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BROTHER 2 BROTHER



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SECTION 4 – BROTHER 2 BROTHER PROGRAM

4.1 WHAT IS BROTHER 2 BROTHER – PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Brother 2 Brother is the next regular step in masonry to promote and encourage more involvement at the grass roots level, *Your Lodge!*

Brother 2 Brother is about people. It was developed by the grass roots, for the grass roots. Individual lodges will make it successful and enjoy the benefits.

It is aimed at better lodge management, better and more diverse programs in lodge, more participation by members, a better sense of belonging to a fraternity, more activities that include family and friends, and simply making all members feel that they belong and are an important part of the lodge.

The *Brother 2 Brother* Program is designed to expand the interest generated in the individual Mason by the Friend to Friend and Mentor Programmes. In essence, it is a program that will provide challenge, recognition and support in order to retain, revitalize and renew our membership. All brethren should know that *Brother 2 Brother* means these three things.

4.1.1 Forms and Tools

Brother 2 Brother provides a series of tools that can be utilized in working with the lodge to solicit and collect feedback from its members. The usage of the material is described within the appropriate sections of the Manual. The tools are intended to be used as guidelines. They may be utilized as is, or modified to meet the needs of the specific lodge. If you have developed tools that work well in your lodge, please pass them along to us so they can be integrated into the Manual for everyone to benefit from.

4.1.2 Conclusion

The *Brother 2 Brother* Program is designed to facilitate the development and activation of suitable administrative and management styles that will retain, revitalize and renew the members of individual Lodges throughout our jurisdiction.

Your assistance and support would ensure the lodges in your district will have the opportunity to learn and understand the *Brother to Brother* program. Make it a point to recognize your District and Lodge Chairman. Encourage the brethren to use the tools available to them, so that they can strive to retain, revitalize and renew their membership.

Together, we will overcome the obstacles of declining membership and transform them into exciting and rewarding challenges.

4.2 OUR MANDATE

“To promote a better understanding of the benefits of this membership retention program and strongly encourage its use in all lodges of our Grand Jurisdiction.”

4.3 OUR VISION STATEMENT

*“To develop and refine a lodge based program that encourages membership retention, through strong leadership, membership engagement, stimulating programs, thought provoking discussion, all the while **Enhancing The Masonic Experience** and creating a Lodge culture that ensures that **We Keep The Promises That We Make** to our members.”*

4.4 THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The key focus of “Brother 2 Brother” is to look internally at our fraternity. The foundation upon which the Brother 2 Brother Program is built is the guiding principles, which are, RETAIN, REVITALIZE. RENEW.

4.4.1 Retain

“This principle provides guidance to lodge leaders in the development of the Mason who has been a member for less than one year”

Retention of Active Members Less Than One Year ...

First impressions are extremely important. First impressions are established early in our new member’s Masonic life. We have planted the seed. Brother to Brother discusses existing available programs, defines the role played by the Sponsor and Mentor, and emphasizes the importance of early visitation and social programs involving family and friends. Your Lodge can discuss and apply these programs where applicable. The benefits will lead to the retention of new members making them life long active Masons. Always stress these points regarding a candidate:

- The candidate is the most important person in our organization.
- The candidate is not an interruption in our work - He is the purpose of it.
- The candidate is part of our organization - Not an outsider.
- The candidate is not a cold statistic - He is a human being with feelings and emotions.
- The candidate is not a face or a number - He is an individual.
- The candidate is a person who brings us his wants - It is our job to fill those wants.
- The candidate is the lifeblood of this organization.

4.4.2 Revitalize

“This principle provides guidance to lodge leaders in the development of the Mason who attends lodge on a regular or irregular basis”

Revitalization of Past Masters, Officers and Members ...

The object of "Revitalize" in the Brother 2 Brother Program is to present ideas which make ALL members feel that they belong and are an important part of the lodge. The topics outlined for discussion in your lodge, where applicable are:

- Finding the Right Type of Lodge Management
- Coping with Change

- Better and More Diverse Programs in Lodge
- Ideas for more participation by members
- Conducting membership opinion surveys

Along with other ideas and tools, it's imperative that ALL members feel needed wanted and welcomed. If you build it, they will come!

We should be using a number of the programs we currently have targeted for other groups such as the Friend to Friend and Mentor Program. In many cases the average member could not explain these programs, let alone understand the content of them. Is it their fault? Or is it a fault in leadership whether lodge, district or Grand Lodge.

If the average member knew the true strength of the Fraternity, that he joined as it relates to himself, then he would have reason to attend lodge. Until he can relate to Freemasonry on a personal basis and see how he can blossom spiritually, he will continue to compare going to lodge with going bowling or playing baseball.

Some possible examples of these hidden qualities include leadership, communication, public speaking, confidence, administrative, management and organization skills. Once a Mason understands the precepts and sees the value to him as a person, we can then explain the value of many other things we do that are needed in every day life.

4.4.3 Renew

“This principle guides the lodge leadership through the process of encouraging a Brother to more see the light of masonry”

Renewal of Inactive Members ...

Our membership in the Province of Ontario has been in a steady decline. In 1996 we saw over 73,000 men in the Fraternity, by 2008 we were down to 53,000 members.

The passing of brethren accounted for the largest percentage, however, demits and suspensions out stripped the new memberships as well. One we have no control over, while the other we must resolve.

Brother 2 Brother will assist the interviewer to thoroughly investigate the reason(s) why a member is not attending lodge. We want to retain this membership.

- We want to RENEW a suspended member.
- We want to RENEW a potential suspended member.
- We want to RENEW a demitted member in good standing.
- We want to RENEW a demitted member with dues owing.

Brother 2 Brother will assist you to conduct a personal or telephone interview, and to utilize current Masonic Programs that are available to your Lodge.

The interviewer must be prepared. Research will be required to determine why the member stopped attending lodge. This information is usually available. We know what the problem is. Try to establish a cause.

4.5 HOW TO GET STARTED

Each Lodge, through the Worshipful Master, is to select a respected individual who will fill the role of Lodge B2B Chairman. This person will act as a Facilitator. He will be the key person in the program. He must be familiar with the program and have received the manual containing the latest reference material. He will work with the Worshipful Master, Officers and brethren to devise a lodge plan. The implementation of the plan will be up to each specific lodge; each dependant upon their specific needs, and document their results. The Lodge Chairman is the most vital component to the Brother 2 Brother Program and the programs success in your lodge will be proportional to the effort he and his team put into it.

While there are many tools and programmes available through Grand Lodge with specific rules and guidelines for implementation, there are just as many pieces of literature, booklets, papers and writings with historic value which although useful to every Mason are not so well published. *Brother 2 Brother* highlights these items and where to access the information.

Brother 2 Brother provides a series of tools that can be utilized in working with the lodge to solicit and collect feedback from its members. The usage of the material is described within the appropriate sections of the Manual. The tools are intended to be used as guidelines. They may be utilized as is, or modified to meet the needs of the specific lodge. If you have developed tools that work well in your lodge, please pass them along to us so they can be integrated into the Tool Kit for everyone to benefit from.

In conclusion, the *Brother 2 Brother* Program is designed to facilitate the development and activation of suitable administrative and management styles that will retain, revitalize and renew the members of individual Lodges throughout our jurisdiction.

Your assistance and support would ensure the lodges in your district will have the opportunity to learn and understand the *Brother 2 Brother* program. Make it a point to recognize your District Area Co-ordinator and the Lodge Chairmen. Encourage the brethren to use the tools available to them, so that they can strive to Retain, Revitalize and Renew their membership.

Together, we will overcome the obstacles of declining membership and transform them into exciting and rewarding challenges.

4.6 GUIDELINES FOR THE LODGE CHAIRMAN

4.6.1 Purpose

As a respected person and Mason, you have been chosen to implement the Brother 2 Brother Program in your lodge. You can help the lodge with its growth and with the satisfaction and productivity of the membership through the leadership you provide.

This section will provide some tools you may wish to utilize in order to achieve your lodge's goals and objectives.

4.6.2 What is the Definition of a Lodge Chairman

A Chairman is the person who introduces the "Brother 2 Brother" Program and Manual into the lodge through the Worshipful Master. The Chairman develops a plan of action for the use of the program ensuring that the plan is implemented, and results are documented.

He encourage interaction of:

- The views and ideas of the new and experienced alike
- The views of many generations
- Various occupations, expertise and skills
- Urban and rural perspectives

4.6.3 The Role of the Lodge Chairman

Congratulations on being selected to provide leadership in a program which may well be described as the greatest link our fraternity will have with the next century.

You have been recognized as a leader by your lodge and are charged with the responsibility for the growth, satisfaction and productivity of the brethren in your lodge. This process is designed to help YOU create the foundation for progress.... people progress. In your position you will facilitate the process to achieve the following:

- Encourage the brethren to identify and realize their potential
- Help to build a shared, common focus for the lodge
- Develop a plan for communicating the "Brother to Brother" Program
- Advance the lodge in a positive direction

This manual is key to the success of the program. Please study it step by step in order that you may achieve the desired results. Invest not only your time but your energy, enthusiasm and experience, and enjoy the results.

4.6.4 Guidelines for the Lodge Chairman

a) The Two Golden Rules of a Chairman

- Authority of lodge management always rests with the Worshipful Master. All responsibilities are of a consulting nature only.
- The Lodge Chairman cannot and should not do everything himself. His role is to facilitate and guide the process.



b) The Duties of a Chairman

- To provide information about the "Brother 2 Brother" Program to every member of the lodge under the direction of the Worshipful Master.
- To work with the Lodge Officers to enhance their administrative, communication and organizational skills to retain, revitalize and renew lodge membership using the Manual.
- To receive training on the "Brother 2 Brother" Program, to stay current on Manual improvements, and to attend regional feedback sessions meetings about the "Brother 2 Brother" Program.
- To maintain current updated copies of the Manual for use by the lodge and to present that material to members of the lodge as needed.
- To document "Brother 2 Brother" activities within the lodge and communicate that information to the "Brother 2 Brother" District Chairman for summary.
- To provide positive and negative feedback about the "Brother 2 Brother" Program and Manual to the District Chairman for constant program enhancements.
- To share any new strategies or tools with the District Chairman so that all Chairmen can share all of those successes.

4.6.5 How To Be A Good Chairman

A good leader leads by example. You obtain results through example. As people observe you, they are positively or negatively influenced. You are the messenger, not the message. As the facilitator, what you do and how you do it has an important impact on the results you will obtain.

a) Working Your Plan

To assist you in achieving successful results, the following suggestions may help:

- Allow and encourage the brethren to become involved and build their self-esteem. Encourage, praise and reinforce their actions. Confidence will soar.
- If you don't know the answer, admit it, find the answer, and inform the people who asked the question. You will earn respect by these actions.
- The enthusiasm you generate will be mirrored by the brethren in conjunction with their acceptance of the program.
- Keep personalities out of the discussion. Focus on the objectives.
- You are dealing with adults. Help them; don't ridicule them in any way.
- Be a good listener. Good listening is the foundation of interaction.
- Challenge the group to move ahead and progress.

b) What's Important When Training Adults

What do adults like, dislike, want and expect from the training you provide?

Review the following list and decide on your actions.

Working With Adults

Adults Like:

- Consistency
- To feel part of the process
- To feel important
- Constructive feedback
- To win and improve
- To avoid failure



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c) Skills of a Good Facilitator

There are many skills needed to be a good facilitator. How well do you qualify? Review where you are today and set a plan to continuously improve. Occasionally review this list to see how you are progressing.

Use the qualifications listed below as a guide:

A Facilitator Should

- Know the subject matter
- Have a professional bearing
- Be enthusiastic and motivated
- Have good communication skills
- Be a good listener
- Be well organized
- Have a good sense of humour
- Have good time management skills
- Display leadership by example
- Be aware of body language



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d) How to Work With People

There are three things that make up our fraternity; The Book of Constitution, People and Tools. While Constitutional issues are often easily identified and remedied, breakdowns or failure to communicate is a more complex issue to resolve.

To this end it is imperative that you have a basic understanding of people. The following thoughts may assist in having an awareness:

- Take a personal interest in each individual
- Be patient
- Encourage suggestions
- Accept people despite their mannerisms
- Be reasonable

- Be willing to see the other person's viewpoint
- Take an active interest in their personal development
- Set clear expectations
- Group Dynamics

As a facilitator, you must understand the power of the group in order to obtain the desired result. Groups are always made up of those who work better:

- In a group
- As part of a team
- As individuals

Understand individual differences and use the strength of all. The results can be astounding.

4.6.6 How to Run a Successful Meeting

a) Presentation Formats

Workshop:

Excellent interaction
 Assign topics.
 Have leader report to group.
 List action on flip chart.

Break into small groups (3 to 6).
 Appoint small group leaders.
 Discuss conclusions.
 Rotate leadership.

Seminar:

You plan completely
 Emphasis on action.

Need total preparation.
 Follow training plan.

Panel:

Trainer directs.
 Each make an opening statement.

Gets interaction
 Available for questions.

Guest Speakers:

Individual speaks

Some advantages of group presentations are:

- Interaction gets all involved
- Each person is a resource.
- Builds trust
- Brings out ideas
- Gives everyone a better understanding of each other

4.6.7 Preparation For Better Meetings

Preparation is essential for a successful meeting. A logical approach will enable you to achieve your objectives. The following items may be helpful in preparing and delivering an excellent presentation:

- Be prepared before the meeting starts. Use a checklist.
- Set tables and chairs for maximum effect.
- Start and end on time.
- Ensure that all participants are introduced.
- Present the meeting objectives. Set the stage - who, what, where, when and why.
- Set the guidelines...what will you cover?
- Everyone is entitled to an opinion.
- Encourage participation. Controversy accepted, but it should be controlled and sincere
- Take regular breaks throughout your sessions. Never go past 45 minutes without a break or stretch.
- A change of pace can keep group interest high. Try breaking into groups.
- After a break, review quickly what you have just covered. Then outline what is to come.
- Encourage note taking for home study

- Get people to believe in themselves. As they build faith in their abilities, they will succeed and improve their self esteem.
- The better the planning; the better the meeting. What are the needs? What has to be accomplished? Answer those questions then set your goals.
- Write out your plan on paper so you can focus on the goal. This will also keep you on track.
- Stay on time.
- Build upon your successes. Once your plan is established it will be relatively easy to start future sessions from where you left off.
- Practice before you get in front of the group.
- Let the participants do the work of developing answers to the questions. They must at the end of the day, take ownership.
- Always follow-up, give feedback and instil confidence.

Blank Chairman Planning Form

Lodge Name: _____ **Lodge Number:** _____

District: _____ **Lodge Facilitator:** _____

Start Date: _____

The Following (Single) Issue Will Be Addressed:

Goal to Accomplish:

A Solution Will Be Developed By What Date: _____

Schedule of Tasks to Resolve Issue:

- Issue Presented to W.M. for Approval to Proceed _____
- Identified Issue Presented to Lodge _____
- Team Assembled to Address Issue _____
- Tasks Assigned to Team Members _____
- Planning Meeting #1 _____
- Planning Meeting #2 _____
- Solution to Issue Created by Team _____
- Solution Presented to W.M for Approval _____
- Solution Presented to the Lodge _____
- Steps Taken to Correct the Issue _____
- Task Completed _____
- Follow-up Date to Check Status of Issue _____
- The Following Steps Will Be Taken To Correct the Issue:

Was The Plan Successful? How Did it Help the Lodge?

General Notes or Comments:

4.6.8 Barriers in Training

They include the following:

- Noise
- Differences in learning abilities
- Lack of discipline
- Lack of motivation
- Late arrivals
- Language barriers
- Talkers
- Problem participants
- Seating (Room Arrangement)
- Remedies and Approaches
- Avoid the use of sarcasm or ridicule
- Address everyone on the level
- Maintain control
- Allow for individual differences
- Demonstrate enthusiasm
- Maintain dignity
- Establish standards of excellence
- Set an example
- Take a personal interest
- Provide the right climate

If after attempting to resolve a problem you find that the problem has not been eliminated, consider breaking into groups or taking a break.

Remember you don't have all the answers.

They are adults so get them to solve the problem.

4.6.9 Asking Questions

The technique of asking questions is an art that every facilitator should master. Questions should ensure interaction. You should ask questions to open a discussion, keep interest alive, get participants involved, advance the discussion, develop the topic, gain acceptance, or to get action.

Using *Open Ended Questions*:

- Allow people to talk and develop answers
- Do not restrict yes or no responses
- Expresses opinions, thoughts and ideas

- Probe for more information
- Qualify a person's thinking
- Open questions usually begin with Who, What, Where, When, Why and How

Using Closed Ended Questions:

- Restrict answers to "yes" or "no"
- Elicit a specific, short answer
- Further clarifies a participant's thinking
- Guides discussion

4.6.10 How Do You Know When You Are Successful?

There are three ways in which you can measure your success as a Chairman of the “Brother 2 Brother” Program.

Your first level of success will be accomplished if you achieve the following:

- Undertake the role of Chairman with enthusiasm and a desire to succeed.
- Understand the information contained in the Manual and the goals and purpose of the program.
- Work with the Worshipful Master to determine a strategy for utilizing “Brother 2 Brother” in your lodge.

Your second level of success will be accomplished if you:

- Develop a plan of action for assessing where the program can help your lodge.
- Identify specific issues that can be addressed and prioritize those issues.
- Develop and document a plan for how to address each specific issue that your lodge is experiencing.
- Implement your plan.
- Document you findings and compare the results to your goal. Did you see an improvement in the area of the lodge that you chose to target?

Your third level of success will be accomplished when you:

Report your findings, whatever the result, to the Regional Co-ordinator. You will have to get feedback from the lodge in order to determine the results of your work. Listed below are some ways of recognizing your success.

Improved morale	Less apathy
Better attitude	Fewer excuses
Better teamwork	No buck passing
Higher productivity	No or reduced gossiping
More co-operation	Better communication
Greater enthusiasm	More people feeling happy about lodge!

The list is ongoing; however, find the things that will work for you and your specific lodge. You must get feedback from the lodge.

If one particular plan does not work, try something else until you find the right combination that does work.

4.7 HOW DOES A CHAIRMAN GET STARTED?

As the lodge Chairman, one of the biggest challenges you will face is **HOW TO GET STARTED**.

After you have completed the Grand Lodge Chairman training workshop and returned home, you will find it easier to do nothing at all than it will be to formulate a plan to get you started. Consider the following suggestions to help you get the Brother 2 Brother Program in motion at your lodge.

1. Meet with your W.M. and provide him an overview of the Brother 2 Brother Program
2. Form a small committee of 2 or 3 people that you can work with.
3. Meet with your new committee and review the toolkit with them. Do some brainstorming and give some thought to the condition of your lodge. How has attendance been? What are your observations? You may want to include your W.M. in this meeting as well.
4. At the earliest opportunity, speak to the lodge and give an overview of Brother 2 Brother Program to the brethren. If time permits, put some questions to the floor, ask the brethren what they like or dislike about lodge. If you are thinking of doing a survey, tell them. Ask for their suggestions and their feedback.
5. Surveys, many lodges have tried them with varying results. Only a small percent of the surveys are returned. Give plenty of thought to what you hope to achieve and how you will get your brethren to complete and return this survey. You may get some ideas or an explanation from some of the brethren as to why they don't attend.
6. Document your plan. (put it in writing)

The key focus of Brother 2 Brother is to **RETAIN, REVITALIZE, RENEW**, so try to think of ONE thing you could do right away that might inspire someone to come back to lodge ... then focus on that one idea. Don't start a lot of different projects at once. If possible, avoid being placed on other committees.

Don't postpone the start-up of this important program. Like the NIKE commercial says, **JUST DO IT !**

Always Remember to

Follow
One
Course
Until
Successful

4.8 Six Easy Steps Of Implementation

The steps that you should take when you return to your lodge are as follows:

1. Be familiar with the Tool Kit and its contents.
2. Brief the Worshipful Master by providing a program overview and gain his approval. As this process may extend multiple years, ask the Worshipful Master if the senior officers in the lodge can be included as well. This will help to ensure continuity and support in future years.
3. Develop a formal communication plan for the membership. This may include a short description of the program in the summons. If the summons is full, ask for some space in a newsletter or even develop you own letter and ask for it to be included with the summons in monthly mailing.
4. Survey the lodge and identify where the “Brother 2 Brother” Program can help and strengthen your lodge.
5. Apply the model to meet the needs of the lodge. See "Model" description on the next page.
6. Accept feedback and build that feedback into the model to improve the process. Remember, the process is driven by the members of your lodge based upon their needs and requirements, not by the sections in the Tool Kit.

Six Easy Steps of Implementation

- 1) Be familiar with the Tool Kit
- 2) Communicate with the Worshipful Master & Senior Officers
- 3) Develop a formal communication plan
- 4) Survey the lodge. Identify where BTB can help
- 5) Apply the BTB model to meet the needs of the lodge
- 6) Accept feedback and build it into the process

Communicate - Communicate - Communicate

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4.8.1 THE “BROTHER 2 BROTHER” MODEL

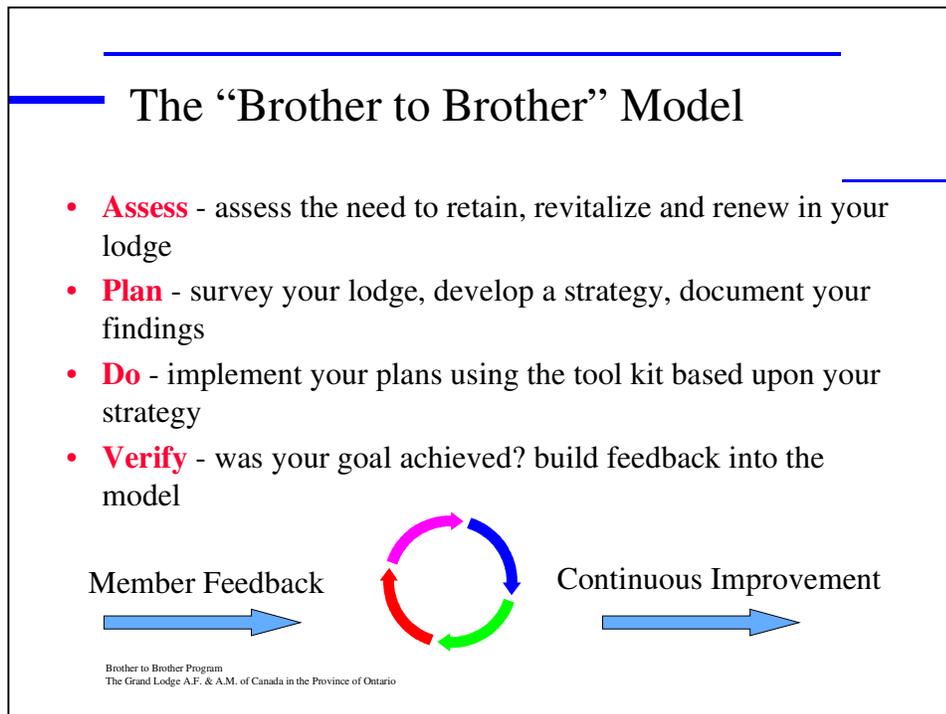
Assess: Determine the need for retention, revitalization and renewal in your lodge.

