



## LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT COURSE

*Grand Lodge Committee on Leadership Services F. & A. M. New York*

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### **DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF LODGE OFFICERS**

The Master and officers of a lodge form the nucleus around which a lodge functions. It is, therefore, an honor and a privilege to be elected or appointed an officer of a lodge. With this honor comes various duties and responsibilities. This lesson discusses the duties of lodge officers from the Master to the Tiler. Each officer should take his responsibilities seriously and to do the best job he can. He should also learn from the more experienced officers and help the less experienced officers of the lodge. **To be a leader is to be a servant and a teacher.**

Before reading this lesson, read Chapter 4 of the **24 Inch Gauge** and sections 309 through 318 in the **Book of Constitutions of the Grand Lodge of the State of New York**. These readings will provide the foundation upon which this lesson is built. Each elected or appointed officer of the lodge will be discussed, starting with the Master

#### **Master**

The Master is the chief executive of the lodge. He is responsible for all the workings of the lodge. He also exercises complete control over the meetings of the lodge. As CEO, the Master should establish the team concept of leadership and involve as many as possible in planning, organizing and implementing activities and programs. The Master holds the title of "Worshipful" because his office is the most respected one in the lodge. Only the Grand Master or his District Deputy Grand Master can ask for or assume authority over the lodge from the Master. Some of the duties of the Master are:

1. Organizational -- serve as team leader to:
  - Set goals and objective for the lodge year.
  - Assign committees and their chairman
  - Charge committees with their duties and set reporting goals and times.
  - Meet with his Wardens and Past Masters to select appointed officers.
2. Communication with the Brethren
  - Make lodge notices and newsletters enticing and interesting.
  - Ascertain the talents, interests and concerns of the brethren and use these to build lodge programs.
  - Conduct a professional public relations program with the community
3. Leadership Development
  - Hold officer planning meetings through out the year
  - Encourage officers to participate in training programs and courses like this Leadership Development Course
  - Help prepare the Wardens for mastership



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**4. Conduct Meetings**

- Minimize the length of business meetings
- Emphasize interesting, inspiring and educational programs
- Speak loudly or use a sound system to accommodate members with poor hearing
- Start all meetings promptly
- End meetings promptly
- Consult with the Secretary on communications, petitions, and anticipated business prior to the meeting.
- Make and keep an agenda for each meeting.
- Confer degrees in a timely manner, do not keep candidates waiting for long business meetings.

**5. To the Membership**

- See that members in sickness or distress are attended.
- Visit the sick, if local, and send cars to distant members.
- Conduct Masonic Funeral Service for departed members, when requested by the family. Offer the service to the family and determine if any other help needs to be provided.
- Plan for special awards such as Dedicated Service, 50-year membership, etc.
- Promote Grand Lodge programs and activities like the Totton Essay Contest, Camp Turk Summer Camp, etc.

**6. To the New Brother**

- Use the Grand Lodge Shepherding program with all petitioners and newly raised brothers.
- Rehearse lodge officers in the degree rituals and insure that the presentation is done with proper dignity.
- See that each new entered apprentice has someone to help him with the work
- See that all new members are quickly assimilated into the activities of the lodge.

**7. Education**

- Know and impart knowledge of Grand Lodge proceedings, rules, regulations, and landmarks of the craft.
- Attend district Schools of Ritual, Instruction and other district educational programs. Encourage officers and brethren to do the same.
- Provide Mason related programs throughout the year. After all, only in Freemasonry can one truly learn about Freemasonry.



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- Encourage the Wardens and other officers to participate in Chancellor Livingston Library reading programs. The Master sets the example by using the programs himself.

### 8. Duty to Grand Lodge

- See that the Grand Master's message is conveyed to the members by arranging for an official visit by the District Deputy Grand Master. Know the protocol of entrances.
- Support the Grand Master's program.
- Plan to represent the Lodge at the annual communication of Grand Lodge.
- See that election returns and annual reports are sent to Grand Lodge on time and correctly.

### 9. Lodge Finances

- See that a Lodge budget is prepared each year.
- Keep spending within the limits of the budget for all but emergency purposes.
- See that the Lodge furnishings, records, jewels and memorabilia are properly cared for and maintained
- See that all brethren who may be dropped for non payment of dues are contacted and the reason for non payment is discovered, where possible. Insure that no member is dropped because of an inability to pay the dues.

The Master of the Lodge sets the tone of the Lodge for his term as Master. He should be prompt in his attendance at meetings, properly attired and prepared. He should be responsive to the needs and desires of the membership. He must always remember that it is the office and not the office holder that runs the lodge. The brethren elected a man to be their Master, to guide them and be responsible to them, all of them. Remember, let harmony prevail and moral and social virtue cement us.

