

President's Welcome

Vicki opened this very special Christmas meeting and last session of the year. She welcomed members and guests and acknowledged the backstage work of the Executive Committee that “makes these meetings possible!”

Toastmaster of the Evening

Ava took on the role of TME for the second time since September. Smiling – as always! - she introduced her theme, ‘Light, joy, and good cheer.’

And the Traditional...

Suzanne used Clement Clarke Moore’s poem “A Visit from St. Nicholas” as the toast. As this recitation is now in its third year, we can now call it traditional!

The Word

Florence proposed the thematically appropriate and well used ‘warmth’ as word of the evening.

The Joke

Tristan said he refused to tell us a joke. Instead, he wanted to prove that Santa isn’t a man - A man wouldn’t think about gifts until it was too late. A man would get lost and never ask for directions. What man could multitask sorting out the gifts, landing the sleigh, and getting down the chimney? Never mind the responsibility: that requires commitment!



New Members

Tristan, VP Membership, presented candidate seeking membership, and Hyunjoo was inducted into the club.

ALEXANDER

Origins: Grimbergen, hometown of the beer.
Loves: Asian culture (and his Asian partner, Claudia!).
Professional life: He works for a big international tech company.
Beliefs: That we should live in the moment; that we should have five to ten minutes of breathing exercises daily.
Motives for joining TMP: His work involves presentations in English and as we seem “all very talented,” he wants to overcome his stage fright here!



ARTURO

Professional life: He is an engineer in finance and human resources.
Beliefs: The value of communication as both a tool and the bridge between people and ideas.
Professional life: He works for a big international tech company.
Motives for joining TMP: He wants “to enhance my way of communication with synthesis and empathy.” He wants community, not just an organization.
What he can give: Enthusiasm, cultural diversity, and a global approach.



WELCOMING HYUNGJU



Tristan presenting a new member ribbon; Alison introducing Hyunjoo's mentor, Jessica.

Table Topics: Secret Santa!

Josep explained that everyone had a table topic – describing the recipient of their Secret Santa gifts.
Vicki – Peter – Jessica – Anaelle – Alison – Siobhan – Yasmine – Thibaut – Florence – Tristan – Vincent – Suzanne – Caroline – Josep – Benoit – Ava – Lars – Amelie – Vicki – Joanne

“Christmas is all about presents,” Josep told us. “No one dares to say it – but I dare to say it!”



Speeches and Evaluations

LOVE ACTUALLY

Speaker - Amelie

Evaluator - Caroline

After dancing to the film's music (and, evaluating, Caroline borrowed the film's idea of holding up notecards!), Amelie discussed the lure of the love story, how its 'love at first sight' plot once happened to her, and confessed she wants to write a romance.

Commendations

Using the room; employing eye contact; making the audience feel involved; incorporating pauses; giving a strong conclusion; conveying enjoyment; and adding music and dancing!

Recommendations

A little extra preparation so notes are not needed.

THE ART YOU DIDN'T KNOW YOU WERE EXPERIENCING

Speaker - Yasmine

Evaluator - Josep

Yasmine explained that art is all around us in the hospitality industry. As this is where she works, looking around at the style and décor of a place has become second nature to her. Good hospitality is like art: it must make you feel something, she told us - and we should applaud the success of the staff at Les Noces de Jeannette!

Commendations

Strong opening: explaining we see art on a daily basis, linked to a career in hospitality, and ending with the reality (good and bad); structuring of speech with subtle transitions between ideas; general comfort in presenting: familiarity with subject, limited reference to notes, ability to move around.

Recommendations

Could perhaps use space even more and explore more vocal variety, e.g., acting out conversation.

A REVEALING NEWS STORY

Speaker - Vincent

Evaluator - Jessica

Vincent explained why there was an element of public support for the man who killed the CEO of United Healthcare recently. The murder had revealed healthcare as "a deep issue", and not just in the U.S.: we all want to live longer and healthier lives, but drugs are expensive.

Commendations

Very strong speech ("one of the best speeches you have given"); ability to simplify a complex subject; structure: opening with questions, use of facts and statistics, conveying emotions (reference to father)

Recommendations

"Tighten your Call to Action" – e.g., urge audience to be grateful for what they have.

Guests



BAPTISTE, a friend of Caroline (who has talked about us for the past three years!) was on his first visit. Managing his own company, which is growing, he has little free time.

One special thing about him: he is a gluten-free baker.

Reflection after the meeting: When is the next meeting?!



ARTURO has spent the last three years in Paris. He loves dancing (“I’m from the Caribbean, so yes!”)

One special thing about him: He enjoys cooking and sharing food.

Reflection after the meeting: “I have seen the team in a different way,” and he described it as “a positive evolution!”



GOMA is a student mastering in management.

One special thing about him: He enjoys playing football with friends.

Reflection after the meeting: Goma commented on the good atmosphere, adding “Warmth is shared here!”



ALEXANDER was on his third visit and was seeking membership.

One special thing about him: He meditates every day and has done so for many years.

Reflection after the meeting: He hopes the next time he sees us, he will be a member!



KARINE, a Toastmaster from Singapore, was on her second visit.

One special thing about her: She is a laughter yoga practitioner, something she would recommend (but she added that we already laugh here).

Reflection after the meeting: Karinne appreciated the welcome. She felt we “raised the game tonight”!



ZAHRA is Iranian. She was on her first visit to TMP.

One special thing about her: She described herself as a mountain girl who enjoys hiking, skiing, and camping.

Reflection after the meeting: She liked the energy of the club. Now with many questions, she intends to contact our VP Membership.

And Finally...

ANAELLE'S GENERAL EVALUATION

Anaelle had many points of praise –

Ava was an “amazing” TME!

Two applications for membership and an induction tonight suggest that we are a “dynamic club” – and congratulations to Tristan, VP Membership.

It was good to see mentorship highlighted by Alison’s role in the induction, introducing mentor to mentee and reminding everyone of the potential rewards of the relationship.

Anaelle noted that everyone was in a festive mood, and she appreciated the Christmassy outfits. She praised Josep for his innovation using Secret Santa as table topics.

AWARDS



From left to right –
Table Topics -Anaelle
Speech - Amelie
Evaluation -Caroline

THANKS

Vicki thanked Suzanne for agreeing to serve as Chief Judge for the February 4th club contest. On behalf of the club, Vicki thanked the staff of Les Noces de Jeannette:



Next meeting – January 7, 2025