Plan: Use the Tips, Techniques and Tools in the manual, to develop a strategy, survey your lodge and document your plans.

Do: Based upon the lodge strategy, implement your plans by using the manual as a resource. Work your plan!

Verify: Review whether your goals have been achieved? Document your findings against your goals.

*Above all **communicate, communicate, and communicate** each step along the way.*



4.8.2 Putting Your Training Plans Into Action

You are responsible for making it happen. What does each participant need in order to achieve their goals?

Get each individual to assist in devising the plan. The result will be a personal prescription for success.

What is the future for development of officers and other committee members in your lodge? Put everyone in the "think tank".

What is needed? Review the objectives, especially personal objectives to be sure they have been achieved.

You may wish to develop a plan that allows for top down training. For example, the Master trains his likely successor and so on down the line. This is one method that can be effective.

"The future belongs to those who prepare for it". After each session list future action you wish to take! Then plan the next session.

Check List:

- You should do a one year follow-up on skills inventory for each individual.
- Review this work binder frequently.
- Use the training action section.
- Master the learning process.
- Think Success!

This is a process that can be tailored to suit your particular needs. As you gain experience you can personalize your format to gain the required results.

Once this is achieved stay with it.

Then you have a continuous process!

4.8.3 Documenting Your Results

How do you know if you are successful?

This question has been discussed many times throughout the development of this program. The criterion to determine if you are successful is been defined later in this section.

Having answered this question, the next question becomes: How do you document your success?

In order to document your findings forms have been provided to assist you. They have been provided to help you plan your implementation. You can simply photocopy the form and fill it in or make your own form.

What is important are the questions that it asks you in the order they are asked. If you follow this format, achieving your goals will be much easier. The form also provides a common format so that information can be summarized on a provincial level. To help you develop your first implementation plan a completed sample form has been included.

To help with the evaluation of the program on a provincial level form has been provided. This is a form that the B2B Team will ask you to complete and return. It will help the “Brother 2 Brother” team in the ongoing evaluation of the program.

4.8.4 Value of a Membership Opinion Survey

A good barometer to measure the value of how the Lodge is performing and for improvements is through Membership feedback. This can be accomplished with a useful tool called a MEMBERSHIP SURVEY.

It's Benefits:

- It will convey Membership perceptions and interest at a point in time.
- It will assist in testing and developing new plans, maintaining existing good plans, and discontinuing plans.
- It provides a vehicle for getting feedback from all members.

Additional costs may be incurred via postage and stationery however obtaining meaningful feedback from the membership is money well spent. You may wish to include the survey and a prepaid addressed return envelope in the summons and ask for its return within 10 days.

The frequency of surveys will depend on need. It is suggested every 2-3 years.

Sample Letter Sent To The Brethren By The Lodge Chairman

Dear Brother,

The Brother 2 Brother Program is an initiative by the Grand Lodge A. F. & A. M. of Canada in the Province of Ontario. The mission is to assist lodges to RETAIN, REVITALIZE and RENEW their membership.

To RETAIN the interest of brethren who have been masons for less than 1 year.

To REVITALIZE and maintain the interest of those brethren who attend on a regular or irregular basis.

To RENEW the interest of those brethren who no longer attend lodge.

On behalf of the Worshipful Master and in my capacity as Brother 2 Brother Chairman I have prepared this questionnaire. Please complete it and return it to the Secretary in the enclosed self-addressed, stamped envelope. Your response will help us to gauge the interests of the members of the Lodge and will assist us in the planning of future social and lodge-related functions.

The returned questionnaires will be analyzed and the results will be presented and discussed at our emergent meeting on _____. This emergent meeting has been reserved for Masonic Education, the main topic of which will be the Brother 2 Brother Program.

Thank you in advance for your reply even though it is to tell us you hate questionnaires or to justify our investment in postage. Let us know that you are there!

Fraternally,

Brother 2 Brother Chairman

Worshipful Master

Membership Opinion Survey

The Worshipful Master has directed me to seek your personal opinion on the following issues. Would you please indicate your choice by answering the following questions. Feel free to write on the back of the page if you need more room.

Q1	Is our meeting date unsuitable, if yes what is suitable? How about the day of the week?, number of times per month? How about our Installation and Visitation date?	
Q2	If you were Worshipful Master what would you do differently?	
Q3	How many social events should be held each year (excluding Installation and Official Visitations)?	0 1 2 3 4 5
Q4	What Social Events would you be interested in attending? Please label your choices by number with the number 1 being having the highest interest. Make as many choices as you feel appropriate.	Bowling Night Ladies Night A Trip to the Casino Golf Tournament Attend a Baseball or Football Game Bingo Night Boat Cruise A Day at the Races A Night at the Theatre Family Picnic Other: _____
Q5	Do you attend lodge on a regular basis? Please mark yes or no. If no please state why?	

The survey results will be used to determine the direction of our lodge for the future. Any direction would be put into a motion at a future meeting, discussed, and voted on accordingly.

Please return the completed questionnaire in the enclosed envelope before the next meeting.

Thank you in advance for your input and co-operation in this important manner.

Regards,

Lodge Secretary

Additional Questions That Lodges Have Been Asking Their Membership?

Please rate the following activities or aspects of the Lodge by circling the appropriate response:

Quality of The Work	Poor	Marginal	Fair	Good	Excellent	No Opinion
Banquet Hour	Poor	Marginal	Fair	Good	Excellent	No Opinion
Committee of General Purposes	Poor	Marginal	Fair	Good	Excellent	No Opinion
Masonic Education	Poor	Marginal	Fair	Good	Excellent	No Opinion
Visitation	Poor	Marginal	Fair	Good	Excellent	No Opinion
Communication	Poor	Marginal	Fair	Good	Excellent	No Opinion
Telephone Committee	Poor	Marginal	Fair	Good	Excellent	No Opinion
Golf Tournament	Poor	Marginal	Fair	Good	Excellent	No Opinion
Ladies' Night	Poor	Marginal	Fair	Good	Excellent	No Opinion
Picnic	Poor	Marginal	Fair	Good	Excellent	No Opinion
Spring Dance	Poor	Marginal	Fair	Good	Excellent	No Opinion
Charity within the Lodge	Poor	Marginal	Fair	Good	Excellent	No Opinion
Sponsorship within the Lodge	Poor	Marginal	Fair	Good	Excellent	No Opinion
Mentoring within the Lodge	Poor	Marginal	Fair	Good	Excellent	No Opinion
The Lodge Summons	Poor	Marginal	Fair	Good	Excellent	No Opinion
Degree of Participation by Past Masters	Poor	Marginal	Fair	Good	Excellent	No Opinion
The Masonic Hall Corporation	Poor	Marginal	Fair	Good	Excellent	No Opinion
The level of Brotherly Love within the Lodge	Poor	Marginal	Fair	Good	Excellent	No Opinion

Additional Questions Continued

How many regular lodge meetings do you usually attend each year?
 (0), (0-1), (2-3,) (4-6), (> 6).

Is our meeting time suitable for you? (yes) (no). If no, when would be better? _____

How many emergent meetings do you usually attend each year?
 (0), (0-1), (2-3,) (4-6), (> 6).

Are our Emergent meetings held at a suitable for you? (yes) (no)
 If no, when would be better? _____

How many social functions do you usually attend each year?
 (0), (0-1), (2-3,) (4-6), (> 6).

What would encourage you to attend more frequently?

How well do the committees within the Lodge serve your purposes.?

What interested you in joining our Lodge?

Of which concordant bodies are you a member? (York Rite), (Scottish Rite), (Shrine),
 (other _____)

Do you regularly receive:	The Ontario Mason?	(Yes) (No)
	The Masonic Calendar?	(Yes) (No)

Would you like to serve as an officer of our Lodge? (Yes) (No)

Would you like to serve on a committee of our Lodge?
 Committee? _____ (Yes) (No)

If you were Worshipful Master, what would you do differently?

Would You like to do some ritual work?

Do you need a ride to lodge, can you drive for someone that needs a ride to lodge?

A FRIENDLY TIP: IF YOU SURVEY WITHOUT ACTION, DON'T SURVEY AGAIN

After the survey is completed and the information is compiled; the following is an sample guide on where to look for guidance:

Case 1: “In the last 3 years we have had an abundance of new masons, however today they are not attending lodge. They seem to take their three degrees and leave.”

Use manual section on retention. Using your facilitation skills develop a plan to retain membership.

Case 2: “Our lodge appears to be run by a single dominant figure or a small clique rather than a team. Why?”

Use the manual section on lodge management styles. Using your facilitation skills discuss with your membership why full participation by its members is beneficial.

Case 3: “Our lodge is running just fine. Is there anything in the Brother 2 Brother Manual that we could use to enhance or improve the level that we are operating at?”

Use manual section on additional materials. Using your facilitation skills, discuss with your membership how to enhance lodge activities. Prepare a list.

Case 4: “I am the Worshipful Master of the Lodge. There are 140 on our membership role and 20-25 regularly attend. How can we reach the others?”

Use manual section on Renewal. Using your facilitation skills discuss with your membership renewal strategies. Prepare a list.

Case 5: “The lodge closes and some members leave before the banquet hour starts. We have coffee and donuts. Why?”

Use manual section on how to improve a night at lodge. Using your facilitation skills develop a plan with your membership.

Case 6: “Our lodge is experiencing 5 to 6 demits a year in good standing. What can we do to restore their membership and interest?”

Use the forms and tools. Using your facilitation skills discuss a plan to improve with your membership.

Case 7: “The only communications with our membership is the summons. How do we get a handle on all our members’ feelings about lodge and their interest?”

Use the forms and tools. Using your facilitation skills, design membership opinion survey with your group. What questions would you ask?

Case 8: “Our lodge’s social and family programs used to be great! Now they are non-existent with a lack of interest and participation. What can we do to re-ignite our social and family programs?”

Use manual section on developing social programs for family and friends. Using you facilitation skills, work with your group develop a plan to improve social activity.

Brother 2 Brother Chairman Feedback Session Agenda

Date: _____

Location: _____

Time: _____

Agenda

1. Welcome
2. Introductions
3. Collecting Our Thoughts
4. Feedback - Where are you at in your lodge, Retain, Revitalize or Renew?
5. Wrap Up - Another Session?, Handouts, Thank you
6. Lunch

Collecting Our Thoughts

At what stage is your Lodge with respect to the Brother 2 Brother Program?

1. Familiar with the Manual _____
2. Communicated with the Worshipful Master _____
3. Communicated with the Members _____
4. Survey of Lodge - Where can B2B Program help? _____
5. Some Plans Implemented _____
6. Feedback from those plans _____

Comments (Successes or Problems using the Program)

Sharing Our Ideas (Retain)

Question: Write down five things that your Lodge has done or could do to help a new candidate in his first year as a Mason.

Sharing Our Ideas (Revitalize)

Question: List five ways that the Lodge can revitalize its meetings and/or activities to keep brethren interested and attending.

Sharing Our Ideas (Renew)

Question: List five things that your Lodge has done or might do that could renew the interest of inactive members.

Program Feedback To The Brother 2 Brother Team

In order for Brother 2 Brother Team to measure the results of the program, please supply the following information:

Lodge Chairman _____

Lodge: _____ District: _____

Have you met with the Worshipful Master and/or Wardens to further introduce Brother 2 Brother and discuss target areas for its use: No _____ Yes _____

Has a plan been presented to the Lodge? Explain?

Has it been accepted (*please circle*):

Master & Wardens:	Yes	No	Positive	Negative
Active members:	Yes	No	Positive	Negative
Non-Active Members:	Yes	No	Positive	Negative

What are the areas of concern for your Lodge? Explain?

Is there adequate information in the Manual, to assist in addressing these concerns?

How many members on your team? _____

How often do you meet? _____

Do your team members participate in developing plans?

Are there any questions, as to the contents and interpretation with the Manual?

Yes _____ No _____

Explain:

Is your name listed in the lodge summons as below? Yes _____ No _____

Brother 2 Brother Chairman – (W.)Bro. Xxxxxxx, 111-123-4567

Your Brother 2 Brother Team is always ready to assist when called upon, however, the Lodge Chairman is THE PERSON responsible for this lodge driven program. What success have you experienced in:

A) RETAIN: Can you determine how many members have been retained? _____

How many could be in the future? _____

Explain: _____

B) REVEITALIZE: How many Masons have re-kindled their interest and attendance at lodge meetings or functions? _____

C) REBEW: Having reached out to long standing Masons of your lodge, have you been successful in re-kindling their love of the craft and their active participation in their lodge?

How many? _____

Expalin: _____

Is the program successful in YOUR lodge? Yes _____ No _____

Explain:

4.9 RETAIN - Retention of Active Members Less Than 1 Year

4.9.1 Purpose

First impressions are extremely important. First impressions are established early in our new members Masonic Life. We have planted the seed. This section discusses existing available programs, defines the role played by the Sponsor, the Mentor, and emphasizes the importance of early visitation and social programs involving family and friends.

4.9.2 Masonic Overview

What is Freemasonry?

Freemasonry is the oldest and largest world-wide fraternity dedicated to the Brotherhood of Man under a Supreme Being. In a society whose moral values are being severely tested. Masonry brings men together for fellowship and the promotion of integrity and good citizenship.

Where Did Freemasonry Get its Start?

Our traditions can be traced directly to the associations of operative masons. They were men of outstanding character and high ideals who built the cathedrals and buildings of the Middle Ages.

With the decline of cathedral building in the 17th Century many guilds of craftsman, called "Operative Masons" started to accept into their membership those who were not working members of the Mason's craft and called them Speculative or Accepted Masons. It was in these groups called lodges comprised mainly of "Accepted" masons that Freemasonry as we know it today had its beginning.

In Seventeen hundred and Seventeen 1717 four such lodges which had been meeting regularly in London England united to form the " First Grand Lodge of England" under the direction of a "Grand Master".

From that first Grand Lodge, Freemasonry has spread throughout the world. Today some 150 Grand Lodges have a total membership of approximately five million masons.

Our Grand Lodges currently recognizes approximately 140 other Grand Lodges throughout the World. Each of these Grand Lodges is presided over by a Grand Master, assisted by a Deputy Grand Master and a Board of General Purposes. These jurisdictions are usually subdivided into Districts under the custody of a District Deputy Grand Master and each district is comprised by a number of individual lodges, each

ruled by a Worshipful Master. In Ontario we currently have 46 districts and a total of (648) lodges comprised of approximately 78,500Masons.

The District in which we belong is called the [District Name] District. [District Name] is comprised of [##] lodges, all meeting in [##] Lodge building or Masonic Temples.

There are numerous other appendant bodies of Masonic origin that are recognized by Masonic Grand Lodges including Royal Arch Masons, The Scottish Rite, the Shriners and many more. The common thread running through all of these bodies is that they are continuances of Craft masonry and their members must be Master Masons in order to join.

Freemasonry supports many charitable institutions such as, The Ontario Deafness Research Foundation, Autistic Homes of Ontario, and the Muscular Dystrophy Association. The Masonic Foundation of Ontario has a bursary program for university and college students and an awareness program to educate youth on the hazards of drugs and alcohol.

What is Freemasonry and What are its Objectives

Freemasonry is a non religious organization which throughout its very many years of existence has maintained a consistent set of principles which are in parallel and which compliment those of all the Major Religions of the world, while at the same time promoting the simple but important objectives of helping all men and women everywhere to live happy lives. These principles include: Kindness and consideration at home; honesty in business, courtesy towards others, dependability in one's work, compassion for the unfortunate, and being a good citizen of the world.

While Freemasonry's activities and work may vary from town to town and from country to country its principles and objectives remain the same wherever it exists in the world. The organization of Freemasonry is based on a system of Grand lodges, each sovereign within its own territory. There is no central authority governing all Grand Lodges. To be acknowledged by others, however, acceptable traditions, standards, and practices must be maintained.

How Do You Become a Member?

One of freemasonry's customs is not to solicit for members. However anyone should feel free to approach any Mason to seek further information about the fraternity.

Membership is for men (21) years of age or older who are of good moral character, and who believe in the existence of Supreme Being.

What does Freemasonry Expect From its Members?

Freemasonry welcomes applications from men who seek harmony with their fellow man and who wish to participate in making this world a better place in which to live by formatting Masonic ideals of reverence morality, kindness, honesty, dependability and compassion.

4.9.3 Guidelines For Discussing Freemasonry With The Non-Mason

There are many subjects that could be covered. To present a broad brush look at what Freemasonry stands for and why we are proud to be recognized as members of the Craft, and to get our message across, certain points should be made.

Masonic Points of Assistance:

- Freemasonry is not a religion, however, the primary requirement for membership is the assertion of a belief in a Supreme Being. How the individual Mason perceives and worships the Supreme Being in which he believes is his own business, and no brother Mason is permitted to dissuade him from those beliefs. To reinforce that rule, the discussion of religious beliefs is forbidden in a Masonic lodge.
- Simplistically, the objective of Freemasonry is to take good men and make them better. Through its lessons and charitable works, and the fellowship amongst its members, Freemasonry stresses the principles of kindness and consideration at home, honesty in business, courtesy towards others, dependability in one's work, compassion for the less fortunate and being a good citizen of the world.
- Freemasonry is the oldest fraternal organization in the world. Freemasonry claims to be descended from the men who erected the great Gothic stone cathedrals of Britain, beginning some 650 years ago. The "Regius Poem", dated around 1390, describes the granting of the original Charter to Masonic guilds in York, England, in the year 926. Over the years, as construction methods changed, the need for stone buildings declined and so did the need for guilds and lodges. To preserve the moral and other benefits offered to society by these Masonic organizations, the lodges began to admit members who were not practising stonemasons. As time passed, lodges came to have fewer and fewer stonemasons, and more and more "non-operative", or "accepted" Masons. It was from these "mixed" lodges that modern Freemasonry descends. Modern Freemasonry was founded in England when four lodges banded together in the year 1717 to form the first Grand Lodge. From Britain it spread over much of the world, playing a significant role in our culture and civilization.
- Freemasonry is not a secret society, if it were, conversations such as this would not be possible. Freemasonry is a fraternal association of men of good will and high ideals, proud to be members and to discuss its objectives with non-

Masons. There are certain secrets associated with membership in Freemasonry, but they are restricted to means of mutual identification.

- Because of our historical roots with the medieval stonemason, it is only logical that Freemasonry has adopted his Working Tools: the Twenty-four Inch Gauge, the Chisel, the Gavel, the Square, the Level, the Plumb Rule, the Skirret, the Pencil and the Compasses, and make use of them in our Ritual. As we are "speculative", rather than "operative" Masons, however, these tools are used in a symbolical sense in building proper moral conduct.
- As noted, modern Freemasonry began in London, England in 1717, and rapidly spread throughout the world. Within 20 years, for example, the Craft had travelled to North America with the military forces and the colonists. Similarly, it quickly spread to other parts of the Globe. A Mason from any Grand Lodge recognized by another, may visit a lodge in that other Jurisdiction simply by proving that he is a Mason in good standing.
- The dictionary defines "God" as the one "Supreme Being, the creator and ruler of the universe". Certain religions use other terms to define the Supreme Being. As Freemasonry does not espouse one religion over others, the universally accepted term "Supreme Being" is generally used in reference to God. Regardless of the term used to identify "God", however, the common denominator among all Masons, regardless of religious persuasion, is a commitment to and the declaration of a belief in the existence of a Supreme Being, as no Atheist can become a Mason.
- There is no one "governing body" over this wide-spread Order. Each country, or political entity within a country, is governed by its own sovereign and independent Grand Lodge. Other Grand Lodges will recognize its right to call itself Grand Lodge of its jurisdiction, and will be in amity with it, provided it has exclusive control over the operations of Masons within its jurisdiction, and abides by the established principles of Freemasonry.
- Our Grand Lodge currently recognizes more than 140 other Grand Lodges throughout the world. Each of these Grand Lodges is presided over by a Grand Master, assisted by a Deputy Grand Master and a Board of General Purposes. These Grand Jurisdictions are usually subdivided into Districts, under the custody of a District Deputy Grand Master, acting on behalf of the Grand Master, and each District is comprised of a number of individual lodges, each ruled by a Worshipful Master.
- Much has been made of the secrets of Freemasonry over the centuries by non-Masons. The secrets basically boil down to various signs, tokens and words of recognition by which a visitor can prove himself to be a Mason and thereby eligible to enter a lodge in which he was not known.

- The Masonic emblem of the "Square and Compasses" is widely recognized and often seen being worn by members of the Craft, especially in North America.
- While Charity plays a significant role in Freemasonry, fund-raising for particular purposes is not its all-consuming goal. Throughout North America, Freemasonry and its concordant bodies support many charitable and worthwhile causes, in the amount of over half-a-billion dollars annually, that is, an average of more than \$1,500,000 each and every day! Through financial support of the Masonic Foundation of Ontario, we provide student bursaries, support such organizations as the Scouts, Guides and 4-H, and contribute to youth-oriented problems, including autism, hearing impairment and drug preventative programs. The funds to support these projects come almost entirely from donations made by our members.
- Freemasonry is primarily interested in generating fraternal fellowship and building strong moral character. It differs in that, unlike most clubs, societies and similar organizations, Freemasonry does not actively solicit for new members.
- There are numerous other appendant or concordant bodies of Masonic origin that are recognized by Masonic Grand Lodges, including: Royal Arch Masons, the Scottish Rite and Ancient Arabic Order of the Nobles of the Mystic Shrine (the "Shriners"). The common thread running through all of these appendant bodies is that they are continuances of Craft Freemasonry, and members of a Craft Lodge.

4.9.4 Possible Questions About Freemasonry With Suggested Answers

QUESTION: What is Freemasonry?

ANSWER: Freemasonry is an organization which, throughout its many years of existence, has maintained a consistent set of principles that are in parallel with and complement those of all major religions of the world, while at the same time promoting the simple but important objectives of helping mankind to live happy lives.

QUESTION: Is Freemasonry a religion, or some substitute for religion?