### Senior Warden

The Senior Warden is the second in command in the Lodge. He governs the Lodge in the absence of the Master. The Senior Warden is the primary of two officers who can open and preside over a lodge meeting in the absence of the Master. He should, therefore, be prepared to assume the duty when required.

Some of the duties of the Senior Warden are:

- Learn the Master's work
- Participate in workshops, courses and Schools of Ritual or Instruction to learn how to be an effective Master.
- As soon as he is installed, or sooner, he should start making firm plans for his Mastership, assuming he is elected by the brethren.



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- Attend Lodge communications, paying strict attention to any actions that may disrupt the harmony of the lodge. Assist the Master in soothing ruffled feathers and keeping passions in due bounds.
- Build a solid relationship with the brethren by greeting every member and guest at every meeting.
- Assist the Master, as required, in visiting the sick and calling absent brethren.
- Assist the Master at Masonic funeral services.

### **Junior Warden**

The Junior Warden calls the craft from labor to refreshment. As such, he should work with the Master in planning and the Stewards in providing the refreshments to the brethren.

The Junior Warden should be prepared to assume the Master's chair in the event that both the Master and Senior Warden are absent from a stated communication. However, the Junior Warden must never assume that he has the right to take the Senior Warden's station when the Senior Warden is absent or in the East.

Some of the duties of the Junior Warden are:

- Attend all lodge meetings
- Assist in the training and instruction of junior officers on their duties.
- Supervise the Stewards in providing lodge refreshments.
- Attend workshops, courses and other schools designed to improve leadership skills and Masonic knowledge.
- Start the process of learning how to plan a lodge year.
- Assist the Master at Masonic funerals services.

### **Senior Deacon**

The Senior Deacon is in command of the floor work during the conferral of degrees. He should, therefore, know all of the floor work. The Senior Deacon is also the administrative assistant to the Master during lodge meetings. The Senior Deacon has what could be considered the most interesting position in the lodge.

Some of the duties of the Senior Deacon are:

- Greet all members, guests and candidates prior to the opening of the lodge.
- Since the Senior Deacon is ritualistically responsible for welcoming visiting brethren, he should be the officer responsible for investigating visitors that can not be vouched for. This should be done privately and with dignity. The intent is to prove a man a Mason, not to determine how much ritual he knows.
- Inform the Master of the names of all visitors to the lodge.
- Insure that the candidates for the degrees have properly trained conductors and mentors.
- Attend all meetings of the lodge.
- Participate with the Master and Wardens in district educational events.



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- Oversee the training of the Masters of Ceremony in the proper preparation of candidates for the degrees.

### **Junior Deacon**

The Junior Deacon controls the outer door. None but he may open or close the door during a lodge communication. He is also the administrative assistant to the Senior Warden. When labor is resumed after refreshment, he receives the password from the brethren returning to the lodge room.

Some of the duties of the Junior Deacon are:

- Greet all members and guests. He is the first person to assure the Senior Warden all present are Master Masons.
- Obtain from the Tiler the names of visitors and report this information to the Senior Deacon.
- As local custom dictates, he should assist the Senior Deacon in investigating visitors that can not be vouched for.
- He must know the proper protocol for the entrance of visiting Grand Lodge officers, be it the Grand Master, the District Deputy Grand Master, Grand Lodge staff officer or any other Grand Lodge officer.

### **Masters of Ceremony**

The Masters of Ceremony are the surrogates of the Senior Deacon in preparing candidates for the conferral of degrees. As such they are ultimately responsible for the preparation room and all it contains. They should keep the preparation room clean. They should make sure that the candidates costumes are properly cleaned and maintained. Local custom may delegate the cleaning and repair of the costumes to another officer, but the Masters of Ceremony should oversee the work.

The Masters of Ceremony are the first lodge officers with whom the candidate has contact during the conferral of degrees. These two officers should take care to see that the candidate is treated with proper respect and dignity. The whole impression of a degree by a candidate can be affected by the conduct and attitude of these two officers.

### **Stewards**

The Stewards, under the direction of the Junior Warden, prepare or help prepare the refreshments for the lodge. this should not be overly time consuming nor require special talents. The cost of refreshment should be borne by either the lodge, the brethren or both, but not the Stewards.

The Stewards should know the floor work appropriate to their office. They are in the early stages of their progression to the East. They should be studying the work and learning the duties of the other officers in the lodge. As local custom dictates, they may have portions of the ritual assigned to them. They should endeavor to do their best in learning and presenting the work.



