District Leader

Biographical Information

Candidate's Name: David Martin

Candidate's Office: Program Quality Director

District Number: D73

Toastmasters member since: 1 May, 2014

Education:

Diploma of Business (Swinburne University).
Cert IV - Small Business Management
Cert IV - Training and Assessment
Australian Institute of Management - Finance for Non- finance Executives
Management Award General Motors Management & Technical Education Centre
Various technical certificates such as Certificate of Technology, Certificate of Automotive Body Design and Development, etc.

Toastmasters offices held and terms of service:

President: Hawthorn 2016-17. Flinders Lane 2018-19.
VPE: Hawthorn 2015, 2015-16. Flinders Lane 2017-18 and interim during 2020, 2021, 2022.
VPM: Toast of the Country Club interim 2019. Flinders Lane interim 2020.
Secretary: Flinders Lane 2021-22, interim 2022.
Sergeant at Arms: Toast of the Country Club 2016- 2023. Hawthorn 2019- 23. Flinders Lane multiple times
District Database Manager: 2016- 17
Area Director: E15 2016- 17.
Division Director: Inner City 2017- 18.
District Admin Manager: 2019- 20

Toastmasters honors and recognition:

Distinguished Toastmaster 2021
Multiple Triple Crowns
Hawthorn Toastmasters Toastmaster of the Year 2017

Relevant work experience and how it relates to Toastmasters and your role as a District leader:

I have worked in and managed roles in large automotive manufacturing companies up to Chief Engineer of Prodrive Thailand. I also co-founded one of Australia's largest automotive design houses. These roles are typically a blend of technical expertise, people management and business development with layers of legislated design rules, workplace law and business law. In the context of Toastmasters, the automotive industry is global in nature but locale-specific and has complex matrices of responsibilities with diverse stakeholders. Each stakeholder has various skills and expectations
I was also a school council member for 14 years (and president for the final three). I headed the Admin and Finance committee during my presidential terms. School councils are to some extent similar to Toastmasters inasmuch as they represent students (members), class levels (clubs), staff (club executives) and families, etc. They provide multiple and complex challenges which involve core beliefs, ambitions, skills, etc. within a defined framework.
I was also a surf lifesaver at Victoria's most dangerous beach. We were trained to make immediate but informed decisions and to act decisively in life and death moments.

What experience do you have in strategic planning?

In the roles described above, strategic planning drives market share, resource planning and organisational success and resilience. To create new ideas on existing structures that combine proactivity with flexible reactivity is a challenge that I both enjoyed for its intellectual challenges and for the chance to measure progress/results in the spotlight of stakeholder reviews. The formal skills taught at General Motors' Management Centre have formed the bedrock of my career since.

What experience do you have in the area of finance?

In my own business with my partners, I was primarily responsible for business development which included projects well in excess of millions of dollars.
On school council, I headed the Admin and Finance committee to oversee complex budgets and annually audited performance. I can quite easily read budgets, P&L reports, etc.
I also completed the Australian Institute of Management certificate 'Finance for Non-finance Executives'

What experience do you have in developing procedures?

I was responsible for QS9000 (ISO for manufacturing) planning/management certification for my own company as well as working with other companies to integrate their operations across other suppliers/customers up to automotive OEMs (the main car companies). That also included the annual review and update process.

What lessons did you learn from previous leadership positions?

I have learned that in any organisation, no matter how well it's structured, designed and resourced, any breakages or failures are ultimately human-induced. Problems are inevitable but the organisations that suffer the least disruption are the ones that identify problems as early as possible. Safe and blame-free communication is the absolute key to breakage avoidance.

What lessons did I learn about me? That my judgement was quite often intuitive in its initiation and supportable because of the advice I sought.

Why do you want to serve as a District leader?

I believe that now more than ever in Toastmasters' recent decades, the fragility revealed by COVID has brought very different problems that will require the leadership to be able to reach back to previous leaders to 'come up' with sound thinking. I know the depth of my network with previous district governors/directors and members of influence will allow me to engage in relaxed counsel to come up with realistic strategies.

In your opinion, what are the District mission's major objectives and how would you work to achieve them?

The district's mission statement is "...to build new clubs and support all clubs in achieving excellence". Now I believe a major goal is to rebuild in clubs, to reengage with lapsed members and to be able to explain WHY some clubs are growing whilst previously-strong clubs are closing. When I joined in 2014, we only had what I know as the 'legacy' system (which made perfect logic). However, there were systems prior to that which also made perfect sense. I'd like to speak to members who straddled the transitions and discover how the transitions were handled. Pathways is a well-documented program but I'd like to see better engagement from 'legacy system' members across to Pathways. I know members who have taken up Pathways quite confidently but equally, there are members who are happy to "just do a speech". I believe the PQD role is about ensuring and articulating how well Pathways does (or can) work. I'd like to simplify or enrich the story of not 'what' it is but rather 'how' it can work for each member or enquiry.

Additional information about yourself:

I have a real commitment to our organisation; since joining Toastmasters in 2014, across my three clubs there have been 357 meetings so far. I have missed only six meetings and two were due to district responsibilities. Three of my children are current or lapsed Toastmasters. I believe I have a real ability as a talent spotter - to pick what each person is seeking, their strengths, potentials, willingness to go in contests (or not), to be likely to serve on club executives, etc. I also try to shield members from roles and activities that may 'scare' them away and gently encourage them to take on the scary stuff in their own timeline.

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