

Written  
by  
Masons,  
for  
Masons

# 101+ Ways

## to Improve Interest & Attendance in Your Masonic Lodge



*Building a foundation for the future on the finest traditions of the past*

Produced by

The Masonic Renewal Committee of North America, Inc.

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# 101+ Ways to Improve Interest & Attendance in Your Masonic Lodge



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The Masonic Renewal Committee of North America, Inc.

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# About this publication

This publication is designed to give lodge leaders 101+ practical and valuable things they can do to increase interest and attendance in the lodge. These ideas are included in 10 steps. The Masonic Renewal Committee of North America produced and published these materials for lodges throughout North America, to be purchased and distributed by their respective Grand Lodge. Although produced for leaders of Masonic Lodges, these materials are easily adapted to most Masonic organizations. For more information on how this publication was developed, see Appendix B.



America and adopted as presented, would form the foundation for all our suggestions. Your copy of the Blueprint 2000 is included in Appendix C.

Renewal means a rebirth or renaissance. Masonic Renewal means an awakening of interest in and the rediscovery of the values of Freemasonry. Both imply a sense of discovery and an attendant burst of accomplishment. As with the Renaissance of the 14th to the 16th Century, this renewal suggests individual Masons, largely at the local lodge level, can provide the fresh life, vigor, and creativity necessary to

Like a book on 101 hints on sprucing up your house, this book contains 101+ ideas for increasing interest and attendance in lodge. All are designed to make lodge meetings and activities more appealing. Finding ideas you can use should be easy. Choose those you like.

Those preparing the material have tried to be careful not to make suggestions that might be contrary to laws, rules and regulations of any Jurisdiction nor to enter into the area of ritual except that all ritual, including opening and closing ceremonies, should be of high quality without unnecessary delays or interruptions.

These hints are aimed at improving quality and excellence in your lodge. This book was developed with the expectation that the Blueprint for the Year 2000, presented by the Masonic Renewal Committee to the Conference of Grand Masters of North

achieve their vision.

Masonic leaders from throughout North America representing more than half of the Grand Jurisdictions of the United States and Canada worked with representatives from the Northern and Southern Jurisdictions of the Scottish Rite, the Imperial Shrine and other Masonic groups, to describe a vision along with short-term and long-term strategies for the renewal of our Fraternity. A copy of the Executive Summary of this effort is included in Appendix D.

The resulting Blueprint 2000 describes a preeminent fraternal organization for men that is different in many ways from what exists today, not in substance, but in form. Not in what we do, but in how we do it. Not in changes in ritual or tradition, but in improved quality and leadership.

Masonic lodges that achieve the vision in the Blueprint 2000 will offer:

- Fraternity and brotherhood that amazes, inspires, enlightens, delights and piques the interests of men.
- Greater connections with friends, relatives, neighbors and community leaders.
- New and exciting ways to experience Masonic education and enlightenment.
- Respect and recognition of the importance of the family.
- A social consciousness built upon local and global solutions of quality and renown.

For our Fraternity to attract new members and retain the interest and involvement of existing Masons requires that every lodge recognize the importance of TIME and QUALITY in everything we do.

*101+ Ways to Improve Interest and Attendance in Your Masonic Lodge* is about time and quality. There is something here for every lodge to try and success is virtually guaranteed.

This book was written by Masons with years of experience in organization development and the process of change. It was reviewed by scores of Masons who have had experience not only in the successful leadership of their lodge, but also in bringing the kinds of suggestions we have made here into reality.

We do not suggest that all of these ideas are easy to implement. Managing time is not easy. Leading the change process will take time and patience. But as Masons and as leaders of Masons we have no more important task than to deliver both with quality.

Men have told us, in no uncertain terms, what they want, need and expect as members. Responding to members by providing an environment of quality and excellence in the lodge will result in increased interest and participation by Masons and a renewed Masonic spirit. These 101+ hints can be an excellent place to start.

## About the Design of This Publication

This book has been designed to be of maximum interest to readers by contrasting illustrations which represent 21st century Masons with historic steel engravings of similar intent. We hope this contrast enhances your enjoyment and interest in the material. To maximize reader comfort, we have typeset the book in the very readable Berkeley typeface.

Good luck. Please use the evaluation and assessment form found in Appendix I to let us know how this publication has helped you.

### How Can the Lodge Satisfy Your Needs and Desires?

Surveys of active and inactive Masons, dis-  
closed Masons wanted the following:

- Better fellowship and opportunities to make new friends
- Greater civic involvement, public charities, pride in accomplishment of the Craft
- Improved Masonic education and understanding by Masons
- A higher profile Freemasonry, more open to the public, greater visibility, more pride in the organization
- Active commitment to the needs of youth
- Higher quality degrees presented in a more dramatic and understandable manner
- Improved meetings with entertaining and interesting programs
- Improved leadership training and more opportunities to be a leader

# Contents

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The 101+ steps for improving attendance and interest in your lodge are organized into 10 different categories. There is no particular order to the 10 categories and you can decide where to begin. Where you begin probably depends upon the current situation in your lodge.

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# Focus on Fellowship

**I**t's only natural to go where you feel most welcome. This includes attending a meeting at lodge. All too frequently we hear Masons say, "We shouldn't give ourselves more than a C+ when it comes to fellowship in the lodge."

## Mistakes We Make in Lodge

*The officers meet before lodge to finalize the plans for the evening and fail to spend time with their members*

*No one is assigned to greet men as they arrive*

*Guests and new members are left to fend for themselves*

*Men stick with their small group of friends and don't circulate*

*Members fail to introduce a new member to their friends*

If we don't offer a member good fellowship, why do we call ourselves a fraternity—particularly one based on brotherly love? Making a man feel at home and welcome in lodge should be the first step in making him a Mason.

It shouldn't take you long to discover a dozen things you can do differently, and at almost no cost, to improve the fellowship in lodge. Here is a

baker's dozen of suggestions you can review.

## How to Achieve Fellowship

1. **Discover as much as you can about a new member during the home visit** and make this information available to the members. If members know what a new member does, his interests and hobbies, and his reason for joining, they will have something to talk with him about.
2. **Record the information about the new member in your files.** Use the New Member Profile included in the Membership Kit to identify the important information you will want to include (for information on ordering the Membership Kit see Appendix H). If your lodge has a computerized membership management program, use it. If it does not, consider purchasing or developing one. Make sure your membership files include all of the information found on the profile in the Membership Kit.



3. **Encourage those who attend regularly to give you their ideas** about improving fellowship. Stress the importance of fellowship, and get their good ideas on how to make improvements.
4. **Give someone the job of greeting all members as they enter the lodge.** Make sure this person knows that it is his job to make the members feel welcome when they enter and to steer any new member or guest to someone on the fellowship committee so he is not left alone. Distribute name tags for new members and visitors.
5. **Make sure the Worshipful Master and his officers circulate among the members** before lodge is opened. Try to match new members and guests with someone in lodge who will be his "host" for the evening. Never allow a new Mason to sit alone in the lodge room.
6. **Make all introductions during lodge warm and personal.** Ask all members in lodge to warmly welcome new members and guests.
7. **Use the time after closing lodge to reinforce the fellowship** that was present before opening lodge. Thank your members for attending.
8. **Ask for feedback.** See how satisfied your members and guests were with the quality of fellowship they received.
9. **Follow up with a personal note** to a new member or guest thanking him for being with you in lodge. Your Fellowship Committee could handle this important task (see example in Appendix E).
10. **Include the names of new members in lodge communications** with a brief summary of their interests and the names of their wives and children.
11. **Tell your members you are working to improve fellowship** and why. Inform members of the important role they can play. Don't be concerned that you are trying something new or that you need their help.
12. **Place a Suggestion Box in a prominent place** in the lodge. Give members a questionnaire they can use to evaluate the level of fellowship in the lodge. Make a contest out of fellowship. Use a fellowship "barometer" to show graphically how fellowship has improved. Try to achieve 100% member satisfaction.
13. **Keep member satisfaction job #1.** Remember fellowship is an important reason why a man becomes a Mason. It's something you can provide free of charge.

#### **What Masons Said Contributed the Most to Good Fellowship**

The good example set by leadership  
 Absence of cliques  
 A warm and pleasant setting  
 Effort on the part of all members  
 An open and friendly atmosphere

## Step 1

# Your Turn

**Y**ou can prepare your own plan for improving fellowship. Use any of the ideas on the previous pages and add those you know will work for your lodge. But above all, have a plan. Remember, for each action you plan, you will need someone to be responsible, deadlines for accomplishing the objectives and a list of the resources you will need.

**What are the objectives of my good fellowship plan?** (Make it specific and time related)

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**How are my objectives related to my overall vision for the future or to the Blueprint for the Year 2000?**

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**How am I going to approach meeting my objectives?** (Describe in narrative form)

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**What are the specific actions I need to take?** (Describe in more detail on the next page)

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# How Are You Using Time?

Nothing is more frustrating than to hear a member say that a Masonic meeting was a waste of time. But the fact of the matter is that time is one of the most precious resources we have. Consequently, no one, absolutely no one, has a second to waste.

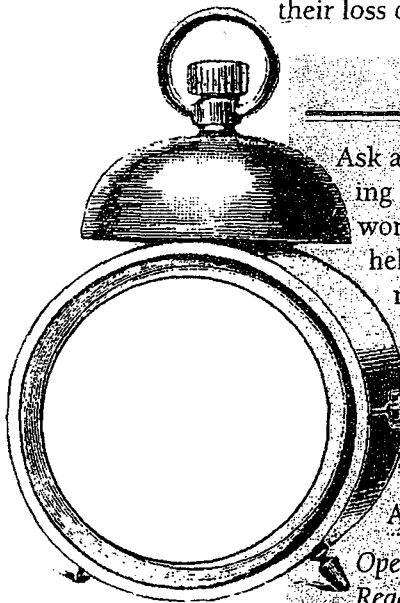
When 1000 Masons were asked what they were dissatisfied with in their Fraternity, the leading cause of dissatisfaction was that the meetings were boring and that too much time was wasted. For many, the misuse of time was directly related to their dissatisfaction and their loss of interest in lodge.

## Why Save Time?

Your members come to lodge for relaxation, fellowship and fun. So what's the hurry? Good question. The reason we're concerned with the use of time has as much to do with future members as it does with those you already have. If your lodge is typical of most, more than 85% of your members are not active. Remember, better lodge attendance is the goal of this program. And since we do not necessarily want longer meetings, just more members in attendance, then we must pay attention to the importance of time.

## An Ideal Use of Time

It would be difficult to outline an ideal use of time that could be used by every lodge, so the chart on the next page can only be a place to start. You will notice that we have shortened the amount of time required to open and close lodge. You will also note that more time has been committed to programs. We have heard Masons say that attending lodge should be an "event";



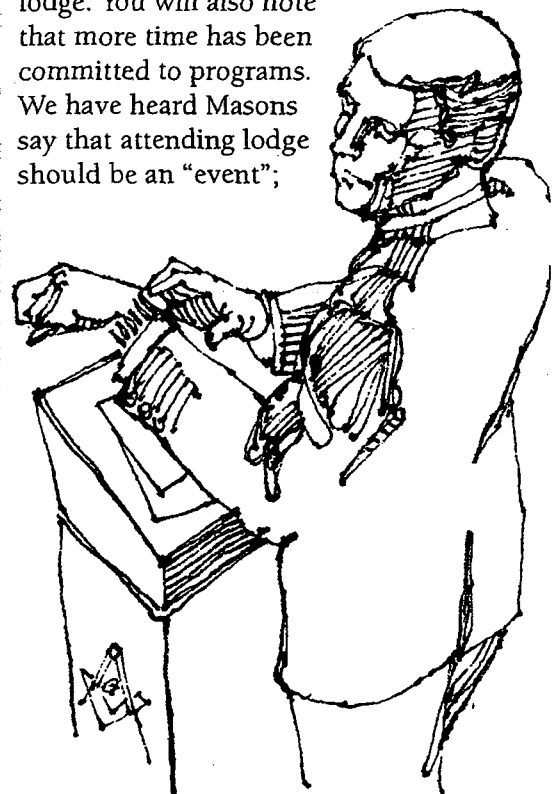
## How Are You Using Time?

Ask a member to time the activities during a meeting where there is no degree work. Make a time chart if that will help. Ask the member to record in minutes how much time you spent in lodge on each of the categories below. (Remember, if these categories are not applicable to your lodge, substitute a category that does apply):

| Activity                           | Minutes |
|------------------------------------|---------|
| Opening or tiling the lodge        | .....   |
| Reading minutes and correspondence | .....   |
| Introductions and reports          | .....   |
| Special programs                   | .....   |
| Closing the lodge                  | .....   |

Consider the following questions:

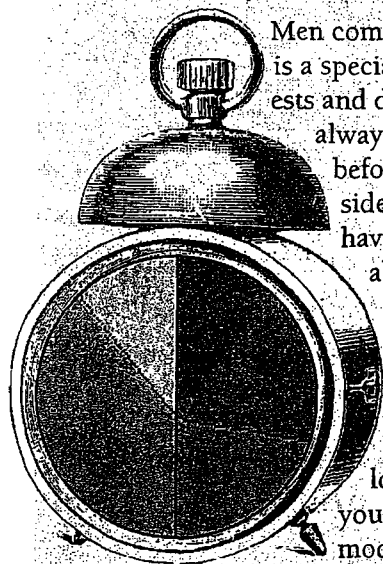
1. For about how many minutes were members simply listening to someone?
2. What percent of what they heard contributed to their enjoyment, excitement or fun?
3. What can you do to reduce the amount of "wasted" time?



that members should be "delighted" with what occurs there. Even more importantly, we have heard Masons say that when they are asked by their wives "What happened in lodge?" too often they are forced to say "nothing happened".

Listed are 8 steps you can consider. Again, if something is against the "rules" of your lodge or Grand Lodge, make your decisions reflect those rules. If the rules need to be changed, and if you can get others to agree, follow due process for your jurisdiction.

### An Ideal Use of Time



Men come to lodge when there is a special program that interests and delights them. Not always an easy task. But before you can even consider the program, you have to make time available. You will have to use some of the suggestions on this page to make this work, but here's an ideal way to use time in the lodge. See how close you can come to this model.

| Activity                            | Minutes* |
|-------------------------------------|----------|
| Opening lodge.....                  | 10       |
| Reading minutes and correspondence, |          |
| Treasurer's report.....             | 15       |
| Introductions and reports.....      | 20       |
| Special programs.....               | 35       |
| Closing the lodge.....              | 10       |

\* Assumes a 90 minute lodge meeting

### Steps to Save Time

1. **Summarize minutes, correspondence and communications** that are not of major importance to the lodge. Members who feel they need to review the full document or correspondence can find a copy posted on a bulletin board in lodge.
2. **Begin your meetings at the time they are scheduled.** If you are scheduled to begin at 7:30 start at 7:30. Give members notice that the meeting is about to begin. Ask others to usher members in on time.
3. **Increase the overall pace** by which events occur. There is no reason why responses to questions asked by the Worshipful Master to the Junior and Senior Warden should be dragged out. Make commands crisp and clear. Insist that responses are delivered the same way.
4. **Post the full minutes and the report of the treasurer.** Ask only for a summary for members in lodge. Help your secretary understand why this request is being made and ask for his cooperation.
5. **Make sure each presenter is prepared to act** in an efficient and professional manner. Being prepared saves time, increases the responses of members, keeps their interest and adds to their satisfaction.
6. **Hold introductions to a minimum.** Introduce guests in a group if possible. Most members see long introductions as a waste of time. Recognition of new members and guests should be warm and personal - make them feel welcome.
7. **Limit remarks presented at the end of lodge.** Call on one Past Master to speak as opposed to calling on each one singularly.
8. **Review with your officers how these changes are improving lodge.** Ask members, especially new members, how they view the time they are spending in the lodge. Report the results to all members.

## Step 2

# Your Turn

**Y**ou can prepare your own plan for improving how you are using time. Use any of the ideas on the previous pages and add those you know will work for your lodge. But above all, have a plan. Remember, for each action you plan, you will need someone to be responsible, deadlines for accomplishing the objectives and a list of the resources you will need.

**What are the objectives of my time improvement plan?** (Make it specific and time related)

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**How are my objectives related to my overall vision for the future or to the Blueprint for the Year 2000?**

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**How am I going to meet my time-related objectives?** (Describe in narrative form)

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**What are the specific actions I need to take?** (Describe in more detail on the next page)

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# Plan For a Perfect Evening



**N**o meeting in your lodge will be perfect unless you plan for it to happen. It will take you more time to do it right than to just let the meeting happen. Remember, if your lodge attendance is down to 10% of all members, something has been overlooked – possibly for a very long time.

## Make Your Meeting an Event

Making your lodge meeting more of an event, adding some excitement and interest to the meetings will go a long way toward bringing members back. Below are a few ideas you should consider. In addition, on the following pages we've given you 7 other steps you should try. Together, they will help you plan a perfect evening.

1. **Consider the interests of the youthful and the mature members equally.** That does not mean they are the same. So when you plan for a meeting keep the needs of both in mind. The older Mason may want things to remain unchanged; the youthful member may expect variety and excitement. Plan your evening to accommodate both.
2. **Remember that newer and older members have different needs and expectations.** Newer members are determining whether they did the right thing in joining. They will evaluate your plan for the evening on their terms. Make sure you know what they expect and provide it in your plan.
3. **Focus on quality.** No matter what you do, do it as well as you possibly can. Nothing works as well as high quality to achieve member satisfaction and improved attendance. When men said they did not attend lodge because they were bored and nothing happened, they were talking about quality. Make quality job #1.
4. **Delight your customers.** Yes, we said customers, and we did say *delight*. Attendance is very related to satisfaction. If a member (your customer) comes away from an evening delighted by what occurred, you can bet he will be back and that he will tell his family and friends about his experience.
5. **Balance fellowship with everything you do.** Weave the good feelings of men being with other men into all of the activities of lodge. Men will want to see that members like and respect one another. Make sure the officers set an example.



6. **Make food important but don't over emphasize it.** All Masons like to eat but it's hard to imagine that food in the lodge can be the main event. See other suggestions in Step 8, "How Food Can Work for You".
7. **Involve your members** in the evening and the meeting. Consider the fact there is a direct relationship between being involved in the activity and satisfaction with the evening. See more in Step 9, "Make Involvement Pay Off."
8. **Realize that some men are not attending because they do not read the lodge notices** or your Trestle Board. So no matter how much you plan, they will not read or hear about it unless you take some special steps. See Step 5, "Communicate with Your Members".
9. **Ask for feedback on what you need to do differently.** Ask your officers, members and guests for their ideas for improving quality.

### **Steps You Can Take**

Now you understand the importance of time and can see some of the ideas you need to consider in planning the perfect evening. Here are some concrete suggestions for the evening itself. Make sure you consider these in conjunction with the help you can receive in the following pages.

1. **Force yourself to plan in detail** for the meeting. Use a planning form such as the full-page copy in Appendix F as an example for making a customized form for your lodge.\* A pre-planned meeting or event forces you to consider the needs of members. After all, they will be the ones

who will endorse your plan and will show their appreciation through improved interest and attendance.

2. **Make something special happen** at least six times a year during stated meetings. Work at least six months in advance so you have your choice of speakers or guests. Involve your members in the program and in program planning. A completed six month calendar and schedule will make you feel good about the progress you are making.
3. **Call on individuals in your community** who can help you provide excellent programs for your lodge. Some are related to Masonry but many others are not. They can help you find ways in which the lodge can be more active and aware of the needs of the community. Still other programs provide member services. Here are a few examples.

*The principal of an elementary, junior or senior high school can speak about the scholarship needs of students or ways the lodge can help improve the school.*

*A financial planner can help members discover the important financial or retirement services available to them and answer their questions or concerns.*

*A travel agent can speak about trips that are available to individuals or groups and how to save money on travel.*

*An insurance agent or broker, or a claims specialist can speak about life, health or property insurance and offer many insights on how to avoid delays in claim processing and reduce premiums through risk avoidance.*

\* See "The Mason's Workbook" published by MSA for more ideas.

*A career counselor* can speak to members about the changing nature of jobs, how to find a job and how to be better trained for the future demands of the job market.

*A relocation specialist or real estate broker* can speak to your lodge about changes in the real estate market and the importance of their home as an asset. Pay particular attention to the role relocating employees will have in the future, particularly as it relates to home buying and selling.

*A health care specialist* can speak on ways to protect good health and offer concrete steps members can follow in their personal lives.

4. **Show any of a number of videotapes** that will be of interest to the lodge and to the future of Masonry. Arrange through your local library, a local university or a professional lending library. Of particular interest are the following films:

*The Business of Paradigms* by Joel Barker  
(see Bibliography, Appendix A)

*I've Heard the Name, What Does it Mean?*  
Part of the Membership Development and Management Kit produced by the Masonic Renewal Committee.

*Getting the Most From Your Fraternity*  
produced by the Masonic Renewal Committee.

*For Many Reasons*  
produced by the Shrine.

5. **Invite a strategic planning expert or futurist** available through a local college or consulting firm to meet with your lodge to talk about how the needs of men will have changed by the year 2000.

6. **Don't forget Masonic enlightenment.** We joined to improve ourselves through Freemasonry. Ask every member to be involved by accepting an assigned date to lead the discussion. Masonic Service Association Short Talk Bulletins are one source for help.
7. **Have fun.** Use some time during the meeting to enjoy the company of other men. Relax, get excited and be involved. Plan a non-ritual meeting where members can come informally, enjoy fellowship, and be truly relaxed. Another way to enjoy companionship is to plan activities outside of the lodge such as card parties or bowling.

Here is a list  
of five items that usually result in a  
perfect evening.

Use it as a checklist for your plan.

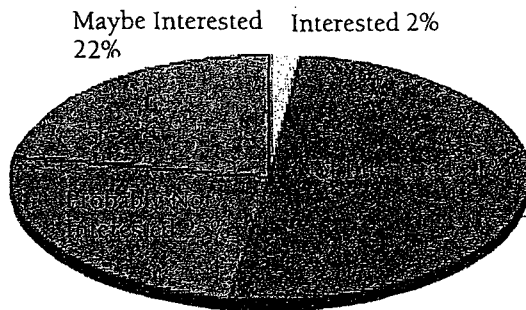
- ☐ Begin your planning early
- ☐ Know your exact objective
- ☐ Develop a plan and agenda
- ☐ Check, confirm and reconfirm
- ☐ Keep member satisfaction in mind.

## Your Personal Workshop

Consider using a planned evening in lodge to discuss the events that are shaping the future of Freemasonry and their impact upon your lodge. For assistance in planning the evening, refer to the Trainer Kit available through the Masonic Renewal Committee of North America (for ordering information see Appendix H). At a minimum, plan an evening's discussion around the three graphs on this page. You can make an enlargement of the graphs and make a transparency suitable for use on an overhead projector in most quick-copy outlets or stationery supply stores.

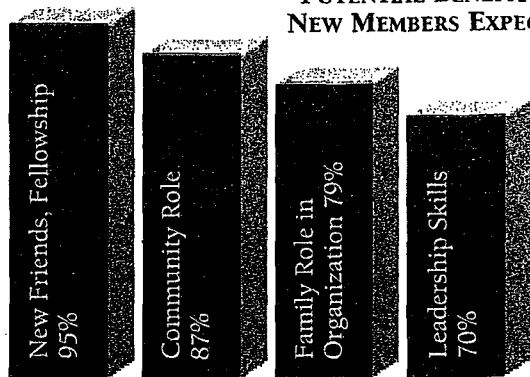
Use the following questions to generate a discussion in your lodge:

**PERCENT OF MALES INTERESTED  
IN JOINING ORGANIZATIONS LIKE  
FREEMASONRY**



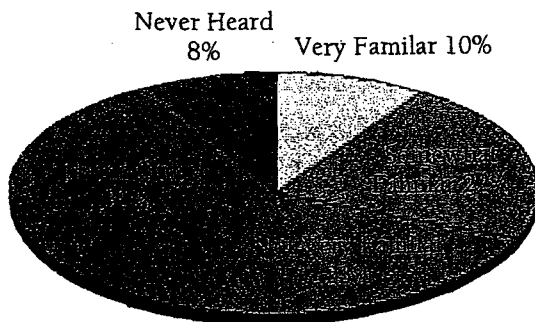
1. How should Masons and members of every other organization view this chart on potential member interest?
2. If there are approximately 70 million men over the age of 21 in North America, how many potential members are there overall? (17 million)
3. How might you make the case that the 22% who are interested is a "renewable" resource?
4. What do you think is the relationship of those most interested and the age of those who responded? (Highest interest was among the more youthful)
5. Why are so many of the population overall "non-joiners"?

**POTENTIAL BENEFITS  
NEW MEMBERS EXPECT**



1. Why is Freemasonry so ideally positioned to provide potential members with expected benefits?
2. What do you think the respondents mean when they listed community service as an important benefit?
3. Why would so many men want training in leadership?
4. Why is the Fraternity such a good place to teach leadership?
5. Are there other organizations that can provide these benefits better than Freemasonry?

**FAMILIARITY WITH MASONS**



1. What percentage of all American men have any significant awareness of the Fraternity?
2. Only 9.5% are very familiar. What does that mean when we require a man to "ask" to join?
3. What accounts for the larger than normal percentage who said they knew the name?
4. What do you think they know when they say "somewhat familiar"?

## Your Turn

**Y**ou can plan for a perfect evening if you will only try. First, use any of the ideas on the previous pages and add those you know will work for your lodge. But above all, have a plan. Remember, for each action you plan, you will need someone to be responsible, deadlines for accomplishing the objectives and a list of the resources you will need.

**What are the objectives of my plan for a perfect evening?** (Make it specific and time related)

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**How are my objectives related to my overall vision for the future or to the Blueprint for the Year 2000?**

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**How am I going to approach meeting my objectives?** (Describe in narrative form)

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**What are the specific actions I need to take?** (Describe in more detail on the next page)

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## Preparing Your Plan

| Summarize the key actions you plan to take | Who is Responsible | Start/Finish Dates | Resources Needed |
|--|--------------------|--------------------|------------------|
|--|--------------------|--------------------|------------------|

# Get the Ladies on Your Side

**L**et's face it. Any organization we join or are active in is more fun if our spouses are enthused about our membership. Attending meetings, participating in events, having fun with our Brothers and giving time to charity are all easier to achieve if the ladies are on our side.

Your wife may be a supporter of your interest in Freemasonry. She may even be a member of Eastern Star or Amaranth or active in Rainbow or Job's Daughters. But how do the wives of your less active members feel about Freemasonry? Here are some ideas you may want to keep in mind.

In a survey conducted among non-Masons, only 45% of all men over the age of 21 had ever heard of the Masons and less than 10% knew how to join. Experience since the survey seems to indicate that women were even less aware of Freemasonry and fewer than 1 in 20 could give a single reason why a man should join a Masonic lodge.

Your lodge may have done a better job than most in informing the wives of prospective Masons about the Fraternity. Chances are the wives of your newer members are not well informed about what it means to be a Mason or why their husbands should want to attend a lodge meeting.

So how can you get the ladies in your lodge on your side and supportive of their husbands' role as active members? Below are 14 solid ideas. Decide which will work for you.

## How to Win the Ladies

1. **Information is the key.** What a woman doesn't know about Freemasonry can hurt you. From the first time she hears the name until her husband has joined and is active, it's important to keep her informed. Consider using the videotapes, *I've Heard the Name What Does It Mean?* and *Getting the Most From Your Fraternity*,

early in your meetings with the new member and his spouse. Consider also using the printed pamphlet, *When Your Husband or Father is a Mason* as additional information. Both the videotapes and the printed pamphlets are available as part of the Membership Development and Management Kit produced by the Masonic Renewal Committee of North America.

2. **Publish a periodic newsletter** for the wives. To do this you will need to learn the names and addresses of your members' wives, but it will be well worth the effort. Begin your publication by explaining the basics: What is Freemasonry? Who are Masons?





Who can be a Mason? What does the lodge support?, and What happens in lodge? A handy way to communicate effectively with non-Masons is to have the publication include answers to the most difficult questions non-members ask.

3. **Plan the first visit to the prospective member's home carefully.** Don't overlook the fact that Masonry is being evaluated even as you want to learn more about the prospective member and his family. Here are a few do's:

*Try to include men of similar age on the investigating committee or visitation team*

*Pay particular attention to the wife and children. Address questions to them too*

*Encourage the family to visit the lodge*

*Learn how the wife will feel about the amount of time her husband will spend becoming a Mason*

*Stress the benefits that are available to the entire family*

*Write a note thanking the family for allowing them time in their home*

4. **Recognize that the wife of a Mason – particularly a youthful member – will probably have a career of her own.** That career will take time just as the husband's career takes time. Be considerate of the time she must commit to her job. Be sensitive to the amount of time you ask a Mason to be away from his home. Remember that parity – equal time for belonging – holds true for both the husband and the wife in most 21st century families. So when you schedule events that include both spouses, plan your time and schedule events accordingly. If possible, provide babysitters for the evening.

5. **Cater the Ladies Night Dinner** if possible. Hopefully, you're already doing this. But we've heard of lodges where the ladies always cook the meal and clean up on Lady's Night. While you're at it, consider using linen with real china and silver. The caterer will only charge you a minimum price per place setting and they will be responsible for cleaning up and washing dishes even if you don't have dish washing facilities.
6. **Try a more lite fair at dinners.** Most wives are careful about meal planning for their husbands. Why spoil it at a dinner for the ladies loaded with fatty foods?
7. **Think and ask before you decide what's right for your lady guests.** It's probably OK to order flowers for a cruise or travel your lodge may have planned or even a special dinner. But what would your guests prefer? We've heard of lodges that have passed up a gift and made a contribution in the names of the wives to a local homeless shelter or to a local food bank. Gifts that ladies do like include a photograph with their husband, note cards, a book, perfume, candy, a gift certificate or even a free car wash. Above all, ask around. See what they say. You'll get good information.
8. **Remind wives of special meetings or dates** you want members to remember. You'll find attendance increases if the ladies are on your side and keeping the calendar at home.
9. **Thank every lady for her help.** Make her feel at home in lodge every time she attends.
10. **Pay attention to your own wife** and see that members follow your example. There's nothing more infuriating to a woman than to be invited to a meeting

with her husband only to have him disappear into a group of men telling jokes or discussing Freemasonry. Or worse yet to be left outside the closed doors of a tiled lodge room without a program for them. This may not be the easiest suggestion for you to share with your members, but it will pay handsome dividends when it comes to creating a more pleasant evening or event when members and their wives or friends are together socially.

11. **Host a meeting with the wives of recent members** sometime during the first six months. During the meeting, try to handle the questions they may still have about the Fraternity. Listen to their views on the use of time, the time husbands are away from home, meetings, costs, or other comments they may have. Try not to be defensive. Most likely you will only need to provide information that the husband has overlooked. Have coffee or tea available during the meeting and make each guest feel at home.
12. **Arrange for one of the wives to present a program.** Wives who are professional real estate agents, insurance brokers, stock brokers, teachers or professionals in other fields will present a program all members can enjoy. Present a small gift as a token of appreciation.
13. **Travel with spouses can present special opportunities or problems.** Most wives seem to get used to being left alone for hours during meetings or being directed towards shopping centers. But how many wives would prefer to see something in a new area? Almost every city has a convention or meeting planning bureau with a toll-free 800 number. There are planning professionals who are paid to make guests in a city feel at home. If you're traveling to a large city, consider giving them a call and asking them to help

arrange a visit or a day trip. Most of the time their services are free. To learn more about a city, dial 1-800-555-1212 and ask for Convention or Visitor Information Services in the city you are visiting.

14. **Feedback will tell you everything.** Ask for input from your members' wives or from your guests and you'll get it. Use it.

### ***Your Personal Workshop***

**W**hen ladies were asked what they liked the most about a meeting they attended with their husbands they responded with the following suggestions.

1. Activities that kept couples together
2. Limited "business" conversation
3. Avoiding "tasteless" jokes
4. Eliminating long introductions
5. Activities that included the women
6. Meeting new friends
7. Meeting leadership
8. Short speeches
9. Sensible dress requirements
10. Interesting food.

What do you think ladies dislike most about Masonic meetings? Develop here your list of how you think they might respond.

1. ....
2. ....
3. ....
4. ....
5. ....

Consider conducting an informal survey. But don't be surprised if you get low responses to a written survey. Those who don't like something seldom respond.

# Your Turn

**Y**ou can get the ladies on your side if you will use any of the ideas on the previous pages and add those you know will work for your lodge. But above all, have a plan.

Remember, for each action you plan, you will need someone to be responsible, deadlines for accomplishing the objectives and a list of the resources you will need.

**What are the objectives of my plan for involving spouses in lodge? (Make specific and time related)**

**How are my objectives related to my overall vision for the future or to the Blueprint for the Year 2000?**

**How am I going to approach meeting my objectives? (Describe in narrative form)**

**What are the specific actions I need to take? (Describe in more detail on the next page)**

Summarize the key actions  
you plan to take

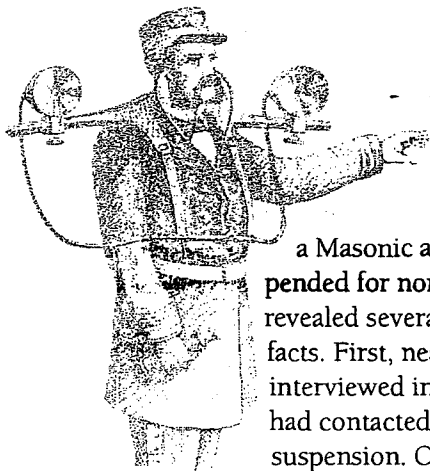
## Who is Responsible

| Start/Finish Dates |
|--------------------|
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### Resources Needed

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# Communicate With Your Members



A recent study of members of a Masonic appendant body suspended for non-payment of dues revealed several very interesting facts. First, nearly 50% of those interviewed indicated that no one had contacted them prior to their suspension. Of those interviewed, nearly 35% indicated they had no

knowledge of being suspended while another 35% could not be reached at all because information about them was incorrect or out of date.

Masonic lodges throughout North America face the awesome task of not only developing a more complete set of records on members, but also communicating with them more professionally, more regularly and with greater appeal. Where can we see examples of good member communications?

The airlines communicate monthly with their frequent flyers. Their objectives are to inform their customers about the miles they have accumulated but, more importantly, to keep their name in front of the customers who have many different airlines from which to choose.

The major credit card companies keep car holders informed about all manners of opportunities from leisure travel to specials on products. Triple A (AAA) provides members with an outstanding monthly newsletter offering tips on travel and safe ways to operate a car.

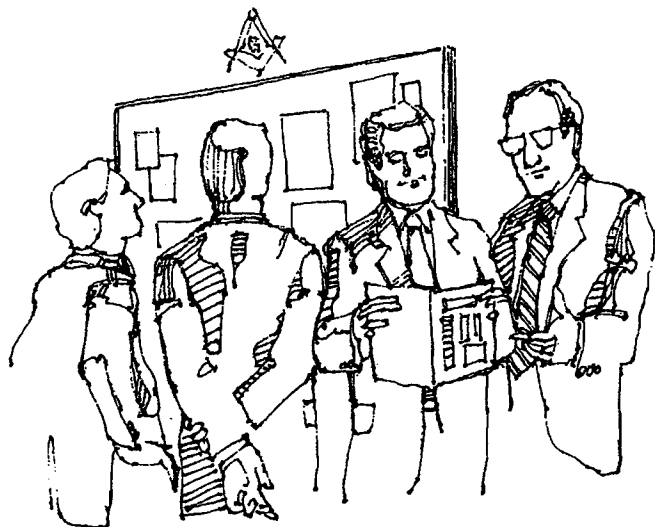
Colleges and universities, social clubs and country clubs, health clubs and hobby clubs all recognize the importance of effective, appealing member-centered communications.

## Ten Tips on How Your Lodge Can Improve Communications.

1. **Dress-up, brighten-up and spruce-up your existing publication** and communications to members. There's no doubt that the pocket-sized Trestle Board gives us

the facts about lodge. But it's equally clear that it's seldom appealing and inviting. Consider at least a quarterly supplemental publication mailed to the member and his family (see the sample layout in Appendix G).

2. **Input your member records into a computer.** Include the name, current address, phone number, employer, wife's name, date of birth, date raised and occupation or skill code. This will not be as easy as you may think since so many members are inactive and many will not respond to a questionnaire. Once you have the records, your lodge might consider using a Service Bureau to enter the names onto a disk for use in your computer. These agencies are bonded for security purposes and can do the job in a fraction of the time it would take in the lodge and the cost is usually about \$1.00 to \$2.50 per member record. Look under Service Bureau or Secretarial Services in your Yellow Pages.
3. **Develop a list of men who have been raised to Master Mason** in the past three years and ask the officers or volunteers in the lodge to contact each by phone and invite him to a special meeting, a dinner



or a friends night. Call back right before the meeting to confirm that he is going to attend. Members will respond to a personal invitation from a Brother quicker than you might expect.

4. **Develop a special Greetings program** for members or their wives. Mail to members on behalf of the lodge on significant holidays or birthdays. Remember, every time a communication from the lodge comes into the home, it raises the awareness of the member.
5. **Place as much information about the lodge in the local papers as possible.** This is not always easy because the local press may not be interested in carrying news about officers and appointments. But when you do give a scholarship or make a gift to a charity or to the community, give the facts to the local press in advance and follow-up with a news release afterwards. Persistence is an important ingredient. Members who see news about their Fraternity feel proud.
6. **Improve the communication in the lodge by developing and maintaining an attractive bulletin board,** and keep it current with member-related news and information.
7. **Improve the quality of the photographs you use.** The usual "grip-and-grins" may be easy to get but they do little to engage the reader. One lodge arranged for a group picture the night 25 year awards were presented. Most of these seldom seen Masons returned the following month to be presented with a copy of the picture.
8. **Make a contest out of improved attendance** and compete with another lodge for the best percent of growth in attendance. Let members know of your progress.

9. **Find a member who may be a designer or graphic artist with desk-top-publishing experience** and let him review all lodge communications. Listen to his recommendations.

10. **Rent, borrow or purchase a computer** for the lodge. Add word processing and graphics software. Consider adding a planning and budgeting package. Use it to improve the quality and frequency of communications to members.

## Your Personal Workshop

### What Happened?

The Worshipful Master was determined to make his year different. He was not going to tell the lodge what he was going to do, he would ask them for their ideas and build from there.

He developed a survey consisting of three pages of questions asking members for their input and advice. He had the Secretary send the survey to each member and he waited for the responses to come in.

Four weeks later, 17 had been returned. With more than 345 members in the lodge, the Master thought that was a pretty poor showing. He asked the Secretary what happened. He was told, "Don't feel bad, they don't respond to anything."

What went wrong? What could he have done? What should he do next?

For suggestions, turn upside down.

- a. Consider a phone survey; higher responses, better feedback, reduced frustration
- b. Beware that up to 50% of all member addresses are incorrect or out of date. Even first class mail takes months to be returned
- c. Responses to printed questionnaires will always reflect those most satisfied. Those most dissatisfied seldom respond



## Your Turn

**Y**ou should have ideas of your own on how to use improved communications to increase attendance in lodge. Use any of the ideas on the previous pages and add those you know will work for your lodge. Remember, it is important to fix some of the other problems we have been considering before mounting a major communications program to attract men back to lodge. Make improved member communications a part of your long-range plan.

**What are the communications objectives of my plan?** (Make it specific and time related)

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**How are my communications objectives related to my overall vision for the future or to the Blueprint for the Year 2000?**

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**How am I going to approach meeting my objectives?** (Describe in narrative form)

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**What are the specific actions I need to take?** (Describe in more detail on the next page)

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# Buddy-up and Connect

Attendance at lodge is directly related to the good feelings a man has about being with other men in a fraternal setting. Attendance is also very related to him having a good time. It's just that simple. If members are not able to enjoy themselves in lodge, if the meetings are boring or if nothing happens, you'll have to correct those problems before you can make meaningful progress with better attendance.



But the real problem seems to be that a man joins, gets through his degrees and "drops out" of sight. The records indicate that only about 35% go on to join other appendant bodies. So what happens to these newer Masons?

Well, the answer is painfully simple. They did not find the fellowship, friendship or the connections they expected in lodge. Many say no one paid any attention to them.

Imagine that. In a fraternity of men built on a foundation of friendship and Brotherly love, they were left to fend for themselves. That's what these next several pages are all about. Helping a man feel at home and connect in the lodge by assigning a Brother as his buddy.

## How It Works

1. **Assign every man who is elected to the lodge a buddy.** This can be his Recommender; more importantly, it's a fellow Mason maybe about the same age of the new member who agrees to the following:
  - To be at each stated and special meeting for six months*
  - To call personally to invite the new member to each meeting*
  - To provide transportation if required*
  - To follow-up after each degree to answer any questions*
  - To personally introduce the new Mason to men in the lodge*
  - To contact the family and answer any questions they may have*
2. **Introduce the new Mason to other Masons.** A new Mason should be introduced to more and more Masons who are encouraged to become part of his circle of friends. By this method, a new teacher, for example, may be introduced to others who teach as well as to those with whom he might connect because of his age, career, interests in sports, family, children, or other factors.
3. **Facilitate members learning about the interests of new members** by introducing the new Mason in lodge. Develop a thorough introduction stressing the man's

interests and his reasons for joining. Publish a personal "thumbnail" description by the new member in your lodge bulletin.

4. **Take the time to encourage the connecting process** by relating to members the name of new Masons you have met and what you found interesting about him as a man and a Mason. Do not embarrass anyone just remind the members that this relationship building process is fun and rewarding.
5. **Buddy-up outside of lodge also.** Ask a new member to a ball game or other sporting event. Ask him to invite several friends. Keep the event light and only discuss the lodge or Freemasonry if he raises the question. Use the time to get to know him as a friend. Answer any questions his friends may have if they ask.
6. **Consider taking a photograph of the new member and adding it to the bulletin board.** If the man agrees, ask him for photographs of his family or photographs of him engaged in his interests or hobbies. If there are examples of his hobby such as art or photography, consider using them in the display also. Change the display after a couple of months and return the photographs to the member with a note of thanks from the Master.
7. **Ask for feedback** periodically. Your important job is to be a friend and coach for the new Mason. He will tell you how you are doing. As you find he is making friends in lodge, you can withdraw somewhat and allow others to pick up the relationship. Remember, if you have done your job well, you will have a friend for life.
8. **Watch for any loss of interest** on the part of your new friend. If his attendance starts to lag, get in touch with him right

away and determine the cause. Don't let more than several meeting dates pass before you are in touch with him to determine if there are problems or other ways you can help.

## *Your Personal Workshop*

### **Spot the problem.**

**J**erry Diggs was 54 when he became a Mason. No one in his family had been a member and he joined because he was impressed with the things he had heard Masons did. The fact that so many famous men had been Masons helped too.

As a businessman who spent several days each week on the road, getting the degree work done was not as easy as he had been promised. He had trouble making the classes and frequently had difficulty catching up.

He joined a lodge made up of men most of whom had spent their entire careers with the local telephone company. Most of his close friends were not members and he was having problems connecting with those who did attend. Not that he didn't have a lot to offer. He was well educated and had belonged to other active organizations in another community. After several months of going to lodge and feeling left out, he stopped attending. He felt he could spend what little free time he had better elsewhere.

Questions for discussion:

1. **What appeared to be happening in this lodge?**
2. **What should Jerry and the lodge leadership have done?**
3. **How can this situation be "saved"?**
4. **What next step should the lodge take?**

# Your Turn

**Y**ou should have ideas of your own on how to use a buddy system to improve a new member's interest and attendance in lodge. The buddy system is really another way of establishing connections and helping a new member through the process. You may be a member of a lodge where connections come easily because many of the members work for the same company. However, increasingly that is not the case. How would you increase new-member interest? Develop your ideas here.

**What are the objectives of my plan?** (Make it specific and time related)

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**How are my objectives for developing a buddy system related to my overall vision for the future or to the Blueprint for the Year 2000?**

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**How am I going to approach meeting my objectives for new members?** (Describe in narrative form)

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**What are the specific actions I need to take?** (Describe in more detail on the next page)

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## Preparing Your Plan

| Summarize the key actions you plan to take | Who is Responsible | Start/Finish Dates | Resources Needed |
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|--|--------------------|--------------------|------------------|



# Put the Phones to Work



**N**othing works as well with members as personal contact. Whether you are looking to increase the interest in attendance or trying to identify volunteers for a charity project, if you can't meet face-to-face, reaching a man by telephone works best.

Sometimes you will use the phone to encourage a man to come back to lodge. Other times you may just want to check in with a member you have not seen for awhile. Others have used the phone to invite a member to a special meeting such as a Past Master's Night, Installation of Officers, or other special occasions in which they have expressed a special interest. They'll appreciate the fact you cared enough to call them. With a little effort and organization you and a few of your lodge members, officers and volunteers can carry off a very effective phone program. Here's what you should try to accomplish:

## An Effective Phone Program

1. **Reach each of the newest Masons** — men who were raised during the past three to five years but who have been absent from lodge. Your objectives in speaking with them include:
  - *Reacquainting them with the lodge* and with the last time you know they were in attendance. When? Check your lodge's register.
  - *Listening to them* tell you reasons why they appear to have lost interest in lodge or are not attending.
  - *Sharing with them your intentions* to rebuild interest in the lodge and your goals for attendance and membership.
  - *Handling their objections* on why they have not attended or listening to the conditions that have kept them away.
  - *Determining if there are reasons* for not attending related to not recalling the appropriate signs and words and offering to assist them.

2. **Use good telephone techniques** to get the best information from members and enlist their support for your plans for the lodge.

Techniques and questions like the following will be useful in gaining information without offending the member.

OPENING: "Good evening (his name), this is (your name and title) from (your lodge and location). Is this a convenient time for you to spend a few minutes with me on the phone?"

If not, arrange for call back time and date. Indicate when you will call him back.

Enter information on the phone card (see example on page 33), then do it.

Don't forget.

**Why don't we use the phone more often? Here are the reasons you will discover:**

No one likes calling members at home  
It takes too much time  
We can't get the volunteers to make the calls  
The numbers on file are never right  
Members "say" they don't like being contacted at home

**DEFUSE THE NEGATIVE:** "We've missed seeing you at lodge and a number of the Brethren have asked about you. I'm calling to encourage you to become active in the lodge and to answer any questions you may have."

**PROBE FOR REASONS:** "We realize that men like you have very little free time – only five or six hours a month. Others stopped attending because they weren't made to feel welcome or no one spoke to them. Are any of these reasons why you have become inactive?"

**ASK FOR HIS HELP:** "If there was one thing we could do in the lodge to get you interested and active again, what would that be?"

**EXPLAIN YOUR PLAN:** "Our lodge has identified reasons why men have not been as active as we would like. I wonder if I might explain some of our plans to you and get your reaction and suggestions?"

**GET HIS REACTION:** "Which of the ideas I have just outlined appear to be of greatest interest to you? What about the idea is most appealing?"

3. **Ask questions during the conversation** that will help you understand what has happened to his interest in Freemasonry and why he has apparently lost interest in your lodge. Consider:

"How has your wife viewed your interest in Freemasonry and your interest in our lodge? Has she been generally supportive of the time you committed to the Fraternity?"

"Most people like to be involved in the organization they join. Are there things you would like to do in the lodge that you have not had a chance to pursue but that might be of real interest to you?"

"How did your experience in learning the work for the degrees impress you? Were there any problems that you would like to discuss with me about the process?"

"What could we do to encourage you to give us the opportunity to involve you once again?"

4. **Handle his questions and objections in a way that encourages greater openness.** For example, if he indicates that he "hasn't had the time" to stay involved, try not to counter by saying that everyone has the time or that there's not that much time involved. Handle his objection "it takes too much time" by:

Agreeing that Masonry does require time  
Asking him how else he spends his leisure time

Determining if he has too little time because of a new job, etc.

Identifying precisely how much time he can commit

Trying to match some role in the Fraternity with the time available

5. **Learn proper phone etiquette and techniques** so you can put them to use in the lodge. Consider requesting the recently developed Shrine video, *Communicating for Members*, which explains how to use the phone correctly. You may be able to enlist the support of your local phone company to provide training in telephone techniques. They will suggest that you:
- Always greet the respondent with a warm, friendly but firm voice.

Clearly state your name and affiliation

Ask if you can please speak with Mr. (first and last name)

Determine if this is a good time to spend a few minutes talking or are you interrupting a dinner, etc.

Spend as much time listening carefully as you do speaking

Thank him for his time and information when terminating the call

7. **Complete the call report card** after each phone conversation.

## Your Personal Workshop

### Putting Phones to Work

**Y**ou may want to use the time you spend on the phone to develop a profile of the member with whom you are speaking. By doing so, you can develop a record for the lodge and for others who may call in the future. This information will be very helpful in planning many lodge activities. But remember, this information is very personal and confidential so great care should be taken to insure its confidentiality.

Ideally, this information should be entered into a computer in a file structure that can be viewed and printed as needed. But if you cannot yet do that, use note cards that you can purchase in most stationery supply stores. You may not want to capture all of this information, but use the two-sided card produced below as an example.

|                                      |               |             |
|--------------------------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Name                                 | Date of Birth | Date Raised |
| Address                              |               |             |
| Phone (Work)                         | Phone (Day)   |             |
| Name of Spouse                       |               |             |
| Name of Children                     |               |             |
| Place of Employment                  |               |             |
| Title or Job function                |               |             |
| Special interests, skills or hobbies |               |             |

#### Phone record

| Date called | Member calling | Reason for contact | Member response | Contact next |
|-------------|----------------|--------------------|-----------------|--------------|
|             |                |                    |                 |              |
|             |                |                    |                 |              |
|             |                |                    |                 |              |
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|             |                |                    |                 |              |

# Your Turn

**Y**ou need to consider the phone as a friend of the lodge. It can also be very helpful in a number of areas not discussed here. Use any of the ideas on the previous pages and add those you know will work for your lodge. The lodge secretary can be very helpful in gaining additional information about members. Develop your ideas below. Make them part of a plan.

**What are the objectives of my plan for putting the phone to work?** (Make it specific and time related)

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**How are my objectives related to my overall vision for the future or to the Blueprint for the Year 2000?**

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**How am I going to approach meeting my objectives?** (Describe in narrative form)

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**What are the specific actions I need to take?** (Describe in more detail on the next page)

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# How Food Can Work for You

**Y**ou may think we're searching for problems when we discuss the matter of food in the lodge. However, we've heard so much from Masons on this matter that we believe it is a real opportunity to improve attendance by challenging the lodge's view of food and the quality of its products.

What we are going to suggest to you in this section falls into two principal categories: food quality and food costs.

A typical lodge meal often looks like this:

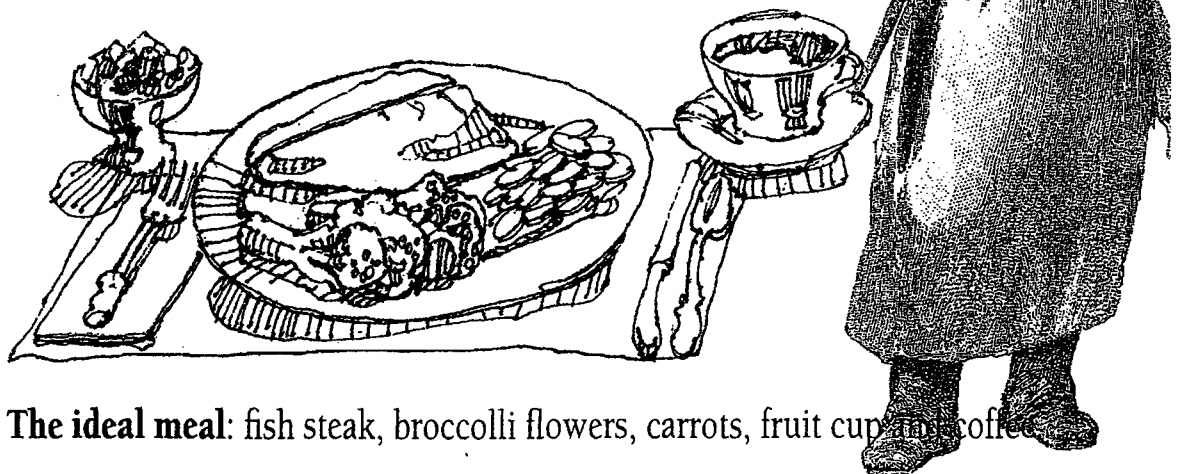
Small table salad or slaw  
Meatloaf with gravy  
Mashed potatoes with gravy  
Rolls and butter  
Broccoli greens  
Apple pie with ice cream  
Coffee or iced tea

Your lodge may offer different choices but they are probably not significantly different. If you're hungry while you are reading this it may look good to you. But if you stop to think about the recent trends in good health, there are lots of ways to improve upon both the quality and nutrition without dramatically increasing costs.

By doing so, you may alert members to the fact that the lodge cares about good nutrition, health and quality. This may bring members back. Here are ten specific suggestions:

## 10 Great Food Ideas

1. **Price your meals based upon value.** It's very difficult for a Mason to buy a meal – even a bad one – for what he pays in his lodge. And since more than 85% of the members are not attending, consider the possibility that the quality of the meals, even those cooked by skilled chefs (the ladies or Brethren who assist), could be better if you only charged a dollar or so more. Most people consider a full-course dinner an excellent buy if it is in the \$8.00 range.
2. **Select entrees that are healthful** and inform people that you are doing so. Skinless chicken has 60% less fat than chicken with skin. Broil or bake chicken rather than frying it. Avoid using batters. Cook more with lemon juice as a seasoning and reduce the amount of cooking oils you use.



**The ideal meal:** fish steak, broccoli flowers, carrots, fruit cup and coffee

3. **Consider a fish entree as an alternative** and see if they would be willing to pay slightly more for fresh fish such as tuna steak or Orange Ruffly. Broil or bake in lemon or light vegetable oil. Serve with rice.
4. **Serve fresh vegetables** whenever possible. Fresh asparagus, broccoli, zucchini, carrots and eggplant make excellent additions to traditional meals.
5. **Obtain foods from a wholesale food distributor** if one is located in the area. Purchasing fresh vegetables in case lots the day of the dinner will provide for fresh food that is more tasty, better for you and probably more fun to prepare and serve.
6. **Use alternative methods of cooking** if possible. Avoid deep frying especially in animal fat. Consider broiling or steaming. Ask your local supplier if he can deliver meats like chicken pre-cooked so you need only warming ovens.
7. **Substitute low fat or no fat breads and cakes** when possible. Certain manufacturers are able to prepare cakes, pies, breads and other grain products without the use of oil which dramatically reduces their fat and cholesterol content. Selected use of whole grain breads or pasta also adds to variety and nutrition.
8. **Ask wives to recommend special dishes** or even whole menus which can be prepared for larger numbers of people at reasonable costs. Most of the ladies are very aware of the need for good health and most will welcome the chance to be of service.
9. **Involve members in preparation and service.** You may be surprised by how many men like to cook and would wel-

come the chance to serve in your lodge's kitchen.

10. **Visit a restaurant for dinner occasionally.** Meet at the restaurant, order from a pre-planned menu, enjoy dinner and then have your program. It's a great opportunity for a local establishment and good fellowship for the members.

## Your Personal Workshop

**W**e've all heard too many jokes about "Belly" Mason. It's not a flattering term, and we can do something to help those who want help. Below are a few suggestions for healthy, inexpensive alternatives in each of the important parts of the planned menu. Develop a series of menu alternatives for your lodge. Get prices from suppliers and see if you can't offer several during the coming year.

### **Appetizers:**

Raw vegetables (such as asparagus, bell peppers, broccoli, carrots, cauliflower, celery, cherry tomatoes etc.) with yogurt-dill dip  
Salsa and tortilla chips

### **Entrees:**

Fresh fish (broiled, baked or poached)  
Vegetable lasagna  
Flank steak with grainy mustard marinade

### **Vegetables:**

Steamed broccoli (or any vegetable) with lemon  
Corn on the cob  
Sweet onions baked in their skin  
Baked potatoes with low-fat sour cream  
Rice pilaf

### **Breads:**

Corn muffins  
Whole wheat or multi-grain bread

### **Desserts:**

Baked apple  
Fresh fruit  
Fruit sorbet  
Light cheesecake topped with fruit

### **Amenities:**

Fresh flowers, table clothes and real china

# Your Turn

**Y**ou will need to carefully plan any changes you want to make with regard to food service in the lodge. Your kitchen and your staff must agree to help by making certain changes. Use any of the ideas on the previous pages and add those you know will work for your lodge. The spouses of Masons who have helped with meal preparation and service will also be of significant help.

**What are the objectives of my plan for improving food service and quality in lodge?**  
(Make it specific and time related)

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**How are my objectives related to my overall vision for the future or to the Blueprint for the Year 2000?**

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**How am I going to approach meeting my objectives? (Describe in narrative form)**

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**What are the specific actions I need to take? (Describe in more detail on the next page)**

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# Your Plan

Summarize the key actions  
you plan to take

[illegible]

# Make Involvement Pay Off

**B**elieve it or not, attendance in lodge can be directly related to responsibility.

Think about it this way. A man joins an organization with the expectation that he will somehow be involved with the organization, involved with the members, involved in the leadership and involved with the community. That involvement is an expectation. Meeting that expectation produces satisfaction and a "benefit".

So, how do many Masonic leaders look at member involvement? First, there is some misunderstanding that only by giving the work to a small group of loyal supporters can we get anything accomplished. Others say that the number of inactive members proves people don't want to be involved. Both are incorrect!

Involving a man in work that is rewarding, and recognizing good work are the surest ways to keep him interested. And believe it or not, involvement has nothing to do with age. Young or old, men who join expect to be involved. Look at what the experts say.

Max DePree in *Leadership Is An Art* describes in the chapter entitled "Theory Fastball", the rights of people who work together paralleling the relationship between a great pitcher and catcher. In doing so he develops seven fundamental rights of people and establishes the basis for understanding a new concept of work.

See if they don't apply to you and the involvement of members in your lodge as well.

1. DePree, Max,  
*Leadership Is An Art*,  
New York, Dell Publishing,  
1989, pp. 36-41

## Seven Rights of People<sup>1</sup>

1. **The right to be needed.** Can I use my gifts? Can I be part of the mainstream of the organization or forever assigned to unimportant tasks? Can I make a difference? Can I find a personal relationship in helping meet group goals?
2. **The right to be involved.** Does the leader ask for my input? Is the request genuine? Can I be included in the evaluation, decision making and implementation of a program or idea?
3. **The right to a covenantal relationship.** Do I sense a "contract" exists between my Brothers? Can I feel comfortable abandoning myself to the talents of others? Are the relationships strong enough to survive conflict and change?
4. **The right to understand.** Have I a clear picture of the vision or mission? Do I understand the pathway or strategy of the group? Can I see where I "fit" into the organization as a whole?
5. **The right to affect one's own destiny.** Can I affect my own future? Are there systems in place which acknowledge my hard work and my contributions?



6. **The right to be accountable.** Do I have a stake in the ownership of the group's problems and its risks? Does anyone care about what I do?
7. **The right to make a commitment.** Is this a place where they will let me do my best? Can I see how I can contribute? Are there systems in place that encourage my commitment?
3. **Provide new and existing members with more information** about the plans and goals of lodge. Do so early in the planning process. You need not ask them to vote upon your effort, but do ask for them to read and absorb what you are providing. Make the information easy to read and appealing.

Following are 10 ways to increase member involvement in your lodge. Remember, the purpose of discussing involving members in lodge activities is that with involvement comes a commitment to participate and be present.

### **10 Ways to Increase Member Involvement**

1. **Identify the skills, talents and interests of each of your members**, active and inactive. It will be tough work but it will be worth it. If you understand that involvement means using men's talents and understanding their right to be needed, you will want to match their involvement with their gifts and talents. If you are unable to capture this information on every inactive member, at least capture this data on every new member. For an example of a profile form you can use in your lodge, refer to the Membership Development Kit, Module 10, "Using Information in Membership Management", or use the profile developed in "Put the Phones to Work" (step 7).
2. **Ask new members how they want to be involved** when you visit them in their homes. Ask again following each degree. Make the individuals feel that involvement is expected. Do not let the behavior of members who are cynical about the lodge become ingrained in new members.
4. **Solicit their input.** Make the request genuine and sincere. Listen to what they say. Determine beforehand how you will use this information in the decision-making and implementation process.
5. **Demonstrate that you have heard what they are saying.** Use their ideas in the decision-making process. Let members know who contributed and how important that contribution was.
6. **Hold a meeting and invite members who are not normally part of the decision-making process to attend.** Seek their advice and get them involved in the implementation process.
7. **Listen to everyone.** You may have to overlook a lot but good listening encourages members to give valuable input.
8. **Seek their involvement.** Ask them to join a team or committee. Give an assignment that matches their needs to their talents. Hold them accountable.
9. **Evaluate their contributions** in ways that strengthen the covenant. Let them know of their contribution to the organization. Make them feel a part of the future of the lodge.
10. **Reward real performance and real contributions** in some meaningful way. Responsibility, achievement and reward are fundamental to human motivation and to active involvement in the lodge.

## Your Personal Workshop

**W**hen you think about involvement in your lodge, how do Max DePree's "rights" (outlined on page 40) come into play? How can they help you understand the importance of member involvement? What ideas do they give you on how you can involve members in your lodge? Here are a few ways we've heard of. Assess the progress your lodge has made by giving yourself an "A" if you frequently do similar things in your lodge, a "C" if you do them occasionally and an "F" if never.

**All major decisions are made by the lodge officers after an open dialogue with the members who are asked for their input before decisions are approved.**

My grade:            ☐ A            ☐ B            ☐ C            ☐ D            ☐ F

**Most of the important jobs are assigned to a number of different men not to a few.**

My grade:            ☐ A            ☐ B            ☐ C            ☐ D            ☐ F

**The future plan and strategy for the lodge is developed by the leaders and is shared with the members.**

My grade:            ☐ A            ☐ B            ☐ C            ☐ D            ☐ F

**Every member is asked for his input.**

My grade:            ☐ A            ☐ B            ☐ C            ☐ D            ☐ F

**We give the task to the man who has the gifts and talents.**

My grade:            ☐ A            ☐ B            ☐ C            ☐ D            ☐ F

1. Identify three specific ways in which you can get the membership involved in planning for the future for your lodge.

a. ....  
b. ....  
c. ....

2. What specific signs or signals have you noticed among the members that they really want to be involved in lodge decisions?

a. ....  
b. ....  
c. ....

3. What signs have they shown that they don't want to be involved?

a. ....  
b. ....  
c. ....

4. List below the names of three members you know personally who are not officers that should be more involved with lodge decision making.

a. ....  
b. ....  
c. ....

# Your Turn

Obviously there are many ways to involve members in the lodge including those presented in this book. But do they also increase attendance? They will if you keep the ideas you have just discovered in mind. You might want to target a group of younger more-recent members first. Use their enthusiasm to help stimulate the group. Don't be surprised if they get off to a quick start that challenges the way things have always been done in your lodge.

**What are the objectives of my plan for greater member involvement? (Make it specific and time related)**

**How are my objectives related to my overall vision for the future or to the Blueprint for the Year 2000?**

**How am I going to approach meeting my objectives? (Describe in narrative form)**

**What are the specific actions I need to take? (Describe in more detail on the next page)**

# Your Plan

Summarize the key actions  
you plan to take

## Who is Responsible

| Start/Finish Dates |            |
|--------------------|------------|
| 08/01/2017         | 09/01/2017 |
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| 10/01/2017         | 11/01/2017 |
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| 01/01/2026         | 02/01/2026 |
| 02/01/2026         | 03/01/2026 |
| 03/01/2026         | 04/01/2026 |
|                    |            |

### Resources Needed

[illegible]

# Creating "Followship"

The essence of leadership is creating "followship". No, that's not a misspelling of fellowship, we mean "followship". Leaders can't make things happen for very long unless they also create a willingness on the part of members to follow. Hence, followship is an important idea for Freemasonry and an important means of increasing interest, activity and attendance in lodge.

Look anywhere in the organization where a lodge is flourishing and you will find an able leader. Look beyond what appears on the surface and you will see that the members of the lodge have "elected" him the leader.

Another way of saying this is that they have agreed to follow him. That "election" process, even when there is no formal ballot involved, is the essence of leadership.

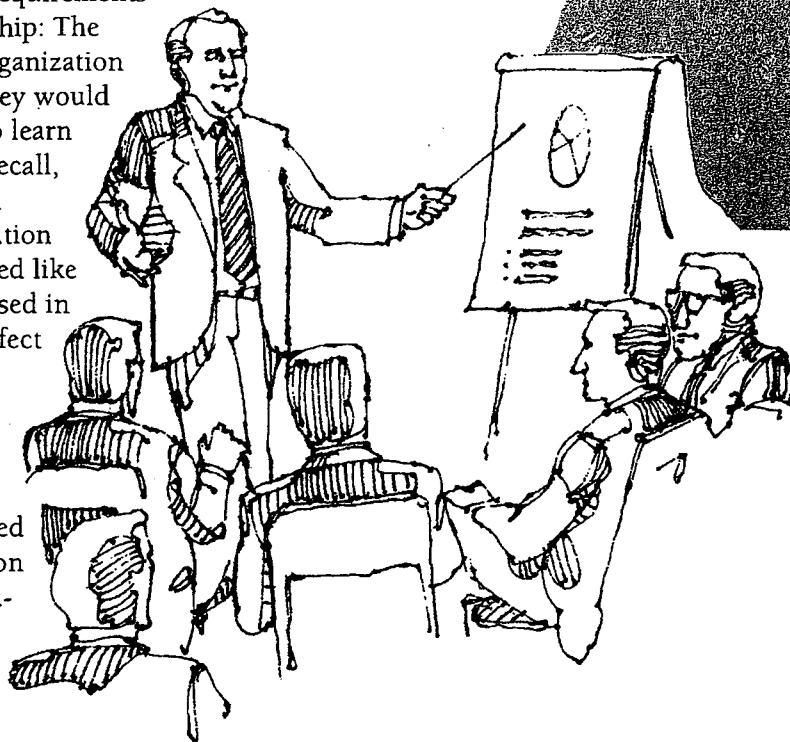
In a very real sense, effective leadership increases attendance. Here's an important reason why. When men were asked in a survey why they would join an organization, two of their most important requirements were related to leadership: The importance that the organization be well-led and that they would have an opportunity to learn and to lead. You may recall, the reasons why a man would join an organization like Freemasonry looked like the graphic you discussed in Step 3, "Plan For a Perfect Evening" on page 15.

Members, therefore, can either elect to follow the strategy outlined by the leader or abandon it. A vote in the affirmative means that the member sees in the vision of the leader a

compelling reason to follow. It has a lot to do with what you have just discovered in Step 9 "Make Involvement Pay Off". Let's look at some examples you can relate to.

How did Lee Iacocca of Chrysler get employees, bankers, stockholders, lenders, and the federal government to "buy" into Chrysler's "renewal" plan? By creating a compelling vision of a strong car company, proud of its product and made in America. That's creating "followship".

How did General Norman Schwarzkoff get an American and multi-national force of men and women to follow his lead into a mid-East war many considered another Vietnam? By making two commitments: To win the war in a very short time and to bring every participant home safely. Even though in war neither may be possible, his vision, followed by his actions resulted in elected leadership. Schwarzkoff created "followship".



If you stop and think about it, both of these examples can be related to the lodge. When the leader of the lodge, or any organization for that matter, has a powerful, positive and compelling vision of where the organization is going, the tendency is to "hop aboard." So how does this relate to increasing attendance in the lodge? The answer comes right back to the fundamentals: Lodge attendance is directly related to quality leadership.

To round out these 101+ ideas for increasing lodge attendance, we have identified 8 different suggestions leaders of the lodge can do to create "followship" through leadership. Most are related to any organization. Some are very difficult to do. All are worth trying.

### **Create Followship Through Leadership**

#### **1. Spend quality time focusing on your customers – the members**

When an organization is member or customer-driven, such as ours, all of the actions of the organization need to be viewed in light of how the member benefits. Make that your litmus test. If the member sees the action you are taking as a benefit – meeting his expectation – then it's worth doing. Conversely, if what you are doing will be viewed negatively, that is, your member will not be able to identify the benefit, then you may need to rethink your strategy or develop a stronger member benefit case. So, if the benefits are strong enough, you can increase the dues, ask members to pay more for a dinner and take other actions as long as they see your focus is on them and they benefit.

*Ask members what they want, get feedback on your planned actions, survey your active members to determine their satisfaction, hold a focus group in lodge and ask them to*

*share with you their views on how well members are being served.*

#### **2. Be directed towards the future**

When members get the sense that the organization has its eye on the future they are much more likely to be interested and involved. All individuals want their organization to survive and most realize that knowing where the organization is going and how the future is defined are important ingredients.

*Demonstrate this by letting your members know what you are thinking and what you have discovered. Ask for their input, study the research, read widely about the social trends in the 21st century, rent and use Joel Barker's Discovering the Future video series (see bibliography) and form a future planning team or committee in your lodge.*

#### **3. Formulate your vision for the 21st century**

Just as Iacocca's and Shwartzkoff's visions were powerful incentives for people to "elect" them leader and create followship, your vision for the future of your organization can be powerful as well. Disney's vision of Disneyland preceded by years the actual ground breaking in California. Your future views of the lodge need to be thought about, explored and defined. Here are the questions that will help guide you. The result will be more interest, greater support and higher attendance by members.

*How do you see your lodge today? What is your vision of your lodge in the year 2000? Is it a warm and friendly place with great fellowship? What are your members' expectations? How will they join? What role will the lodge play in the community? With the family? For more information on the importance of a vision for the future,*



review and discuss the Blueprint 2000 which is included in Appendix C.

4. **Complete an assessment of where you stand today**

Your lodge may need to look at where it is today as a first step in moving towards the future. If you're already doing most of the 101+ ideas in this program, you're clearly ready for the future. But if your audit shows that you have a way to go, you'll probably want to fix before you build. In many ways, fixing what you have and making it right is a part of the building process.

*How many members in the lodge do we now have? What has happened over the last 5 years? What is happening this year? What do we expect for next year? How are we viewed in our community? How many sons are following their fathers into Freemasonry? What are our dues? What should they be? What will happen if we have 50% fewer members by the year 2010?*

5. **Fix the products first**

Some Masons get disturbed when they hear the term "products" applied to Freemasonry. But our members expect to receive something as a result of joining. Products is simply another convenient word to describe their expectations in specific terms. Ritual is a product. Fellowship is a product. Personal growth is a product. So also is charity.

*How would you define the products of Freemasonry? What are the conditions of each of the products of Freemasonry? What work needs to be done to increase the quality of each? What will keep us from doing so? How can these obstacles be removed?*

6. **Recognize the importance of change**

You may have heard it said that doing more of the same things, even better, just won't cut it. You will need to do some of the different things we have been discussing on these pages. Change is often a difficult and painful process to an organization just as it is for individuals. Many of the active Masons in your lodge may resist change. They attend because the lodge gives them what they expect. They tend to prize sameness. You can do things differently. Here is a fundamental question:

***What exists today in your lodge that, if it did not exist, would fundamentally change and strengthen the organization and insure its survival?***

How you answer that question – there will be more than one – is fundamental to the change process and to your future.

7. **Make something happen right away**

Members will look to your leadership to make something happen soon. If you have followed the 10 steps outlined in this book you're on your way.

8. **Focus on Quality**

Organizations that fail to focus on quality cannot make most of the other steps happen. Look at the really high-quality organizations and see how well they are doing. AT&T, Disney, Pepsi, The Girl Scouts, Hewlett-Packard, Herman Miller, and the Salvation Army. All have put their emphasis on quality.

## Your Personal Workshop

Warren Bennis in *On Becoming A Leader*<sup>1</sup> indicates that one of the qualities of leadership is that leaders do the right things. In your lodge there are many different things you can do. Which ones are right? Is it right to ignore time as a measure of satisfaction if dealing with time causes conflict among existing members? Or is it "more right" to convince them of the need to change their views on the importance of time because we have determined that time mismanagement is a major reason why men are not attending lodge? Obviously, one of the right things you should do is to first understand the importance of time and then do something about the use of time in your lodge.

What are the other "right" things you should consider? Which of your ideas are strategic to the future of your lodge? What obstacles will you need to overcome to effect change in these important areas? How can you use the power of "followship" to make these things happen in your lodge?

Put your ideas to work in the space below. Your responses to these questions can be among the most important you have ever considered in Freemasonry.

1. **As the leader of the lodge you may not be able to do everything that you think is important...at least not in one year. Consider the following and determine which one or two are critical to the leadership you will provide during your year.**

Institute a community relations program

Develop a long range plan for lodge

Initiate membership development

Increase Masonic education

Focus on Masonic awareness

Initiate leadership development

Focus on fellowship in the lodge

Make no changes

2. **The choices you made above are an important step in the strategic process. Making the right choice is critical. Most specialists in organizational development believe that renewal begins with a compelling vision for the future. What is your vision for the future of your lodge?**

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3. **Joel Barker in his video, *The Power of Vision*<sup>2</sup>, says that empowerment comes after leaders have built a vision community. In your lodge, who are the members of the vision community, and how will you go about getting their support or "followship"?**

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<sup>1</sup> Bennis, Warren, *On Becoming a Leader*, New York: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company Inc., 1989.

<sup>2</sup> Barker, Joel, *The Power of Vision*, Minnesota: Charthouse International Learning Corporation.

# Your Turn

**I**t should be pretty clear by now that we've subtly changed the subject from lodge attendance to the role of leadership in lodge attendance. In addition, we have taken a somewhat longer view. Both are important transitions for this program and for the lodge. It is also important that every lodge should consider all 8 of the ideas presented in this section and do them in an order that resembles the one presented. But even if you are not able to undertake all, do something. Develop your ideas below.

**What are the objectives of leadership in my lodge?** (Make it specific and time related)

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**How are my objectives related to my overall vision for the future or to the Blueprint for the Year 2000?**

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**How am I going to approach meeting my objectives?** (Describe in narrative form)

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**What are the specific actions I need to take?** (Describe in more detail on the next page)

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## Preparing Your Plan

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# Appendices

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# How This Publication Was Developed

**T**he book *101+ Ways to Improve Interest and Attendance in Your Masonic Lodge* was developed by Masons interested in providing an easy-to-use handbook for the lodge. It is viewed as the first in a series of guides the lodge can purchase for relatively low cost.

The concept for the guide developed after the leadership of the Masonic Renewal Committee listened to Masons and the leaders of lodges tell about their frustration with the low turn out at stated and special meetings. They were aware of the help provided in the Membership Development and Management Kit but wanted something that would be easier to use and contained ideas that had worked elsewhere.

The key to the use of this guide is to recognize that not all 101+ ideas will work for every lodge, but that the majority may. Masons who have written and reviewed the contents say the ideas are, "right on," "a great help for any lodge," "exactly what the leadership needs to make something happen in a lodge," "the

ideas on putting food to work in your lodge and building fellowship are worth the price of the Guide."

Throughout its development, we have asked Masons to give us their specific suggestions. Our intent was to make sure that nothing was offensive, contrary to generally accepted Masonic Law or so inflammatory that it would cause it to be "banned" in any jurisdiction.

In the process of this review, we received the advice and comments of a number of helpful Masons. We are grateful for the time they took and for their constructive criticism. On behalf of Masons everywhere, we thank them for their efforts.

If you would like an additional copy of this book, or would like to send a copy to a friend, please contact your Grand Lodge or the Masonic Renewal Committee.

*The Masonic Renewal Committee of North America*

# Blueprint 2000

## ***In The Year 2000***

**I**n the rapid often unpredictable pace with which the world is changing, predicting the forces which will influence Freemasonry next year may be difficult. The combination of rough economic times, changing social values, the frustrations of the middle class and a host of other forces makes those who would forecast the future very uneasy.

Freemasonry cannot afford to limit its horizon for renewal to a single year – even if the vision were perfectly clear. Change cannot and will not occur on so rapid a scale even among the most progressive jurisdictions.

As a result, the year 2000 – a scant 8 years hence – presents the best target for defining first the vision and then the strategy for achieving it.

This process of strategic planning has been on the minds and in the hearts of a number of jurisdictions for the past five years and significant progress has been made. Throughout the process, the guiding principle has been an unshakable understanding of the forces at play on the Fraternity between now and the year 2000.

In the decade ahead, the fate of organizations like Freemasonry and corporations like IBM and volunteer-led groups like the Girl Scouts will be *customer driven*. Freemasonry will be *member-driven*.

*Time and quality* will be our members' perquisites. The ordinary will not cut it. Lodges that understand that they have an obligation to meet their members' needs with quality as defined by the member will survive.

## **The Blueprint Defined**

A blueprint suggests rather than portrays the final product. Blueprints set the evaluations and define the outline. They are the fundamental element for the craftsman.

A blueprint does not tell the mason or the carpenter how to build just what to build. So it is with this blueprint.

The blueprint for Freemasonry in the year 2000 has been well defined. That is, the fundamentals are there. The foundation has been tested and the ground is firm.

The shape and scope of the structure has been reviewed by thoughtful Masons with an eye to the future and ear to the past. The past, present and future perspective has been necessary in order that the structure will house the fundamental tenants of the Craft.

And the architects have listened to those who will call this house their home. Members. Past and present and future.

Some will say, "what do they know?" Masons with an eye for the future will answer, "Everything!"

Ours will be a genteel Craft for any man of good rapport who professes a belief in a Supreme Being and is well recommended. He will find in his lodge men with commitment to real fraternity and brotherhood. Men who are anxious that he be a Brother and treat him accordingly. Men who come to lodge regularly because doing so is an event that amazes him, inspires him, enlightens and delights him.

His lodge will be a place of great connections. There, he will meet his friends and his boss. His neighbor and his neighbor.

His mentor and peer. His customer and his competition. His father and his son.

At lodge he will connect with his Fraternity in new and exciting ways. He will learn gladly of its history and revel in his place in its present. He will learn the lessons of his Craft from men who are inspired to teach and from men who are anxious to learn.

At lodge the young man and the older man will meet on a foundation forged from both the familiar and the unfamiliar. In the lodge, both will need to yield and stand firm. Each must connect with the other. Neither's path is entirely right or wrong.

Lodge will be a place of community and family. Well known and understood by both. A bright, open, well managed and maintained sanctuary for men and for the community – the center of what's needed and what's possible.

The lodge will be a place of fathers and sons. A respect for one another and for the Fraternity born out of the recognition that one does not replace the other. That a man may not abandon his family for the Fraternity. That the family with the Fraternity is not only possible but desirable.

Finally, Masons in the year 2000 will need to stand for some singularly-passionate and popular cause. They must find the symbolic crippled child and build a global solution of such quality and renown that men everywhere will want to be counted among the membership.

## **Men of Great Courage**

The blueprint for the Craft in the year 2000 means Masons must change a lot and a little. The basic precepts need not change. The ritual need not change. But every other aspect of the Fraternity



must be considered subject to review.

Because we understand the needs of Future Masons, present Masons must build in change. Old ways of doing things – almost everything – will need to change.

Lodges that are inactive will need to become active. Lodges without able leaders will need to find or train men to lead.

Lodges who waste time will have to save time. Lodges that exclude the family will have to include the family. Lodges that count on ritual to the exclusion of all else will need to include all else and still count upon ritual.

This change – and others not yet considered – will not be done by timid men. Nor will it be done by men who sit in the East a single year. It will need to be done *by the lodge, and by men of great courage.*

There will be many who will say it should not be done and try to stand in the way. The blueprint's great value is that it will help those empowered to change to stay the course. To prevail because the path to the future has been well defined and that Masonry will be enhanced not diminished as a result.

## The Next Step

Blueprints define the boundaries. Then the real work begins.

Knowing what the structure looks like does not tell us how to get there. Blueprints are outlines. Craftsmen must work with real materials. They must chip and frame and nail and plane each piece so that the structure comes together as one.

Typically, builders start with the foundation. Masons have their foundation fully defined. They did so in two strategic planning conferences in 1991. Now the building can begin.

Masons know that they must still define the ways in which the Fraternity will be involved in the community.

Masons know that they must help lodges with the issues of time and quality.

Masons know that they must have a program for leadership development.

Masons know that a compelling national problem Masons can help solve still must be defined.

Masons know that how a man learns about his Fraternity in such a manner that he follows its teaching and revels in its principles still can and should be improved in the context of the needs of members for both time and quality.

These and other questions will need the thoughtful attention of Masons in 1992 who will develop a specific plan and specific products to meet these and other challenges of the Craft.

As a result, the blueprint suggests that the strategic planning conference initiated in 1991 will continue indefinitely and be the strategy-setting forum at which Masons from throughout North America may gather to discuss and resolve the critical issues facing their future.

In the meantime, progress in producing the products useful and imperative at the lodge level must be continued. The development of the Membership Development and Management Kit must be followed by regional membership management symposiums to which lodges may send a representative to learn more about implementing the program.

The Leadership and Management Development Kit must be started in 1992 and be ready for lodges by early 1993.

All of which means that support must continue to come from sources already identified and from those yet developed. Support must come from the sale of existing products to the more than 20,000 lodges in North America. Support must continue from the Scottish Rite Bodies and from the Shrine. And it must come from you.

The Blueprint for Masonry is well defined. The willing hands of Masons to build upon it is well known. The vision is clear. *Together, we can make it happen.*

The Masonic Renewal Committee of North America

For additional copies please write:

The Masonic Renewal Committee of North America

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Kansas City, Missouri 64153

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# Executive Summary

Two national research projects were completed in 1988 and 1989. The first phase was conducted with 1,000 non-Mason households and was designed to gain specific insight into why people join an organization and how we could attract new members to Freemasonry. The second phase research, conducted a year later, asked Masons their feelings about their Fraternity, why some were dissatisfied and why some men were inactive in their lodge but still retained their membership.

It was against this background of research that a short-term and long-term strategy for the renewal of the Fraternity was developed. What had started as a review of the State of the Craft had progressed through a Task Force and now rested with the Masonic Renewal Committee of North America empowered by the Conference of Grand Masters with Grand Lodge representatives from throughout North America.

At the annual Conference of Grand Masters in San Diego, February 1991, the Masonic Renewal Committee of North America recommended a series of strategic planning conferences to consider actions the Fraternity would need to take to create organization relevance and a renewal strategy every Mason could embrace by the year 2000.

The first conference was held in May at the Lake of the Ozarks. More than 50 Masons from 23 Grand Jurisdictions attended the three-day conference which was dedicated to identifying those areas most in need of attention. The second strategic planning conference was held in Tulsa in October. Forty Masons representing 22 Grand Jurisdictions participated. Most who attended were progressive Grand Lodge leaders. Between the two conferences, 35 Grand Jurisdictions were represented.

During the first conference it was determined that four areas needed the most attention:

- Development of a compelling Vision for the Future
- A strategy for meeting the Needs of Members
- Recommendations for a more Effective Grand Lodge and Blue Lodge organization
- A Blueprint for creating a more Relevant Organization

Participants at the first conference developed recommendations in each of these areas. Their specific suggestions were recorded on four comprehensive questionnaires completed during the summer.

Those suggestions and recommendations were studied and used by the representatives at the second planning conference.

It was clearly the opinion of the majority of those attending both conferences that great strides in the renewal of the Craft were not only possible but necessary. They agreed that changes of significant magnitude could be and should be considered. Strategically, they began by developing a Vision for the Future.

## Vision for the Future

The framework of any strategic plan begins with a vision of the future. This vision enables the leadership to stay focused on a specific, expected future for the Fraternity. A powerful vision enables the membership to identify the role it must play and pursue it with a vengeance. For Freemasonry, the vision for the year 2000 forms the basic framework of the Strategic Plan. The vision for Freemasonry developed at the conference in Tulsa was:

*Freemasonry: A Global Fraternity United in Building a Better World.*

The participants were very specific in describing the operative words:

*Global:* Meaning the scope and influence of Masonry as an organization should be worldwide

*Fraternity:* Meaning a brotherhood of men

*United:* Meaning working and thinking together; not fragmented and divided

*Building:* Fundamental to our origins meaning to create, frame or make happen

*Better World:* Meaning we can make a difference and stand for greatness

## Freemasonry's Mission Statement

Mission statements describe an organization's reason for being. The Fraternity's mission statement establishes the degree to which our organization will set itself apart from the average and the ordinary; from the civic and the social club. The Mission Statement developed at the Tulsa conference follows:

*The mission of Freemasonry is to promote a way of life that binds like-minded men in a worldwide brotherhood that transcends all religious, ethnic, cultural, social and educational differences; by teaching the great principles of Brotherly Love, relief, and truth; and, by the outward expression of these, through its fellowship, its compassion and its concern, to find ways in which to serve God, family, country, neighbors and self.*

# Executive Summary

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Both the Vision and the Mission Statement described above were unanimously adopted by those attending the conference in Tulsa. It was further recommended that they be presented to those attending the Conference of Grand Masters with the expectation that they, too, would adopt the distinctive vision and mission for Freemasonry.

## Meeting the Needs of Members

The needs of current and future members were the focus of both conferences. Some of the needs identified were: a sense of belonging and real fellowship, involvement in the community, a role for the family, recognition, pride in membership, and the opportunity to excel and grow both morally and ethically. It was also deemed important that Masonry should respect the limits of time and other commitments that many members face in these hectic times.

As for keeping current members active and involved, it was found that communication was the key. Many Masons were unaware of the needs of their Fraternity and of the important skills and contributions their members could offer. Lodges often didn't take the time to get to know their members, learn of their interests, seek out their talents, find out about their families, discover their ties to the community, and ask them to help in meaningful ways. It was agreed that the Membership Kits currently being developed would provide the best short-term solution to finding new members and rekindling interest and activity in the lodge.

## A More Effective Grand Lodge and Blue Lodge

It was most clear to those participating in the conferences that the basic unit for change was the Blue Lodge or Symbolic Lodge. It was also clear that due to many considerations, a recommendation of any single, specific organization structure would be impossible. However, the participants made a number of recommendations and suggestions including director-level or cabinet appointments to share with the Grand Master some responsibilities for the jurisdiction and a review of the selection process of Grand Lodge. It was further agreed that achieving member expectations would require not only well-presented ritual and degree work but also improved quality and emphasis in lodge management, membership management, and community and family outreach.

## Creating a More Relevant Organization

The issue of a more relevant Fraternity was based on the agreement that society has high expectations for any organization it embraces but is quick to discard any organization that fails to meet its long-term expectations. If Freemasonry is to be a viable and relevant part of society, the participants believed it must:

- be well-known and understood;
- be active and visible in the community
- be attractive to potential members;
- be endorsed by the family;
- explain its mission and vision in clearly defined terms;
- stand for a great cause;
- not discriminate;
- stand above the rest by offering quality in everything it does and stands for.

Much good work has been done but much remains. During the two conferences Masons did a very thorough job of developing the first stages of a Blueprint for the Year 2000, keeping in mind that time, quality, convenience and relevance would have to be built into the Blueprint from day one. The discussions centered around the four points identified at the first conference. Participants in a third and fourth conference will develop the Blueprint for Freemasonry in the Year 2000 and then outline the specific strategies required to achieve their vision for the future. In this process, they will also spell out precisely how to achieve the objectives, goals, mission and vision for Freemasonry; the expected results; and the resources, manpower and other support required.

Your support is desperately needed. Only by financial assistance from Grand Lodges can new products be developed. Only by your participation in our Strategic Planning Conferences can we expect to make progress towards renewal.

Our third conference – what we view as the Blueprint Conference – is scheduled for the fifth weekend in May – the 29, 30, 31. The fourth will again be a fall conference at a date to be announced soon.

There has been outstanding progress at each of these conferences. This has been reflected in the renewal efforts in more than a dozen Grand Jurisdictions. Products to support these efforts have been and will continue to be developed. We need you and your Grand Lodge's support. *Together we can make it happen.*

# Personalized Notes

## Personal Note to New Member

Dear (New member's name),

On behalf of all the members of (your lodge's name and number) I want to welcome you to Freemasonry and hope you will be part of our future for years to come. We were all very pleased to see you in lodge on (date).

Your attendance and involvement in our lodge is only one of the important benefits you will receive from Freemasonry. We would welcome your comments about our lodge and any areas where you see room for improvement.

If you have any questions concerning your new membership, please call me at (your phone number). We want you to feel comfortable and know that you are welcomed.

On (date) we are planning (list special program). I hope we will see you in lodge.

Sincerely and Fraternally,

## Personal Note to a Guest

Dear (Guest's name)

On behalf of all the members of (your lodge's name and number) I want to tell you how pleased we were to have you as a guest at (date) meeting. We hope you learned a great deal about Freemasonry in general and about (name) lodge specifically. Ours is a great Fraternity that promises you fellowship with men who share a similar philosophy based upon a belief in Brotherhood, Truth and Charity.

After visiting with us, you probably have many questions. I will call you within the week to see if I can answer any of these questions for you.

Again, we enjoyed your company and look forward to seeing you in the future.

Sincerely,

# Planning Form

Date of meeting:

Type of meeting:

Guests expected:

Objective of meeting:

Program for evening:

Special announcements:

# Publication Layout

## ENERGY news

### HOT REBATES FOR COOL SAVINGS

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— Mr. and Mrs. B. Stovall,  
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Date/Time of Meeting \_\_\_\_\_  
Location \_\_\_\_\_  
Number of People \_\_\_\_\_

BALTIMORE GAS AND ELECTRIC

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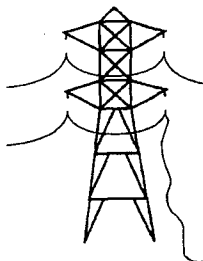
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