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### **Marshal**

Depending on local custom, the Marshal may be the starting point for progression to the East, or it may be a position of distinction given to a faithful brother. The office of Marshal is no less important than any other office in the lodge. The Marshal is responsible for escorting brethren about the lodge as directed by the Master. He may also carry the flag of our country into and out of the lodge during opening and closing respectively. The Marshal also has duties to candidates for the degrees as defined by the Standard Work.

As part of his duties, the Marshal should become familiar with the proper protocol and etiquette allocated to his office. This may include escorting distinguished visitors into open lodge, or about the lodge as directed by the Master.

### **Tiler**

The Tiler of a lodge is charged with allowing no one, except one duly qualified and vouched for, into the lodge room while the lodge is open. Among the duties of the Tiler are these traditional ones:

- Prepare the lodge room prior to opening.
- Secure the lodge room after closing.
- Announce the presence of all Masons seeking entrance to the lodge after it is open.
- Know the proper protocol for the entrance of visiting Grand Lodge officers, especially the District Deputy Grand Master on his official visits.
- **Receive the pass word from the brethren when the craft is being called from refreshment to labor.**

### **Chaplain**

The Chaplain leads the lodge in devotion to Deity during opening and closing of the lodge. He may also be asked to invoke a blessing prior to lodge dinners or other lodge functions. He should always be prepared for these extra devotions. The Chaplain sits to the left of the Master. As such, he can, if qualified, give the Master wise counsel during lodge meetings. This should only be done when requested by the Master.

### **Musician**

The lodge Musician is typically an organist. But, this does not mean that he is always an organist. Local custom may use other means of providing music to the lodge. The Musician's duties include providing music for the ceremonies and rituals of the lodge as dictated by the Standard Work and as requested by the Master. The Musician should be a person of reasonable talent and well rehearsed in the music he presents. Music adds to the beauty of the degrees and the candidates appreciation of them.



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### The Operating Officers

#### **Secretary**

No lodge can function properly without a Secretary. The Secretary is one of the two operating officers of the lodge. He is the right-hand man of the Master. The Secretary has specific duties as given in the Constitutions of Grand Lodge and lodge By-Laws. Some of the Secretary's duties are:

- Keep a proper record of lodge business
- Write vouchers to the Treasurer for disbursement of lodge funds, but only after approval by the Master.
- Make proper and timely returns to Grand Lodge. This includes the name and address of new members of the lodge, number of members, the number of deaths in the past year, and the number of brethren dropped from the rolls by demit or non-payment of dues.
- Inform the Master of all pending and old lodge business.
- Read petitions for membership and affiliation and make proper record of the action taken on a petition.
- Keep a record of lodge income and disbursements which will be reconciled with the Treasurer's records yearly.
- Submit the lodge records to the District Deputy Grand Master, Deputy Grand Master, or Grand Master for his inspection upon request.

#### **Treasurer**

The Treasurer, like the Secretary, is necessary for the operation of the lodge. The Treasurer should always be a highly trusted person, since the lodge's funds are in his hands. His duties include:

- Paying out lodge funds upon receipt, from the Secretary, of a voucher signed by the Master specifying the payee and amount.
- Keep an account of all lodge income and disbursements,
- Submit his records to the lodge finance committee, District Deputy Grand Master, Deputy Grand Master, or Grand Master for inspection and audit upon request.
- If the lodge has a checking account, to balance the account on a regular basis.

#### **The Trustees**

Every lodge should have a group of trustees or a similar body whose function is to be responsible for the invested funds of the lodge, if any, and the property of the lodge. The lodge property includes the jewels, ornaments, tools furniture and memorabilia of the lodge. the Trustees may or may not be responsible for the lodge building, if the lodge owns a building. Lodge building may be controlled by a building committee or similar body.



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The Trustees should take their office seriously. It is their duty to see that the lodge's possessions are properly maintained and protected. If they control investments, they should seek wise counsel on the management of the investments.

**Lodge Historian**

The main function of a lodge historian is to prepare an annual report of lodge activities. A standard form is available from the Grand Historian or from the Area Historian. It includes much of the information prepared by the Secretary but is more inclusive. The Secretary's record should not be considered a substitute for the Historian's report.

A history or histories of the lodge, together with pertinent memorabilia and records, should be under the custody of the Trustees to assure that a permanent and accurate record is maintained and preserved. The Lodge Historian should work closely with the Trustees and Secretary to help provide for the preservation of our Masonic heritage.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

"The 24 Inch Gauge." Chapters II & III and Chapter IV.

**Notes:**