

**Q2: If you attended the conference, what did you like about it? Or if you have attended past conferences, what did you like about them? (If you did not attend, please enter n/a)**

Themes from the responses

- Workshops/Speakers
- Meeting New People/Friends/Networking/Camaraderie
- Contests
- Business Meeting

Word for word responses

- Variety of workshops. At least one of had an influence on my life.
- I like variety / lots of options to choose from. Sessions starting/ending on time to keep the schedule on time.
- The Location, and the Company I kept
- Seeing friends and meeting people.
- Seeing friends and meeting people.
- Good education sessions
- The presentations.
- love the networking opportunities and motivating education sessions.
- quality, diverse educational sessions--not sales pitches
- Conference theme costumes on Friday night; keynote speakers that are past international speech contest winners; spending time with Toastmasters friends from all over Iowa
- I love the networking opportunities and motivating education sessions.
- I really enjoyed the speaker on etiquette.
- Enjoyed the educational session and keynote speakers. Great contest speeches as well.
- The after party social gathering is one of the meetings I enjoy about the conference.
- The outside speakers.
- The contests were interesting Enjoyed meeting new people Interesting to see how business meeting conducted Some keynote speakers were quite good
- The contests
- I liked informal talks with the speakers, learning more about becoming a polished speaker and getting to know other Toastmasters.
- Seeing old friends, and the speakers
- Networking, social events, contests, ed.sessions
- Bonding with people of like interests and hearing Great speeches!
- Break-out training sessions. Contests.
- networking, my interest in the educational sessions depends on what is offered
- Connection with other Toastmasters. The high level of excitement and

expertise put into the event and the speeches.

- I will go if they are in Des Moines.
- I just attended the business meeting. I love making sure everyone has a voice, decisions are fair, and the meeting moves efficiently.
- the education sessions were very good at the Fall Conference.
- Key note speech by vice president of TI.
- Watching and learning from the speakers, especially contest speeches and evaluations. And networking.
- I like the breakout sessions
- The last one I attended was in Sioux City at Bev's and we had a club member competing - I did enjoy the great speeches.
- I have attended past conferences and enjoy the speaking and leadership training opportunities and also the fellowship of other Toastmasters.
- Some great sessions with great friends.
- I liked the educational/motivational presentations.
- The sessions were interesting
- Speaker selection, topic selection, location, variety of activities
- Variety of educational sessions
- I liked the camaraderie. Most of the breakout sessions. Not so thrilled with how to win a contest or similar sessions. Would like to hear how to bring back a club by someone who has actually done it!!!
- Meeting with other toastmasters and the great educational sessions
- People
- networking with other toastmasters

**Q3: If you did not attend the conference, why not? Or if you have chosen not to attend a conference in the past, why not? (Check all that apply) – Only fill in the blank responses are below.**

Themes are:

- Family
- Scheduling Conflicts
- New Member

Word for word responses

- Family responsibilities
- Awareness: This is the first email I've received from the District in a long time.
- On long vacation
- I didn't attend the Conference in Ft Dodge because of the blatant advertising for the 'medium' and 'soothsayer'
- Family medical issue.
- Family medical issue.

- schedule conflict
- Work conflicts on Friday. Comment for question 4. I would like this option if the conference was not so far away. For this conference I wouldn't try to make just a Sat. because it's too far to go. I've missed previous event due to work conflicts on Friday.
- Not informed about the content of the conference
- lack of professionalism, seemed more focus on drinking than learning
- Family Commitments/Time Involved
- New to Toastmasters
- I wasn't active
- I had surgery that week.
- I didn't know about it.
- other commitment
- Not a member at the time
- Conflicting sporting event
- Lack of time (not just work related)
- Time needed for home projects
- I had a schedule conflict and illness in the family.
- i was not available
- Personal Issues
- I had family plans that weekend (son's college visit).
- Personal conflict with the date last year.
- have witness an incompetence in judging at the Area level so egregious that it makes me cringe at going any further.
- Date conflicted with other activities
- have other conferences I attend during the year. Need to make choices.
- scheduling conflict
- I was not a member yet.
- Just couldn't work it into my schedule.
- If we have someone from our club competing I am more inclined to go depending on what other obligations I may have that weekend.
- Hard to take Friday off, could it be Friday night and Saturday?
- Cost of the meals for the quality. I know you have little control in this matter.
- Not willing to engage in TM at that level
- Did not know about it
- Just started Toastmasters
- I'm a new member
- Schedule Conflict
- Out of the area

