



## District Leader

### Biographical Information

Candidate's Name: Paul F. Coddington

Candidate's Office: District Director

District Number: 45

Toastmasters member since: September 2004

#### Education:

Franklin Pierce Law Center, Concord NH. Awarded Juris Doctor degree in May 2000.  
LeMoyne College, Syracuse NY. Awarded Bachelor of Science degree in May 1979.

#### Toastmasters offices held and terms of service:

I have served as a club officer or district officer almost every year since joining Toastmasters. Most notably those terms include Club Growth Director, Program Quality Director, Division Governor, Area Director, Area Governor, and club president five times in four different clubs. Please review the attached list of my officer service.

#### Toastmasters honors and recognition:

In 2022, I was truly honored by receiving the District 45 Darlene Dunn Memorial Award for my Toastmasters mentorship, after being nominated by one of my proteges.

I have been awarded the Distinguished Toastmasters designation three times. The first was in 2015, again in 2020, and the Pathways DTM in 2023. In 2020, I was given the "Visiting Victor Award" and the "Area Online Ovation Award-Gold" for my Area Director performance at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic with TI's in-person meeting moratorium. I was given recognition by Toastmasters as a successful Pathways Guide in 2018, and a D45 award as "Select Distinguished" Pathways Guide that year as well. Regarding club support: I have received recognition serving four different clubs, twice as a club sponsor, and twice as a successful club coach.

#### Relevant work experience and how it relates to Toastmasters and your role as a District leader:

At the NH DOT, I am responsible for a myriad of personnel assignments. I schedule continuing education training for 50 employees, including our land surveyors, appraisers, title abstractors, real estate agents, and clerical staff. I also plan and moderate public hearings for our highway projects. In that role, I train and coach our civil engineers on the finer points of public speaking and delivering presentations to large audiences, using skills and techniques I developed through Toastmasters training. Connecting the dots--what I do for work is very similar to what I would do as a District leader.

#### What experience do you have in strategic planning?

At the beginning of the 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 Toastmaster years, I helped develop the District Success Plan as a member of the senior leadership team, meaning simply that we set goals that were in line with our mission as a District and that of the international organization for the entire year. The real education in planning came during the year as the plans were executed and necessarily updated to reflect changed goals and circumstances.

#### What experience do you have in the area of finance?

I was trained as a personal financial advisor for Prudential and worked for them for 10 years. From 2004 through 2006 I was a member of the Concord NH Board of Education. We developed the school district's detailed \$70M budget each year for presentation to the public for comment and approval. As the Chief of Administration in the DOT's Bureau of Right-of-Way, I have prepared my bureau's biennial budget for inclusion in the agency's total proposal for the state legislature and governor's review and approval. And to the point of the question, I was involved in the development of the District 45 budgets that were prepared for submission to Toastmasters International and ultimately to our membership for approval for the years 2022-2024.

What experience do you have in developing procedures?

Five years ago I was fortunate to be included in training for a "yellow belt" in LEAN methodology and have adopted it enthusiastically. The basic idea is that there is always a way to improve processes and procedures to eliminate the waste of time, effort, materials, and money while simultaneously improving the result. The methodology involves mapping out the procedure and then reviewing it, and asking at every step "why?" The LEAN mindset has been slowly ingrained into the culture at the DOT and we have reduced costs, accelerated the speed of many parts of our operation, and improved the quality of the end result. "Because we have always done it that way" is no longer the answer to "why?"

What lessons did you learn from previous leadership positions?

I have learned that there are several different styles to be used in both leadership and communicating while in a leadership role. A leader needs to do several things to get the cooperation necessary to be successful, including discerning the reason each member of the team is involved. A leader should know when the different styles should be used and adapt. In an organization such as Toastmasters where a member is taking on a role, that is even more important because the reason is never pecuniary. They have another reason. Knowing the skills that each team member has, or skills that they may want to attain or improve in their volunteer role should not be ignored and must be taken into consideration. Most painfully, often a leader fails in the mission but fortunately learns from the experience that a different style in leadership or communication might have helped achieve a better outcome.

Why do you want to serve as a District leader?

As a 20-year member of Toastmasters, I have seen a number of improvements in the organization as well as in myself. During my first ten years of membership, I benefited from the training. In the second decade of my membership, I saw a sea change of opportunities in Toastmasters for me, and changed my focus. Pathways rolled out in D45 in 2018 and I was appointed as a Pathways Guide. As the Area 20 Director, I kept my clubs alive, involved and successful, despite being forced to have video meetings during the pandemic. My experience as a Toastmaster in the past ten years have been as a leader, a coach, a mentor. When I was Club Growth Director, the District came so close, so very close, to being a Distinguished District for the first time in over ten years. As District Director, I want to make that happen and have us be recognized as a Distinguished District.

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

The District mission is to build new clubs and to support the existing clubs. However, we anticipate the District realignment plan, and it will happen for us this year. But to answer the question of the major objectives: no matter what happens, we need to form new clubs and to support the existing clubs. We need a strong CGD and PQD of course, and I hope that we elect them. What I would change in the administration of the District is to heavily support those two officers by creating many committees for both of them, and assist in the recruitment of as many people as we can get to serve on those committees.

District consolidation theoretically includes our merger with one or more of districts 31, 53, or 61. There will be an opportunity to present a three-year club growth plan that gets D45 to 100 clubs to avoid consolidation this year, but if we end the year at 72 clubs, I'm not hopeful that it would be approved. Then, a secondary focus will be to convey to the membership that we did not failed as a District but to present it as another change that TI has made to strengthen Toastmasters, and now we have the opportunity we have been given to meet new people, and have a different outside of the club experiences, such as club officer training, contests, and (OMG!), annual conferences. Embrace the change!

Additional information about yourself: