

LODGE OFFICER TRAINING HANDBOOK¹

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Introduction

The operation and management of a Masonic Lodge is typically left to the Worshipful Master and the other elected officers of the Lodge. More Brothers, however, will make these tasks easier. Successful Lodges rely on the participation of each and every elected and appointed officer, as well as other members, to accomplish all of the functions of the Lodge. The purpose of this handbook is to provide some guidance to all Master Masons who are currently officers of a Lodge and to those who may become officers. It also, looks to help those who are yet to be in an officer's position to understand and appreciate all that comes with a "title" in a Masonic Lodge. As you grow and progress in the Lodge, be mindful of what is ahead of you and what you have already experienced.

This handbook is broken up into several sections, beginning with suggestions for the duties and responsibilities of all Lodge officers from the Tyler "without the door" to the Worshipful Master in the East. The next section provides suggestions for the numbers, types, and assignments of Lodge committees.

Acknowledgement

The information contained herein is a secondary reference source for Lodge activities. The primary sources or authorities for all such activities are as follows and should also be consulted: (1) the Seventh Revision of the Masonic Constitution for the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge State of California adopted July 2009, (2) the Masonic Ritual adopted by this MWPHGL, (3) Mackey's Jurisprudence of Freemasonry, and (4) Macoy's Worshipful Masters Assistant. Information was also gathered from other respected written references, as well as from conversations with well-informed Brothers, *who were as ready to give as I was ready to receive*.

GENERAL DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES OF ALL LODGE OFFICERS

- To perform such duties that are consistent with the usages of the Craft and pertinent to the office held, as directed by the Master
- To attend all Lodge functions (Stated and Intermediate meetings other Lodge functions)
- To conduct one's self with decorum and to dress appropriately in accordance with the customs of your Lodge
- To attend all degree practices designated by the Master
- To be qualified to give the work of your office in all Degrees and, if in a "progressive line", to learn the work of the office one step above yours
- To be willing and able to serve as the Chairman or as a member of a committee assigned by the Master
- To attend the District meetings
- DO GOOD UNTO ALL

Introduction to Officers

There is no official Progression of Line Officers in a Lodge. A Master Mason in good standing in the Lodge, possess real worth, personal merit and be legally qualified (made suitable proficiency in degree of a Master Mason), is eligible to run for any office in the Lodge, save the office of the Worshipful Master, which has eligibility requirements all its own.

The line of progression and the respective duties of their positions will prepare the officer for the administrative position of Worshipful Master as he progresses through the line. However, the important point is that, no matter which station an officer holds, he has an assigned duty that provides challenges and experiences that prepare him to hold the office of Worshipful Master. Remember each officer has the potential of serving his Lodge as Worshipful Master, therefore, it is very important that no man should be asked to serve as an officer if **you would not be proud to have him as your Worshipful Master.**

Qualifications of Officers

The qualifications necessary for officers is that they be Master Masons in good standing in the Lodge, possess real worth, personal merit and be legally qualified. This means that they have shown proficiency in the Master Mason Degree in open Lodge and that proficiency has been voted sufficient by a present majority. Brothers must also be a member of their Lodge for one year before they can hold an office.

Officers and their Responsibility

You shall be held personally responsible to the Worshipful Master and through him to the Lodge and Grand Lodge, that his office be filled with dignity, honor and correctness, and that the various duties be performed without haughtiness or tyranny, but according to love and diligent desire to exemplify the virtues and sublime morality of Masonry.

Tyler

Duties:

- Eighth constitutional officer of the Lodge
- Guard the Lodge against the intrusion of improper persons and permit no one to pass into the Lodge unless well known to him or after being properly vouched for and having permission from the Worshipful Master
- Serve all notices and summons
- Make preparations for Lodge meetings
- Take charge of Lodge furniture, jewelry and paraphernalia
- Lead all processions
- Know the business of all who are in the anteroom and notify the Worshipful Master of such
- Perform other duties as determined by the Worshipful Master

Marshal

Duties:

- Make proclamations of the election and installation of officers of the Lodge
- Conduct and take charge of all processions of the Lodge, act as special proxy of the Worshipful Master
- Assist the Senior Deacon whenever needed
- Assist in the reception of Grand Officers and distinguished visitors
- Perform other duties as directed by the Worshipful Master

Chaplain

Duties:

- Perform those solemn services that we should constantly render to our infinite Creator
- Conduct the devotional exercises at the opening and closing of the Lodge
- Perform other services as the Lodge may require and the Worshipful Master may direct

Senior & Junior Steward

Duties:

- Assist the Junior Warden on all festive occasions of the Lodge (refreshment committee)
- Assist the Junior Deacon in the preparation of candidates
- Assist in conducting candidates during degrees

- Assist the Tyler in setting up the Lodge
- Assist in putting away property after the closing of the Lodge
- Any duties the Worshipful Master may direct

Junior Deacon

Duties:

