

Skills For Life, Inc.

A Prison Ministry
P.O. Box 38553 Suite 113
Houston, Texas 77238

PROGRAM FOR PRISON INMATES

- Two Goals:
1. Assist in preparing inmates to become productive members of society.
 2. Change the prison culture in the only way it can be done - - through the inmates themselves.

The goals will be accomplished through a modified use of Toastmasters International curriculum. To build solid community, competition is eliminated and servant leadership is the driving principle. Our definition of servant leadership is: Servant leaders never pursue a mission at the expense of their people. Rather, servant leaders earn the loyalty and best efforts of their people by serving the interests and investing in the development of those they lead. Servant leaders lead to see others succeed.

The two hour weekly meetings teach public speaking, personal responsibility, and servant leadership skills.

Using the subject matter of their choice, inmates strive for technical goals such as maintaining eye contact, overcoming nervousness, effective use of gestures, vocal variety, eliminating vocal pauses, and using props in an effective manner. In addition, the students are learning to research subjects and organize their material in a logical coherent manner. Progress is measured through goal achievement programs under the rules of Toastmaster International.

Inmates get feedback on their presentations by each speaker having a club member provide a face to face evaluation, always done in a caring and constructive manner, plus receiving a written evaluation from each of the other members. There are exercises for members to learn to speak impromptu and develop listening skills. Behavioral standards for each meeting are dignity, courtesy, be professional, and have fun.

The 2 hour meeting time will conform to the daily schedule of the prison. A minimum of 20 inmates are required to start a club. The program is currently in place at the Carol Vance unit, Jester III unit, Cleveland, Texas unit, Diboll unit, Clemens unit Wynne unit and the Darrington unit. It is mandatory at Jester III as part of their faith-based program and the Cleveland unit. The Vance unit is made up of voluntary and mandatory components. Diboll, Clemens, Wynne and Darrington were started in 2012. All four clubs doubled their membership (necessitating two meetings) in less than 10 months.