

The Grand Lodge of
Free and Accepted Masons of Ohio



LODGE EDUCATION OFFICERS
HANDBOOK

Prepared by
The Education and Information Committee
of
THE GRAND LODGE OF FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS OF OHIO

©2006, Grand Lodge of Ohio

Lodge Education Officer

The Office of Lodge Education Officer is an important position in the Lodge regardless of the fact that it is not a “progressive line Office.” As Lodge Education Officer, you will be a leader in your Lodge and with proper effort can favorably impress your Brethren with the need for more light in Masonry. It should be remembered at the outset that this appointment is effective only during the term of the Worshipful Master from whom you received the appointment.

You may have served in another Office or even be a Past Master, but this experience is not necessary for you to serve successfully as a Lodge Education Officer. You must, however, be one who has a genuine interest in Freemasonry and a desire to help the Brethren attain the knowledge which must, for the future of the Craft, be attained through the Education Program.

Those who have served as Lodge Education Officer may find little here that is new. Still, in order to be complete, this manual must start with the basic principles of operation of the Grand Lodge Education Program.

Please refer to your copy of the Candidate Counselors Handbook. It is important, at the start, that you clearly understand *The Plan and Instructions for Candidate Counseling*.

Having read the instructions carefully, you will note that the prime object of the Grand Lodge Education program is *Candidate Counseling*. This is the foundation of the entire program and will give you the opportunity to meet and work with those who are coming into Freemasonry in the formative period of a Brother’s membership. We should be ever ready to provide light and information for his benefit.

Once selected to serve as Lodge Education Officer, your first responsibility is to recommend Brethren for appointment as Candidate Counselors. Be sure that these Brethren are willing to give the time necessary to accomplish their mission successfully. The Candidate Counselors should be well versed in Freemasonry or who are willing, with your help and guidance, to study for their own improvement while working with Candidates. It is possible to learn by doing, if one has the interest and desire. Finally, remember that those whom you recommend should be outstanding Brethren, for they will be making the first impression on the Candidates.

The number of Brethren to be recommended as Counselors will vary with each Lodge. Under no circumstances, however, should you appoint less than one Candidate Counselor for every **five** Candidates. It may be that your Lodge could easily use more. Confer with the Worshipful Master and discuss possible Brothers to use as Candidate Counselors. While you may be recommending various Brethren to the Worshipful Master, he has the ultimate responsibility for the success of the entire Education Program, and he must approve the choices.

A Candidate Counselor should be assigned to a man as soon as he is elected to receive the Degrees in your Lodge. The Counselor should be his guide, instructor and mentor throughout the Candidate’s journey to become a Master Mason and beyond. Assign a Brother to a Candidate based on his abilities and his enthusiasm for the task.

Following the appointment of the Candidate Counselors, it becomes your duty to assemble those appointed to assist you for the purpose of imparting to them the Worshipful Master's instructions. It is desirable at this meeting that each Counselor be presented with a current copy of the Candidate Counselors Handbook. *The Plan and Instructions for Candidate Counseling* section should be read together so that all may know the prescribed plan of operation. This refresher of the printed instructions should be reviewed even though the appointed Counselors may have served in previous years. Also included is a new section titled, *Topics for Discussion by Counselors*. This information can be used as a guide by the Counselors as they prepare themselves for the work to come. It will help them add depth to their Candidate presentations.

It is your responsibility to hold such instructional meetings as often as may be necessary to acquaint the Counselors with their duties, to assist them in the training program, and to improve their effectiveness. It is not intended that the Counselor memorize the Candidate Booklets, but, having familiarized himself with them, he may talk informally using the outlines in the Handbook for each. Do not delay as it is important that each Candidate receive this counseling promptly.

PLAN OF ACTION

With all appointments made, the initial Candidate Counselors meeting and any other necessary preparatory training accomplished, you are ready for work.

Following each Stated Meeting of the Lodge, you should obtain from the Secretary the names, addresses, and phone numbers of any and all petitioners elected to receive the Degrees and immediately assign to them Candidate Counselors.

As the "program supervisor," make certain that the Counselor contacts the Candidate, that he arranges a meeting, conveys to him the *On The Threshold Booklet* and makes the *On The Threshold Presentation* **BEFORE** he receives the Entered Apprentice Degree.

