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EasyStart - An Introduction to the Düsseldorfer Toastmasters

This guide is intended to introduce new members to the Düsseldorf Toastmasters and to help them navigate through our club and the world of Toastmasters in general.

In addition, it answers a couple of questions you might have as a new member of the Düsseldorf Toastmasters, describes the learning program, and provides information on how to actively participate and apply for a mentor.

Although we have tried to make this guide as detailed as possible, it is possible that we have not answered all your questions. If this is the case, please give us feedback on this:

kontakt@duesseldorfer.toastmasters.de

Thank you for helping us to improve our guide!

To get you started quickly, we will start with the most important thing: our two portals. General information about the Düsseldorf Toastmasters can be found below.

1 Portals

As a Toastmasters Club member, you need access to two portals with different objectives:

- www.tmclub.eu (EasySpeak) is primarily used for the administration of our club evenings. Here you can check the agenda of the next evenings, register for roles or request a speech. You can also contact other club members and view club statistics. As EasySpeak is used by many European clubs, you can also see a lot of information about these clubs and even go to visit them.
- www.toastmasters.org is the portal of our international umbrella organization 'Toastmasters International' with information about our educational programs ('Pathways'), a placement test to choose your learning path, the opportunity to watch learning videos and download training materials. It also manages your 'speech career' at Toastmasters, awards you have already won, what projects you have already done and what you will do next, and a way to upload feedback forms.

You can also find us on the internet at www.duesseldorfer-toastmasters.de and on Facebook (www.facebook.com/DuesseldorferToastmasters).



1.1 EasySpeak

Portal: www.tmclub.eu

EasySpeak is a platform for communication and management of the club. Here you can confirm your participation in an evening, communicate with other club members and register for speeches or roles.

1.1.1 How can I log in?

First you have to create an account. You can find detailed instructions on how to do this at www.duesseldorfer-toastmasters.de/intern. To do this, you choose a username (e.g. FirstnameSur - the full first name and the first three digits of the surname) and a password.

In EasySpeak please fill in your personal profile and add a photo of yourself (max. 80 x 80 pixels). We would like to enable our members to get in contact with each other and to form an interesting network.

1.1.2 What do I do if I have forgotten my password?

If you have forgotten your password after creating it or if you have problems logging in, you can have a new password created by clicking on 'I forgot my password' below the login button.

1.1.3 How can I find the agenda?

Under the menu item 'Meetings' you can find out about the next meeting (and via 'Calendar' about future meetings). It is also possible to track the agenda on your mobile phone under 'Track changes of this meeting'.

1.1.4 How can I confirm my presence?

The Düsseldorf Toastmasters Club has many members. For the organization of the evening, it is important that the members confirm their participation in the meeting. To confirm your presence, select in EasySpeak in the menu 'My Participation' the selection field 'Sign up for meetings'. Here you can confirm your presence or let us know if you cannot attend the evening. Alternatively, you can do this in the meeting agenda on the left side of the agenda at 'confirm attendance'.

1.1.5 Take on a role

Under the agenda of the day, you can choose a free role and take it on. It is recommended to announce this a few days before the relevant evening, as vacant roles are usually filled quickly.

Besides giving a prepared speech there are many other roles you can take on with the Toastmasters. Just have a look at the document 'A Toastmaster wears many hats' (www.toastmasters.org/resources/resource-library?t=hats). There you will find a description



and purpose of each role that you can take on with the Toastmasters. We recommend starting with a small role - for example tip of the evening, joke of the evening or Ah Counter.

1.1.6 How do I register for a speech?

If you want to give a speech, select on the left-hand side of EasySpeak in the action box 'Scheduling VPE Tasks' the button 'Schedule Speeches'. This will open a window where you can enter the title of the speech, select the path in the next tab and in the third tab the desired date on which you want to give the speech. Do not be surprised if your speech does not appear immediately in the agenda, because the speech has to be confirmed by the Agenda Master first.

The overview under 'My Participation' and then 'Sign up for al role' allows you to check different evenings for free places.

A short tutorial on how to apply for a place to speak can be found here: www.duesseldorfer-toastmasters.de/wp-content/public/easyspeak_how_to_request_a_speech.gif

Important: To apply for a speech in EasySpeak, you first need to select a 'manual' (that's the path you chose in Pathways) and indicate what project it is.

1.1.7 How do I get in contact with other club members?

If you would like to contact other members, select in EasySpeak 'My Communication' and then 'Contact other members'. A member list will appear from which you can select a member and find his/her contact details. You can contact the members by phone or e-mail.

1.2 Toastmasters International and Pathways

Portal: www.toastmasters.org

From our umbrella organization Toastmasters International (TMI) you will receive an e-mail with the access data for the member area of the website www.toastmasters.org. There you will find interesting material and videos and you can modify your personal data.

The PATHWAYS training concept, which is binding for all new members since March 2018, offers various paths ('Paths') tailored to the individual needs of members.

From 11 paths, each with 5 levels, you choose the one that best suits your wishes and/or talents. Each path consists of speech projects, positions, and tasks that you will perform in the club. You make your choice for your path by filling out an online questionnaire in the so-called 'Base Camp' (www.toastmasters.org/start-pathways/choose-your-path). Based on your answers, your personal preferences and goals will be determined and finally two training paths will be suggested. Alternatively, you can look at all the paths and choose one independently of the questionnaire.



If you want to get an overview in advance, you can find the **Pathways Project Catalogue** on our homepage in the internal area www.duesseldorfer-toastmasters.de/intern. This catalogue describes the training concept with its 11 paths.

1.2.1 PATHWAYS Start

Access data to the portal of Toastmasters International and therefore also to Pathways will be sent to you automatically as soon as our treasurer has registered you there. Now you can explore the members page step by step:

Step 1: First-time log-in at toastmasters.org for new members

Go to www.toastmasters.org and click on 'Login'.

Username: your e-mail address as given to the speakers' club. The first time you log in: Click on 'Forgot Password'. TMI will email you a link to enter a password of your choice.

Enter your password twice and write it down - great, now you are logged in at TMI!

Step 2: PATHWAYS - Choose your path in Base Camp

Visit the Pathways Base Camp and choose your first path:

There are 11 paths with 5 levels each, each consisting of different projects (speeches, offices, etc.). In some cases, you can choose from several projects. The description of the paths is available in English throughout.

You can generally decide whether you want to edit all the information/documents online or alternatively receive the printed documents. If you request printed documents, a nominal charge is to be paid separately to Toastmaster (not the club). Some paths are not available in printed version.

Step 3: PATHWAYS - Take off with your icebreaker

Once you have registered with Toastmasters and chosen your path, log in to your account/profile. There you will find your personal information stored under your profile name, such as your address. To get to your 'icebreaker', click at 'Go to Base Camp' the button 'Go'. In the 'Paths and Learning' section, click on 'Open Curriculum' for your current path. Now you click on the 'Level 1' field and go to the 'Ice Breaker' and click on 'Activate'. Then click on 'Launch' to start.

Have a close look at the description under 'Launch' and answer the questions before you start to prepare your presentation and also do a first self-assessment. Now all you need to do is practice your speech and request an appointment in EasySpeak (see 'EasySpeak' above).

After you have given your speech, please go to 'Base Camp' to do a final self-assessment. You will be surprised how different your perception can be now compared to your initial



assessment. Only after you have completed this step, the Vice President Education can enter your speech and complete your first task online.

Important: Pathways projects have a certain order. It is not mandatory to follow the order - however, we recommend that you do so for optimal learning success.

Step 4: Evaluation form

The focus of the evaluation is slightly different for each speech project. Since you will rarely be able to coordinate with your evaluator in advance, help the evaluator to give you feedback that is as detailed as possible.

Print out the evaluation form and bring it with you on the evening of your speech. Hand it out to the evaluator of your project and inform him/her about the feedback you received during your last speeches, so that he/she can point out your areas of development.

If the club evening is an online evening or hybrid evening, it is best to write an e-mail to your evaluator in advance and send him the evaluation form.

1.2.2 The Düsseldorf Path - the training program of the Düsseldorf Toastmasters

Welcome to the Düsseldorf Toastmasters! You want to learn to speak convincingly in front of an audience. An excellent decision!

Our training program is based on the online program *Pathways* of Toastmasters International. In eleven different learning paths you will find a multitude of practice projects. You can choose your first learning path immediately. The pathway with the most pronounced focus on Public Speaking is the *Presentation Mastery* pathway.

To become a good speaker, you need certain basic skills. The most important basic skills are practiced in the following ten practice projects. These ten practice projects can be found in each of the eleven learning paths.

1. Icebreaker
2. Evaluation and Feedback
3. Researching and Presenting
4. Using Descriptive Language
5. Effective Body Language
6. Understanding Vocal Variety
7. Connect with Storytelling
8. Creating Effective Visual Aids
9. Connect with Your Audience
10. Inspire Your Audience



Pathways lists some of the above practice projects as optional (*Elective Projects*). However, we Düsseldorf Toastmasters consider them very important for learning to speak convincingly in front of an audience.

We recommend to you:

Begin your speaker's training by working on the above mentioned ten projects in the order listed. *Pathways* is divided into five levels. Some of the above projects appear in *Pathways* in a different order than we suggest here. We recommend that you follow the order above, as in our experience the skills are based on each other.

Note: this order is optional, and you can of course follow the order that *Pathways* itself specifies. *Pathways*' own order is relevant if it is important for you to participate in the next English club competition (takes place once a year, condition: levels 1 and 2 in *Pathways* are completed. This rule does not apply to the German club competition which also takes place annually).

Your reward: You are a Roastmaster!

If you have completed the above ten practice projects, you have a solid toolkit. You will receive the Roastmaster award! As a Roastmaster you can attend the monthly meetings of our club for advanced speakers, the *Roastmastersclub*, free of charge. We are looking forward to this together with you and wish you much success!

1.2.3 Do you have further questions about Pathways?

The first steps in *Pathways* and further information about *Pathways* and the individual paths as well as FAQs can be found on our internal site www.duesseldorfer-toastmasters.de/intern. If you need help with this, please contact the Vice President Education, Björn Schulz (vp-education@duesseldorfer-toastmasters.de).

2 Our Club

Now some more information about our club - the Düsseldorf Toastmasters.

We are the first Toastmasters Club in Düsseldorf and were founded in July 2004. In the meantime, we are the biggest Toastmasters Club in Europe and the second biggest worldwide. Like all Toastmasters Clubs, the Düsseldorf Toastmasters Club brings together people from different personal and professional backgrounds and of all ages. The Club is administered by our executive committee. You can find more information about our executive committee here: www.duesseldorfer-toastmasters.de/en/presidium/



2.1 Club evenings

Our club evenings take place 5 times a month:

- 1st Wednesday of the month: German evening
- Tuesday before the 2nd Wednesday of the month: German evening
- 2nd Wednesday of the month: English evening
- 3rd Wednesday of the month: German evening
- 4th Wednesday of the month: Members Only evening in German and English
- In months where there is a 5th Wednesday: German Evening

There is also a monthly evening exclusively for advanced speakers, the 'Roastmasters'. The Roastmasters usually meet on the 4th Tuesday of the month. All members who have completed the third level in a path according to the new pathways program are eligible to participate.

2.2 Mentoring

To help new members to enter the world of Toastmasters, we have a mentoring program. Through a mentor you will get personal contact to an experienced member who will be happy to share his or her knowledge and experience with you. You can find more information about the mentoring program in our mentoring guide at <https://www.duesseldorfer-toastmasters.de/intern>.

If you would like to get a mentor, please contact Ivan Polak, our Vice President Mentoring (email address: vp-mentoring@duesseldorfer-toastmasters.de) He will assign you a mentor who will meet your needs. If you would like a specific person, please discuss this with Ivan so that he can arrange this.

2.3 Social events

The Düsseldorfer Toastmasters are not only a club where you can improve your rhetorical and your leadership skills, but also a community where you can meet interesting people and make friends. There are many ways to make contact with other members, including

- **Happy Hour:** Following our regular meetings every Wednesday and every second Tuesday of the month, we meet in a nearby restaurant for a drink.
- **Our summer and Christmas parties** give you the opportunity to talk about yourself and get to know other club members.

Special events, such as the 'Rede-Nacht' (Night of Speeches) or the 'Speech Competitions', offer further interesting opportunities to meet other Toastmasters.