



ROSTRUM

INFORMER

April 2018

Newsletter of Rostrum Western Australia

www.rostrumwa.com.au



From the President

It was good to see so many people turn up at the Wembley Recreation Centre in February to have their say about Rostrum – what it means to people, what it is doing well and what it could do better. Carmel Philippe ran an interesting and thought-provoking session and we will be following up on

the findings throughout the year.

What came through strongly to me was that people value the club structure of Rostrum very highly. You can try to learn public speaking through short courses and private coaching and of course they have their place, but for continued improvement you need constant practice and an audience as well as the feedback from your tutor. Participants also noted that clubs provide a sense of community and friendship which is valuable in itself and helps people to increase their confidence and social skills.

Elsewhere you will read about our 70th anniversary celebrations – we are looking forward to a fun night to savour our achievements over the years. I was talking to Freeman Terry Walker, a former state president of Rostrum WA, and also national president, the other day about our 70th and he made a very pertinent comment.

Terry said despite the ups and downs and occasional disagreements that have occurred in Rostrum as in any organisation, whatever the future holds we should remember always the great good that Rostrum has done over the years. Many hundreds – thousands perhaps – of people have benefited from the Rostrum experience in their personal and professional lives. It has literally changed people's lives.

I will certainly keep that in mind as we approach our birthday party on 28 July.

Freeman Sue Hart, President, Rostrum WA
suehart@iinet.net.au

SAVE THE DATE!
TUESDAY 8 MAY 2018

Club 15's



Details on page 4

TIP: The KISS principle

The skilful use of simple words, simple phrasing and sentences, and a clear sequence of basic ideas demonstrate the advantages of the KISS principle:

Keep It Simple, Stupid!

The simpler and more straightforward the presentation –

- the easier it is for the speaker to remember the pattern of the speech, and
- the easier it is for the audience to understand it.

Conversely, every complexity of design, every unnecessary word and every departure from straightforward sentence construction will add problems for the speaker and confuse the audience.

TIP: A quick fix for impromptu speaking

If you draw a complete blank, answer one or a combination of the following questions to build a story around the topic –

What? Which? Who? When? Where? How? Why?

For the topic 'Success', apply What-Where-Why – 'I want to tell you a success story; it happened in...' Tell the story briefly, why success was achieved and move into the conclusion.

Tips adapted from Laurie Burgess *Excellence for Communicators*

Rostrum reinvented

Around 25 people attended a brainstorming workshop on 4 February 2018 and provided valuable input to the process. They were asked to consider a number of critical questions, provide their personal perspectives and consider the issues for Clubs, in small and larger group discussions. Some of the results are summarised below:

Areas of concern for individual members include:

- Dwindling member numbers;
- Relevancy of meeting format, programs, agendas and member commitment to meetings;
- Resistance to change and lack of leadership/direction;
- Keeping the Rostrum brand, product and marketing relevant;
- The disconnect between the Rostrum WA Executive and the membership;
- Lack of diversity;
- Difficulty with venues; and
- Cost as a barrier to participation.

For Clubs, the pain points are:

- High member turnover and dwindling membership;
- Meeting attendance and participation;
- Quality of meetings and coaching;
- Lack of diversity (especially age demographic); and
- Costs

Individual members are excited and positive about:

- Building their skills, knowledge, confidence and experience;
- Support, belonging, fellowship, social/fun aspect and networking with a diverse group;
- Club and Executive support, focus on the future and developing the quality of the product;
- The coaching, encouragement and training available;
- Contributing, helping others, tutoring and mentoring;
- This opportunity to reinvent Rostrum and move forward; and
- New, energetic people coming through and seeing Rostrum grow and improve in size and influence.

From a Club perspective, there is some concern about

- The relevance of Rostrum's current focus areas and development programs; and
- The lack of communication and disconnect between Clubs, and the Executive and Clubs.

And from a Club perspective, the positives are:

- Rostrum WA's support, such as training opportunities, coaching;
- The admin support provided by the RIC; and
- The opportunity to respond to member needs and evolve into the future.

These considerations, together with a range of ideas for what members see as the purpose, goals and future of Rostrum, will really contribute to the Rostrum Reinvention as we go forwards (stay tuned for more details).

Carmel Philippe, Vice President, Rostrum WA

Coming up in ...

