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Hosts

Linda Lu, Public Relations Manager, D99 Toastmasters
Richard A. Mattis, DTM, District Director, D99 Toastmasters

PODCAST TRANSCRIPT**Linda**

Hi folks! I'm Linda Lu and I have with me Richard Mattis, DTM, District 99 District Director. Today, we'll be chatting about the D99 Toastmasters and what is your responsibility as the District Director.

Thanks for hopping onto the podcast today, Richard! I was wondering if you could provide our listeners with a bird's-eye view of this role please? I bet they would be curious to learn more about what a typical day looks like as District Director.

Richard

As the District Director, I am responsible for directly overseeing and managing the District's day-to-day operations, finances, and human resources. I have a team of District leaders to help me fulfill these responsibilities.

My role requires me to empower the District leadership team to work together toward the District mission – To build new clubs and support all our clubs with achieving excellence - while supporting each one in his or her development as a leader.

A typical day changes through the year – for the first 3 months though – many of my days will include activities for filling open leadership roles, delivering required district information over to TI, planning the budget, district success plan, reviewing/approving materials, organizing the fall District Council Meeting, sitting with our PRM for this wonderful chat 😊.

Linda

Thanks Richard! That was a great overview. Perhaps you could highlight some challenges and opportunities associated with this position.

Richard

This position provides me with an amazing opportunity to serve the members of District 99. Let me speak to the challenges our members and clubs are likely to have over this program year:



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- **Going to in-person, hybrid or staying virtual:** Clubs are working through how to meet the varying needs and preferences of their members. Some members enjoy the virtual meeting experience. Some members have stopped attending their club meetings cause they are sick and tired of virtual meetings and not connecting physically with people. Some people work from home and don't want to travel to meeting locations. Some people want a mix of either in-person or virtual but no hybrid which they might find complicated to manage.
- **Re-engaging members:** For community clubs, some members disengaged to wait on going back to in-person meetings. Some members are fatigued from dealing with impacts from the pandemic or working hard to keep their clubs going.
- **Re-establishing and Rebuilding clubs:** Many districts including ours have lost both clubs and members. Corporate clubs have taken a hit as people worked from home through the pandemic. Toastmasters International has provided new incentive for clubs to restart with 12 instead of 20 members. We will see how these incentives can be embraced to bring back some of the clubs.

Linda

2022-2023 program year that is going to be filled with both challenges and successes. Richard, how would you describe your leadership style?

Richard

Most of the leadership/management tests I have done over my career paint me as a fairly balanced leader. My perspective - I am a supportive leader who encourages participation from my teams. I have found both in my leadership roles in Toastmasters and in my project management career – listening to my team is vitally important. Some of tweaks we plan to make this year to support the clubs – comes from my listening to our clubs who have expressed needing help with various elements of the program...such as Pathways adoption, Evaluation education, Club Assessments to name a few areas.

Linda

In what specific ways do you motivate your team in D99 Toastmasters ?

Richard

Have fun. Listen to People. Connect with People. Be Awesome. Work Together.



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Linda

Tell me about a time you struggled with work-life balance. How do you manage it?

Richard

Linda, this is a good question. When we ask people to take on leadership roles, some of them will ask about how much time it requires...fueled I am sure by the need or concern to manage work-life balance.

Some tips I can give for managing the balance – from my own experience:

- Figure out the schedule of when you can give time to your role with the least impact on your family or work. For example, I am an early-riser and will on some days try to get through important emails or to-dos before starting my day-job. Same thing for weekends.
- Pace is important in the context of 1 program year – it's important to take breaks to rest and recharge
- Get help from others. Sometimes instead of working on a request for 2 hours, you can get to the end result fast by asking help from someone who knows the information already or can point you in the right direction quickly.

Linda

In closing, what is your message to the district for the year ahead?

Richard

The year ahead is one of continued rebuilding for many of our clubs and re-engagement for many of our members. The district leadership team is here to support all our clubs and members in achieving excellence. I encourage all our members to remember the core values of Toastmasters International – Respect, Integrity, Service and Excellence – keep these in mind as we work with each other in this time of rebuilding. Individually strive for excellence – strive to be awesome – you will make others around you better – and working and rebuilding together we will be awesome – awesome members, awesome clubs and an awesome District 99.

Together...Awesome.

Linda

Awesome, Richard! Thank you very much for the insights and sharing with us about D99 leadership! I'm sure all our listeners found them to be very valuable.

And speaking of our listeners, if you're listening right now, we encourage you to join Toastmasters! If you are already with us, we encourage you to register D99 club officer training 2022-23 program. Visit d99tm.org to get more information.



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About Toastmasters International

Toastmasters International is a worldwide nonprofit educational organization that empowers individuals to become more effective communicators and leaders. Headquartered in Englewood, Colo., the organization's membership exceeds 364,000 in more than 16,200 clubs in 145 countries. Since 1924, Toastmasters International has helped people from diverse backgrounds become more confident speakers, communicators and leaders. For information about local Toastmasters clubs, please visit www.toastmasters.org. Follow [@Toastmasters](https://twitter.com/Toastmasters) on Twitter.

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