ANSWER: Freemasonry is not a religion. Freemasonry does seek as members only men who believe in the existence of a Supreme Being, but in no way does it promote one form of religious conviction over another. Freemasonry recognizes each individual's right to his own beliefs, and prohibits discussion of a religious nature in lodge. As such, it is not a substitute for religion. Each member seeks the way to pursue his religious convictions in the manner best suited to him.

QUESTION: If Freemasonry is not a religion, or religiously focused, why does the Bible play such central part of the lodge activities?

ANSWER: The Bible, which Masons refer to as the Volume of the Sacred Law since it may be substituted by the Holy Writings of another religion should the candidate be a follower of a religion not based on the Bible, is used for new members to declare their faith in a Supreme Being, and is always open during lodge meetings. Masons are taught to regard the Volume of the Sacred Law with reverence and to acknowledge it as the inspired revelation of the mind and will of God. They are urged to read the Bible (or Book of their faith) and to regulate their lives and actions by its teachings. Furthermore, the Ritual has a religious aura and Biblical events and personalities, especially from the Old Testament, are part of that Ritual. Quotations from the Bible are used for a specific and sometimes illustrative purpose.

QUESTION: Is Freemasonry a Secret Society?

ANSWER: No. If membership in Freemasonry required secrecy, members would not wear or display insignia indicating their association with the fraternity. This is not to say that Freemasonry does not have secrets, but those secrets are almost exclusively related to ritual and modes of recognition, and permit strangers who share membership in the fraternity to sit together in a lodge anywhere in the world and enjoy each other's fellowship.

QUESTION: How long has Freemasonry existed?

ANSWER: As with anything with its roots in antiquity, a definitive answer to the specific origins of Freemasonry is not possible. Several hypotheses have been advanced. The one considered most viable is that it began with the stonemasons who erected the great Gothic stone cathedrals of Britain, beginning some 650 years ago, and to the guilds they created. These operative Masons were engaged for years on end constructing the mighty castles, abbeys and monasteries away from the major cities and towns. They formed themselves into lodges, in imitation of the town guilds, to provide some form of self-government while away from other forms of control. Modern Freemasonry was founded in England when four lodges banded together in the year 1717 to form the first Grand Lodge.

QUESTION: Why are Masons called "Masons"?

ANSWER: Today's Free and Accepted Masons take their name from the builders of the great Gothic Cathedrals that were erected many centuries ago in England and Europe. Because they were highly skilled, ancient Operative Masons were permitted freedoms during an era when most citizens were bonded to the land as serfs. The experience of being able to enjoy the privileges of a rare Middle Class in that era caused Masons to realize that they had duties, obligations and responsibilities to each other and to their Society. To preserve those ideals for the benefit of future ages to come, these original Masons adopted their working tools as symbols to teach the

importance of just, upright and moral living and to impress upon the mind realizations that can lead to higher achievement and nobler deeds in life. These symbols are still used in lodges today, and the lessons they teach are practised by Masons throughout the world.

QUESTION: If Freemasonry is primarily a fraternal association, why does it have such scary oaths?

ANSWER: The roots of Freemasonry go back to medieval times, long before Freemasonry dropped its secrecy and revealed itself to the world in 1717. Much of our Ritual has been taken from the Ancient Charges and Constitutions of those medieval guilds. The oaths are a throw back to that time, and are considered traditional only. There is no recorded case of any of them having been enacted. To understand the harshness of them, however, one must consider the circumstances of the time, recognizing that Masonic membership was not publicly displayed and that any behaviour different from the norm was suspect, both by the State and the Church. It was a time when punishment for acting different from the norm was most cruel. Being hanged, drawn and quartered for treason, and burned at the stake for heresy were forms of punishment for opposition to the Church. Oaths sworn by Masons of that period to retain their hidden identity were in line with the punishment that could be meted out to them, if their exposure meant arrest.

QUESTION: Since Freemasonry does not admit women, what would my wife do if I became a Mason?

ANSWER: While membership in Freemasonry is restricted to males 21 years of age or older, of good moral character who believe in the existence of a Supreme Being, there are several organizations, including the Order of the Eastern Star and the White Shrine of Jerusalem, in which Masons can participate along with their ladies. There are also youth organizations recognized by the Masonic Order, including DeMolay for boys and Job's Daughters and Rainbow for Girls.

QUESTION: How much time would it take to be a good Mason?

ANSWER: Each Lodge has one regular meeting every month, often with the exception of the summer months. Other meetings may be called from time to time for special purposes. Masons are also encouraged to visit other lodges, so a Mason can be as active as he wishes. Freemasonry, however, recognizes that each member has obligations to his family, his work, his religious beliefs, his community and himself. These must take priority, and Freemasonry does not interfere with his ability to meet these obligations.

QUESTION: How does one become a Mason?

ANSWER: Because tradition requires every Mason to come free of any coercion, Freemasonry does not solicit for members. An interested man must ask. If he meets

the age and moral requirements, he need only submit an application signed by two members of the lodge as sponsors.

4.9.5 The Candidate

Your Lodge can discuss and apply these programs where applicable. The benefits will lead to the retention of new members making them life long active Masons. Always stress these points regarding a candidate:

- The candidate is the most important person in our organization - He is not a hindrance!
- The candidate is not an interruption in our work - He is the purpose of it.
- The candidate is part of our organization - He is not an outsider.
- The candidate is not a cold statistic - He is a human being with feelings and emotions.
- The candidate is not a face or a number - He is an individual.
- The candidate is a person who brings us his wants - It is our job to fill those wants.
- The candidate is the lifeblood of this organization.

4.9.6 A Poem For All Masons: “I’m The Guy”

The following poem captures a very important theme and creates in our hearts a sense of emotion. It reminds us that sometimes the obvious is often the most misunderstood. If all brethren were to remember this passage whenever they go to a lodge, it would help in strengthening our fraternity.

I'm the Guy

*I'm the guy who joined our organization.
I'm the guy who paid dues to join.
I'm the guy who stood up in front of all of you and promised to be faithful and loyal.
I'm the guy who came to your meetings and no one paid any attention to.
I tried several times to be friendly to some of the fellows,
but they all had their own buddies to sit next to.
I sat down several times but no one paid any attention to me.
I hoped very much, that somebody would have asked me to take part in something
but nobody noticed when I volunteered.
I missed a few meetings after joining because I was sick and couldn't be there.
No one asked me, at the next meeting, where I'd been. I guess it didn't matter.
It didn't matter very much to others whether I was there or not.
The next meeting I decided to stay at home and watch television.
The following meeting I attended but no one asked, where I was when the last
meeting was held.
You might say I'm a good guy, a good family man who holds a responsible job,
who loves his community and his country.
You know who else I am? I'm the guy who never came back.
It amuses one, when I think back, on how the officers and members were discussing
why they were losing members. It amuses me to think that they spent so much time
looking for new members when I was there all the time.
All they needed to do, was to make me feel needed, and wanted, and welcome!!!*

Brethren - Just reflect on these words !!!

4.9.7 The New Applicant - The Committee Of Inquiry

Background

We have all heard the concern that excessive secrecy has fostered unreasonable suspicions about Freemasonry. It can lead to misconceptions about Freemasonry and its members, making the task of portraying the fraternity in a realistic light more difficult. It has been considered an impediment in allowing prospective members an accurate knowledge base on which to make informed decisions about petitioning for membership. In some, this has led to a position that all secrecy should be questioned

and there is a need to be more open about the fraternity, our activities and how we function.

However, there is a legitimate need for privacy with respect to some aspects of Masonic endeavour, particularly if we are to safeguard the ability to experience the “utmost extensions of fraternal feeling and affection which can exist between man and man” and ensure that it is displayed amongst the brethren.

Each candidate for initiation learns early in Masonic life, during the charity lecture in the first degree, that Masons do not trifle with the emotions of others. If we take such care to explain our requirements to a candidate not yet a Mason among us, how much more fitting is it to be cautious that we do not offend the sensibilities of our brethren in the execution of that very important function of screening those who petition for membership?

The need for secrecy during the process of investigating a man’s character is two-fold:

1. To ensure that those charged with responsibility of investigating character and passing on the suitability of a petitioner can do so without improper influence.
2. To ensure that there will be no disharmony within the Lodge should the investigation result in declining the petition.

Members of the committee of inquiry will be conducting their own “vote” on the qualifications and suitability of a petitioner for membership. Just as the vote by ballot on that suitability is secret so everyone can vote in good conscience knowing that the secrecy of the ballot protects them from unwarranted attack by disappointed supporters, so it is important that the members of the committee of inquiry remain confidential so the committee can perform its function with the best interest of the Lodge and fraternity in mind.

Importance and Purpose

After the reception of a petition, the single most important event in the life of a Masonic Lodge is the function performed by the Committee of Inquiry. It is impossible for every member of a lodge to personally know all of the potential petitioners to the lodge. In these days of declining membership, the Brothers who sign the petition of a prospective member may be blinded by friendship, a concern for the shrinking membership of their lodge or, very simply, they may not have sufficient concern for their lodge to see beyond the surface of the potential initiate whose petition they are signing.

It is the duty of this committee to be unbiased by improper solicitations and uninfluenced by mercenary motives of Brothers, well meaning friends, and relatives of the prospect. The committee must seek the truth about the depth of the character of

whom they investigate. Just as importantly, they must consider the financial circumstances of the petitioner, the organizations he is already involved in, the kind of company he keeps, the reputation he has in the community, in his work place, and with the general public he comes in contact with every day.

As per the Book of Constitution the purpose of this committee reads as follows:

“Each application, having been read in open lodge, shall be referred forthwith to a committee of inquiry of 3 or more Master Masons appointed by the Master, none of whom shall have proposed or seconded the application. The committee shall inquire into the character and qualifications of the applicant and shall report in writing thereon to the lodge at its next regular meeting held after the lapse of not less than four weeks, or as soon as possible thereafter.”

The following six words may be of assistance in conducting the interview:

WHO	Who is he? Who does he know? Who does he associate with?
WHAT	What are his reasons for petitioning? What is his attitude toward God? What is his profession? What is his general reputation at work? What is his standing in the community?
WHEN	When did he become interested in Masonry? When did he come to this District?
WHERE	Where does he spend his leisure time? Where did he previously reside?
WHY	Why is he seeking membership? Why is he petitioning your lodge?
HOW	How does intend to serve Freemasonry? How does he intend to conduct himself? How has he lived in the past?

***REMINDER!
DON'T***

- look at a man and think he is all right
- think that he will necessarily reform
- be guided by his own reports
- be afraid to ask questions
- report until you are satisfied
- leave investigation until the last minute
- leave the real work to the other two members
- forget that he may be the Master of the lodge someday

Guidelines for the Committee of Inquiry



Brother . . .

You have been assigned to visit an applicant who has expressed an interest in Freemasonry. As per the Book of Constitution: “Each application having been read in open lodge, shall be referred forthwith to a committee of inquiry of three or more Master Masons appointed by the Master, none of whom shall have proposed or seconded the application. The committee shall inquire into the character and qualifications of the applicant and shall report in writing thereon to the lodge at its next regular meeting held after the lapse of not less than four weeks, or as soon as possible thereafter.”

THE COMMITTEE

The visit with the applicant is part of a process to eliminate the embarrassment of a negative ballot since improper rejection may alienate the man, his family and his friends to Freemasonry. Relatives, sponsors and the Worshipful Master shall not be a part of this committee. The committee usually consists of three Master Masons who comprise a cross-section of the lodge. Try to include a junior member, and perhaps a member with a common interest along with one or two experienced members of the Craft. After reading this brochure you should have an understanding of what is expected of you.

PREPARATION

Prior to meeting with the applicant, read the application, know his name and how to pronounce it, his age, occupation, length of time of residence and any other information on the form. Talk with his sponsors and have ready the names of local brethren he might know and perhaps the names of a few famous Masons. Familiarize yourself with:

- answers to common misconceptions of Freemasonry,
- our policies on religion, politics and membership restrictions,
- what the Craft is and what it promotes. Be prepared to explain and educate.

It is also necessary to know the application procedure and the time frame involved from reception of the application to the possible date of the initiation, including the investigation, publication in the summons and balloting. This usually involves three lodge meetings.

MEETING WITH THE APPLICANT

Select a mutually convenient time for all concerned and a suitable location for the interview, preferably the applicant's home. Invite the applicant to have his wife and/or children sit in. Likewise, encourage them to ask questions. Ask if any relatives are or were Masons.

Remember that you are a guest in the applicant's home and that he is seeking welcome into our Masonic home. This is our opportunity to visit and get to know each other. This is the applicant's chance to ask us questions. Often the friendship started with the first visit will continue in brotherhood.

WHAT WE WANT TO KNOW

Remember that a friendly visit cannot be scripted, but the discussions should fall under three categories:

- **Statement of Faith** -Does he believe in the existence of a Supreme Being?
- **Requirements** - Male, 21 years of age, able or not able to comply physically with our ceremonies.
- **Financial and Personal Commitment** - Explain the Initiation Fee, annual dues, and dress code, as well as, extra expenses such as the banquet hour, special dinner and ladies' night banquets, and other lodge and district social events. Occasional appeals for Masonic charities and general benevolence should be noted.

Can he and his family afford these new expenses?

Is he able to attend the particular meeting night of the lodge to which he is applying? Is he on permanent night shift, or on alternating afternoon shifts, or does his occupation require that he work in the evenings? If so, it might be recommended that he consider joining a different lodge or a daylight lodge.

He should be prepared to commit to monthly attendance and become involved as an active member. Sports activities with his children may also limit his time during certain periods of the year.

Through conversation with the sponsors and the applicant, try to determine his reason for petitioning membership in your lodge, whether he is involved in other organizations, the company he keeps, his reputation in the community where he resides, his workplace and the general public.

In a nutshell, the following six words may be of assistance in conducting the interview:

- **WHO:** Who is he? Who does he know? With whom does he associate?
- **WHAT:** What are his reasons for petitioning? What is his attitude towards a Supreme Being? What is his vocation? What is his community involvement?
- **WHEN:** When did he become interested in Freemasonry? When did he come to this District?
- **WHERE:** Where did he previously reside?
- **WHY:** Why is he seeking Membership? Why is he petitioning your Lodge?
- **HOW:** How does he spend his leisure time?

As a reminder, consider the following:

Outward appearances may be deceiving. Expand your inquiry beyond the personal interview. His reports of his own successes may be misleading. Ask questions. Remember that the applicant may be the Worshipful Master of your lodge someday.

Arrange the investigation interview as promptly as possible. Make sure you play an active part on the Investigation Committee.

REPORT

Complete your report honestly and truthfully regarding the suitability of the applicant. Promptly submit the report to the Secretary prior to the date of the next regular lodge meeting. The most gratifying reward is the knowledge that you may have helped bring a new brother into Masonry. Remember one of our philosophies is that “Masonry helps good men to become better men.”

Have you and your family viewed the “Friend to Friend” or “Circle of Friends” video?
 Yes , No

Are you aware of the Initiation Fees? _____

The yearly dues? _____

How long have you known your Sponsors? _____

The nature of their acquaintance _____

Associates

Are any members of your family, Masons? No Yes _____

Are any of your fellow workers, Masons? No Yes _____

Are any of your friends, Masons? No Yes _____

Duties

Do you have the necessary time to attend lodge regularly? _____

Do you belong to any service clubs? _____

Will you make a daily advancement by studying or contributing to Masonry?

Explain the Objectives of Masonry: (explain to the applicant)

- Provides an opportunity to assist in benevolent work
- Provides for a meeting of kindred spirits
- Develops friendship and sociability
- To practice Masonic Charity

Masonry is NOT: (make him aware)

- A charitable institution
- A social security or a benefit society
- A religious society
- A political party
- An entrance to the business or professional world

4.9.8 Sponsorship Of Candidates: The Role Of The Sponsor

The Sponsors are the potential Candidate's bridge from darkness to the first light of Masonry. It is the Sponsors who likely created the favourable image of the Craft that has whetted the Candidate's desire to join Masonry. It is important to ensure that the matching of the man with the Craft is for the mutual benefit of both.

The Role of the Sponsor

Take an inventory in your own mind and answer the following questions before you undertake sponsorship of a potential candidate.

What do you know about the man? His job? His family? His interests? His abilities? If you do not have the answers, you need to get to know him better before agreeing to sponsor him.

Is your lodge the right one for him? In districts where lodges have concurrent jurisdiction, groups of professional or trades people often congregate in certain lodges. A man may not be happy in lodge if he is not a part of that group.

Is the man right for the Craft? Why is he considering becoming a Freemason? How does his family feel about the fraternity? Has he been successful in other organizations? How does he conduct himself in the community? Will the brethren look to him with pride? Remember, each candidate is a potential Master of your Lodge.

Am I the right Sponsor? Do I have the time, skills and inclination to invest in his training and nurturing? There will be a need to assist him with the memory work and floor work, to advise him on the meanings of the various terms, accompany him to lodge and introduce him to his new network - his brethren. Am I prepared to invest the time and energy to see that this is done well?

There are no right or wrong answers to these questions, except what you feel in your heart.

The Applicant

Should you agree to act as a Sponsor, deliver the Application form with the second Sponsor and sit down with the applicant in a relaxed atmosphere. Review its contents

and fill it out together. The applicant should know the manner in which his petition will be handled, this includes having it read out in lodge, a Committee of Inquiry appointed

to inquire into his character and qualifications by interviewing him, his family and his references, a report on their findings and, pending a favourable report, a ballot on his application in lodge. Both Sponsors should be present in lodge at the time of the report and the ballot.

Initiation Night

The night of the Candidate's Initiation should require the attendance of both Sponsors, who should transport him to lodge wearing proper dress and ensure that he is made at ease before the ceremony by introducing him to the members. Following the meeting, they should ensure that he meets as many of the brethren present as possible, so that he feels welcome and wanted and most important of all, a part of the entire scenario.

Progressing Through the Degrees

The coaching and preparation of the Candidate for his subsequent degrees is imperative and a duty of the Sponsors, or a member assigned by the Worshipful Master, who should work in close co-operation with the Lodge Mentor Chairman, to ensure the necessary co-ordination. One is not a substitute for the other; they play different, but complementary roles. The sponsors assist the Candidate in advance for what is upcoming, to apply for membership and to prepare for each Degree. The Mentor enters the picture after each step to explain and consolidate what the Candidate has just experienced, to assist him in understanding its historical background, its symbolism's and its activities.

When properly applied, this segregation of responsibilities between sponsors and the Mentor becomes integrated. What emerges is various lodge members working together to make the new member feel appreciated in his new surroundings.

Maintaining an active interest in the Candidate's progress and keeping in touch is an essential aspect of being a sponsor, even after the Candidate has received all of his degrees. The young Master Mason continues to need advice and support and the sponsor should take new members to a variety of Masonic events.

4.9.9 Developing Social Programs For Family And Friends

The twenty-four inch gauge divides the day into workable segments, giving a guide for a rich and balanced life. A similar division is essential in planning a successful lodge program.

The three segments of a lodge meeting are

- Business or administration
- The Ritual or "The Work"
- The social period that closes the meeting

All are equally important.

The formality or structure of the first two segments discourages casual conversation or easy fellowship within the lodge room. The social program that follows the meeting is like the dessert after the meal. It should be imaginative, a delight, and something that

the family members and guests anticipate with pleasure. People who linger to chat or socialize are a compliment to such planning.

This topic gives suggestions for planning a program that should truly make the brethren "sorry to part" and really eager to "meet again".

Definition

"Social", according to the Concise Oxford Dictionary, means "living in companies---gregarious---not fitted for or not practising solitary life". No mention is made of amusement nor guest speakers. Our lodges' challenge is the creation of a friendly, gregarious atmosphere, the establishing of an interesting environment conducive to fellowship. In order to meet this challenge, the planner has to have direction. If the brethren want meat, potatoes will not satisfy them.

Research

Before undertaking to revive a social program, know your membership. Take an inventory of your members. Examine the demographics. Is the lodge top-heavy with octogenarians or bloated with Baby-Boomers? Are they identified with watch-fobs or multiple ear-rings? Having established this, determine the perils of a program that would exclude or alienate either extreme. The social program must be one of inclusion.

Consultation

What do your members want? Ask them.

As a base, first meet with your officers. Whatever the membership demands, those officers are the means of achieving it. The fact that they are elected does not mean

they have all the answers, but they are charged with finding solutions to problems and giving the membership a direction.

The officers have to deal with the past, the present, and the future.

What has the lodge been doing? If the program has been one of "open-business-initiate/pass/raise-coffee-and-home," perhaps an improved social program could be considered. On the positive side, successful visitations, ladies' nights, Burns Dinners, and appreciation nights might be measured against attendance and enthusiasm. What programs have been dropped, such as Members' Nights, special dates such as St. Patrick's Day, picnics or potluck dinners? Would their revival be greeted with enthusiasm or a yawn?

What should we do now? This remains an unknown until the membership has input. Have the Worshipful Master dedicate a regular meeting to discussion and planning. In

a think-tank, and that is what you will be leading, no question is improper. No suggestion is silly.

The lodge must know where it stands, so come prepared with knowledge from the past. The members must set the direction they wish to follow. The present is the bridge between beginnings and completions.

A good leader never goes into a meeting with empty hands. Go with ideas that can be modified or chewed up. Outrageous suggestions sometimes force discussion from which great plans emerge.

Get opinions. If no one has them, your lodge is dead anyway. Imposed programs do little to involve members. Involvement indicates life.

Expand on those opinions. Get the thoughts of others. Good men will enjoy the challenge of working together. (Leaders and program directors will be those evident at the meeting.)

Lead them to a consensus. If the ideas are those of the brethren, and if they have developed those seeds into a draft program, then they have already established ownership and have bought into the running or supporting of the social program.

Follow up the meeting with a written report to the brethren to be included with the summons. Highlight the issues raised and name the brethren who participated.

Announce the immediate beginning of some program or project that originated with the members' meeting. This acknowledges momentum.

Inside or Outside?

Every lodge is competing with the World Series, Stanley Cup, and increasing family responsibilities. A brother may be reluctant to leave his partner at home for a night out with the boys. In planning a social program, be aware that one night a month for regular meetings is a reasonable allotment for the average brother. Another night for emergent meetings is usually negotiable. Lots of visitations start adding a strain.

Our Craft aims at excellence and excellence is expected. A boring night or one that did not meet its promise is a waste of time for the sometimes-come brother. He might not be back soon. It can even turn off regulars.

Inside Programs: As a building starts with a foundation, so does a social program. Utilize the time within the lodge, using the lodge room.

Take advantage of the banquet hour. In fact, use it as an attraction to bring more people out for the entire evening.

