



DISTRICT LEADER BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Candidate's Name: **PREETI VENKATARAMANI**

Candidate's Office: **DIVISION DIRECTOR - EASTERN** District Number: **10**

Toastmasters member since: **2005**

Education:
Bachelors in Commerce. Masters in Computer Application.
I have been with Toastmasters in 2 phases. Between 2005-2008, I worked on my CC and CL and completed both of them. After a 10 year gap, reinstated myself as a member in 2018. So far I have completed Level 3 in the Strategic Relationships Pathways.

Toastmasters offices held and terms of service:
Area 20 Area Director Jul. 01, 2019 Jun. 30, 2020
533 Parker SpeakEasies Club : Treasurer Jul. 01, 2019 Jun. 30, 2020, Treasurer Jul. 01, 2018 Jun. 30, 2019
9564 Coming Attraction Club: President Jul. 01, 2007 Jun. 30, 2008,
Treasurer Jul. 01, 2006 Jan. 31, 2007, Treasurer Jul. 11, 2005 Jun. 30, 2006

Toastmasters honors and recognition:
Have won Tall Tales Contest and Humorous Speech Contest in 2006/2007.

Relevant work experience and how it relates to Toastmasters and your role as a District leader:
I have previously worked in IT in various team lead roles and have a deep understanding of team work, team cultures and leading by example. Teams thrive and do their best when leadership is clear, consistent and committed to their goals. I have learnt a lot from leaders before me and now imbibe those lessons in leading with grace, dignity and enthusiasm. Leadership in Toastmasters is voluntary, so being committed and enthusiastic is key to doing justice to those leadership roles.

What experience do you have in strategic planning?
During my IT experience, my strategic planning was focused on how to keep the code base flexible and adaptive such that there is minimum rewrite and allow the business team to grow the company without much hassle. I now run my own business, so have to plan a lot to make it grow. How to effectively plan and execute such that prospects are more aware and customers are more satisfied - leading to more referrals and growth opportunities. I am also very active in the community and take on various leadership roles. As the school PTO rep I am responsible for steering, planning and organizing school activities such that there is active participation and productive learning. I have also worked as a Team Manager for the Destination Imagination program for 2 years. Guiding Elementary level children to work towards a long term goal (6 months plus) and keeping them on track requires a lot of planning and/or strategic shift where needed. I also plan and coordinate fundraising activities for different organizations, including our very own District 10 fundraiser of Raffle Gift Baskets!

What experience do you have in the area of finance?
I have worked as a fundraiser for multiple organizations. This has helped me have a keen eye on what is the expected income and how to manage the cost of the basic supplies needed for the fundraiser. I have also worked as a Treasurer for Toastmaster's club for multiple years and have maintained a healthy club balance.

What experience do you have in developing procedures?

Communication is one of my strengths. I have documented legally sensitive programs with detailed steps on how the software code should handle new scenarios as well as when input from the legal department is mandatory. This helped new hires in a growing company to not only pick up the pace of work but also to execute it clearly and consistently.

What lessons did you learn from previous leadership positions?

Initially I was hesitant to ask for help and would spend time trying to figure things out myself. I have now learnt that it is wiser to reach out for help/advice/guidance where needed and am not shy to ask about it. Secondly, that prevention is truly better than cure. Instead of fighting fires on a weekly basis, spend more time understanding why and how the fires are starting and put systems and checks in place to prevent them. As a result, the time team members spent on call during weekends was greatly reduced and work satisfaction, team morale went up dramatically. Thirdly that team building, team culture is vital to productivity. People do their best when they feel understood, appreciated and validated.

Why do you want to serve as a District leader?

Toastmasters is shaping me into a better human being and a more mature leader. I want to contribute back to this wonderful organization and have District 10 thrive! As a leader I bring consistency, clarity and commitment to the table. I know I can contribute meaningfully to the District's success and support its growth.

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

The major objectives of the District are to build new clubs and help all clubs in achieving excellence. This can be achieved by creating a nurturing, enriching and supportive environment in which each member feels safe enough to get out of their comfort zone and grow. I am approachable, collaborative, friendly and work well with others towards a higher purpose.

Additional information about yourself:

My personal philosophy is to leave a place better than you found it. In the last few years, growth and contribution have become the new lens through which I view things. How can I contribute, who can I help, what can I learn and where will my skills be most effective? Such questions are helping me contribute meaningfully to people and projects around me and evolve as a leader simultaneously.