APRIL

- 10 Speak up Speak out (SUSO) short course**
6.30 pm to 9.30 pm
Wembley Community Centre
40 Alexander St, Wembley
☺ Registration with the RIC is required
- 21 Dais Exec Meeting**
9.00 am
David Price's office

MAY

- 1 Closing date for bookings for Club 15's Comedy Night**
See page 4 for details
- 8 Club 15's Comedy Night**
6 pm sharp
Eastman Lounge, Perth Hockey Stadium
Curtin University
- 12 Rostrum Voice of Youth Semi Final**
Details in the next issue
- 19 Dais Exec Meeting**
Details as for April
- 25 Dais Reps Meeting**
6.30 pm for 7 pm start
Wembley Community Centre
40 Alexander St, Wembley

Information and course registration:

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Thank you for your contributions to this issue. Please send me your notices, photos and articles for the May issue by 20 April.

Rose Fogliani (Editor)
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ROSTRUM WA IS TURNING 70!

**Planning is well under way for a big
celebration in July, including our
Annual Dinner on Saturday 28 July**

SAVE THE DATE

**More details will be announced in
the coming weeks**

Think on your feet

An exercise on ... thinking on your feet ... from Freeman David Price

There are two components to this exercise:

1. **Thinking on your feet.** The most important skill you can learn in Rostrum is to think on your feet and be able to present intelligently with no notice – something you have to do in your day to day work all the time. It's really scary – that's why it is such an important skill.
2. **Peer Coaching.** When people have to coach others, it makes them focus much more analytically on the presentations. Through doing this, they become more competent speakers themselves. The premise is the age old saying – the best way to learn something is to teach it. Peer coaching is a really powerful way of developing skill and understanding about speaking.

Here's how it works: A person is rostered every week to be the **Think On Your Feet Wizard**.

Another person, though not someone completely new to Rostrum, is rostered to be the **Peer Coach**.

The Wizard prepares three things: **one question** about anything, **one topic** that someone can speak about, and **one random object**. Examples of questions might be: 'What is the biggest thing holding WA back from being the most prosperous state?', 'If money were no object, would you fly on Elon Musk's rocket around the moon, and why?' Examples of topics might include: 'Pure Gold', 'Bricks and Mortar', 'Flying High'. Examples of objects might be anything in the room or, better still, something obscure brought to the meeting.

At the time in the meeting for the exercise, the chair asks the Wizard to present the session and announce who the Peer Coach will be.

The Wizard either goes out to the front or from their chair, asks **one question** without preamble and names a person to answer that question for one minute only – preferably someone who is not already rostered to speak at the meeting. The nominated person speaks from their place, not out the front.

When they have finished, the wizard gives **a topic**, and then immediately nominates a person to speak on the topic for one minute only. That person speaks from their place.

When they have finished, the wizard produces **an object** and names a person. From their place, the named person needs to provide a use for the object that is NOT its normal use for one minute only.

The **Think On Your Feet Wizard** needs to do some preparation as to the questions and topics, but also who is present and not rostered, and who they will call upon without notice. They should know who they are going to call on, and not look around the room at the time and choose someone.

Peer Coaching

When the three people have spoken the **Peer Coach** is introduced by the chair.

The coach gives constructive feedback/coaching to each of the three speakers following this formula:

TWO commendations, then ONE recommendation

Probably no more than 45 seconds coaching on each person.

Coaching itself is harder than it looks and so as more people practise and gain the skill, the more the overall club skill increases.

At the end of the meeting, the rostered meeting coach includes the coaching exercise in his or her coaching! In other words the coach, coaches the coach – sounds silly but it works.



David Price (second from left) with some members of Southern Star Club 63 in Albany

Dr David doing his rounds...

Since taking up his role as Vice President Freeman David Price has been busy visiting WA clubs to see how they're travelling, offering suggestions, volunteering to 'guest coach'; in short, he's taking the temperature of Rostrum clubs and dispensing some advice and meds. David, together with our other Vice President, Carmel Philippe who ran the recent brainstorming workshop, the rest of Executive and a select group of members, will be driving changes during Rostrum WA's 70th anniversary year to make our organisation more vibrant and relevant to today's speaking public.

ROSTRUM CLUB 15 is excited to host its ANNUAL



Come and be entertained by entrants in the

COMEDY CONTEST

First prize: \$250 Runner up prize: \$100

WE ARE SEEKING CONTESTANTS NOW!

Enquiries to Jacinth Watson watsonja@iinet.net.au

Plus

COMEDY DEBATE

Will the reigning Champions Club 5
prevail against the Challengers Club 19?

When: TUESDAY 8 MAY 2018
Where: PERTH HOCKEY STADIUM, CURTIN UNIVERSITY
 Eastman Lounge
Time: 6.00 pm – 9.30 pm
Cost: \$30 includes a two course meal plus tea or coffee
 Drinks available for purchase at the bar
Enquiries: Jacinth Watson watsonja@iinet.net.au
Bookings: Group bookings are to be made by Club Treasurers using
 the booking form
 Closing date for bookings and payment is **1 May 2018**