Outside Programs: If your members have time and if they can afford the expense, try outside programs. One lodge in particular held a "Master's Night at the Opera." Not

everyone likes opera but 30 brethren and their spouses attended the Magic Flute presented by the Hamilton Opera Company. It was preceded a month earlier by a

lecture and musical demonstration on Mozart, Masonry and the Magic Flute at the Regular Meeting. Spouses and friends had been invited to that part of the evening and the banquet hour that followed. Baseball games, minor hockey, and nights out at the race track offer camaraderie away from the lodge and should involve spouses, extended families and friends.

Trickle or Flood?

Assume that the think tank was a success, that all sorts of ideas bloomed, and eight different programs have been endorsed. The temptation is to go ahead with the converted membership and lead them to the promised land.

Don't do it.

Pick the programs most likely to succeed. Assign them to brethren best suited to guide them to success. Go for one a month and limit it to an inside program. Once a year try for an outside program. As leadership in the lodge evolves, modest social programs will become entrenched and can become expanded. They will become part of the tradition of that particular lodge.

Linking Programs

The phrase words "social program" needs a flexible interpretation. At first glance, degree work has nothing to do with the social side of Masonry. But consider the opportunities.

One particular lodge was initiating a candidate from the Greek community. The lodge scoured lodges across the city and came up with a team from that community. The banquet hour had flat bread, dips, and other Hellenic delicacies.

Another candidate, skilled in Japanese martial arts, was received by an old friend at the door of the lodge. The candidate's highly prized Samurai sword was smuggled from his house. Sushi was served at banquet hour. What has raw fish and Japanese armour to do with an initiation? They create interest and memories.

Consider ethnic background, occupations, and religion when planning any degree. Match the social program to them.

Police officers are honoured to see a fellow officer initiated. Their professional brotherhood crosses municipal, provincial, and federal lines. If the candidate is an avid fisherman, involve his fishing buddies if possible, and serve fish at the banquet hour.

The candidate, the important person for the evening, is delighted to see brethren from his workplace, community, or church when he finally regains his sight. This joy, this

social glow, is shared when the brethren socialize afterwards. It is an improvident social director who does not have such visitors participate either in the work or in the toasts following the meeting.

One lodge invites the spouses of officers to the installation. They go from labour to refreshment to permit their guests to take part in the presentations. Members of other lodges assist by hosting a wine and cheese reception while lodge is open. Spouses are encouraged to sit with their husbands at the banquet hour and not at a segregated table.

Consider families. Could sons and nephews attend banquet hours? Could wives, daughters, and neighbours? Could the social life of your lodge be improved by having friends and family included in the presentation of Grand Lodge Regalia, the marking of special anniversaries, or participation in education nights? Your lodge has your answer.

Resources

You have riches in resources you can't even imagine. When planning a guest speaker, find out what your members want to know. Go to your membership list. Go to your community at large. Ask, "Could you help us, please?" The question usually brings a positive response.

Festivals: One lodge invited a founder of the Kitchener Waterloo Oktoberfest to talk to the lodge. "It took the imagination of three men to get that event rolling 25 years ago". He told us about community dynamics.

Death: It has become impersonal, handled only by doctors and undertakers. What happens after someone dies? A brother who is an undertaker enlightened us.

Public Safety: The police have new weapons. The media says the police are shooting a lot of people. One lodge invited a weapons training officer from a local police force to bring a selection of weapons, including a new automatic weapon. The members had an open discussion, and felt safer.

Immigration: In one lodge members were puzzled by reported abuses of immigration laws and an influx of queue-jumpers. A lodge member who is an immigration lawyer, joined with a retired MP who worked on the Act and a member of the Immigration Appeals Board and answered everyone's questions.

Defence: A major who was public affairs officer for the Canadian Forces in the former Yugoslavia.

Music: Invite an expert in Mozart to prepare the lodge for an opera.

Wine: Invite a guest with a purple thumb and a great wine cellar.

Air Safety: Invite a PR director of an Airline Pilots Association.

Remembrance Day: Urge members to wear their service medals and decorations (miniatures for those in formal wear). Promotes conversation at banquet hour.

Individuals are willing to help. Agencies, unions, and companies are eager to tell their stories. Both await only an invitation and a platform. Your obligation to receive them with courtesy and impartiality and to give them a reasonably-sized crowd to address.

Voice of Experience

Your lodge has to decide what works for it.

One particular lodge reports:

"Guest speakers present serious topics in the lodge room. (More casual talks are given in the banquet hall.) The VSL is closed on the altar and the working tools are away. The lodge has been closed but members wear their regalia and the lodge is otherwise clothed. Outside guests, including family members, are received and sit with the members. They see for themselves the link between Masonry and education, they can soak in the atmosphere of the lodge, and they can see the regalia. (This has resulted in requests for applications)".

Tips for a Successful Social Hour

The lodge room is opened to outside guests after the social hour and skilled brethren are made available to answer questions.

Guest speakers could engage in a question and answer period.

Long banquet tables have been replaced by round tables seating six to eight people. It promotes group conversation.

Eliminate the head table. Special guests are escorted by lodge members to specific seats when appropriate but free seating is more in keeping with egalitarian ideals.

Grand Lodge Officers, past and present, are encouraged to sit at separate tables. Our members enjoy talking with them.

Stand-up-and-circulate makes for better mixing than sit-down meals.

Food does not have to be fancy nor expensive. A wheel of brie, a chunk of cheddar and quartered tart apples makes for good sociable food. Do it yourself sandwiches with cold meats, cheese slices, mustard and bread are quite adequate. Variety is appreciated by the members. (Please, not pizza or doughnuts every meeting!)

The traditional Ladies Night has been dropped. In its place we have a family potluck dinner to end the Masonic season, with either the men or the women cooking. Plan

and co-ordinate so that the degree, the candidate, the speaker, the guests, and the food all have links.

4.9.10 The Importance, Purpose And Benefits Of Lodge Visitations

Importance and Purpose

What wizardry lies in visitation? What will transform a traveller from a faceless person behind an auto wheel, into a man of specific merit and deserving of favour?

Masonic membership and the privilege of visitation are yours and mine. The Mason who travels often is no stranger to this privilege. Many depend upon visitation to relieve the boredom of ongoing activities within his mother lodge and in time to establish firm friendships in the lodges where he has visited. One of the most obvious ways to involve new Masons immediately is in the area of Lodge Visitation. Not much expertise is required and there is a fabulous opportunity for the Brother to gain valuable experience. Every Lodge reflects a vast range of ages and conditions among its members. Ages range from twenty-one in most Jurisdictions, to more than one hundred.

Any Mason in good standing may visit any recognized lodge in the district, province, and country or abroad, subject at all times to regulations of his own and the visited jurisdiction. To the Visitor, the Masonic world has made available the facilities of lodges, the assistance, companionship, and hospitality of its members, all when he presents himself at the lodge portal. The cold exterior of a strange community and the indifferent manner of its citizens disappear upon his acceptance with the friendly and fraternal handshake.

The word "privilege" has been mentioned frequently. One might ask why visitation is not a "right", especially since some by-laws refer to it in this manner. It is a right only so far as each Mason has the same chance, meets the same requirements and is greeted as are all other Masons upon visiting another lodge. However, restrictions are placed upon the indiscriminate visitation of lodges in much the same manner as a man may regulate the traffic through his own home. Any member present in lodge at the time a visitor presents himself, may object to the Master, and our traveller must remain outside the tiled door. If already sitting in lodge, he must retire. The lodge is the member's fraternal home, so it is for him as well as any other member, to select those from other lodges to sit with him in his own.

The visiting Mason should avoid meetings at which election of officers and lodge audits are discussed, as well as when any topic of a strictly local and unpleasant nature is to be aired. He may not be present at Masonic trials unless he is on official business in connection with such trial. Only upon express invitation of the lodge should any visitor presume to appear for admission under these circumstances, otherwise he may encounter an embarrassing "impasse" leaving an unpleasant memory of his visit.

How Do I Visit Another Lodge?

Many of us do not actually know the procedure of visiting another lodge. The method to gain admission is in most jurisdictions basically the same. A member in good standing who has been personally vouched for by a brother in good standing or who has passed a satisfactory examination by a Board of Trial may visit a lodge at the discretion of their Worshipful Master. Be certain you have something to identify yourself, a paid up dues card, a letter under seal from your lodge addressed to you, or any document issued under seal by it. Make certain the dues card is countersigned. Many brethren have been careless of this in the past. A card may fall into unscrupulous hands, and might be used in an improper manner to beg money or other assistance, all in the name of the brother who forgot to sign and then lost his card.

If you are just “plain Johnny Mason”, one of the members who never studied the work and seldom attend meetings, it might be well to brush up on the principle grips and passwords with a member of your lodge. Now, fortified with all this, you are about to invade the precincts of the strange lodge.

How to Visit a Lodge? A Step by Step Answer.

- You have previously determined that the lodge is regular and recognized by our own Grand Lodge. You approach the Tyler and advise him of your desire to visit, introducing yourself. He will make the necessary arrangements while you remain with him.
- A Board of Trial for a visitor shall be conducted by at least two Master Masons of the lodge, of whom one should be an Installed Master, appointed by the Master.. These brethren are entrusted with the task of satisfying themselves that you are a Mason in good standing. They may ask you to examine the register in the thought that a brother may be inside who could vouch for you and eliminate the examination.
- You know not a single brother present however, and are requested to exhibit the documentary evidence to which we have referred. If the lodge is out of Province, the committee will check the directory of lodges to ascertain the regularity of your own, unless they already know of it.
- Having satisfied themselves in that regard, the committee will retire with you to a convenient place from which any and all other persons are excluded while the examination is being conducted.
- The necessary questions will be asked to assure the committee that you are in possession of the secrets with the necessary signs, grips and tokens of the

Degrees. If you are a Master Mason, you might be required to subscribe to the Tyler’s oath in accordance with the Constitution, or repeat it while holding the Volume of the Sacred Law.

- Following satisfactory examination, the visitor shall enter his name, his Masonic rank and the name of his lodge in which he claims or last claimed membership, in the attendance book kept by each lodge for the purpose.
- After the committee have reported their findings to the Master, you will be properly clothed and conducted into the lodge by the appropriate officer. Here you will be introduced to the members present and led to a convenient seat next to brethren, if possible, so that you may be made to feel at ease quickly.
- If you are a Grand Lodge officer or hold any title in the fraternity, the Master may, at his discretion, invite you to the East for introduction and accorded a seat beside him.

Conclusion

Now, suppose one day you find conditions reversed and you are appointed to be part of a Board of Trial committee. You will act as described above, exercising tact and diplomacy in your greeting and the way in which you make the various requests of the visiting brother. Some suggestions along this line may be timely at this point.

By ascertaining whether the visitor has ever held office or has been a Grand Lodge Officer, you may decide just to what extent you will examine him. You would not expect a visitor who is only occasionally present in his own lodge to recite a long lecture or conduct a degree for you in the examination. Remember to give the visitor, at all times, the benefit of courtesy and friendliness.

Above all, put the visitor at ease. He may never have undergone this ceremony before. If you perceive that he is becoming "out of his depth" in replying to your questions, suggest to him that he relate what transpired in the degrees in his own words. This will often bring out the desired information from a brother who finds himself unable to recite a word of ritual in the proper manner. Always keep in mind that true Masonry lies far beyond the mere ability to recite its ritual and ceremony, or the act of doing lip service to its teachings.

Visitation is a true privilege. It is a privilege in a greater sense as it enables a Mason to widen his scope of experience, his acquaintances, his fund of knowledge and his understanding of the complexities of human nature. We shall sometimes find a spiritual life and a renewal of our confidence in mankind's basic honesty and compassion. When men who were complete strangers only a short hour before, greet us with a warm and fraternal handshake, we realize that the fraternity is a collection of Grand Lodges which in turn are collections of constituent lodges.

Again, these lodges are made up of the individual man with a common meeting point of the mind and heart. Here are the "grass-roots" of the Craft and with these qualities the newly initiated brother may well plan his Masonic beginnings.

4.10 REVITALIZE - Revitalization of Past Masters, Officers and Members

4.10.1 Purpose

The objective of this section entitled REVITALIZATION is to present ideas which will make ALL members feel that they belong and are an important part of the Lodge. The topics outlined for discussion in your Lodge where applicable are:

- Finding the Right type of Lodge Management.
- Coping with Change.
- Better and more Diverse programs in Lodge.
- Ideas for more participation by members.
- Conducting Membership Opinion Surveys.

Along with other ideas and tools, it's imperative that ALL members feel needed, wanted and welcomed. IF YOU BUILD IT, THEY WILL COME!

4.10.2 Ideas For The Revitalization Of The Membership In General

A few thoughts as to how we can revitalize the existing membership.

We should be using a number of the programs we currently have targeted for other groups such as Mentor and Friend to Friend. These are programs the average member could not explain, let alone understand the content of them. Is it his fault? This may be a fault in leadership whether lodge, district or Grand Lodge.

If the average member knew the strength of the fraternity of what he joined as it relates to him, then he would have reason to attend lodge. Until he can relate to Freemasonry on a personal basis and see how he can bloom spiritually, he will continue to compare going to lodge with going bowling or playing baseball.

Some possible examples of these hidden qualities include leadership, communication, public speaking, confidence, administrative, management and organization skills.

Once a mason understands the precepts and sees the value to him as a person, we can then explain the value of many other things we do that are needed in every day life.

4.10.3 Finding The Right Type Of Lodge Management: Consultation And Consensus

"Brethren, such is the nature of our institution that, while some must of necessity rule and teach, so others must of course learn to submit and obey..." Masonry is a fraternal organization, which prides its self on the equality of its members. As noted in the preceding quotation from the "General Charge", certain members must take a

leadership role for each individual lodge to survive and flourish. How this Lodge Management is conducted can have a profound effect on the success of the lodge.

The purpose of this Section is to examine the various techniques of Lodge Management that exist and to determine which approach to leadership is best suited to a modern day Craft Lodge. The goal is to determine how to instil a successful management scheme in the Lodge.

Management Styles

Lodge Management can run the gamut from "totally autocratic" to "fully democratic". The successful formula lies somewhere in between. Perhaps you will identify the style that your Lodge employs. Maybe you will be pleased with what you find. You may identify problems with your Lodge's management style. If you do recognize problems, perhaps this Section will enable you to identify solutions to those problems.

1. Decisions by **DECREE**, made by: **A SINGLE DOMINANT MEMBER**

Advantages: - none.

Disadvantages: - members lack feeling of ownership of the Lodge
- generates dissatisfaction
- narrow in scope
- fosters stagnation
- undermines normal Officer development and progression
- autocratic.

2. Decisions by **DECREE**, made by: **A SMALL PERMANENT CLIQUE**

Advantages: - none.

Disadvantages: - unreceptive to new ideas
- dissension among members
- stagnation
- causes factions in Lodge and in Corporate memory
- places the Lodge in a rut
- stifles incentive
- decisions rehearsed, rather than democratic
- undermines the Office of Master
- undermines membership participation.

No longer can Masonry tolerate Lodge Management by one dominant member, or a small group of members. Management by one individual or a small clique leads to conflict. This type of management has no place in the modern Lodge. Decisions made by Decree, or even Consultation then Decree, promote no advantages, but create many disadvantages including; results in a dictatorship; creates dissension, anger and resentment; turns members off Masonry; results in short-term attendance by new members; decisions not in best interests of the Lodge at large; and it leads to criticism outside of the Lodge.

To overcome the disadvantages of an autocratic leadership and its negative impact on the very existence of the Lodge, a number of managerial styles are employed. While they provide certain advantages, any restriction of participation by the membership at large still creates disadvantages. For example:

3. Decisions by **CONSENSUS**, made by: **MASTER, WARDENS AND PAST MASTERS**

Advantages:

- establishes a line of organization
- members know where decisions are made
- progression of thoughts and plans
- new ideas encouraged and considered
- blends good old ideas with new ideas
- retains Corporate memory

Disadvantages:

- Past Masters could intimidate Master and Officers
- old ideas could outweigh new ideas
- destroys the Committee structure
- management base too narrow
- discourages initiative of Junior Officers and members
- excludes general membership, particularly new members.

4. Decisions by **CONSENSUS**, made by: **MASTER AND ALL OFFICERS**

Advantages:

- as above, plus:
- more ideas and from a broader base
- participation by Junior Officers encouraged
- better team development
- continuity of ideas and plans
- opportunity for management training.

Disadvantages:

- could create an elitist group of Officers
- could generate long debates on minor issues
- could result in some exclusion, including Past Masters.

5. Decisions by **CONSENSUS**, made by: **MASTER, OFFICERS AND PAST MASTERS**

Advantages:

- as above, plus:
- past experience balances with new ideas
- better representation.

Disadvantages:

- regular members excluded.
- could be difficult to get members to attend meetings.

Strength and the flexibility to address changing times and circumstances come from participation and the ability to manage the changes that must come. Masonry must move forward. It must count on all of its members. Management must flow with changes in society and be flexible to address these cultural changes. To be stagnant in a changing world is to wither on the vine.

The "Friend to Friend Programme" is designed to rejuvenate the interest in those members who have not been active in recent years, and generate an interest to join in quality men who need a simple nudge to investigate membership in the Craft.

We must prepare for the integration of these new members. The "Mentor Programme" is making these new members knowledgeable about Masonry in a manner not witnessed in candidates in past years. This knowledge and a related interest in the operations of the Lodge must be exploited and directed towards retaining the interest which first attracted them to the Craft and making them long-term, active members.

Masons come from all walks of life and vocations. Each has something distinctive to contribute to the advancement of the Fraternity. Members bring to the Craft unique skills, enthusiasm, interests and a sincere desire to improve themselves and Masonry. New members must be given the opportunity to participate in the ownership of the Lodge by immediately encouraging their involvement, by demonstrating that the new members' opinions, thoughts and special talents are needed by their Lodges and the brethren. Like any organization, all types of skills and talents are required to operate the Lodge. There are administrative, planning and accounting needs, managerial and Officer needs, and the need of music at our ceremonies.

These are some of the special skills that only a capable brother can contribute. These individual skills must be harnessed and made to work in unison for the betterment of the Lodge. This is achieved when the membership is consulted, and the decisions made reflect a consensus of what is the best course of action for the Lodge. This leads to one further improvement in the style of Lodge Management:

6. Decisions by **CONSULTATION AND CONSENSUS**, made by: **MASTER, OFFICERS, PAST MASTERS AND MEMBERS**

- Advantages:
- all those above, plus:
 - democratic
 - excellent for management training
 - necessitates formal planning and agenda
 - creates good communications
 - opportunity for differing points of view
 - always alternatives to consider
 - members able to buy into plans
 - contributes to a happy and healthy Lodge.

- Disadvantages:
- could be unwieldy
 - too many ideas could lead to lack of accomplishment
 - takes longer to arrive at conclusions
 - requires strong management

No management style is without some disadvantages, but these disadvantages are manageable, and have the benefit of action. Several of those listed, particularly a surplus of ideas and a requirement for strong management, could also be viewed as advantages.

21st Century Lodge Management requires wide-spread participation by the members, under the strong direction of the Master, where every member has the feeling of belonging to the Lodge and participating in its management, where the views of the members are sought and considered, where decisions are taken following a consensus of views, and where good management is guaranteed through a plan of succession, under which Officers fully participate in the management of the Lodge as they progress.

In certain instances, we must inspire our current members to become more involved in Lodge activities, while in other instances, we must encourage them to share management of these Lodge activities with the new members. To do this, of course, the Lodge must have activities. These activities should be the result of a carefully conceived plan, developed by the Master, with assistance from Lodge Officers and Past Masters that strives for an interesting balance between degree and social programs, and provides for optimum participation by Lodge members (see Section on "Planning the Year as Worshipful Master" for suggestions).

If your analysis has identified a concern, hopefully, this Section will lead to a solution. And if you understand why change is necessary for the future well-being of the Craft and how to go about achieving that change through the proper Management of Change, then this Section will have achieved its full purpose.

Your challenge is to assess the management style used by your Lodge and, if necessary, to alter it (FOR THE BETTER), so that it employs consultation with its members, action by consensus, and is capable of coping with inevitable change without divisive internal conflict.

4.10.4 Lodge Management: Coping With Change

Introduction

Lodge Officers and active members have all too frequently heard: "you can't do that!", or "we have always done it this way!" These utterances are aimed at change, or more accurately, against change. Change for change's sake is inappropriate. However, equally inappropriate is resistance to change because "we never did that before!"

The purpose of this Section is to address the Management of Change.

One of our basic tenets is that it is not in the power of any man or body of men to make innovation in the body of Masonry, however change is said to be inevitable. What often gets lost in the heat of debate is the nature of the change. Landmarks, Tenets, Principles and the Ritual require consistency for the Craft to survive. Equally important for survival are the changes necessary to keep the Craft current with modern society. We are soon to enter a new millennium, but without the capacity to recognize the need to modernize our management philosophies and bring them forward into the 21st century, there is little likelihood that the truly important unalterable principles will have the fertile ground in which to survive and grow. Certain changes are mandatory, if the basic philosophy of Freemasonry is to endure beyond its 300th Anniversary.

The paradox we all face as Masons is to preserve that which cannot be changed without compromising the very foundation of Freemasonry. While overcoming the conflict and bickering over those changes that must be made to ensure the continued existence of what each and every Mason deems inviolable: the preservation of a healthy Masonic Order "until time shall be no more" is the challenge of every Mason. What changes are required for Masonry to survive and grow? Some are already being taken. The veil of secrecy that, in the past, has surrounded and screened out the curiosity and perhaps interest of our family, friends and the community, is being lifted. Masonry is emerging from its own dark age at a time when society fears more and more the unknown. The more society understands about Masons and their contributions to the community, the stronger the Fraternity will become.

Lodge Management must also move forward. Gone are the heydays of Masonic growth following both World Wars when, with the fraternal feeling for their comrades-at-arms still in their hearts, many returning veterans sought something to erase the agony and, to fill the gap, turned to Freemasonry. This is an age of independence. The "Baby Boomers" and "Generation Xers" all have their own distinct views of life in general, and how much they wish to participate. Their sense of belonging differs from past generations. They are not content to sit on the sidelines. They are active or they are gone. To attract these generations, who represent the future of our Craft, Freemasonry must adapt to accommodate their philosophies to include a voice in the operation of the Lodge and expand to include their families in Lodge activities.

We must strive for Total Quality Masonry, the pursuit of excellence in all our Masonic activities, including improving the quality of our membership. While the values of Masonry remain untarnished, many of the old ways of doing things must be re-evaluated to ensure they are still valid in today's world. If changes are necessary, then changes must be made, including modernizing our managerial philosophies, as outlined in the Section entitled: "Finding the Right Type of Lodge Management".