It is recommended that the first meeting with the Candidate be held in his home and in the presence of his wife or "significant other." The *On The Threshold Presentation* should be shown at this time. This Presentation (as well as the *Entered Apprentice Presentation, Fellow Craft Presentation* and *Master Mason Presentation*) is available as a Power Point slide show that can be used with a computer. The same slides are also available in Portable Document File (which uses the freely available Adobe Acrobat® Reader), so that each Presentation can be printed out and given without the aid of a computer. All are available for download from the Education Resource Page of the Grand Lodge website, <http://www.freemason.com>, or a printed copy may be obtained from the Grand Secretary's Office.

This initial meeting is an ideal way to introduce the Candidate's wife or significant other to Freemasonry. It also creates an opportunity for the Counselor to answer any questions, provided that the answer would not go into matters private to the Lodge. The meeting should not exceed forty-five minutes and should leave the Candidate impressed with his Counselor's sincerity, quiet dignity, and businesslike manner. Before closing the meeting the Candidate should be presented a copy of the *On The Threshold Booklet*.

The ***On The Threshold Presentation*** is a good tool to assist the Counselor in delivering the desired information. It provides a visual focal point both to sustain interest and to allow for greater retention of the information presented. The visual images in the presentation follow the booklet.

As an alternative, the first meeting may be held at the Lodge building. Should this plan be followed, the Candidate's wife or significant other should be invited to attend. Be sure to create a friendly atmosphere for the guests. The meeting can close with a tour of the Lodge building. Light refreshments are a nice touch.

The Counselor should make arrangements to bring the Candidate to Lodge the night he is to receive his Entered Apprentice Degree, or in any case, to meet and welcome him on his arrival 1 hour before the start of the meeting. The Counselor should introduce the Candidate to the other Brothers present and stay with him during the entire evening. It should be kept in mind that the Candidate is in a new and strange situation and should be made to feel at ease and welcome.

As Lodge Education Officer, be certain that the Counselor arranges to meet with the new Brother to review the ***Entered Apprentice Booklet*** and make the ***Entered Apprentice Presentation***. This meeting, and those that follow, should be conducted privately, whether at the Lodge building or elsewhere. As each Degree is concluded, arrangements are made to discuss the booklet that refers to that Degree. The same friendly, welcoming spirit should ever be in evidence. The Counselor should endeavor from the beginning to interest the Candidate in the fundamentals of Freemasonry and while so doing, become his guide and friend. During this time, it is the duty of the Lodge Education Officer to keep the Worshipful Master informed of the progress being made with the Candidates and the amount of interest being shown by them.

Having completed the three Degrees and reviewed the four booklets, the new Brother must not then be ignored. Some men are natural extroverts, but most are not. Special effort should be made to invite new Brothers to events and to ensure that they *feel* and *are* included.

Through your efforts as Lodge Education Officer, see that the new member has any additional information which he may want. Direct him to the Grand Lodge website, <http://www.freemason.com>. See to it that he is informed on how to prepare himself for visitation to other Lodges. Invite him to go along when your Lodge attends Inspections of other Lodges. Finally, make him feel proud that he is a Master Mason and in particular, a member of your Lodge. Endeavor to make his attendance regular and ask for his assistance in passing on to others this new found information and friendship, for only by so doing will you be able to perpetuate the Education Program. With a little help, new Brethren often make excellent Candidate Counselors.

Even though Candidate counseling is a major part of the Education Program, your duties as Lodge Education Officer do not end there. You should attend any Education Meeting held in your Masonic District, as well as frequently visit the Education Committee's home page on the Grand Lodge website. Education meetings held in your District are excellent forums for the discussion of Lodge Education challenges and can include suggestions for their solution. District Education Meetings, which are well planned, are ideal for your Counselors and other interested

Officers and Brethren to meet with their counterparts from other Lodges and discuss Education programs. Do not pass up these meetings as being unimportant.

These meetings also will relay to you new Lodge Education Programs or directives issued by the Grand Master or the Education and Information Committee. Some of these programs may be for mandatory or optional implementation in every Lodge, and it is important that you take this information and these instructions back to your Lodge.

With the help of the Education Committee member in your District and the approval of your Worshipful Master, you should plan short, interesting Education Programs for the Brethren of your Lodge. These should never be long or tiresome. The attention span of today's men has been guided by the short time between television commercials during prime time programs. The best received Lodge Education Programs are summarized, presented in a story-like manner and never just read.

As Lodge Education Officer, you will receive the monthly "Short Talk Bulletin" from the Masonic Service Association. **These bulletins are property of the Lodge** and should be retained by the Lodge to form a library of interesting Masonic information which can be cataloged and referred to by the Counselors and other Brethren. Many of them are of such interest that they should be reported to the Lodge when received. It is not necessary that they be read in their entirety, but that the information they contain be informally given to the Brethren in a "short talk." These bulletins are purchased by our Grand Lodge in the hope that every possible use will be made of them in a Lodge's Education Program.

Occasionally, the Grand Lodge Education and Information Committee issues or reprints short articles that can be used for short talks in Lodge. Take advantage of these articles for they have been prepared especially for use by Ohio Lodges. Many are available on the Education section of www.freemason.com, under the heading Suggested Readings and LEO Programs.

Do *not* plan Education meetings in which you, as Lodge Education Officer, either instruct in the *Ritual* or interpret the *Code*. Ritual instruction in Lodge is the right and duty of the Worshipful Master (*Code*, §28.01(b))—or, at the District level, of the District Deputy Grand Master (*Code*, §28.02). Code interpretation likewise is the exclusive province of the Worshipful Master (*Code*, §19.02(b)).

You are now about to begin a year of interesting Masonic service. As you humbly put forth your best efforts you will be amply repaid by the gratitude of your Brethren.

RESEARCH LODGES

Research Lodges are specially chartered Lodges. Their sole purpose is to further the quest for Masonic knowledge by conducting research, holding discussions, and publishing papers on Freemasonry and its history, traditions, and philosophy. Unlike regular Lodges, they do not confer Degrees, and membership is generally limited to Master Masons.

The first Lodge of Masonic research is Quatuor Coronati Lodge No. 2076, chartered in 1886 by the United Grand Lodge of England. This Lodge publishes its work annually in *Ars Quatuor Coronatorum*. Complete sets of these volumes are highly sought after, usually bringing several thousand dollars at auction. American Masons can join this Lodge's Correspondence Circle, and thereby receive, among other things, its annual volume of published work. The Lodge's website is at <http://www.quatuorcoronati.com>.

In 1965, the Grand Lodge of Ohio chartered the Ohio Lodge of Research, which meets regularly at various locations in Ohio. Membership is open to all Master Masons for a very modest annual fee, and every Lodge Education Officer should consider joining this Lodge as part of his obligation to promote Masonic education. The website for the Ohio Lodge of Research can be found at <http://olr.freemason.com>.

Another organization of special interest to those Masons charged with furthering Masonic education is the Masonic Service Association of North America, which was created in 1919. This organization is not beholden to any one Grand Lodge, but serves all of Freemasonry in North America. It is probably most well known for publishing the familiar *Short Talk Bulletins*, which are sent to every Ohio Lodge Education Officer. The Association's website is at <http://www.msana.com>.

The Southern California Research Lodge is another popular organization and is well known for its program for providing, free of charge, a copy of *The Craft and its Symbols* by Allen E. Roberts to all newly initiated Entered Apprentices. This program is not limited to California members. The Grand Lodge of Ohio Education and Education Committee does **NOT** recommend that this book be given to a Candidate who is receiving his Degrees one at a time in the traditional manner. It could be, however, given to the Brother after he has received his Master Mason Degree. Their website is at <http://www.calodges.org/scrl>.

A recent book *Freemasons For Dummies* by Christopher Hodapp is written in a contemporary style and is available at local bookstores. It is a worthwhile reference for a new Master Mason.

Finally, there are many more Masonic organizations dedicated to furthering the study of Masonic history, philosophy, and knowledge. Countless ideas for new Lodge education programs can be found by participating in one or more of the formal Research Lodges or Masonic study organizations. The Committee encourages you to explore the field of Masonic research constantly and expand your horizons, ever remembering that we are *all* students in the quest for more light.

How to be a Successful Lodge Education Officer

1. Prepare your mind for success. Have a positive approach and attitude. Have faith. Be confident. Think Success. Be enthusiastic. It will rub off on others. "Nothing important was ever accomplished without enthusiasm." Realize that you have a great obligation, a great opportunity for service. It is no credit or honor "to just carry a title." Time, patience, and perseverance will accomplish all things.
2. Prepare your program for the year. ***Plan ahead!*** The only sure success is a planned one. Meet early with your Counselors for adoption of a program. ***Publish your program.*** Plan your work. Work your plan. "Genius is five percent inspiration and ninety-five percent perspiration."
3. Give many Brethren something to do. Everyone craves recognition. No one likes to be ignored.
4. Be generous with praise, slow with criticism. Give credit to others.
5. Don't delay. Don't procrastinate. Do the little things that add up to big things tomorrow. Unless you do today's work today it will never be done.
6. Continually check on the progress of the program.
7. Masonry offers a man an opportunity to improve in every walk of life. See that every Brother in your Lodge has an opportunity to grow in the light of Freemasonry.

Suggested Discussion Topics

The general procedure for a Counselor to follow while introducing our newest members to Freemasonry is well outlined in the Lodge Education Officers Handbook and the Candidate Counselors Handbook.

The ritual coach is to teach the Candidates the necessary ritual examination so they may properly advance to the next level of our teachings. The Counselor is to explain the Degrees along with the traditions of the Fraternity so that the teachings which are set forth may become a part of the Mason's way of life. He also needs to know some of the history and philosophy.

On this basis, it is of value to list some of the items which should be mentioned and explained to the Candidates by the Counselors so that nothing of importance is overlooked during the counseling session. Below are listed several topics for each of the three Degrees which should be explained and their symbolic importance made known to the Candidates.

EA COUNSELING SESSION

1. Was not asked to join
2. Investigating committee and its report
3. Unanimous ballot
4. On the Threshold
5. Preparation for the EA degree
 - a. Opening lodge
 - b. No metallic substance
 - c. Leg, foot, breast, cable-tow
 - d. Raps
6. Reception
7. Prayer
8. Circumambulation and Scripture
9. Challenges
10. Approach the East (step)
11. Obligation and position
12. Light/Lights
 - a. Greater
 - b. Lesser
 - c. Candles are representatives, not Lights
 - d. Brought to
13. Grip (Token)
14. Salutes
15. Apron
16. Deposit - Memorial
17. Working Tools
18. Exit
19. Lecture
20. Charge
21. Closing lodge
22. Protocol, traditions while in lodge
23. Rights and privileges as an EA

FC COUNSELING SESSION

1. EA counseling session
2. The EA proficiency exam
3. Preparation for FC degree
 - a. Opening lodge
 - b. Leg, foot, breast, cable-tow
 - c. Raps and pass
4. Reception
5. Circumambulation and scripture
6. Challenges
7. Approach the East (step)
8. Obligation and position
9. F. Light
10. Square and Compasses
11. Pass G. and Pass W.
12. Grip (Token)
13. Word
14. Salutes
15. Apron
16. Working tools
17. Exit
18. Lecture
19. Charge
20. Closing lodge
21. Further rights and privileges

MM COUNSELING SESSION

1. FC counseling session
2. The FC proficiency exam
3. Preparation for MM degree
 - a. Opening lodge
 - b. Leg, foot, breast, cable-tow
 - c. Raps and Pass
4. Reception
5. Circumambulation and scripture
6. Challenges
7. Approach the East (step)
8. Obligation and position
9. M. Light
10. Square and Compasses
11. Pass G. and Pass W.
12. Salutes
13. Apron
14. Working tools
15. Labor to refreshment
16. Exit
17. Legend of H. Abif
18. G. Hailing Sign
19. Grip (Token)
20. Lecture
21. Charge
22. G. Honors
23. Closing lodge
24. More rights and privileges

OTHER ITEMS

Fellow Craft Team
Learn work and assist ritual
Officers, District and Grand
Committees
Balloting
Activities
Family involvement
Grand Lodge
Visitations
District Associations
Annual Meetings
Installations and Inspections
Good books to read
Prompt dues payment
Ohio Masonic Home
Scholarship Foundation
Local Masonic traditions
A Way of Life