

Masonic Lodge Leadership

This paper is prepared by the Grand Lodge Research and Education committee. It is presented to point out and inspire Lodge officers in the performance of their obligations as officers in their Lodges. Hopefully some of the thoughts and suggestions expressed will be cause for contemplation for those serving as officers of their Lodges in the coming year.

So let's start by defining and explaining what leadership is.

Leadership; is the relationship between an individual and a group sharing a common interest or goal, and behaving in a manner influenced or directed by him or them.

Leadership is not demarcated by power *over* people – rather, it is a power *with* people that exists as a reciprocal relationship between a leader and his/her followers. In actuality, individuals who seek group consent and strive to act in the best interests of others can become effective leaders.

It is generally accepted that, Leaders are not born but that they are made. *With that in mind and with personal reflection and observation I believe our Lodges are or should be instrumental in developing leadership qualities in our members,*

Leadership has been described as “a process of social influence in which one person can enlist the aid and support of others in the accomplishment of a common task”.

So now that we have defined Leadership what are some of the essentials to developing it in our Lodges? First we have to **inspire** our Brothers to accomplish those things which are necessary for the health and prosperity of the Lodges. You need to be **passionate, committed** and **communicate excitement** about the task you are undertaking. **Involve** your Brothers in the decision making process, get them to participate and contribute, **value** their contributions, **incorporate** their ideas.

To do this we must first know our Lodges and what our needs are? The Brothers are the Lodge, they come from many diverse backgrounds, have different goals and objectives which they want to accomplish. Create an environment of Brothers, where they can contribute in a meaningful way!

Qualities you should pursue as a leader; accept responsibility, be creative, solve problems, and initiate action. Above all be gracious and accept criticism, accept blame when appropriate. Do not be afraid to seek counsel and advice. Request assistance and involve your Brothers, encourage their creativity. Importantly give recognition and credit; it is the greatest form of encouragement! When necessary to correct a Brother, do it in a complimentary way. Tell him how much you appreciate his efforts in doing good ritual, and suggest means by which he could improve.

Let me suggest a few tools which may be useful to you in your duties; have an **action Plan** for your year.

Set the **goals** that you hope to achieve, **organize** your plan, and create a calendar.

Communicate your plan.

In summary I would like to suggest the use of the symbolism of the equilateral triangle. The three sides of which are; “**where are we**”, “**where do we want to go**”, and “**how do we get there**”. Where is your Lodge, Where do you want to go, (what do you want to achieve), so how do we get there. Make a plan, like geometry solve two sides of the triangle and the third is obvious. Another triangle that is applicable to the Lodge is; **Involve, inspire, and**

encourage. Involve your Brothers and officers in your plans and actions, inspire them to be involved, and encourage their participation!

If you study our ritual, obligations and charges you will find many references to the character of leadership interspersed throughout. The “youngest entered apprentice” in the northeast corner is admonished to walk upright. We remind a Brother in the “most friendly manner”, and “harmony being the Strength and Support of all institutions” to name a few. How many references to leadership can you find within our ritual? Probably too many to count, but still worth the consideration?

As officers in your Lodge I hope by the time you are installed you will have studied the “Lodge Officers Handbook” for guidance and understanding of your duties. Studied the Monitor with particular attention to understanding the full weight of the obligation of your office, and the duties you have assumed. You are in a position of Leadership in your Lodge and as you progress in your respective offices; **lead by example!** The importance of showing leadership increases as the responsibilities of Office increase. The wages of a Master Mason are the approbation and gratitude of the Brethren, and they can be earned without limit in positive proportion to the efforts extended in planning, learning and executing the increased responsibilities and duties of Office.

I firmly believe that any Brother who diligently pursues his duties in his Lodge office as he progresses through the officer line can and will; develop and advance in his leadership abilities. He will grow as a man and as a Mason.

In preparing this paper, I have extracted information from many reputable sources as appropriate to our work as Masons.

References: The Scottish Rite web site, pod cast; interview with Ill. Ronald Seal, “A Masonic Leaders Guide”, “Masonic Lifeline: Leadership”, various encyclopedias and references.

Brothers, as we approach that time when we are considering the election and appointment of new officers for 2014 I think in worth to consider the qualities described in this paper. If you as an officer in your lodge progress it is important to you and your Lodge to develop these qualities. If you are not an officer it is important that you choose wisely, and contribute to the welfare of your Lodge. There is in every Lodge work that you can make a meaningful contribution too.

Questions:

- What leadership qualities do you recognize in your Brothers
- What leadership qualities do you hold?
- What can you contributed to the leadership of your Lodge?
- Do you contribute?

“We all meet upon the Level”

W.: John Bishop

The Committee on Research and Education