



District 57

[Home](#)[Members](#)[Clubs](#)[District Tools](#)[Public Relations](#)[Home](#) » **Steps to a successful virtual YLP**

November 20, 2020

Steps to a successful virtual YLP

By Samanvitha Basole

Recently, I started an online Youth Leadership Program (YLP) that went well all around.

The students were very impressed with this workshop. It was a very rewarding experience for me as well. I saw a few students grow from being shy participants to confidently leading the meeting!

I share here the steps I took to host this YLP.

But first, some of the comments I have received from the students:

“ This is a fun program that is helping me speak confidently whether I am delivering a planned or an impromptu speech. I am finding these skills useful in my online classes. — Jayaram Reddy

“ Now I am more conscious of filler words in my speech and trying to make it more interesting. I am now more alert when someone speaks and unconsciously evaluating their speeches by looking for main ideas. I particularly like table topic speeches which makes you quickly think on your feet and come up with a small speech instantaneously. — Sai Gayathri Penugonda

While we've all been locked in our houses due to the current COVID-19 situation, I felt that time was ripe to utilize my commute hours towards helping my community.

I know that a few of you are interested in starting an online YLP. I hope this article gives you an estimate of the work required behind running a YLP.

Here are the steps to host a successful YLP:

- Get in touch with the D57 YLP chair to plan out your session and get help.
- Firstly, figure out a date, time, duration, length, and age group for the program.
- Check with the YLP chair if you can get a list of students (This is an important step as the YLP has a long queue, we certainly want to follow the first-come first-served order).
- Order a workbook and coordinator guide for you along with the required number of workbooks and certificates (your club would likely fund for these).
- Email info@d57tm.org to get a video conferencing account for the program, and make sure that the district has no meetings 15 mins before and 15 mins after your meeting time.
- Once you have all these set, host an info session for students to give them some information about this program and what they should expect. This is also the right time to interview the students and see if they are joining the program based on their own interest and not being pushed by someone else.
- In the info session, set a decorum for the meetings. That is, standing up while giving a speech, ensuring stable internet, arrive a few mins before start, etc.
- After finalizing the student list, send them a photo release form if you are planning to take the pictures and post somewhere (I made my form using some templates I found online).
- In parallel to the previous step, either ship the workbook to the student's place or have them pick it up at your place.
- To start off the program, use the coordinator guide to create an agenda and plan the session. I found that the first time I created the agenda, I took hours to create the template, figure out the roles, time, etc. But from the second session onwards, it only took me a few minutes to edit the agenda. It's best to divide the students in three groups and rotate responsibilities (speakers group, evaluators group, and other roles group).

- After each meeting, send a review email of the list of next session speakers, best speaker of the day, etc.
- Definitely adhere to the start and end time of the meetings. We want to set a good example to the students.
- Throughout the program, encourage student communication and participation. In the first session, I created break out rooms for group introduction and discussion. Also encourage the evaluators to share the evaluation form with the speaker after the meeting.
- Set general rules such as video on at all times, participating as much as possible, professional posture, not swaying on their executive chairs, etc.
- Plan a virtual competition and celebration at the end of the workshop to celebrate their success.
- Finally, enjoy the journey and watch the students grow!

Resources

- D57 website for YLP – <https://d57tm.org/ylp/>
- Video background templates from Toastmasters – <https://www.toastmasters.org/resources/zoom-virtual-background>
- <https://www.toastmasters.org/resources/timer-zoom-backgrounds>
- Toastmasters shop – <https://www.toastmasters.org/shop>
- Meeting Roles – <https://www.toastmasters.org/membership/club-meeting-roles>
- [Sample Flyer](#) (if you need to advertise to recruit students)
- [Sample Info Session Slides](#)
- [Sample Photo Release Form](#)
- [Sample Agenda](#)

Samanvitha Basole is the president of Newark Toastmasters club which held the Presidents Distinguished status last year. You can connect with her on LinkedIn here:

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/bsamanvitha/>