubs as Distinguished or higher. Two of the six Area Governors earned Distinguished Area or higher. Four of the six Area Governors were able to help the struggling clubs of their areas to close which positioned the areas for distinguished success the following club year.

My South Division Team was productive and earned recognition all thanks to using Area Director visits to motivate, inform, and connect with the clubs they supported.

How about you?

Are you being productive by using Area Director visits?

Will you earn recognition at the end of the club year as Distinguished or higher?

Have you begun to support your clubs for current and future success?

It is my goal to help position you for productivity and recognition.



In this special report, I will provide you with specific techniques for using Area Director visits as a checklist to:

- Motivate,
- Inform, and
- Connect with the clubs you support.

Welcome to **M.I.C. Check: 3 Ways to Use Area Director Visits to Support Clubs.**

Let's begin!

MOTIVATE

First, I want you to use Area Director visits to motivate the clubs you support.

This action simply means you keep the members and leaders of the clubs in your area *excited*. It also means you *give them a reason* to be successful as a club. Furthermore, it means you *excite* them to participate outside of the club at area, division, district, and international-level events.

As what I call the "Messenger of the District," your role as Area Director gives you a first-hand relationship with clubs which can directly motivate them to do and to become in ways a District Director or International President cannot.

As a "Messenger of the District," you are in a unique leadership role. You have become a:

- Liaison between clubs and the district;
- Point person for clubs to receive out-of-club level information;
- Representative for your district and Toastmasters International; and
- Face-to-face resource for each club in your area.

Did you realize that?

I would imagine, if you're simply going through the motions of your Area Director role to complete the requirements toward your Distinguished Toastmaster (DTM) award – you probably didn't.

However, I think if you're owning your role as Area Director and using it to serve the clubs in your area – you probably did.

Your role as Area Director is extremely important to the success of your clubs, area, division, district, and Toastmasters International.

Therefore, use your Area Director visits as the primary source to motivate the clubs you support.

INFORM

Second, I want you to use Area Director visits to inform the clubs you support.

This action means you will *give information* to your clubs about area, division, district, and international-level events. It also means you will *communicate knowledge* to your clubs on the topics in which they seek your advice, direction, and support. In addition, it means you will *share information* about the club's status in the Distinguished Club Program (DCP); participation in club officer training; achievement of educational awards; and any other information necessary upon your Area Director visits. Furthermore, you will *give* pins, ribbons, certificates, trophies, or prizes earned by the club from district and/or international-level programs, incentives, or awards.

The best way to inform the clubs you support is to make sure you are prepared.

Over the years, I cannot tell you the number of times I've witnessed Area Governors/Directors visit my home club and not be prepared. They would say statements such as:

- "Oh, I'm just here to observe. I'll give a report on my next visit."
- "Your club is doing great! I don't have anything else I can tell you."
- "I don't have anything to say."

Are you kidding me?

As an Area Director, you always have something say!

Why?

Because you always have *some type of information* to share!

Area Director visits are the perfect "facetime" in which to share information with your clubs. They don't have to read it in an e-mail. They won't need to search your district website. They can avoid browsing through the Toastmasters International website. You won't even need to leave them a voicemail message.

You can give them the information they need to know when you visit them – face-to-face – during your Area Director visit. Your Area Director visit is the perfect time to keep your clubs informed.

However, you must be prepared.

Think about keeping your clubs informed by having a 2-3-minute message you deliver.

Are you working to complete speech requirements from a traditional manual or a Pathways level?

Maximize your Area Director visits. They are the perfect opportunity for you to complete your manual/Pathways speeches. Structure the speech to meet the speech objectives while using content about club, area, division, district, and/or international-level business in which to keep your clubs informed.

Prepare yourself with the information you will share by using resources such as:

- **Your predecessor:** you can consult with last year's Area Director to learn valuable information about each club;
- **Area Director's Club Visit Report Forms:** you can review the forms submitted by last year's Area Director to gain details about each club you plan to visit;
- **District Executive Committee (DEC) meetings:** you get reports, fliers, and announcements from DEC meetings which can be used to structure a speech during your next Area Director visit;
- **The Toastmasters International newsletters:** you can use *The Club Leader Letter* and/or *The District Leader Letter* to extract information to share with your clubs; and/or
- **The Toastmasters International dashboard:** you can gain knowledge and insight about each club at <https://toastmasters.org/dashboard>.

Speaking of the dashboard, it will become your best resource to stay informed about the clubs in your area. The details it provides you will give you something to share when you visit your clubs. Learn about their:

- **Charter date:** lets you know the experience level of the club and the anniversary date of the club. This is good information to share because some members don't know how long their club has been in existence. Therefore, recognize the club for their charter/anniversary date upon your visit.
- **Goals achieved in the past:** gives you an idea of which goals of the Distinguished Club Program (DCP) the club is consist in achieving.
- **Goals not achieved in the past:** provides you with an opportunity to motivate your clubs with a "stretch goal" to do something they've never done before.
- **Members recruited:** allows you to highlight the critical factor of the DCP. Clubs which recruit four, eight, or more members during the club year will have a stronger chance of earning the distinction of Distinguished, Select Distinguished or even President's Distinguished in the Distinguished Club Program (DCP). If you notice your clubs are not achieving goals #7 and #8, come prepared to share ideas on membership recruitment. Inform them about what your club does. Inform them about what TI recommends. Inform them of ideas you've learned from other clubs.

Use your Area Director visits as the primary source to inform the clubs you support.

"No free speeches!" That's a lesson I learned from Past District Governor and Distinguished Toastmaster Alvin Joyner. He taught us leaders to think of every speaking opportunity as a speech for our communication manuals. That advice helped several of us club and district leaders to earn multiple education awards, including DTM. Thanks Alvin! R.I.P.

CONNECT

Last, I want you to use Area Director visits to connect with the clubs you support.

This action means you will *join together* with the clubs you support to assist them with doing more and becoming better in the year in which you serve them. It also means you will *have a bond* or *establish a rapport* with the clubs you support. Furthermore, this action will let you *form a bond* or *establish a rapport* primarily with the club leaders of each club you support.

Did you know as Area Director you can host an Area Council Meeting? It's a great way to connect with the leaders of your clubs. Read my special report, "[Insight, Method, and Format for Conducting Joint Area and Division Council Meetings](#)" to learn more about hosting your very own Area Council Meeting this year.

Typically, the first bond an Area Director forms is with the **Club President (PRES)**.

The Club President is the highest-ranking leader and point person of each club you support. They lead the administration of their club. That's why it makes sense to communicate – primarily – with the Club President.

A bond with the Club President allows you to personally inform them about upcoming club officer training opportunities. A personal invitation or reminder from you, can motivate the club to have four (4) or more of their leaders attend club officer training each round.

In addition, when you have a rapport with the Club President, you get a chance to motivate them to submit their club dues and club officer lists on time. Inform them how to submit those reports online directly to Toastmasters International using Club Central at <https://www.toastmasters.org>. Motivate them to check the status of their renewals and/or club officer list submissions by visiting "Daily Reports" at <http://dashboards.toastmasters.org>.

When you connect with the Club President, you can motivate them to earn goals #9 and #10 of the Distinguished Club Program (DCP).

Another bond you will form is with the **Vice President Education (VPE)**.

The VPE is the second highest-ranking leader of the clubs you support. The VPE is your connection for obtaining essential details of the *Club Success Plan*. At the beginning of your term as Area Director, you will be asked to obtain a copy of the *Club Success Plan* from each club you

support. The *Club Success Plan* will give you an idea of the progress each club will make toward achieving the goals of the DCP.

Sure, you can get a copy of the *Club Success Plan* from the Club President.