Converting Conflict into Consensus

As Masons, we are admonished to "... work together with that love and harmony which should at all times characterize Freemasonry" ... and so we should. This, however, is

often easier said than done. Often differences of opinion can harden resolve on differing courses of action to such a degree that confrontation arises, making a common sense compromise difficult. Not only is this "non-Masonic", it creates a state of stagnation within the lodge, and everyone suffers.

Change is never easy, and it can be accompanied by conflict. Differing points of view must be assessed and the merits of each fully considered. Proponents of differing opinions must be given their say. Frequently the course of action to follow lies between the extremes. Often, the solution evolves through compromise. When required, a mediator, whether it be the Worshipful Master or some skilled Brother chairing a Committee, must possess the wisdom of Solomon and the patience of Job. He must be fair in his assessment of the different views and possess the skills of a good negotiator in achieving a solution that all parties can accept for the harmony of the Lodge. This is the essence of the Management of Change.

Mediating consensus from conflicting points of view is a challenge. This is particularly true in the management of a lodge, where opposing views often agree on only two factors. Each has the lodge's best interests at heart, and each believes that its point of view is best for the lodge and its members. To achieve consensus on a course of action that addresses the problem and permits the lodge to move forward, a mediator must strive for a compromise to be reached. Often, this is not midway between the opposing views (half a change may be worse than no change at all). The lodge must move forward.

The best interests of the future well-being of the lodge must be paramount. Any change must strengthen the lodge. In creating the proper atmosphere for consultation, every effort should be made to improve the interaction between the parties. Each party must be made more respectful of the opposing position. The key to success is communication, "are all parties listening"? Are they open to compromise? Do they fully understand the total picture, including the various options? Are their interests shared, compatible, or conflicting? It is the role of the mediator to get answers to these questions and to assess the alternatives. What are they? Can they be improved upon? Are there other possibilities?

When opposing parties try to bargain over positions, they tend to lock themselves into their positions. The more each clarifies its position and defends it against attack, the more committed they become to it. A principled mediation method of focusing on basic interests, mutually satisfying options and fair standards typically results in a wise agreement by reaching a gradual consensus on a joint decision efficiently.

This method should involve the following steps:

Separate the PEOPLE from the Problem:

Deal with the facts only. It is difficult to deal with a problem with people misunderstanding each other, getting angry or upset, and taking things personally.

People tend to see what they want to see. Out of a mass of detailed information, they tend to pick out and focus on those facts that confirm their perceptions and to disregard or misrepresent those that call their perceptions into question. Give each side a stake in the outcome by ensuring that they participate in the process. If they are not involved, they are hardly likely to approve of the solution. Often, people will continue to hold out, not because the proposal is unacceptable, but simply because they want to avoid the feeling or appearance of backing down to the other side.

Proposals should be made that are consistent with their values. "Face-saving" involves reconciling an agreement with principle and the self-image of both parties. If the parties view themselves as adversaries in a personal face-to-face confrontation, it is difficult to separate their relationship from the substantive problem. The more effective way for the parties to think of themselves is as partners in a side-by-side search for a fair agreement advantageous to each and beneficial to the Lodge.

Focus on INTERESTS, not Positions:

List the facts. Since the parties' problem appears to be a conflict of positions, and since the goal is to achieve agreement on a position, they naturally tend to think and talk about positions - and in the process, often reach an impasse. The basic problem lies not in conflicting positions, but in the conflict between each side's needs, concerns and fears, that is, their interests. Interests motivate people. Their position is what they have decided upon, but their interests are what caused them to decide. Looking to their interests instead of their positions makes it possible to develop a solution. Behind opposed positions lie shared and compatible interests, as well as conflicting ones. Agreement is often possible precisely because interests differ. Shared interests and differing, but complementary interests, can both serve as the building blocks for a wise agreement. A position is likely to be concrete and clear, unfortunately the interests underlying it may well be unexpressed, intangible and perhaps inconsistent.

The problem, then, is to identify those interests. One basic technique is for the mediator to put himself in the shoes of each party. Examine each position they take, and ask himself "Why?" One useful way to uncover interests is first to identify the basic decision each party seeks, and then to determine why the other party has not made

that decision. What interests of theirs stand in the way? The purpose of mediating is to serve the best interests of the Lodge. The chance of that happening increases when there is communication between the parties. Each side may not know the other's interests. If each side is to take the other party's interest into account, the mediator has to explain to them what those interests are. He must be specific. Concrete details not only make the description credible, they add impact. People tend to listen better if they feel that they have been understood. It also helps to acknowledge that their interests are part of the overall solution being sought.

Invent OPTIONS for Mutual Gain:

It may seem that there is no way to split the pie that leaves both parties satisfied. Often the solution appears to be an either/or choice that is either markedly favourable to one side or the other. As valuable as it is to have options, people involved in negotiation rarely sense the need for them.

There are four major obstacles that inhibit the inventing of an abundance of options:

- Premature judgement - inventing options does not come naturally.
- Searching for the single answer - in most people's minds, inventing alternatives simply is not part of the negotiating process.
- The assumption of a fixed pie - each side sees the situation as essentially "either/or", either I get what is in dispute, or the other party does.
- Thinking that "solving their problem is their problem" - each side is concerned with only its own immediate interests.

To invent creative options deal with the facts, then it is necessary to:

- Separate the act of inventing the options from the act of judging them, since judgement hinders imagination.
- Broaden the options on the table, rather than look for a single answer.
- Search for mutual gains - shared interests help to produce agreement.
- Invent ways to make the decisions of each party easy - confront each side with a choice that is as painless as possible.

Insist on Using Objective CRITERIA:

The more standards of fairness, efficiency or merit are brought to bear on the problem, the more likely that a final course of action will be produced that is wise and fair. Approaching agreement through discussion of objective criteria also reduces the number of commitments that each side must make and then unmake as they move toward agreement. In positional bargaining, each party spends much of the time defending its position and attacking the other side's position. The use of objective criteria tends to employ time more effectively talking about possible solutions. Objective criteria need to be independent of each side's will and, to assure a wise agreement, should also be logical and practical.

When change appears necessary and differences in how to address the issue exist, the preceding methodology should be employed. To assist in reaching the proper conclusions, the following process should be considered:

- Identify the issue.
- Assemble the pertinent information from available sources, such as the Constitution and Lodge By-laws, experience and expert knowledge of members, tradition and history to form a basis from which to begin, review of past records, and consult with other lodges and data sources within the Craft.
- Review the assembled facts with representatives of the membership.
- Establish a Committee to devise a plan to bring about the appropriate change, chaired by a member possessing mediation skills. Committee members should be selected for their abilities in relation to the issue, and to represent the interests of the membership.
- Have Committee proposals and recommended action reviewed by representatives of the membership.
- Implement the agreed change, and review progress and results with the membership on a regular basis.

Summary

Changes are occurring daily all around us. We cannot drag our feet in an attempt to stop the changes. We must adapt to those changes so that we will survive. Freemasonry is like life itself, because it is comprised of individuals who each contribute to its strength. Freemasonry, therefore, must also change to keep up with the evolution of society. In this manner, not only will Freemasonry survive in the new century, it will flourish. The key is to recognize that Freemasonry cannot stand still in this fast-paced world. It must be at the forefront of change, not in those areas which are inviolable, but in Lodge Management.

4.11 RENEW – RENEWAL OF INACTIVE MEMBERS

4.11.1 Purpose

This section will assist the interviewer to thoroughly investigate the reasons(s) why a member is not attending lodge. We want to RETAIN this membership. We want to RENEW:

- A suspended member
- A potential suspended member
- A demitted member in good standing
- A demitted member with dues owing

This section will assist you to conduct a personal or telephone interview, and to utilize current Masonic Programs that are available to your Lodge.

The interviewer must be prepared. Research will be required to determine why the member stopped attending lodge. This information is usually available. We know what the problem is. Try to establish a cause.

4.11.2 How Do We Reach Them?

The Ontario Mason, Lodge newsletters, Visitation Committee, and personal contact by original sponsors. Give a role to shut in members who can't attend (i.e. phone committee), advise of positive change in the lodge, identify the "need" for their return, encourage loyalty and respect, or conduct a "rusty" mason night.

Make contact first by phone. Here are some questions to Ask

- Why are they not attending?
- Where are they?
- Who are they?
- What are they doing?
- How to we get to them?
- Why do they remain members?
- Why did they join?

Conduct Exit Interviews:

Design a one page form to obtain feedback, perception (transferred out of town, dissatisfaction), personal follow-up contact.

Calling Procedure

The interviewer must be prepared. Research will be required to determine why the member stopped attending Lodge. This information is usually available. Remember, we know the what the problem is, try to establish the cause.

In order to prepare oneself adequately for the interview, the following steps may help you

- Review other discussions which may have taken place.
- Go over any documentation which may have been accumulated.
- Review positive accomplishments of this person.
- Have the correct facts to avoid an entirely corrective discussion.

Opening Remarks

Hello, my name is _____ from _____ Lodge.

Did I catch you at a bad time?

Type of Questions to Ask?

- Our records indicate that you are no longer on our active rolls.
- Is our information correct or did we make a mistake?
- Perhaps we have failed to keep your interest:
- We don't want to lose you as a member.
- You have worked hard throughout your years as a Mason.
- You have an investment in your Masonic career.
- Did you join any other appendant bodies, such as the York Rite, the Scottish Rite or the Shrine?
- We need you back in the Masonic family.
- What can I do to help?
- It would give me a great deal of satisfaction to complete a small questionnaire. (Retention and Restoration Committee Report)

How to Close the Call

I will mail you a Summons from our Lodge, any further information relating to your current status, Demitted, Demitted Dues Owing, etc.

Please reply in the self addressed, stamped envelope indicating you want to return to Lodge and/or your comments.

Please mail back to me for personal handling.

It will please our Master, the Officers and members to hear the good news.

Make your cheque payable to _____ Lodge for \$ _____

Please return promptly so we can process it at our next meeting.

Make Good Judgement

- I am sorry to hear that you have bad health.
- We all have setbacks.
- Are you aware that part of your dues was set aside to help others?
- There is a process available to provide discreet financial assistance.

4.11.3 Retention And Restoration: More Understanding And Taking Action

Retention... Webster defines retention as “A remembering; Memory”.

A candidate will always remember his first impression of Masonry. Therefore, the first impression is a lasting impression. What we do, what we say, how we act are all important.

A candidate’s Initiation should be a very memorable event for him and his family. If harassed, distracted, embarrassed in front of his peers, don’t expect him to get involved.

Encourage the candidate to become active. Make him feel NEEDED, WANTED and WELCOMED. Most of us need to be wanted and receive recognition. (Be patted on the back!) Listen to his needs, desires, concerns and suggestions.

We must continue to keep abreast of our changing times. Successful businesses do. So should we? A good retention program reduces the need for a restoration program and will produce positive results.

The needs and desires of our members must be met to:

- Include fellowship.
- Include enjoyable activities.
- Provide community service.
- Offer leadership opportunities.
- Offer family participation.
- Communicate with members....FOLLOW UP!

- Develop a plan that includes benefits.
- Networking with peers in a prestigious organization.

We must retain the members we have. It is becoming a greater challenge to face.

Restoration

THE CAUSE OF SUSPENSIONS - CONCERNS

Keep in mind, in a single year, a financial disaster can turn into a positive situation:

- Bad health conditions can cause a financial burden.
- Age prevents some members from being active.
- Wrong mailing address. Didn't get around to changing it.
- Lost interest. Membership no longer appeals to me.
- Lack of fellowship and networking activity.
- Lack vision, programs outdated, old traditions.
- Misunderstanding, disagreement and egos. Not happy!
- Failed to provide value. Lack of benefits.
- Few opportunities to get involved in leadership.
- Lack of family programs and family participation.
- The only time I get a call from the brethren is when I am behind in my dues or you are raising funds.
- No one ever listens to my suggestions or needs.

4.11.4 Telephone Calling Procedures

What you need to know before making a call, strategies, techniques, tips, ideas, how-to and skills:

- Recruit brethren to make calls who are professionals. (i.e.: Insurance and Sales.) Also conduct training meetings and train other members in the calling process.

- Make sure that the former member is still alive.
- The needs and desires of our membership must be met. Search for those priorities in your conversation.
- Make the former member feel important. Listen to his response. Keep an open mind.
- Be a good listener.
- Search for a common ground in the conversation that will allow you to be his friend and build on. Be friendly.
- There is a right and wrong way to make calls. Think before you make the call. Plan your strategy. Avoid 'mind' confrontations.
- What you say and how you say it is critical. Speak clearly into the phone and talk as slow as possible.
- Prevent from hurting former members feelings. He will be somewhat embarrassed to discuss sensitive information, however, give him the opportunity to air it out.
- Research activity that the former member was involved in:
 - The year he was initiated, passed and raised?
 - The date he was suspended?
 - Who was the Master when he was initiated?
 - Who were his sponsors?
 - Did he participate in the Floor Work?
 - Was he an Officer or Worshipful Master?
- A good time to make the call is from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

With information listed on the RETENTION and RESTORATION COMMITTEE REPORT, you are now ready to make that important call.

Have knowledge of the amount of money (\$_____) he will need to pay to be current and the method of payment.

Mail a letter to him indicating the amount he owes, with all current information, including your Lodge Summons, enclose a self addressed, stamped envelope and ask him to mail it to you within the week. If you don't receive a reply, call him and stay with him until you receive a reply.

If you follow these procedures and follow up after the call, you can expect to restore 40% of the members called. The end result of this effort will be rewarding to you and the individual you called. Bringing a Mason back home makes you feel good.

There is a feeling of warmth and caring that comes from being a part of the restoration process. It is the right thing to do.

The Call

RETENTION AND RESTORATION: PERSONAL CONTACT FORM

_____ *Lodge, No.* _____

PERSONAL INFORMATION

First Name(s)	Last Name	Spouse	Home Telephone
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Address	Apt	City	Province	Postal Code
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Age	Date of Birth	# of Years a Mason	No. of Years belong to this Lodge
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DATE:	Initiated	Passed	Raised	Worshipful Master
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Grand Lodge Rank	Position	Year of Appointment/Election
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PAYMENT INFORMATION

Total Owing:	Prior Year	Last Year	Current Year	Total Due	Date Due
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MEMBER INFORMATION (PLEASE CIRCLE)

Interviewer	1st Interviewer	2nd Interviewer	3rd Interviewer
Date Called			
Career Status	Employed Unemployed Retired	Employed Unemployed Retired	Employed Unemployed Retired
Reasons for Not Paying Dues?	Invoice Not Received Invoice Lost Don't Know Amount Owing Cannot Afford Dues	Invoice Not Received Invoice Lost Don't Know Amount Owing Cannot Afford Dues	Invoice Not Received Invoice Lost Don't Know Amount Owing Cannot Afford Dues
Limited Income?	Temporary Long Term	Temporary Long Term	Temporary Long Term
Reasons for Not Attending?	Moved Away Poor Health (Temp) Poor Health (Perm) Confined to Home Confined to Nursing	Moved Away Poor Health (Temp) Poor Health (Perm) Confined to Home Confined to Nursing	Moved Away Poor Health (Temp) Poor Health (Perm) Confined to Home Confined to Nursing
Do You Attend Appendant Bodies	York Rite Scottish Rite Shrine Other: _____	York Rite Scottish Rite Shrine Other: _____	York Rite Scottish Rite Shrine Other: _____

GENERAL COMMENTS

1 st Interviewer	
2 nd Interviewer	
3 rd Interviewer	

Secretary

Worshipful Master

The interviewer must be prepared. Research will be required to determine why the member stopped attending Lodge. This information is usually available. Remember, we know what the problem is, try to establish the cause.

In order to prepare adequately, the following steps may help you:

- a) Review other discussions which may have taken place.
- b) Go over any documentation which may have been accumulated.
- c) Review positive accomplishments of this person.
- d) Have the correct facts to avoid an entirely corrective discussion.

Your plan will have three parts:

1. Opening: You will give the opening statement. Do not begin with a question, such as: "Do you know why I'm calling?" Practice writing an opening statement. Say it out loud. Run it by someone to get feedback.
2. Discussion: This section is the cornerstone. Try to get the co-operation of the person to find solutions. Ask open ended questions. It will allow a wide range of responses, and give the person more room to state their position, feelings and ideas. Let the person know you are listening. In your own words, tell him what you have just heard. It is not a question, and should not be followed by a question. It is a statement.

"You're saying then that...."

"If I understand you, you mean...."

3. Closing: Summary of what has gone on. Remember to follow-up and encourage feedback.

Be prepared for possible resistance and defences which may arise during your telephone call. Reactions vary from one person to another, and may affect you in various ways. How you handle these reactions will set the whole tone of the call.

Some reactions are more difficult to handle than others, such as:

- Silence.
- Attacking you.
- Comparing to others.

- Blaming everything and everyone.
- Denial.
- Over-talking, rambling.
- Anger emotions.
- Rationalization and justification.
- Minimizing the issue.
- War stories.

When making that first call, have a plan. Know what you're going to say. Be the facilitator and let him do the talking. Try to avoid those probing questions

4.11.5 A Letter to a Senior Member Unable to Attend Lodge

The following is an example of a letter that can be sent from the Senior Warden to a member who is unable to attend lodge.

This letter should *NOT* be a form letter. The underlined areas below indicate where the letter should be personalized. Never send a "fill in the blank" letter to a brother under these circumstances. You are strongly encouraged to personalize this letter as appropriate.

“Lodge Letterhead”

Date:

Senior Warden

Bro. _____

Telephone Number _____

Dear Bro. _____

I was most impressed by the thought and deep concern which our incoming Master portrayed in his Installation talk, "we are indeed most grateful!"

His idea, that if we believe in Freemasonry and its future it is time to get back to basics. He asked "where is the Brotherhood, Friendship and Closeness?" characteristics which were in evidence and I am sure attracted each one of us when we were first initiated.

Perhaps we can set an example by keeping in touch and caring about one another. After all that is said and done many of us in this Lodge are senior in years and have a wealth of Masonic knowledge and experience.

I would be grateful if you would telephone me at _____ at anytime when you are under the weather through sickness, bereavement; or are in need of assistance, or even just want someone to talk to. I realize only too well that some of us prefer not to talk about it. But how can we help one another if we don't share our need. If you hear of some one sick or in need please let me know. I would be glad to make a report at each meeting.

We do need to care for each other. I honestly believe that simple caring is the foundation on which Masonry was built and which creates the Brotherhood of Freemasonry. Please help me to help you and our Brethren.

Fraternally and sincerely,

Signature

Senior Warden

4.12 Successful Planning For The Masonic Year (For the Worship Master)

4.12.1 Introduction

Things, especially good things, do not just happen - you must make them happen. This requires planning - and your plan should try to predict the unpredictable, so that, as Worshipful Master, you are prepared to cope successfully with any eventuality, from black balls in the ballot box, to the unannounced arrival of the Grand Master himself.

Planning is a key management responsibility. It provides the following benefits:

- It compels you to assess your goals and objectives.
- It promotes communication and co-ordination with other members of the Lodge.
- It provides definite expectations that are the best framework for judging subsequent performance.

As a line officer, it is easy to take for granted the success of the meetings, but it must be recognized that hard work and planning are behind every successful meeting. Concentrate on determining the components that you recognize as contributing to that success, both in your Lodge, and when you visit. And do visit. There are many ideas worthy of adopting which you will see at other Lodges. Be prepared in advance to be the Worshipful Master.

There is no one sure road to success, but let's look at what should constitute a successful plan.

But first, let us recognize that our plan is our road map to success, and, like any map, it is of no value if, once prepared, it is stuffed into the glove compartment and forgotten.

Study your plan, revise it if circumstances dictate - after all, it is your guide for a successful year!

In reality, we should be talking of two types of plan - the long-range plan, setting out your goals and objectives for your year as Worshipful Master, and the short-term plan, or individual meeting plans, which obviously must be more precise, but in fact, are component parts of your Master Plan.

4.12.2 Long-Range (Master) Plan

In some lodges, it is traditional for the Master-elect to meet with the Past Masters prior to Installation to set out his plan of action and get their collective advice and guidance.

If your Lodge does not now follow such a practice, you should seriously consider instituting it - or alternatively, set out your goals and objectives, as well as a plan to achieve them, and discuss them with a cross-section of Past Masters.

Obviously, the number of candidates available during the year will dictate the overall program, and this number is usually not known at the outset of the Masonic year. As a result, the long-range plan must be flexible. Some plan is better than no plan, because a plan necessitates thinking and communication - two keys to success and it will provide you with the foundation upon which to build a successful year.

Be creative - plan variety and strive for an interesting balance between your degree and social programs. Degree work is fine, especially if you are blessed with a number of candidates. Remember, "All work and no play makes Johnny a dull boy" - it also makes him a bored Mason, one who could turn away to other pursuits of enjoyment, and he may be lost to the Lodge forever. If you have lots of degree work, vary it, so that there are different degrees at regular meetings. Intersperse special interest programs. Invite other lodges to participate. It is important that the Lodge Officers know their work and work the three degrees, even if you have to borrow candidates from sister lodges, or exemplify certain degrees. This responsibility having been addressed, consider other special programs such as:

A Past Masters Night, honouring an active Past Master by allowing him to conduct a degree team of other Past Masters.

A Members Night, with a Past Master conducting a Degree Team consisting of members. What a wonderful way to keep their interest up and to uncover likely officer material.

Special Degree Teams, such as the R.C.M.P. or the Masters Group of some specific year.

Fraternal Visits by Lodges, either from within or outside your own District or Grand Jurisdiction with the visitors doing the work of the evening.

Special programs of Masonic Education and/or Instruction.

Special non-Masonic programs in the Lodge Room for family and friends of members.

An Awards Night for the presentation of long service and other pins and certificates.

Social functions, such as the annual Ladies Night, Christmas Party, barbecue, special functions for members and their families, and don't forget the widows of deceased members.

In preparing your long-range plan for the year, take full advantage of the expertise available. Just because you are the leader does not mean that you must carry the ball at each meeting. Use the resources of your own Lodge and do not forget to utilize the

District talent available to you. There are District Officers in a number of disciplines who are anxious for the opportunity to participate in Lodge meetings.

With your road map for the year completed, you are now ready to finalize its implementation. Recognize at the outset, however, that the long-range plan must be flexible to address changing requirements as the year progresses and, regretfully, that all your goals will probably not be achieved, unless you have set your sights too low!

4.12.3 Short-Term (Meeting) Plan

Develop your meeting plan (the detailed map) in a logical step by step manner, and write down an outline to which you can refer during the meeting. Do not try to commit everything to memory.

A good plan for each meeting should include the following elements:

Establish your objective. It may simply be to have a successful meeting.

Set the goals necessary to achieve that objective. Perform the work of the evening with dignity and decorum to ensure a smooth-flowing meeting and to end at a reasonable hour.

Define specific tasks. Organize the business portion so that it is accomplished smoothly. Ensure that all participants in the work of the evening are well versed in their parts and know when to act. Ensure all Officers are aware well in advance of any special requirements expected of them, e.g. that the Deacons are aware that a ballot is to be conducted.

Choose your strategies. Ensure all Officers are prepared by holding educational meetings and practices. Try to foresee anything that could arise during the meeting.

Time all segments and ensure that they are smooth flowing.

Assign responsibilities. As noted previously, you are the leader, so set the strategy.

Assign tasks to the Secretary, Director of Ceremonies, other Officers and certain members. Let each one know what is specifically expected of him and establish controls to evaluate performance. Your map is only of value if you check it from time to time to ensure that you are still on course.

Choose a capable Past Master to conduct practices and to assess actual performance during meetings. Encourage him to provide constructive criticism. Only in this manner can the Officers improve.

4.12.4 Order of Business

The Order of Business at a lodge meeting is often specified in the Lodge By-laws; however, it can be revised at the discretion of the Worshipful Master. Your plan for the evening should be developed on that sequence, and might be something like this:

- Open the Lodge in ancient form.
- Have the Secretary read the Summons calling the meeting.
- Have the Secretary read the Minutes of the last regular and any subsequent emergent meetings, then confirm and sign the Minutes.
- Hear and approve the report of the Committee of General Purposes and present the accounts for payment.
- Receive and consider the reports of other committees.
- Have the correspondence read and considered.
- Receive and deal with any petitions or applications.
- Consider any business left unfinished from a previous meeting, and consider any other matter legitimately brought before the Lodge.
- Ballot upon applications for membership, first by affiliation and then by initiation (in accordance with the Book of Constitution, balloting must be the last order of business, except for the conferring of degrees).
- Confer degrees in their respective order, and/or present other programs of the evening.
- Hear any address or lecture.
- Close the Lodge in ancient form and conduct the banquet hall program.

4.12.5 Specific Procedures

Having developed this basic outline, let's now look at some specific procedures to follow:

- Several weeks before the meeting, discuss the contents of the Summons with the Secretary to ensure key points are covered and special announcements are included.

- Several days before the meeting, review the Minutes of the previous meeting with the Secretary to determine whether there is any unfinished business that might require
- some comments by the Worshipful Master -- similarly, for the Committee of General Purposes, to ensure that no outstanding matter of Lodge business is overlooked.
- Refresh your memory as to when a motion or notice of motion is required, which motions may be decided by a show of hands, which require a secret ballot, and whether a simple majority or a two-thirds majority is required to carry the motion.
- Remember that the regular meeting places the seal of approval on Lodge affairs - ensure that contentious issues are brought forward for resolution at the Committee of General Purposes before placing them in front of the members, so as not to take up the time of the whole Lodge. Be prepared to refer items to the Committee of General Purposes, or even to special sub-committees, and invite interested members to participate in the discussions.
- Do not try to crowd too many items into one evening - recognize that we are competing for the member's time. Make him want to come back by giving him excellent degree work or thought-provoking education programs - but remember, do not overkill. You have a captive audience to entertain, but you only have their attention for approximately two-and-a-half hours - do not drag the meeting on. A key factor in the success of our Fraternity is "fraternizing". The members are there to support you, but they also want to visit with old friends and meet new ones - do not steal their socializing time!
- Make sure that all Officers are familiar with their tasks of the evening. Nothing is more true in this respect than the old adage, "practice makes perfect".
- Ensure that the Officers are alert and attentive to the proceedings and are ready to participate when required. Decorum is of key importance. The Officers must always appear to be alert and interested. If they show disinterest, why should the members be interested?
- If the work of the evening is a degree, appoint a prompter and announce his name at the beginning of the evening, so as to avoid confusion from stage whispers during the work.
- Know who the visitors are likely to be. Make some arrangements by which you can be notified of the arrival of an unexpected guest, or one to whom special honours are to be accorded. If the program of the evening is to be a special one, such as a Past Masters or Members Night, confirm the part each participant is to undertake by letter. In all cases, telephone those who are to take part in the evening several days in advance to confirm their presence. It is also wise to

have backups available for key parts, just to be sure. For example, if the degree is to be put on by a special team; ensure each Lodge Officer is ready to step in at the last moment, should his counterpart for the evening not be able to attend.

4.12.6 Key Factors to Success

Now let's look more closely at some of the key factors that will contribute to a successful year as Worshipful Master.

Knowledge

As Worshipful Master, you are responsible for every administrative procedure and financial transaction. Be prepared by knowing the breadth and limitations of your authority. Before assuming control, ensure that you are familiar with the Constitution of Grand Lodge and the By-laws and financial resources of your own Lodge.

Delegation of Work

Although the plans that you have developed are yours, you cannot implement these plans by yourself. Decide what could and should be delegated. Select and train a competent team to accept delegated responsibility. Communicate your expectations. Coach and counsel to improve performance. If you do not include others, they will exclude themselves. Do not forget that you are the leader, you can delegate the work, but it is not your role to single-handedly rule and direct the Lodge.

Timing

Sound management is the best control of time, and a solid plan is the tool to tighten that control. Timing is a vital part of planning a meeting, and is instrumental in achieving one major goal, that of sending everyone home at a reasonable hour, satisfied that the evening was filled with propriety, dignity, perhaps a little humour, and lots of good fellowship. If you succeed, they will want to come back, and perhaps bring a friend.

Develop an average timetable for the various segments of the evening. For example, opening, business, degree or other work, speeches and announcements, closing and the banquet program. Attempt to follow your timetable closely, but do not try to make up for lost time by speeding up the ceremony, this only lessens the dignity. Do eliminate moments when time is otherwise wasted. Do use natural pauses in the procedures, like the preparation of the candidate, to good advantage, such as for introducing visitors, or for announcements for the good of Freemasonry.

To ensure that the meeting moves along at an appropriate pace, consider the following:

- Start the meeting on time, as specified in the Lodge summons. Do not keep many waiting because a few are late. Encourage the Officers to be present early, not only so that the meeting can start when scheduled, but also to help meet and greet the brethren and visitors.
- If there is to be a ballot, ensure that it is prepared before Lodge is opened and that the Deacons know the procedure to follow.
- Ensure that all Officers recognize the value of not wasting time.
- When introducing the visitors, do so without delay. Reduce the number of groups to as few as possible. Discourage ad-hoc introductions of individual visitors or groups by Officers or members of your Lodge.
- For special visitors, the Director of Ceremonies should limit his introduction to a few carefully chosen remarks, before turning them over to the Worshipful Master for the official Lodge welcome.
- Continually think ahead to what is supposed to happen, and keep the meeting focused towards your goals.
- Ensure the necessary motions are made, and seconded, without delay.
- Do not keep answering “alarms” to allow late arrivals to dribble in.
- Discourage frivolous comments in the Lodge and place a limit on the length of all speeches, both in Lodge and during the banquet hour, except on special occasions.
- Knowledge, Delegation and Timing, are all key factors in contributing to a successful year. They are but the working tools to carry out the design, and must be integrated into a plan in order to achieve specific goals and objectives.

Summary

That’s all there is to it. With a dedicated team knowing what is expected and you as leader with your plan as the strategy, you cannot help but succeed! Planning is not that hard, but it is essential. It is difficult to set out down the road to success, if you have no preconceived notion of what success is.

Implementing your plan and making it work will call upon your leadership qualities. Remember, you are Worshipful Master of your Lodge because you have already

demonstrated to others that you possess just such qualities and the lodge has elected you for such.

4.12.7 Ideas On How To Improve A Night At Lodge (Survey Results)

The following is a summary of comments collected from Masons over time. The sole purpose of collecting these comments is to gauge the pulse on the condition of masonry from its members, many of whom will be the leaders of tomorrow, and to determine the positives and the negatives about Freemasonry to determine a strategy for the future.

The points below are a subset of those comments. The comments do not reflect Grand Lodge or the Brother 2 Brother Team's thoughts, but do reflect the perceptions of those who have participated in presentations and sessions.

- Debate on moral issues, Discuss Masonic history in layman terms.
- More Masonic & historical education. More educational presentations.
- Variety in Degree Work (i.e. special groups, themes).
- Less time on business and more on Degree Work and social aspect. Invite speakers.
- Explain to new candidates what we do, and why. More visiting speakers.
- Provide more current materials for the Masonic Education Committee.
- Introduce Masonic Education to 21st Century Technology (videos, graphics, etc.).
- Get more members out. More effort in The Work.
- Live theatre.
- Phone campaigns to encourage more members to come out.
- Provide more factual information before Lodge matters are decided.
- Try to give some duties to different individuals, i.e. degrees and lodge care. Eliminate all unnecessary, redundant speaking.
- Breakdown the groups that form after lodge, i.e. PM's sit with PM's, young sit with the young etc., mix it up.

- Involve more members in the activities.
- Move formal meeting and degree work along in order to be out of Lodge earlier.
- Interesting and timely Masonic education. Quality degree work.
- Short presentations on history of Lodge and craft.
- Reduce redundant material.
- Start on time and end at a reasonable time.
- Better and more food. More attendance. More casual events. Reduce Degree Work.
- More in-depth discussion on inner meanings and symbolism of the craft.
- Esoteric meanings of the degrees. Group visitations. Keep it prompt.
- Change start time to 7:00 p.m. to allow additional time for discussions.
- Should be out of lodge room by 9:30 to allow time for fellowship and social time.
- Don't like getting home at midnight.
- Polish our ritual.
- Try to get some of our older brethren out to lodge possibly by providing a ride.
- Encourage perfect performance of the work.
- Audio Visual props and speakers bureau.
- More in lodge explanation of ritual.
- Charity....more community visibility.
- Banquet hour programs to reduce boredom.
- Theme nights supported by speaker.
- Liven up the fellowship hour.
- Have work rehearsal first.
- "Give the boys something to go home and think about in everyday life."

- Brief (10 minute) educational spots.
- Don't let meetings bog down.

4.12.8 How to Memorize Ritual Work

One of the problems that most often plagues Freemasonry is poor ritual. This does not just mean getting the words wrong, this means ritual that is drab and uninspiring which fails to teach a candidate. Ritual is often mediocre. It doesn't have to be. Anyone can do ritual well provided it is learned well at the start.

Ritual is not hard, it's mostly a matter of knowing how to do it, plus a lot of practice. This article is intended to impart some guidelines on how to do good ritual. It doesn't demand a lot of time or any particular talent, just a little drive to do well. Read it and play with it. With some practice you should be able to use these techniques to perform good ritual in your Lodge. This method of learning ritual works equally as well with longer speeches as it does with shorter pieces.

Figure out the Words

The first step of learning any ritual is to know what you are saying! This should be obvious, but it is often overlooked because brethren are afraid to admit that they don't already know what the words mean. Don't be afraid to admit your own limits. Nobody ever gets every single word right every time.

Start out by listening to someone say the speech, preferably several times. (You should be doing this on a regular basis.) Listen carefully, and make sure you understand what is being said. Ask questions (after lodge of course).

Next, go through your "Book of the Work" to carefully see how much you can read. Mark words that you cannot figure out or that you are unsure of. This is the point to catch any mistakes you may be making. Then call or get together with an experienced ritualistic and talk through it, reading out of the book slowly. Have him correct any mistakes and fill in the words you don't know.

Understand the Speech

This step gets overlooked even more often than the previous one. Read through the ritual a couple of times and make sure you really grasp its meaning. Don't just know the words, know what the words are talking about. Find out who the characters being talked about are. Again, ask questions.

Now, start trying to understand the speech structurally. Any ritual is made up of components of separate pieces that are linked together. For example, a section may be talking about symbols, with three paragraphs per symbol. Concrete meaning,

abstract meaning, and purpose. Figure out what these pieces are, you will use them later.

The next step is especially useful for long speeches. Visualize the speech. Any speech can be thought of in terms of movements, places, rooms, etc. Words are hard to remember but places are easy. An example is the Senior Wardens Lecture, which walks through King Solomon's Temple. It's no accident that the path is easily visualized. This is why symbols are used in the first place, because they are easy to learn and internalize. Use them!

If You Can't Read it, You Can't Say it!

Start out by reading the speech over and over. Read it out loud when you get the chance. This step is particularly important and skipped more often than any other. Do not skip it, this is how you get your brain and mouth are trained to the words. It may sound silly, but it really matters. The mental pathways used to talk are distinct from those used to read.

The Sentence

Now, start trying to learn sentences. Just sentences. Read the first word or two of the sentence then try to fill in the remainder from memory. Do not fret if you can't do it immediately, it will probably take at least 5 or 10 times through before you are getting most of the sentences. You will find some that are harder than others. Hammer those ones over and over (but don't totally neglect the rest while you do so). Again, get to the point where you are doing reasonably well before going on to the next step.

The Paragraph

Once you have got most of the sentences, try to move on to paragraphs. Again, some will be easy and some will be hard. Try to understand exactly why one sentence follows another. In most cases the ritual does make sense. An individual paragraph is almost always trying to express a single coherent thought in pieces. Figure out what that thought is, and why all the pieces are necessary. Keep at this until you are able to get most paragraphs by glancing at the first word or two, or by thinking, "Okay, this is the description of truth," or something like that.

Finally, start putting it all together. You visualized the speech, and figured out how it hooks together. Now use that visualization to connect the paragraphs. Make sure you have some clue why each paragraph follows the one before. In almost every case the next paragraph is either a) continuing this thought, or b) moving on to a related thought. In both cases you can make memorization much easier by understanding why it flows. Convince yourself that this paragraph obviously has to follow that one, and you will never forget the order.

Smoothing It Out

You are now at the point where you have got pretty much all the sentences down, and most of the paragraphs, and you are able to get through the whole thing only looking at the book a few times. Now, start “saying” it out loud.

When you are driving in the car, when you are alone at home, pretty much any time you have some privacy. Try saying it all out loud, at full voice. It sounds very different when you actually say it aloud. You will find that you stumble more, and in different places. Some words turn out to be more difficult to pronounce than you expected. Try it a few times.

Start out by trying to do this frequently, once, even twice every day. It will be hard at first (and it's difficult to pull out the cypher book while you're driving), but it will gradually get easier. When you are starting to feel comfortable, slow down, but don't stop. Practice it every couple of days, then every week. Don't slow down below once a week. If you feel up to it, see if you can speed up your recitation. (But do not ever speed-talk the ritual in open Lodge. That's for memorization and rehearsal only).

The Mindset

Last part. You are now at the point where you pretty much have the ritual memorized. Now, the trick is learning how to perform it well. Everyone has some amount of stage fright. The trick to overcome its control of the nerves.

Now that you are comfortable reciting the ritual, observe how you do it. By now, you are not thinking about it, so your mouth is doing almost all the work, with the conscious mind simply making a few connections between paragraphs. That is the right state to be in. Think about how that feels and learn the feeling.

Before you go in to "perform mode", do some basic acting exercises. Take a few deep breaths, concentrate on not thinking. For now, just worry about being calm. Being calm is far more important than anything else. If you are calm, you are unlikely to mess up too badly. If you are tense, you are far more likely to mess up. Some people like to exercise the body to relax the mind. You should do whatever works for you.

Acting

Now the final step, which separates competent ritualists from good ritualists. Now that you are able to let your mouth do all the talking, start listening to yourself. Think about the ritual again, but don't think about the words, think about what it means. What are the important bits? Emphasize those. How could you use your body or hands to illustrate a point? Try talking to the person in front of you, not just at them. Look them in the eye and make them get the point. You are teaching an important lesson. Try to capture the emotional intensity of that importance.

Think of your "performance" as a melding of two parts. Your mouth is providing the words, your mind and heart the emotion. Again, nothing beats practice. This is what rehearsal should really be for, taking a dummy candidate in hand and learning how to really get the point across. Don't fret if you find that you need to change "modes" now and then. Here and there you will need to think about the words briefly, when you change paragraphs or hit a hard sentence. That won't throw you, though, so long as you keep track of what you are saying. You have already figured out why each part leads into the next. That will guide you when you stumble.

Conclusion

Don't expect to get all this down instantly. It takes most people a few years to really get good at it. Just try to advance yourself bit by bit. Learn the transitions and pieces first, if you have that you can get through the ritual. Next time, work on memorizing more thoroughly. The time after that, work on getting it really smooth. After a while, you can build up to the point where you have the luxury to act. At that point, you will find that you start doing the kind of ritual that Freemasonry is meant to have, both moving and interesting enough so that the candidate (who is the whole point) actually learns what you're saying and what it actually means. And if you really do it well, you will find that you come to understand the meaning of the ritual a great deal better yourself.

An extra hint, smile when you speak of happiness. Feel happy and your voice will adjust itself to suit. The same applies to other emotions. If you get the expression right, the rest will follow.

The final point. Have fun! Freemasonry is about friendship.

Don't get worked up just because you have a part to do. Enjoy the moment and the experience.

*Adapted from a lecture presented by W. Bro. Mark Waks
Past Master, Hammatt Ocean Lodge - Saugus, MA
From the Internet*

Please complete the following work/skills inventory to help the Officers of the Lodge Build a Strong and Positive Degree Team - (Based on the 2007 Book of the Work)

FIRST DEGREE	Page #	Have you given or are you prepared to give any of the following? Indicate Yes/No	Would you like to learn and give any of the following? Indicate (Yes)
Questions in West	47-48		
Instructions at Altar	49-50		
Obligation & 3 Great Lights	50-55		
Lesser Lights	55-56		
Floor Work	56-61		
Apron Charge	68-69		
Charity Lecture	70-74		
Working Tools	74-77		
Authority	77-78		
Past Master's Charge	92-99		
Introduction of Candidate			
Bible Presentation			

SECOND DEGREE "Passing"	Page #	Have you given or are you prepared to give any of the following? Indicate Yes/No	Would you like to learn and give any of the following? Indicate (Yes)
Examination before Passing	100-103		
Instructions at Altar	118		
Obligation	119-121		
Floor Work	121-128		
Apron Charge	136		
South-East Angle	137-138		
Working Tools	138-142		
Past Master's Charge	148-151		

THIRD DEGREE “Raising”	Page #	Have you given or are you prepared to give any of the following? Indicate Yes/No	Would like to learn and give any of the following? Indicate (Yes)
Examination before Raising	153-155		
Instructions at Altar	172-173		
Obligation	173-177		
Dark Work Part 1	178-182		
Dark Work Part 2	182-187		
Ecclesiastes	187-188		
Dark Work Part 3	188-192		
Secret Work	192-195		
Apron Charge	197-198		
Traditional History	198-206		
Working Tools	206-208		
Exemplification (Includes the G. & R, Sign)	208-212		
Past Master’s Charge	213-214		

Signed: _____

Telephone #: _____

Date: _____

4.13 Teamwork Between the Three Principal Officers of the Lodge

4.13.1 Purpose

The purpose of this article is to review the role of Worshipful Master of a Lodge and the team work required by the three Principal Officers of the Lodge to be successful.

4.13.2 The Worshipful Master - In General

The position of Worshipful Master of a lodge is the highest honour the members of a lodge can bestow and is an office that should not be taken lightly. For a period of one year the Worshipful Master is expected not only to employ and instruct his Brethren in Masonry, but with forward thinking and planning, his year as Master can be so fulfilling and rewarding.

When installed in the Chair of King Solomon the Master of the Lodge should have his year planned to accommodate degree work and due progress of new members. It must be pointed out that with ten meetings per year a Master has only THIRTY HOURS actual time in the Chair. However it is essential that a program of informative and entertaining evenings be established for the interests of all members. Needless to say any such plans for the year should be flexible to accommodate changes as and when necessary.

No one person can possibly hope to achieve all the above without assistance from others. For this reason dependence and involvement of the Senior and Junior Wardens is essential. This then becomes your management team, ably assisted by all other committee members of the Lodge together with the Secretary and Treasurer.

The success of the lodge in any given Masonic year rests with the direction and leadership of the Worshipful Master.

In short, without forward planning of your year and team participation then not only will you have failed as Worshipful Master but the Lodge will have suffered even more.

4.13.3 The Worshipful Master - Protocol

This is an area that causes much concern amongst Brethren.

Many evenings, and special events good manners and proper etiquette can make a good evening a most treasured and memorable event.

The reception of visitors in a timely and respectful manner is not only expected but is a required must. The Worshipful Master along with his Brethren will always stand to receive visitors and honoured guests. If a senior Grand Lodge Officer is being received due honours and an invitation to assume the gavel [when required] is mandatory. We

are not attempting to write a new book, correct procedures are very well detailed in the Masonic Manual and Meeting the Challenge.

Remember the Worshipful Master is indeed responsible for his lodge and its well being. A smile is contagious and led by a Master who has established well thought out plans and directives for the year will result in a happy and content group of Masons, who will cherish the Lodge meetings for many years to come.

4.13.4 The Senior Warden

As a Senior Warden, you have a year to prepare for the journey to the East. Will you be ready?

Before anything else is done, have you approached a Past Master of your lodge to be your installing Master? Have you obtained approval of same from the Worshipful Master? PLAN PLAN!!!!

It is expected that the Senior Warden will support the Worshipful Master in all aspects of Lodge management and will carefully commence PLANNING for the year in which he will advance to the East. He should have completed his PLANS for committee chairmen and Lodge officers [where they are appointed by the Worshipful Master] prior to his installation.

A general *PLAN* should also be completed for the full year as Worshipful Master. Last minute planning is not acceptable or indeed conducive to a successful Masonic year.

Once again it is imperative that the three Principal Officers of the lodge be consulted. TEAM effort results in high spirits, participation of all members and a strengthening of Lodge unity.

4.13.5 The Junior Warden

It seems all “Junior” Wardens are informed of two things. First, refreshments and banquets, and two, The Junior Warden’s lecture.

This office provides the opportunity to experience building your own team [of Stewards and New Masons] to administer and deliver to all Masons the joy and satisfaction available during the Social or Banquet Hour. Much of your effort can support the well being of your Lodge and the attendance of the members [and visitors].

The office of Junior Warden in addition, as a member of the management team, allows for your contribution of time and talent in support of the Lodge and the Worshipful Master, gaining much valuable experience as you continue on your Masonic journey.

4.13.6 Grand Lodge and the Three Principal Officers

The three principal officers are voting members of Grand Lodge and are expected, where possible, to attend the annual communications of Grand Lodge in July of every year.

Grand Lodge is the governing body of Masonry and this being your parliament it is essential you have an understanding and knowledge of how it operates and contributes to Masonry in general.

All three Principal Officers, as mentioned, are eligible to vote for officers and members of the board. They, as well as all Past Masters, should also attend the District meeting held at Grand Lodge in July, at which time the District Deputy Grand Master for their respective District will be elected.

You are the Leaders of your Lodge and you should demonstrate Leadership and Responsibility by your attendance and active participation at all Grand Lodge and District events.

Your attention is also directed to The Book of Constitution. A current copy must be provided for all new candidates at time of Initiation. The same applies to the Worshipful Master at time of installation. The guidelines and rules of operating your lodge are therein contained and the Worshipful Master must be familiar with them.

In particular, the Worshipful Master is responsible for the issuing of the Lodge Summons and its contents. His message should be informative and enlightening. Remember to direct your thoughts to those who do not attend Lodge on a regular basis. Do NOT forget shut-ins.

It is also important to take note of section 240. Have you a copy of “The Proceedings” ? Does your Lodge publish this information in the Summons? Does your Lodge include in their meeting some time to detail to the Brethren those points of interest?

4.13.7 Grand Lodge Support

From our Grand Master and all Officers of Grand Lodge, Past and Present, an enormous amount of talent, experience and expertise is available in support of your Masonic goals. Through these resources assistance can be obtained in almost every facet of Lodge management, Masonic direction and indeed confirmation of your own suggestions and ideas.

Many programs and valuable information is available from Grand Lodge. Have you visited The Grand Lodge library????

One of the most recent and most exciting programs offered by our Grand Lodge is the “Brother 2 Brother” Program.

A Lodge Chairman from each lodge is to be named by the Worshipful Master.

This again is where TEAM work comes into play.

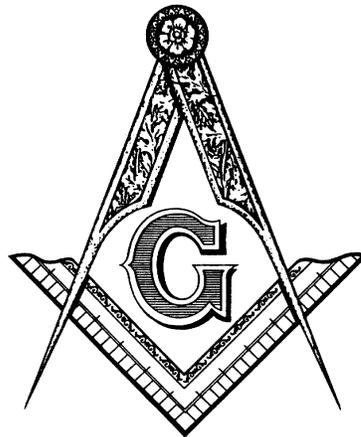
The Lodge Chairman reports back to the Worshipful Master, and hopefully the Three Principal Officers. He then proceeds to organize a lodge team to implement the valuable opportunities and suggestions available from the kit.

Is the Brother 2 Brother program in use in your Lodge??

IF NOT -- WHY NOT

4.14 A MASONIC DESK TOP REFERENCE GUIDE

*A MASONIC DESK TOP
REFERENCE GUIDE*



4.14.1 A Masonic A-B-C Desk Reference Guide

We have seen a continuing trend over the past four decades of: decreasing membership and stagnant attendance. We seem to have conditioned ourselves into believing that this phenomenon is beyond our control. We bemoan the fact that we just can't seem to attract new members or encourage our 'lost' members to rejoin us. Can we really blame them for asking: "What's in it for us?" and also "What am I getting for my dues dollars?"

When one looks at the situation from this perspective, the solutions become clear. We must create opportunities for our members to have meaningful participation; to make our meetings interesting and to enjoy the fellowship. Arrange social activities that include our ladies and families; to make all our members feel wanted and needed. We all carry a membership card in this wonderful organization and accept the responsibility of making a contribution to it. We should feel proud to be Masons. Let people know who we are, what Masonry stands for and what we do for the communities in which we live. The two concerns have little to do with any outside influences and therefore it is within our power to do something about them.

The theme that has been emphasized recently is Back To Basics. It is an important statement because it implies listening to the brethren throughout our great jurisdiction, in every district and from every lodge. Sure, it is important to have an overall Long Range Strategic Plan, Lodges of Instruction, Grand Lodge programs with facilitators, workshops and seminars. It is one thing to have these useful, well thought-out and worthwhile tools to help us revitalize our fraternity; but if they are difficult to implement, or are too overwhelming to even consider; then these noble initiatives will just gather dust in our collective lodge libraries.

The A-B-C Desk Reference is a handy, grass-roots, easy-to-use, and resource booklet containing a collection of practical, reasonable and do-able suggestions to help lodges regain their meaningful place in the lives of present brethren and for others who will choose to join us in the years ahead. It has been compiled from numerous suggestions, many observations and several discussions offered by concerned brethren.

This A-B-C Desk Reference contains three focus areas: Attendance and membership, Business meeting practices plus Community and social involvement. It also contains a sampling of suggestions for measuring the listed activities. These measurements will help record whether (or not) these activities actually do improve the condition of Masonry for the members according to the particular circumstances of your lodge. It is *essential to add and to revise*, the activities according to lodge needs in order to make it a work in progress using this exercise-book format.

From the Attendance section, how about: a) Putting on a play such as The Lodge -of Confusion No. 0 or The Can Opener - the Forgotten Working Tool to create interest; b) Hold two meetings a month the Regular meeting for business and a special speaker or activity, the Emergent meeting for degree work. Both to finish early, say 9:30 p.m. at the latest.

From the Business Section, consider: a) Placing shoe-box full of reference materials and books under each Senior Officers' chair as a handy reference source; b) Setting-up an ABC (Automatic Bank Chequing) account on a monthly or quarterly basis for easier dues payments.

From the Community section, try: a) Sponsoring a soccer team or a school academic award. The fathers of these students could be some of our next petitioners if their interest is aroused enough to enquire about Masonry; b) Starting a coffee club for members, wives, friends, neighbours and cottagers, even children (provide colouring sheets, table games for them) one day a week, say Fridays from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. You'll be surprised at the spin-offs it creates.

Agreed upon initiatives require 'sparkplug' members to address their lodge's very real problems. These brethren should talk to their lodge officers, the Committee of General Purposes and the membership about their concerns. Discuss an activity or two from this booklet and then take action. The lodge then becomes the author of their own improvements and not be just a recipient of suggestions passed down from Grand Lodge: Sure; it involves a bit of an educated risk; but such important issues can no longer be left to the other guy or remain unattended hoping they will somehow disappear if not addressed.

If we are successful, then the accomplishments of our revitalized membership can be our legacy for the generations of Masons who will follow; just as we have been the stewards for the centuries of Masonic ideals that have been left to us by our Masonic forefathers. Whether it be Grand Lodge initiatives and programs or a suggestion or two from this *companion* booklet, it will take commitment to initiate, communication to develop and community involvement to help preserve our Masonic way of life. What a great opportunity to get Back To Basics and to craft the future. Good luck and remember these ten little words: "If it is to be, it is up to me."

4.14.2 Attendance And Membership

1. Start on time! Don't wait for late-comers. Admit them at an appropriate time.
2. End on time! Important for fellowship, long distance travel, poor weather.
3. Speak clearly. Project your voice to be heard throughout the room.
4. Turn off equipment noise such as an air conditioning unit.
5. Speak directly into the microphone (if your lodge has such a luxury) or stand directly beneath a voice-activated sound system.
6. Grips, words and signs are important and should be given, and repeated, correctly and distinctly.

7. Perfect openings and closings to keep the meeting moving with dignity and purpose.
8. 'Calling off' and 'calling on' should be done smartly and with conviction.
9. Strive for purity of ritual performance and precise floorwork presentation.
10. Hold weekly rehearsals to ensure all taking part have an opportunity to practice their part. Don't assume someone knows his part.
11. Have regular lodge 'schools of instruction' for officers for them to gain a confidence and comfort level with the ritual or floorwork. References: The Work and Guidelines for Officers in The Mechanics of The Work. Foster a team approach.
12. Consider regular instruction nights for candidates in each degree. Have 'coaches' who know the ritual and who are up-to-date with floorwork requirements and changes. Encourage brethren to attend to brush-up on their knowledge of The Work and promote a social time after the practice.
13. Involve all lodge members and especially newly made Masons with the lectures, committee work, event organization, etc. Don't rely on lodge officers to do all the work.
14. Practice how to conduct a ballot properly and without hesitation. Request members to stand as the ballot is distributed and collected.
15. Review and practice protocol and etiquette. Both are very important and both are in noticeable decline; especially during Festive Boards and after-meeting refreshments. These niceties along with the ritual, floorwork, benevolence and tradition distinguish our organization from service clubs. References: The Masonic Manual; Meeting the Challenge; Good Manners, Customs and Proper Usages (Lodge of Instruction, 2001).
16. Appoint only one prompter. Please no notes or open books during the conferring of degrees.
17. List members doing degree work on a bulletin board plus a list of candidates, their sponsors and the dates set for their next degree. Keep listings current.
18. Encourage mentors and sponsors to actively help their candidates with The Work. Be in lodge with their candidates, stand beside them when the brother proves himself.
19. Actively use the Mentor and Brother 2 Brother Programs - they really work!

20. Appoint 'sparkplug' members to promote these programs. They should be encouraged to attend district meetings to learn the program and to share ideas. Reference: The B2B Facifacts newsletter and Manual published by the Brother 2 Brother Committee.
21. Be a greeter. The WM and Tyler (and other members) welcome members and visitors at the door of the lodge or anteroom.
22. Never leave a candidate alone in lodge, in any degree. Always reassure him, explain things, answer his questions and never alarm. Sit with him during refreshments.
23. Offer to drive an older member, or a Mason new to your area, to meetings and sit with him during the lodge meeting.
24. Install a chairlift, if necessary, to encourage older members to attend.
25. Recognize a member who sponsors a candidate with a token of appreciation.
26. Give a newly-made Mason a Masonic Bible, Masonic or lodge pin, a specially made certificate marking the occasion. Examples: EAM - The White Lambskin Apron; FCM - The Illustrated Lords Prayer, MM - Tonight I Knelt Where Hiram Knelt.
27. Toast the newly-made Mason after the meeting during refreshment time.
28. Assign yourself something that needs doing in the lodge room or anterooms.
29. Encourage the brethren, especially new members, to visit other lodges and districts.
30. Go as a group and start with a van, then a mini-bus. The return trip affords a great opportunity to discuss what interested you or something that could be done at your meetings or added to your lodge furniture. Example: A regalia tree for use during the Ceremony of Installation and Investiture.
31. Offer a brief talk about Masonic or lodge history, in lodge or during refreshments.
32. Demonstrate an item of etiquette such as Grand Honours given properly. This is very important for new members: References; Masonic Manual, Meeting the Challenge.
33. Conduct a Board of Trial to prepare members for a challenge at a visitation.
34. Exemplify a Committee of Inquiry interview - one of the most important duties that can be assigned to members. Reference: Guidelines for the Committee of Inquiry; Meeting The Challenge; Friend-To-Friend video.

35. Sponsor special district meetings. Examples: Officer Progression, Long Range Planning, Seminar for Lodge Secretaries, Brother-To-Brother Feedback Sessions.
36. Create a Mason of the Year Award. Present it in lodge by the WM, the DDGM, mention it in the summons. Perhaps a picture and caption in the local newspaper would also be appropriate recognition.
37. Develop a Masonic study club. Information is available from many sources such as the Grand Lodge Correspondence Course, The Newsletter, or your lodge library. Example: books on Symbolism by Albert Mackey and Allen Roberts provide interesting items.
38. Update your lodge library with recently published books about the Craft and promote a lending program. Consider including some thought provoking reading such as: The Hiram Key, The Second Messiah, Uriel's Machine all by Christopher Knight and Robert Lomas.
39. Pick an interesting item for presentation in lodge from Fraternal Correspondence found in the Grand Lodge Proceedings publication.
40. Create a binder of members' occupations regarding business, professional and trade expertise and special talents worth sharing. A handy reference when planning special events, seminars and can generate friendships that might not have occurred otherwise.
41. Consider two meetings a month. Regular meeting for business and a special speaker or interesting activity and the Emergent meeting for degree work with both meetings finishing early and on time.
42. Start an Entered Apprentice Mason Welcoming Team. Brethren from the lodges in the district can group together to visit an area lodge conferring an EA degree. Take part and/or just welcome the newly made Mason. Reference: London East and London West Districts.
43. Photograph your lodge building or an interesting lodge artifact and make cards such as Christmas, Get Well, Condolence and birthday cards for use by the lodge secretary and lodge members.
44. Donate to the DDGM district charity.
45. Begin a district Warden's Association to travel, getting to know the brethren who will be Worshipful Masters with you next year. Invite the ladies on some occasions and make it a social.
46. Hold meetings on special dates. Example: Robbie Burns Night

47. Create an AIM Team - Association of Installed Masters Degree Team.

4.14.3 Summons

1. Make it attractive, easy to read with appealing font and size, interesting, informative with a meaningful message from the WM. Reference: Recommendations for Lodge Summons, Grand Lodge Communications Committee publication.
2. Names and dates are very important. Re-read and proof-read for spelling, proper titles dates, times, locations, etc.
3. Include all committees, name of chairmen and members plus telephone numbers. List committees in alphabetical order for easy reference.
4. Note: Only Grand Lodge has a Board of General Purposes. Lodges have a Committee of General Purposes.
5. If space allows, include fax numbers and e-mail addresses.
6. Box, shade or highlight special announcements.
7. Graphics and colours may be used.
8. Ask members to submit brief articles; include a monthly Q & A, lodge history, etc.
9. Provide extra summonses at the Tyler's desk or hand one to each visitor - they love to get them.
10. Computerize mailing labels, letterheads, newsletter and summonses.
11. Read your summons to an elderly member during a visit to him.
12. These items are often missing; but must be included, such as: District name, G.R.C., lodge No.

4.14.4 Masonic Memorial Service

1. Have brethren who are taking part to practice their passage. Give a special attendee, say the Grand Master, a part in the service.
2. Consider only the WM, the DDGM and perhaps close family friends to express condolences on behalf of all attending members; it is easier on the family.

3. Donate a certain amount of money to The Masonic Foundation of Ontario in remembrance of every brother of your lodge who passes away during the year.
4. Conduct a lodge Memorial Service at a meeting. Reference: The Memorial Service published by Grand Lodge, 1999 (Revised edition).
5. Give copies of the updated Masonic Memorial Service booklet to area funeral homes. Offer information and supply of donation envelopes for the Masonic Foundation of Ontario. Reference: "For the Cause of Good" or the Annual Report.

4.14.5 Membership

1. Develop a focus group to identify what is necessary to attract new members. Consider using the Grand Lodge Strategic Plan as a guide, according to the particular circumstances of your lodge. Keep in mind though, that quality is better than quantity.
2. Appoint knowledgeable investigation team members; not necessarily those brethren who attend lodge that night. Reference: Guidelines for the Committee of Inquiry, published by Grand Lodge, 2000; Book of Constitution, edition 2002, Section 318; Meeting the Challenge, pages 29-30. This is one of the most important public duties we can perform. It is an honour to be selected; an expression of confidence by the WM in one's ability, judgement and tactfulness for the welfare of the lodge.
3. Carry a pocket-size pamphlet(s) about Freemasonry to give to a man who expresses an interest in Masonry. Examples: A Guideline on Discussing Membership in Masonry and The Petitioner, both available from Grand Lodge. Also, there is a business card available entitled: "On Becoming A Mason".
4. Use the Friend-To-Friend Program - it works! Develop a membership strategy.
5. Wear a Masonic ring or lapel pin. Display the Masonic emblem on your vehicle; use a Freemasonry license surround or a bumper sticker with the message: 2B 1 Ask 1.
6. Show a non-Mason your lodge room and banquet area. Explain some things and answer questions. Give him a pamphlet about Freemasonry. Invite him and his spouse to your coffee club, if your lodge has one. This is a nice way to get to know them and for them to feel comfortable meeting new friends with no strings attached.
7. Hold a work bee to clean-up, freshen-up, paint and refurbish both the inside and the outside of your lodge building. Outside work, even landscaping, is public exposure and may generate the interest of a man about the Craft.

8. Visit members who are considering a demit or who are close to suspension. Mention interesting upcoming events and the benefits of remaining in the fraternity. We are the poorer without them. Encourage them to travel with you; help them with the passwords; assist on a committee for a social event; join the Speechcraft course offered by Toastmasters International through Grand Lodge at a very reasonable cost; etc.
9. Avoid demits and suspensions by using your telephone committee. Advise these members of a Masonic Memorial Service; contact a member who usually attends meetings, but hasn't lately, to enquire about his health and to update him on the recent meeting and special occasions planned.
10. Visit old and ill members at their home, nursing home or hospital. A personal visit is very special
11. Use the COMELY Program -Calling for members who do not attend lodge and for Masons who have moved to your area from another jurisdiction.
12. Hold an Open House for families, friends and neighbours and prospective petitioners. Welcome, explain, answer questions, socialize afterward - make an event of it.
13. Show films, videos, slides from a personal collection or borrow from Grand Lodge library - many titles available.
14. Invite a well known speaker (Mason or non-Mason) to your banquet. Invite others.

4.14.6 Other Considerations

1. Set-up a Speakers Bureau for your lodge as a resource for meetings and banquets.
2. Give 2-3-5 minute mini-talks as Masonic education. Reference: Masonic booksellers.
3. Put on a play such as: *The Lodge of Confusion No. 0*; *Rose Upon The Altar*; *Lodge of Sorrow*; *The Can-Opener - The Forgotten Working Tool*, and many more.
4. Reference: The Masonic Information Center, 8120 Fenton Street, Silver Springs, Maryland, USA, 20910-4785.
5. Offer, in lodge, articles from *The Traveller* containing short stories about Ontario lodges Reference: Grand Lodge Web-site, keyword Traveller,

6. Put-up a bulletin board for pictures, letters, articles about lodge happenings, special events and members accomplishments during the year in your banquet or-ante room - a Wall of Fame that creates a lot of interest.
7. Make card-stock bookmarks with the lodge logo or Square and Compasses with important upcoming lodge and Grand Lodge events and dates. Example: Grand Lodge 150th Anniversary, July 22-23, 2005.
8. Provide lodge or PM pins and make a fuss about the brother's achievement in lodge. 8. Honour all PMs, even all PDDGMs, with special certificates. The evening makes a great reunion with lots of interesting stories and memories.
9. Use place mats with signatures of famous Masons. How many can be identified? Can also use Masonic crossword puzzles, at the place setting, to create interest.
10. Invite an honoured member to sit in the East and give him a few minutes to say some thing about the honour or some reminiscences.
11. Donate an annual district award for most visitations,-during the year, by a lodge attending the DDGM's official visits.
12. Hold special or theme meetings: Examples: Hunters Degree; Automotive/Railway/
13. Firefighters/OPP/Irish degree teams; `Step-up Night; The Wellington District Degree
14. Team that presents an 18th Century Degree - both the-degree-and banquet parts. 1"3. Send flowers to the wife of your newly-installed WM or EAM.
15. Place a letter- board Welcome sign-at the lodge entrance. Use it to promote special meetings or occasions and update it monthly.
16. Assign junior officers as committee chairmen or members of-special-event groups.
17. Practice timing of organ passages (if your lodge is fortunate enough to have one) for synchronization with floorwork and perambulations in all degrees.
18. Practice the Opening Ode with the progression of senior officers taking their chairs and the Closing Ode with the extinguishing of the lesser lights. Reference: Masonic
19. Musical Ritual for Ceremonials and Craft Degrees, published by Grand Lodge, 1918.

20. There are so many things that can be done and these are just some suggestions you may wish to try. Another reference: Grand Lodge Seminar of July 1999, Bored At Lodge? Be Part Of The Solution, Not The Problem! The booklet is entitled: It's The Little Things That Count!

4.14.7 Business Meeting Practices

1. WK senior officers and secretary to have a sound understanding of procedural rules, the Book of Constitution (current edition), lodge by-laws and the Order of Business.
2. Type the Order of Business on card-stock, keep handy at secretary's desk, WM dais.
3. Do not skip any Order of Business items. Members should know that every item has been addressed. If no business under an item, read item title, pass to the next item.
4. Highlight essential parts of the Minutes and paraphrase correspondence. Keep the business portion of the meeting moving smartly and with purpose. Avoid tedious and boring repetition. No need to re-read redundant material such as full addresses; every 'if, 'and or but ; information to be covered by Committee of Gen. Purposes Report.
5. Use separate file folders or clip together correspondence, accounts for quick access.
6. Summarize notice/flyer information; then post them.
7. Shorten the reading of accounts. Secretary states the total number of accounts plus the total amount, mention the largest items and those charges, without having to itemize each and every entry. Example: "There are 15 accounts totalling \$1,650.00 of which the A/C repair at \$X and the taxes at \$Y are the largest. The other accounts are business supplies and heating costs. Full list of accounts is available at my desk."
8. Allow the Committee of General Purposes to do the business groundwork, discuss contentious issues and bring their recommendations to the membership. Do not take lodge time to debate the issues and disturb the harmony of the lodge. Just refer the problem issues back to the committee; but do invite constructive suggestions.
9. Encourage members to attend the Committee of General Purposes meetings to offer input and to learn what is involved in the operation of the lodge.

10. Keep the by-law article about *Good Behaviour and Privacy Enjoyed* on card-stock at the secretary's desk for handy reference at the conclusion of the EAM degree.
11. Maintain an Important Papers Reference binder at the secretary's desk containing: deed or lease; insurance companies and coverages; donation guidelines; chair-lift, furnace and air-conditioning warranty/repair information; honourarium list with amounts and date changes; telephone committee member names and their lists, current year budget and the audit for the previous years, other important contracts.
12. Keep the Membership Roll Book and Dues Ledger at the secretary's desk for handy reference and in a fire-proof safe when not in use.
13. Create a handy Membership Directory with names, titles, addresses, telephone/fax/e-mail information, current or former occupations, spouse's name, interests, committees served on at the lodge, district and Grand Lodge levels.
14. Consider a shoe-size box of reference materials and books under each senior officer's chair as a handy reference: Book of Constitution (current edition), lodge by-laws, The Masonic Manual, Meeting The Challenge, Masonic Memorial Service (revised), A Functional Pronouncing Glossary of The Work, Guidelines for Lodge Officers in The Mechanics of The Work plus the Masonic Protocol and Etiquette booklet (from Lodge of Instruction, 2001).
15. Ensure the lodge seal is handy to imprint all necessary papers: new *officers* list, audit statement, etc. to avoid returned items that require the lodge official mark.
16. Avoid 'dead' spots where nothing is happening. Fill such time with announcements, Masonic education, introduce visitors, present certificate or award, etc. The quality of your meeting is critical to the health of the lodge and will either attract or deplete attendance and participation.

4.14.8 Lodge Dues

1. Consider only one level of dues, rather than several categories for age and length of service. Every member should contribute his equal share to defray ongoing (and increasing) operating costs.
2. Invoice members for current dues and arrears.
3. Set-up an ABC (Automatic Bank Chequing) Account on a monthly or quarterly basis for easier dues payments.

