

My Why – Jacque

By Jacque Leonard, DTM



I joined Liberty Lakers Toastmasters Club #399 in April 2005. Initially, I joined because I was in a sales organization trying to coach my sales team on how to do the business. As I got to know them, it was not uncommon for several of them to come to me and say, “Jacque, when I first met you, you intimidated me.” I would then ask them what I was doing or saying that intimidated them. Their answer was something like, “I don’t know exactly, but I’m glad that you don’t intimidate me anymore.”

When I mentioned these strange conversations to my mentor, he suggested that I join Toastmasters. Soon after I joined, I was assigned a mentor. After working with me for a few months, she told me that there were two things she saw that could be off-putting to some. One was a posture that I frequently demonstrated. The other vocabulary choices I frequently used. She helped me identify times that she observed these behaviors and begin to consciously change them. I could have fixed the problem and left; however, I discovered the world of speech competitions and became interested in competing.

When I began working as a contract trainer, honing my skills, especially in the need to incorporate humor into my presentations, became more crucial to my success. My continued participation in Toastmasters became a steppingstone to my success as a trainer.