However, most Club Presidents will ask the VPE to provide you with the *Club Success Plan* because they work to complete the main parts of the plan.

The main parts of the *Club Success Plan* are the education awards. The VPE will be instrumental in letting you know which members of their club are scheduled to earn education awards during the club year. The VPE starts their term collecting that information from each member of their club. Knowing this information gives them an idea of how they should plan club meetings during the year. Knowing this information also gives them an idea of which goals of the DCP they will earn as a club.

Your connection with the VPE will let you know if the club will earn goals #1, #2, #3, #4, #5, #6, #P1, #P2, #P3, #P4, #P5, and/or #P6 of the DCP.

As Area Director, you will even communicate with the **Vice President Membership (VPM)**.

The VPM is the third highest-ranking leader of the clubs you support. The VPM sheds light on the club's recruitment and/or retention plan for the club year.

Depends on what the VPM shares with you regarding the club's recruitment and/or retention plan, you will have an idea of the club's ability to get new members (recruitment) and/or keep current members (retention) during the club year in which you support them.

Be sure to share with the VPM any helpful ideas, suggestions, tips, or techniques which can aid them in creating and implementing a strong recruitment and/or retention plan.

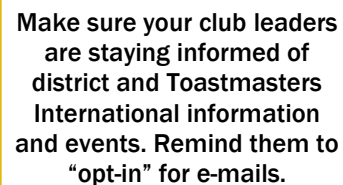
Your bond with the VPM can inform them on ways their club can achieve goals #7 and #8 of the DCP.

Did you notice when you connect with the Club President, Vice President Education, and Vice President Membership, you gain instant opportunities to motivate and inform the leadership roles which directly influence the club's DCP?

Yet, what about the other club leaders?

Should you ignore them?

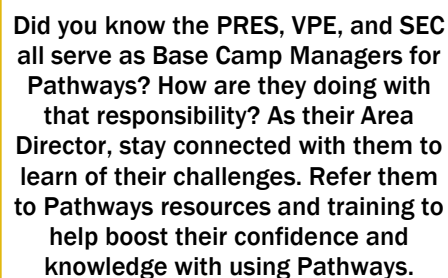
Or, should you connect with them, too?



Make sure your club leaders are staying informed of district and Toastmasters International information and events. Remind them to "opt-in" for e-mails.

I say connect with them, too. Here's why:

- The **Vice President Public Relations (VPPR)** is a partner with the VPM on promoting membership recruitment drives and member retention events. The VPPR is a partner with the VPE on promoting educational workshops, speech contests, guest speakers, anniversary celebrations, and any other club event for which members and guests will be invited to attend. Bonding with the VPPR allows you – as Area Director – to share recruitment and retention tips they can use to promote their club. Also, bonding with the VPPR gives you – as Area Director – a chance to share public relations ideas which can be used to consistently promote club meetings and events to their members and guests.
- The **Club Secretary (SEC)** is a partner with the Club President in making sure the *Club Officer List* is submitted on time to Toastmasters International. The SEC is also a partner with the VPM and Club Treasurer to make sure club dues are submitted on time. Furthermore, the SEC will partner with the PRES to prepare and submit the *Club Proxy* forms for voting at the District 103 Annual District Council Meeting in April/May, as well as, the Toastmasters International Annual Business Meeting in August. As Area Director, when you connect with the SEC, you can directly inform them on how to access and/or submit these reports and proxies on time for their club.
- The **Club Treasurer (TREAS)** is a partner with the VPM, PRES, and SEC in making sure club dues are submitted on-time each round to Toastmasters International. As Area Director, when you connect with the TREAS, you can directly motivate them to have on-time submission of their club dues.
- The **Sergeant-at-Arms (SAA)** is a partner with the VPM and PRES in maintaining the hospitality and protocol of their club. As Area Director, when you connect with the SAA, you can inform them on ways to enhance the hospitality of their club for members and guests. You can also motivate them to learn more about and/or use Parliamentary Procedures to handle the protocol of their club. Your advice and guidance can help to motivate the SAA to set in motion hospitality and/or protocol which helps to keep their club members (retention) and gain guests as new members (recruitment).



Did you know the PRES, VPE, and SEC all serve as Base Camp Managers for Pathways? How are they doing with that responsibility? As their Area Director, stay connected with them to learn of their challenges. Refer them to Pathways resources and training to help boost their confidence and knowledge with using Pathways.

As you can see, all club leaders are important.

Even though each club leader has very specific duties and responsibilities for their role, they each influence the work of the other. The more they work together, the stronger their bond as an executive team. Also, the more they work together, the greater the chance their club will reach some level of distinguished club success.

That's why I encourage you to connect with all seven (7) club leaders.

In some cases, you will have seven (7) different club members serving in each role. That means, you'll have seven (7) different club leaders in which to form a bond. That's good.

In most cases, however, you will have a few club members serving in multiple club leader roles. Establishing a connection with each of those club members ensure you establish a connection with each leader of that club.

That's why you should use your Area Director visits as the primary source to connect with the clubs you support.

CONCLUSION

There you have it. Your M.I.C. check! Three (3) ways to use Area Director visits to help you support your clubs.

It is my hope that you found practical use in the techniques of:

- Motivate,
- Inform, and
- Connect

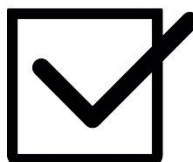
Use these actions as your checklist to support your clubs now and until the end of your term.

These actions will help you to be productive throughout your term. These actions will position you for recognition in your role as Area Director. These actions will also help you to make the most of your Area Director visits.

Keep me posted on how **M.I.C. Check: 3 Ways to Use Area Director Visits to Support Clubs** works for you.

In the meantime, thank you for your service to the clubs you support.

Enjoy your Area Director visits!



RECIPIENT OF THE EXCELLENCE IN PROGRAM QUALITY AWARD

Past District Director (PDD) and Distinguished Toastmaster (DTM) Cassandra "D.I.V.A. of Dialog™" Lee knows a thing or two about education and training. She advised members toward educational achievement and leaders toward distinguished success in her role as Program Quality Director (PQD) for District 30 in the 2016-2017 club year. Her commitment to education and training earned her the "Excellence in Program Quality Award" from Toastmasters International.



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- "Insight, Method, and Format for Conducting Joint Area and Division Council Meetings" (*for district leaders*)
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- "How Does Your Club Rank?" (*for club leaders*)
- "7 Tips for a 'Balanced' Evaluation" (*for club and district leaders*)
- "M.I.C. Check: 3 Ways to Use Area Director Visits to Support Clubs" (*for district leaders*)
- "How Will You Serve?" (*for district leaders*)
- "4 Ways to Connect with Your Clubs" (*for district leaders*)
- "5 Membership Issues to Resolve Using Toastmasters Governing Documents" (*for club leaders*)
- "20-Step Member Vote-in Process" (*for club leaders*)
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RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

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- **Quick Tip Videos:** "Make Your Club Visible"
- **Quick Tip Videos:** "Ideas to Make Guests Feel at Home"
- **Quick Tip Videos:** "3 Tips to Recruit New Members"
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EVENT SUMMARY REPORT

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Please provide details on the event in which you need the D.I.V.A. of Dialog™ to speak:

Name of Event _____

Type of Event _____

Purpose of Event _____

Expected Attendance _____ Percentage: Male _____ Female _____

Admission Fee _____ Date Preference #1 _____ #2 _____

Location of Event _____

Service needed for your event:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Become Your Career Coach | <input type="checkbox"/> Moderate a Panel |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Deliver a Keynote | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Budget for Event (e.g. \$2,500; \$4,500-6,000): _____

Comments: _____

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important
things in life
are the
connections
you make
with others.”
Tom Ford**