4.14.9 Lodge Finances

1. Prepare an annual budget Distribute it to all members at a meeting and insert it in the summons for those unable to attend.
2. Prepare an annual Lodge Operating Financial Statement stating receipts, disbursements and assets (this is not a cheque register).
3. Ensure the annual audit contains all pertinent information (1-3 pages should be sufficient) and is signed by both auditors. It must be legible, easy to read and to understand as well as be available to any member upon request.
4. Encourage your Finance Committee to work closely with the Temple Corporation,
5. Committee of General Purposes and all senior officers.
6. Review your dues level annually for possible adjustments. Dues really should cover the cost of operating the lodge. It is important to not use-up capital investments for month-to-month operating expenses.
7. Set-up the four basic accounts recommended by the Grand Lodge Finance Committee: a) Operating, b) Investment, c) Benevolence, and d) Life Memberships. Reference: Lodge Finances booklet by the Advisory Committee, 1998 - 14 pages including dues recording, lodge financial planning, 11 exhibits - very worthwhile.
8. Use lodge income only for the purposes for which it is received and intended.
9. Consider a Mission Statement and Objectives for your lodge Long Range Financial Plan. May include (but not limited to the following): investment structure, building fund, property inspections and costs, furniture and regalia appraisal and insurance coverage, renovation and repair schedule, fire safety inspections and necessary upgrades, dues review, donation guidelines, annual review and 5 year projections. Use a team approach drawing upon the members varied business expertise.
10. Create a contingency fund for lodge repairs and refurbishments.
11. Start and manage a volunteer fundraising program. Reference: Fundraising booklet, Grand Lodge Seminar 2000.
12. Sponsor a business seminar for members, friends and the general public.

4.14.10 Community Involvement

1. Create a Public Relations Office for press/radio newsworthy announcements.
2. Appoint a member to write items for your summons, district newsletter, Ont. Mason.
3. Hold joint functions with the Lions, Rotary, Kinsmen, etc. - make it your initiative.
4. Organize and participate in local community events, fairs, radio auction, blood donor clinics, parades (need dispensation to wear regalia), classic car show, list is endless.
5. Show Friend-To-Friend and Help-To-Hear videos in the community and your lodge.
6. Install Masonic sign at the entrances to your town. Secretary or G.L. have guidelines.
7. Hold lodge Open House for family, friends, neighbours and the community.
8. Refurbish old toys one day a week for distribution at Christmastime. (Sometimes known as a shoe-box program or toy mountain).
9. Join police detachment/division to distribute bicycle helmets.
10. Supply police cruisers with teddy bears/blankets for small children in an accident.
11. Distribute brochures about Freemasonry to people nearing retirement age for them to consider as something to get involved with upon retirement. For example:
Teachers,
12. Quarter Century Club members, CARP (Can. Assoc. of Retired Persons) members.
13. Participate in the Adopt-A-Highway Program.
14. Provide/lay a wreath during Remembrance Day cenotaph service. Join the parade.
15. Create teams for a Medical Outreach Program visiting brethren in hospitals, nursing homes, their own homes. Send them a card or fruit basket on occasion.
16. Develop a Masonic Transportation Service to drive patients to their medical appointments.
17. Wear a sweater or coat with embroidered name and service.

4.14.11 Sponsorships

1. Brotherhood Nights with Oddfellows, Knights of Columbus, service clubs.
2. Annual student academic achievement award including a modest bursary.
3. Youngsters sports team. Example: Soccer is inexpensive. Print name of lodge on the players shirts. May just arouse curiosity of parents about Masonry - talk to them.
4. Workshop/seminar on important topic by well known speaker. Example: Environmental damage to a local river. Invite the public.
5. New Years Eve First Night celebration for your community/neighbourhood.
6. Local curling bonspiel, slow-pitch tournament, horseshoe competition, gym or beach volleyball, theme dance, BBQ, pig roast, bike ride, etc. Attract potential members through community visibility with actions and deeds.
7. Fundraiser for a new motorized wheelchair (or any necessary piece of equipment) for your hospital.
8. Public meeting regarding the formation of a *History of Your Area* book.
9. Clean-up teams for local parks, rivers, roadways, and so on.
10. Booths at fall fairs, plowing matches, malls. Check with G.L. for display availability.
11. Breakfast special on Mother's Day for mothers and their families.
12. Interest event: Fill every seat in a stadium with a toy for distribution to needy kids.
13. Scout or cub group or scouting event and supply annual trophy. Become a leader.

4.14.12 Social Involvement

1. Plan a bus trip to tour Grand Lodge Headquarters in Hamilton, with your ladies, and visit the Scottish Rite building next door, have lunch there, plus dinner-theatre later.
2. Make a 'pilgrimage' to the monument of our first Grand Master at Woodhouse. Include your ladies, do some area sightseeing on your travels. Examples: St. Jacobs, Niagara-On-The-Lake, etc.
3. Organize a couples cruise with supper and invite friends. Examples: Georgian Bay, Thousand Islands, Lift-lock at Peterborough, Grand River, Lake of the Woods.

4. Consider a theme cruise such as tracing the routes of the rum-runners on Lake Erie, Detroit River, Prince Edward County.
5. Hold Ladies Nights, Special Ladies (Widows) afternoon teas. Invite them to some special occasions such as gardening show, Clogging Grandmothers, Geriatric Follies.
6. Organize a family day with a BBQ, kids games, 20 questions, pot luck, fishing, golf.
7. Invite friends and neighbours, cottagers too.
8. Form a coffee club in the lodge lunchroom, say every Friday from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. Open to all Masons, families and friends. Consider making muffins as well as having coffee and donuts. How about trying soup and sandwiches or pizza, say, once a month. Celebrate birthdays and special achievements. Have games, colouring books and cards for the kids (they usually come during the summertime). You will be surprised at the spin-offs this initiative creates and the number of visitors from near and far.
9. Encourage your ladies, and their friends, to start a quilting club at the same location and during the same hours. They just may bring their husbands to the coffee club.
10. Plan a Father and Son Night with a speaker or activity geared to the boys' interest.
11. Consider a wine-making evening; pot luck dinner with your ladies; breakfast club; night at the races, and the list goes on.
12. Organize a Christmas party for members kids, parents and invite friends. Arrange to have a magician, balloons, hot dogs and hot chocolate or pop/juice, a small toy exchange and, of course, Santa and perhaps Mrs. Claus.
13. Help arrange a meeting for your ladies during the same time that your lodge meets; but at a different location, with a well known speaker or personality from radio, the newspaper or television. Then join them later in the evening to share refreshments. This initiative will help to conclude your meeting at a reasonable hour.

The list of things to do is endless. Use your imagination, take a calculated risk. Enjoy the occasion and really get to know your fellow brethren. You'll reap the benefits of your initiatives plus have fun planning and participating in them.

4.15 SIX STEP MEMBERSHIP RETENTION GUIDE FOR CHAIRMEN

Membership Retention is the single greatest challenge our lodges will have over the next few years. All aspects of a lodge's operation are dependent on the strength of its membership; whether it is financial, administrative, leadership or self-development.



Understanding, in some detail, the expectations of lodge members will help structure your programs for membership development and retention. Today, lodge members evaluate whether the value they get is worth the time and money invested. If it is not, those members will seek out other avenues for their satisfaction. Lodges today must realize that they are in the Experience Business and providing value added benefits for members would strengthen your membership numbers.

If your lodge doesn't have any issues or problems with membership retention you are to be commended for your efforts, however, this program may still be of help to your lodge in guiding it through the regular review that is conducted in order to keep your lodge active and vital.

If you believe that your lodge has low meeting attendance or are having problems finding suitable officer candidates, you could probably benefit from using some of ideas herein contained.

This Six Step Program has been designed to help a lodge make change in an organized and planned manner. Membership Retention cannot be taken too lightly or accomplished overnight. It is very much like developing a business plan for a company. The key objective of this program is to know what your membership wants in their lodge and then give it to them. If your plan is strong and is built on consensus from the membership, your lodge will become strong financially and administratively. Its leadership will be progressive and the enhanced Masonic experience will lead to great self-development.

Each step can help you to create a plan to recapture and sustain the interest of your lodge members.

“Working Together Brother 2 Brother ... We Can Make A Difference”

STEP ...

- 1. Determine the Scope of the Problem**
- 2. Understand the Strengths & Weaknesses of Your Lodge**
- 3. Know What Reference Material is Available to Help**
- 4. Develop a Five Year Plan for Your Lodge**
- 5. Work the Plan**
- 6. Measure Success**

STEP 1 – DETERMINE THE SCOPE OF THE PROBLEM**Seek the Opinion of the Brethren.**

- Include everyone who is willing to offer opinions.
- Every Brother needs to feel he has contributed and is part of the solution.
- Encourage the members to buy into the concept of improving the Lodge.
- Include the view and ideas of everyone.

Consult your Lodge officers.

- Lodge Officers offer a perspective of those who run the Lodge.
- Encourage thinking in new directions.

Consult your Past Masters.

- Past Masters offer experience and leadership.
- Encourage thinking in new directions.

Conduct Surveys

- Decide what you want to ask and choose your questions accordingly.
- The survey should not be too long or tedious.
- Consider the personal contact method and obtain instantaneous responses.
- Consider a paper survey with instructions to return the responses.
- Try an electronic survey method.

Evaluating the Results of Your Survey

- Categorize and analyze all the data collected.
- Summarize the results by using pie charts, percentages or sum of totals.
- Some written data you may want to consider in full, such as comments made
- Categorize into groups; *Severity of complaint, Commonness of problem, Difficulty of solution*

STEP 2 – UNDERSTAND THE STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES OF YOUR LODGE

- Understand your Lodge and its capabilities by analyzing the strengths and weaknesses of the available resources (ie: the lodge building, financial affairs, membership and leadership).
- What is the physical and financial state of the lodge (mortgage, condition, operating expenses, budget etc.)?
- Membership numbers, outstanding dues and attendance?
- Ample supply of new officers?
- Develop a membership skills inventory.

STEP 3 – KNOW WHAT REFERENCE MATERIAL IS AVAILABLE TO HELP

Lodge Resources Manual

- Friend to Friend
- Mentor
- Brother 2 Brother
- Officer Progression
- Protocol & Etiquette
- Lodge Finances (Advisory)
- Lodge of Instruction ... *to name just a few.*

In addition to the actual reference material that is available in the Lodge Resources Manual, your lodge has available to it the *human resources* provided by the *Team Leaders* for Friend to Friend – Mentor, Brother 2 Brother, Officer Progression and Protocol & Etiquette.

STEP 4 – DEVELOP A FIVE YEAR PLAN FOR YOUR LODGE

Lodge management in the 21st Century requires widespread participation by the Brothers, under the strong direction of the Master. In this environment, each Brother is afforded the opportunity of participating in the active duties of the Lodge, and is likely to feel a sense of belonging to the Lodge. The views of the Brethren are actively sought and considered, decisions are taken based on their input, and good management is guaranteed through a plan of succession under which officers fully participate in the management of the Lodge as they progress through the Chairs.

One of our ancient regulations is that it is not in the power of any man or body of men to make innovation in the body of Masonry; however, change is inevitable. What often gets lost in the heat of debate is the nature of the change. Landmarks, Tenets, Principles and the Ritual require consistency for the Craft to survive. Equally important for survival are the changes necessary to keep the Craft current with modern society. We have entered a new era, without the capacity to recognize the need to modernize our philosophies and bring them forward into the 21st century, there is little likelihood that the truly important unalterable principles will have the fertile ground in which to survive and grow. Certain changes will be necessary if the basic philosophy of Freemasonry is to endure.

We must strive to provide value added benefits to the membership. The following can help you along that path:

- **Improve engagement:** This means make an attempt to amaze and delight the new member with the quality of the experience of becoming a Mason. We engage people at a personal level by caring for them as human beings and paying attention to their interests and needs.
- **Better communication:** More communication doesn't necessarily mean more paper. It means answering his questions openly and candidly, sharing the goals of the organization and explaining the important role the new member can play. More people who left the Craft wonder what the organization was all about.
- **Know his expectations:** When we understand what a man wants from his membership, his expectations, we can come in a whole lot closer to providing these solutions than if we try and guess what will make him happy. All men who join appear to want to make new friends and connections. The effective leader will make this possible in the lodge.
- **Increase follow-up:** We hear so often that once a man becomes a Master Mason the lodge has nothing more to do with him. How sad. This is precisely the best time to begin involving the man in his Fraternity in such a way that it brings joy and satisfaction to his life.

Set Measurable and Meaningful Goals

- Build closer working relationships with Grand Lodge and Concordant Bodies.
- Be an effectively managed lodge; led by men with effective leadership skills.
- Be recognized as a fraternal organization committed to charity and community service.
- Develop and implement an aggressive retention program that reduces attrition, improves attendance and encourages Officers.
- Establish a retention goal, a % of membership ... to name just a few.

Set Specific Objectives

- Develop and implement a member improvement program.
- Provide ongoing and regular feedback to all our Brethren.
- Sponsor and coordinate programs of interest to our Brethren and their families.
- Understand the social needs of families in today's society, as it relates to Masonic participation.
- Increase youth awareness and interest in the Fraternity through DeMolay, Rainbow For Girls, Jobs Daughters
- Develop a strong Mentors program for the orientation and education of candidates.
- Build and strengthen relationships with other lodges in your district.
- Establish guidelines to be used in promoting the benefits of membership.
- Improve communications within the Lodge... to name just a few.

STEP 5 – WORK THE PLAN

Where do you want to go? There are many ways to create a value added experience for your Brethren. Be creative, plan variety and strive for an interesting balance between your degree and social programs. Degree work is fine, especially if you are blessed with a number of candidates.

But remember, “all work and no play”, makes for a bored Mason, one who could turn away to other pursuits of enjoyment, and then be lost to the Lodge forever.

Developing a Value Added Strategy is essential. If a lodge member has enjoyed his experience he will pass this good feeling on to others and recommend or endorse the activities of the lodge.

Members will again become enthused with their decision to join when a combination of the following occur:

Time is not wasted	Fellowship is real
Value is received	Cliques disappear
Meetings aren't boring	Conduct is professional
Wives like what we've done	Pride is a result

In preparing your long-range plan for the year, take full advantage of the expertise available. Just because you are the leader does not mean that you must carry the ball at each meeting. Use the resources of your own Lodge and do not forget to utilize the District talent available to you. There are District Officers in a number of disciplines who are eager for the opportunity to participate in Lodge meetings.

STEP 6 – MEASURE SUCCESS

What Constitutes Effectiveness?

For the purpose of this plan, effectiveness can be defined as “the attainment of the desired or intended outcomes of your Lodge Retention Plan.” What are the goals and objectives of your Plan? Are they vague or specific? The more specific your goals, the easier it will be for your Lodge to identify the desired outcomes. Thereby determining what you need to measure and evaluate as the Plan is implemented.

How Is Effectiveness Measured?

A well-designed and properly executed Plan identifies multiple goals, based on the assessment of Lodge needs. Multiple goals probably mean multiple effectiveness measures, but not necessarily. Lodges with more modest objectives may feel that a single measure, such as attendance at the monthly Communication, is a sufficient basis for assessing effectiveness. However, if your Lodge is interested in tracking multiple outcomes (e.g., sideline attendance, number of Brethren attending Lodge of Instruction, number of non-Masonic guests attending Lodge events), you will need to take that into account when developing your effectiveness assessments.

What goals were identified in your Lodge’s Plan? If the primary goal is to increase sideline attendance at the monthly Communication, a logical way to assess your Plan’s effectiveness is to determine how many sideline attendees your Lodge had, on average, for the 3-6 months prior to Plan implementation, and then track monthly attendance in the future. You can use the absolute numbers, or you could state the attendance as a percentage of total Lodge members. At any future time, you have the ability to calculate changes relative to the pre-Plan time period.

Measurement Methods

Establish Your Baseline:

It's important to set an appropriate baseline against which to measure progress toward goals. The problem is that Lodges often do not have the data at hand to know how to set that baseline. For example, while many Lodges keep monthly attendance (which is now requested on the Lodge Secretary's Monthly Report to Grand Lodge), some have not done so. Thus, these Lodges may have to estimate their attendance in the months prior to the implementation of their Lodge Retention Plan if they want to track changes in attendance.

Keep these kinds of issues in mind when deciding what outcomes you want to track – you may have a hard time collecting historical data against which your future efforts can be compared. If you don't have historical data, don't worry – you're better off moving ahead with your Plan and collecting whatever data you can than doing nothing!

The time frame over which your baseline is determined may be important to consider. For example, if you want to track changes in sideline attendance over time, you may want to consider if there are seasonal variations (e.g., "snow birds" who are not around in the Winter months), which should be taken into account. In that case, it may make sense to develop a three- or six-month average against which to compare. Alternatively, you could compare the current month's attendance to the same month in previous years, much as department stores do to assess changes in sales.

Conduct Interim Assessments:

How often? That's up to you!

There are no firm rules to follow in this regard. Just beware of the "dieter's dilemma," where constant scale watching (or, in this case, attention to data) can be counter-productive. You may want to track some outcomes on a monthly basis, and others on a less frequent basis, such as quarterly.

Report Findings to Your Lodge

It is essential that results be reported back to your Lodge Brethren in a timely fashion. Again, there are no firm guidelines for how often, or how detailed, these reports need to be.

One strategy for reporting this information is via the Monthly Communication. This ensures that the information is delivered not just to those who attend Lodge, but also to everyone (even out-of-state Brothers and those who belong to neighboring Lodges who may receive courtesy copies of your Lodge's notice).

SUMMARY

As was noted in the Introduction to this manual, the ideas presented here are not intended to be the be-all and end-all of membership retention. The fundamental premise of the program outlined here is simple:

- Identify the issues or problems facing your Lodge
- Assess the means at your disposal (i.e., strengths and weaknesses) to address these issues
- Use the reference material that is available in the Lodge Resources Manual
- Develop a workable plan with measurable goals
- Work the plan
- Evaluate what worked (and what didn't), and the resulting progress toward goals

We hope the ideas and suggestions presented in these pages will help you formulate a strategy that is successful in your Lodge and we wish you great success as you and your lodge move forward with your membership retention plans.

In closing, we ask you to remember that your B2B Team of the Lodge Resources Committee of Grand Lodge is here to help you! Give us a shout, we are pleased to provide you with whatever help we can, as you and your team proceed.

4.16 LODGE GREETERS PROGRAM

Why a Lodge Greeters Program?

Hospitality is usually what we each supply to our friends when they come to our home and so too should it be in our Masonic home, our lodge. This, however, does not seem to occur naturally in our Masonic lives as it should. Brethren who leave the Fraternity tell us that the main reason for leaving or dropping out is that they were being ignored. Although we don't intentionally ignore our brethren, it is clear that it happens all too often.



It is because of this realization that we must take an active part in making sure that we do everything in our power to make sure that a member cannot say "I left because I was ignored".

Therefore. The easiest thing for us to do is to help make sure that members who attend lodge feel welcome and at home when they walk through the door of the lodge.

Please note...If your lodge has a different and successful program for making members and visitors welcome, please continue to use what you are familiar with.

How does it work?

Although the Worshipful Master should find the time to greet all of the lodge members and visitors at every meeting, at times that is simply not practical due to his pre-meeting schedule.

Implementing the program is very simple. At the next regular meeting the Worshipful Master will assign the Senior Steward the responsibility of coordinating the Lodge Greeters Team for the current Masonic Year.

Next, appoint 2 (or more) men to join the team at your subsequent meetings for that month. Once the program is established ensure that a schedule is posted indicating what month each Brother will join the Senior Steward on the Greeter Team.

Station them at the door of the lodge or the reception area and have them greet every Brother that enters the lodge. If they haven't been to lodge in some time make sure that they are introduced to the other members present. *Next month, select some different brothers (if possible) so that all of your members get the chance to help.*

The greeter team should stay at the door or reception area until a few moments before the lodge opens in order that the late arrivals will feel more comfortable; especially if they are newer members and aren't aware of the protocol in attending lodge.

Who should be involved?

Ensure that the appointees represent a good cross-section of the lodge membership and we strongly encourage you to appoint at least one Entered Apprentice and/or Fellowcraft.

Involving E.A. and F.C. will provide them with the benefits of learning who the lodge members are, they will gain confidence by introducing themselves to others and they will develop a sense of value and worth as a lodge member.

What supplies do we need?

That is what is so wonderful about this program you can implement it at no cost. It simply involves lodge members that are already in attendance, using a working tool that they use everyday, the handshake.

THE HANDSHAKE...



The Handshake is one of the most powerful gestures between people. In business it symbolizes closure, affirmation and a contract. It also symbolizes warmth, friendship, trust, and honor. Members of the Masonic fraternity have stretched forth their hands to all men, using the handshack as an act of brotherly love, relief, truth and a general concern for others. The purpose of Freemasonry is quite simple; to strengthen character, promote respect for others and to help those in need.

Ensure that the Greeters are wearing a name tag to identify themselves. Ensure a chair is available to assist your older members. Have some current lodge summons available for visitors and members alike, should they request a copy.

A warm and welcome handshake, a concerned and heartily offered “Welcome Brother” goes a long way in today’s world. Outside the tyled recesses of the lodge it may be cold and unforgiving, but inside it is warm and friendly. Never leave a man to his own devices in your Lodge. Make sure that your members and visitors alike understand that in your Lodge they are welcome, safe and comfortable.

Roles & Responsibilities

Prior to Lodge Opening:

- Attend the entrance or reception area of the lodge building.
- Welcome everyone warmly by shaking his hand.

- Offer assistance with coats, hats and aprons.
- Provide seating to assist older Brethren and boot removal in season.
- Guide the Brother to appropriate seating in Lodge.
- Provide assistance with the elevator, should your lodge have one.
- Make lodge summons available, if requested.
- Introduce visitors to the Worshipful Master, Senior Warden and lodge members.

Following the Closing of Lodge:

- Ensure that visitors and older members are taken care of during the Banquet/Refreshment period.
- Assist visitors and older members when they leave the lodge for home.
- Part with a warm handshake, a “Thank You for Coming” & “Hope to See You Again Soon”.
- Provide a wish for a safe journey home.

Summary

The best way to improve hospitality in your lodge is to lead by example. It is so important to ensure that everyone attending a lodge meeting feels like they were a part of the night. When we make the evening memorable, pleasant and special, we will have taken that step that will make the Brethren want to come again.

Don't let a single man have the chance to say ...

“Nobody ever cared that I went to Lodge”.