**Q5: What educational sessions would you like the District to offer at one of the 2015 Conferences? Examples include: mentoring, Parliamentary Procedure, Art of Body Language, etc. (Fill in as many as you would like)**

Themes are:

- Mentoring
- Art of Body Language
- Effective Evaluations
- Club Building/Club Coach/PR
- Leadership
- Humor in presentations
- Parliamentary Procedure

Word for Word Responses by Category (number of duplicate responses)

Mentoring

- Mentoring (22)
- Mentoring (with real life experiences)
- Mentoring - how to/ how not to

Art of Body Language

- Art of Body Language (12)
- Body Language (6)

Evaluations

- Effective Evaluations (6)
- Speech Evaluations (2)
- Evaluation methods
- Giving Feedback
- Advanced evaluations -- effective Round Robins

Humor

- Adding humor to your speeches/presentations (5)
- Adding humor to your meetings
- How to use humor, for speakers not comfortable using it.
- How to insert humor into a speech without making it a comedy routine
- Developing your humor

Speech Topics

- More coaching on speeches
- Practical, real-world instruction on how to come up with a killer opening for your speech. (2)
- staging a speech

- Properly preparing for a presentation
- Motivational
- Improvisation
- Inspirational / Motivational
- How to use stories effectively within speeches
- Channeling Pre-Speech Jitters
- Choosing a speech topic
- Coming up with speech topics
- Drafting Stories
- Approaches for the longer projects (beyond the usual 5-7 min)
- Getting comfortable with finding writing material.
- How to be more creative
- How to do a TED-style talk
- Organizing a Speech
- Organizing and Practicing
- Raising the bar for speeches
- Selecting speech topics
- Selecting topics for a beginning speaker
- Specific tips on powerful speech conclusion/call to action. (2)
- Writing effective speeches
- Speech Drafting/Crafting
- Use of technology in presentations
- Using slides or other visual aids
- Tricks for conquering nerves
- Use of Technology
- view/review winning speeches to break them down & discuss what makes them winners
- vocal variety-how to imitate another's voice
- Storytelling (2)
- Storytelling to enhance work presentations
- Storytelling "Dynamics"

### Leadership

- Leadership Principles
- Leadership (4)
- Leading a group to achieve goals
- Leadership Styles
- Leadership Craft (not to be confused with Speech Craft)
- Leadership skills
- Leadership skills learned, now what

### Judging

- Judging (4)

- The Practice of judging contests

### Parliamentary Procedure

- Parliamentary Procedure (12)
- Parliamentary Procedure might be interesting, though we are not likely to utilize within our club.
- Parliamentary Procedure (application)

### Toastmaster Specific Topics

- As training or contest chair, how to be organized in front of a group, i.e. with remarks, presentation materials, certificates, etc.
- Being an Area/Division Governor and why you should do it.
- Breakdown how each role in a meeting helps build leadership
- building a club
- building a Toastmasters website
- Building Membership
- Club Building (membership)
- Club Coaching
- Club roles in a club setting "the perfect 1 hr club meeting" (would be especially good for newer members)
- Detailed advice on motivating members to complete CL
- District leadership
- General TM courtesy for new members/guests
- Have ice breakers/activities to give TM's a chance to practice small talk with people they Do NOT know
- Highlighting the positive things going on in the different clubs (tips for consistently achieving 9-10 of the goals)
- Holding members Accountable
- How do we attract the Gen Ys into Toastmasters?
- How to be better at Table Topics
- How to coordinate a club success plan
- How to effectively lead a volunteer club
- How to encourage members to be motivated/dedicated/involved
- How to get useful information and share with other members
- How to grow your club
- How to Hold an Effective Open House or Membership Drive
- How to make meeting more attractive to guests
- How to retain current members
- How to run a meeting
- Improving Guest Conversion rates
- keeping it's members
- Member retention

- Membership
- Membership building
- Protocol
- Recruiting
- Working on HPL projects
- More on being in and or running contests
- Motivation - How to Keep Members Engaged
- planning a contest/managing contests
- Planning your toastmasters career - goal setting, requirements
- Presentations on what each district officer does
- Step-by-step procedure of writing a press release that will get folks to your club meeting.
- Ways to track progress thru TM
- tips for specific advanced manuals ex. I can't find a play that I want to spend the time developing for the manual I'm working on.
- TM Organization structure/district officer roles
- Toastmasters in 2020
- Walk in my shoes: What is really required to be a District Governor, LT Governor, Division Governor, etc. The learning, the frustrations, how it's different from what I thought it would be, etc.)

