

# HAWAI'I PLANNING



American Planning Association  
Hawaii Chapter

*Making Great Communities Happen*

A Publication of the Hawaii Chapter of the American Planning Association

## Be a Better Planner

### *How Can You Improve Your Public Speaking Skills?*

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I recently became a member of the Patsy T. Mink Center for Business and Leadership (MCBL) Toastmasters Club in an effort to advance my public speaking skills. I learned about this club through the Hawai'i Business Magazine Wahine Forum last October, which I attended with many of my colleagues through our company's sponsorship. Many of you may have heard about Toastmasters International, the world leader in communication and leadership development with 15,900 clubs in 142 countries around the globe. In our Aloha State (Toastmasters Club District 49) there are 66 clubs and 30 Distinguished Clubs. Many clubs are located within the vicinity of downtown Honolulu, making it convenient for downtown professionals to attend. Large organizations can charter their own clubs, which can be closed or open to the public. The MCBL Club is located at the YWCA Laniakea on Richard Street and is open to anyone. We meet once a month, every 3rd Tuesday from noon to 1 PM. Our MCBL Club was launched late last year, with our growing membership we will be chartered this summer!

The mission of Toastmasters club is to provide a mutually supportive and positive learning environment in which every individual member has the opportunity to develop oral communication and leadership skills, which in turn foster self-confidence and personal growth. The meeting is run with a strict schedule and format. Each member takes turn filling a role each meeting. The roles include Toastmaster of the Day, ah-counter/grammarian/word of the day, timer, general evaluator, speech evaluator, thought of the day, speaker of the day, and table topic master. A written instruction is provided in advance, making it possible for anyone to take on any of these roles. Like any great speech or presentation, taking the time to prepare and practice is very important, as well as being committed to attend the meetings. Members go through ten speech exercises, at their own pace, to complete the program. I find the program to be very "beginner friendly", unimimidating, and supportive. More experienced toastmasters are always part of the meeting to mentor members and to help guide club meetings to meet Toastmasters standards. Through these experienced Toastmasters, you can see how Toastmasters program can help transform you into a better public speaker. Besides a fun and supportive learning environment at the MCBL Club, you will also have an opportunity to meet great people outside of your profession. Guests are welcome to attend club meetings and participate in the speech activities. If you are interested in becoming a member or to attending as a guest, please contact Colleen McAluney at [cmcaluney@ywcaoahu.org](mailto:cmcaluney@ywcaoahu.org)



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