#### Virtual Meetings/Technology

- Virtual communication / meetings
- How to give a presentation in an electronic meeting (e.g. Adobe Connect, Webex, etc.)
- Experiencing Toastmasters using dial-in/webinar/etc methods

#### Etiquette

- Basic rules of etiquette and protocol in conducting/speaking at meetings
- Etiquette at meals

#### Social Media

- Social Media for Networking: LinkedIn, Facebook, etc
- social media to promote clubs and events
- The role of Social Media/New PR methods in building Clubs
- online social networking

#### Professional Speaking

- road to professional speaking
- Setting fees for speaking engagements

#### Communication

- Active listening
- critical listening skills

- Loving Great Grammar
- Grammar, syntax,
- Communication and leadership tips for women
- Psychology of Communication

#### Other

- Art of Negotiations
- Conflict Management
- Conflict resolution
- Brainstorming
- Sales training
- Event Planning
- Casting a Vision
- Choosing Bigger Goals- Reaching for My Potential
- goal setting
- Presenting to different learning styles
- Making Small Changes For Big Results
- Confidence Building
- Creating instruction Videos
- Dealing with Harassment at Work
- Interviewing for a Job
- Interviewing skills
- job seeking/career advancing
- Networking (2)
- Success Leadership Series Module
- The art of small talk
- The art of turning a phrase
- Work life balance

**Q6: Please share any other thoughts about the conference that would ensure you gain the most value you can from the event or would make you want to attend for the first time.**

#### Venue and meals

- Less expensive meals. No need to stay in a hotel because it's all in one day. Shorter evening program. More options. Shorter sessions. More promotion. Thanks for asking! It's nice to be contacted for more than just the "it's time to renew your dues" email.
- The venue was a little disorganized and had trouble getting the rooms set up properly and have the speakers working correctly.
- Don't waste too much time trying to get technology to work. Have a backup plan and move to that backup quickly after realizing that you're having problems with technology.



## Education

- I would like to see the Success Leadership modules offered at an additional cost. Participating in one first would be helpful prior to making the presentation to meet your requirement for ACG.
- Many educational sessions at recent conferences have not lived up to their promotional summaries. For example, one session at the spring 2014 conference promised all sorts of wonderful things, and turned out to be a 45 minute exposition on making sure your clothes are clean and pressed. It was quite frustrating to choose a session based on a great blurb, only to sit through it wishing I had chosen the alternative session. Scheduling multiple presentations simultaneously is a poor choice unless each session is offered in more than one time slot. Scheduling two exceptional presenters against each other is a waste of talent. Attendees would benefit from being able to attend both sessions, but instead are forced to choose one or the other. While we want to give members a chance to develop their presentation skills, a district conference should optimize benefit to attendees by scheduling dynamic and proven speakers. Underprepared presenters do not offer much to attendees; nor do they represent the district well.
- The reason I have not attended conferences in the past is that I struggle to see the value of them. To me they seem simply as a chance for those on the "in" of the social network of Toastmasters to get together. While networking in this capacity is useful if that's your thing, I do not see this as a value, especially when TLIs are free and frequently have similarly themed "toastmaster" focused workshops as conferences do. I'm struggling to put words to paper in what I would see as valuable for the cost, however I would say something beyond the basics of toastmasters - I've been a member for less than 2 years, yet in that time I've already heard countless speeches and TLI workshops on the basics club management, mentoring, delegation, the joyous wonders and lofty benefits of being a toastmaster, etc... While these are certainly important topics and each iteration has slightly different take-aways, I don't have an interest in paying money just to hear them again (when they're free twice a year at TLI / club speeches). Taking these concepts further, OUTSIDE of the inward focus on Toastmasters, would be more interesting and more valuable in my opinion. Lastly, distance and lodging costs and frugality are factors as well - I'm far less likely to attend a conference knowing I'm going to need to shell out an extra two nights for lodging on top of the conference. For the one in CR for instance (I live nearby) - I would 100% be driving 45 mins home each night, rather than paying for lodging.
- I have never been to one so I'm not sure. I think things like art of body language and mentoring would be very helpful

- I believe I have notes somewhere on educational sessions people wanted to attend from past conference. If I find it I will forward it on.
- I love presentation by world champion of public speaking and TI officers. They inspire me a lot.
- A great keynote speaker.
- Many Toastmasters are workers and are trying to advance at their workplace. A session from a local employer - VP level - on what companies look for when promoting would be beneficial.
- Many times the sessions described in the program are not what is actually presented. (exception is keynote) I think many presenters don't have the presentation prepared when the programs are printed.
- During the time of contest prep-judges and contestant rules etc- make sure the halls are clear. Have a mandatory session or be elsewhere rule. This is very distracting for the contestants and a new judge. Don't say it won't work. We have done it!!

### Content

- I still remember my first time, ,, I was lost.. but had fun ...loved the auction & book store
- Alcohol / party favors ;)
- Better promotion and explanation of the raffle baskets needed; Better promotion of the costume themed Friday night;
- There is value in the networking and learning how other clubs or divisions do things (e.g. TLIs or recruitment). Maybe have a session with viewpoints from different clubs or divisions -- like group problem solving. Consider making Friday night a live practice session of something, or the problem solving group. The Friday "entertainment" doesn't usually appeal to me. Extend the hospitality suite, instead.
- I am not impressed with the themes of the recent conferences. The idea of dressing in costume was not appealing. Keep the conferences professional and educational.

### Registration

- A more efficient check in will help. Last time, I had minutes of the meeting that had no relevance to the current meeting.

### Schedule/Distance

- I am eager to attend next time my schedule allows.
- If the conference is very far away it would require taking a day off from work which is sometimes difficult. I would definitely try to attend should the conference be in Cedar Rapids again.
- Don't start before 6 PM on Friday
- I think it would be valuable, but TM is not a full size commitment for me. I attend meetings and give speeches, but I am not ready to put in the time at a district level.

- Keeping the Conference in central Iowa may improve attendance by Toastmasters from all over the state; although I understand the reasons Clubs on both sides of the state host the Conferences.
- I have already purchased my Spring 2015 Conference registration. The biggest reason for me making this my first year is location - I live 20 minutes from Sioux City. If I have a great experience, I will consider traveling to future conferences.
- i don't really know. i need it to be during the week so i can take the time away from work and not my family

### Marketing

- As a newer Toastmaster, the conferences have seemed geared to long-time members who have certain rituals and traditions, and I feel somewhat uncomfortable going into that environment. The conference committee and marketing team need to be sure to explain/spell out anything so Toastmasters of all levels will understand what it means. I know the first TLI I attended seemed full of inside jokes and slang/acronyms I was unfamiliar with. In the past both conferences have been held during my busiest times at work so I am unable to get off work the Friday of the conference. I would be more apt to attend if it was held on a Saturday and part-way into Sunday. I will also be much more apt to attend if it is close to home, or in a location where I know people so I don't have to spend money on a hotel or travel long distances.
- Perceived value vs Actual value - if the District or organizers can spell out the benefits, then I'm more likely to attend.

### Other

- Incentives
- Fresh food, group exercise for fun after several long sessions, tall tales,
- A few thoughts about #4: If you go this route, consider something like pay per AM, per PM, or Day 1 and Day 2, etc. It's my experience that managing pay per session is very difficult. Per session can also be more challenging to gain commitment and engagement--and can also affects budget and planning.
- I believe the conferences are well run.
- I am new to toastmasters. I need to know more about the basics
- The people. 'nuff said
- Unlikely to participate
- Recruitment
- Cost
- Fun Dinner-time?
- Getting back into the "Toastmasters life" after several year on the "periphery"
- Have we ever thought to add something like a presentation to a local Charity. Community Support.

- good networking, good food
- Some of the activities and sessions were not wheelchair accessible, at the conference I attended in the past.
- I have been to 3 conferences and all were helpful, well worth the price and FUN!
- Keep the conferences upbeat and fun. I didn't go to conferences when I was a new TM member. It took me a long time to attend, and I used the excuse of time and money. We still have some conferences where the time commitments interfere with attending.