- Seventh Constitutional officer of the Lodge
- Perform the duties of his office as laid down in the Ritual, and other services as directed by the Worshipful Master
- Appointed by the Senior Warden
- Must be proficient in all Degree work
- Take charge of the preparation of candidates for Degrees
- Observe the current Senior Deacon as preparation for his year as Senior Deacon
- See that the Lodge is duly Tyled
- See that Brethren are properly clothed when they enter
- Act as proxy for the Worshipful Master and Wardens, in the active duties of the Lodge – reception of candidates and the introduction and accommodation of visitors

Senior Deacon

Duties:

- Sixth constitutional officer of the Lodge
- Perform the duties of his office as laid down in the Ritual, and other services as directed by the Worshipful Master
- To carry orders from the Worshipful Master
- Introduce and accommodate visiting brethren
- Receive and conduct candidates
- Attend at the Altar
- Drape the altar upon the death of Worthy Master Mason of his Lodge or Grand Lodge
- To be in charge of the ballot box during the election of candidates for membership to the degrees of Masonry
- Escort and arch the Grand Master upon his visitation to a Lodge
- Memorize and perform all Ritualistic work appertaining to his office
- Attend all Degree Practices
- **MUST** be proficient in all Degree work, the Degree's success will depend on his readiness
- Act as proxy for the Worshipful Master and Wardens, in the active duties of the Lodge – reception of candidates and the introduction and accommodation of visitors
- Should be a good reader with some knowledge of elocution

Secretary

Duties:

- Fifth constitutional officer of the Lodge
 - Observe the Worshipful Master's will and pleasure
 - Record the proceedings of the Lodge and to transmit a copy to the Grand Lodge, if required
 - Keep the records of the Lodge regularly, fairly and faithfully
 - Receive all monies due to the Lodge and pay the same to Treasurer
 - Make a written Financial Report to the Lodge at the Quarterly Stated Meetings in August, November, February and May
 - Keep a separate account for each member
 - Make a report to the Grand Lodge at the close of the Masonic Year
 - Keep the seal of the Lodge and affix it to all official documents emanating from the Lodge or his office
 - Notify the Brothers of delinquencies in their dues
 - Send all notices and summons when ordered by the Worshipful Master or other competent authority
 - To notify the Grand Secretary of any expulsions or suspensions
 - To keep a visitor's book
 - To attend upon trials and meetings for taking evidence
 - To furnish copies of all evidence taken on trials where an appeal to Grand Lodge is demanded
- To furnish diplomas, demits and certificates, duly signed and sealed, by order of the Lodge

Treasurer

Duties:

- Fourth constitutional officer of the Lodge
- Receive all monies from the Secretary and give him a receipt for the same
- Keep an accurate account of all money
- Pay out money duly signed by the Worshipful Master and countersigned by the Secretary with the consent of the Lodge
- Keep all property (stocks, bonds and land) owned by the Lodge in his possession
- Submit a report of financial transactions at the Stated meetings in August, November, February and May
- When requested, present a detailed account of the receipts and disbursements, and the amount of funds on hand
- Preserve all accounting books and vouchers and transfer the same to his successor

Junior Warden

Duties:

- Third constitutional officer of the Lodge
- Regular attendance at Stated and other meetings
- Discharge all those duties which ancient usage has assigned to the station of the Junior Warden
- Represent the Lodge with Worshipful Master and Senior Warden at all communications of the Grand Lodge
- Superintend the Craft during the hours of refreshment, carefully observe that none of the craft convert the purpose of refreshment into intemperance or excess
- In the absence of the Worshipful Master and Senior Warden, you are to govern the Lodge and in his presence assist him the governing of it
- Acts on the standing committee of Charity
- Appoint the Senior and Junior Steward
- Chair the Refreshment Committee
- Attend the Grand Master's and Grand Lecturer's official visit
- Assist the Worshipful Master in all things appertaining to his office, according to the Laws, Regulations and Ritual approved by this Jurisdiction

Duties – Implied:

- Memorize and perform all Ritualistic work appertaining to his office
- Be proficient and perform the 1st Degree as the Worshipful Master (To take charge of the 1st Degree)
- Attend all Degree practices
- Sit on the Trestle Board Committee
- Sit on the Budget Committee
- Vote the Lodge's recommendations on resolutions at the Annual Communication

Responsibilities:

- You shall be held personally responsible to the Worshipful Master and through him to the Lodge and Grand Lodge, that his office be filled with dignity, honor and correctness, and that the various duties be performed without haughtiness or tyranny, but according to love and diligent desire to exemplify the virtues and sublime morality of Masonry.

Qualifications for Advancement to Worshipful Master:

- Perform the opening of the Lodge as Worshipful Master
- Perform the closing of the Lodge as Worshipful Master
- Perform one (1) of the Burial ceremonies
 - ❖ All of the preceding must be done in open Lodge, voted on by the members of the Lodge present and recorded by the Secretary in the minutes of the Lodge.
- Complete one (1) year as Senior Warden or Junior Warden

Senior Warden

Duties:

- Second constitutional officer of the Lodge
- Regular attendance at Stated and other meetings
- Discharge all those duties which ancient usage has assigned to the station of the Senior Warden
- In the absence of the Worshipful Master, you are to govern the Lodge and in his presence assist him the governing of it
- The right to assume the chair and to succeed to the responsibilities of the Worshipful Master in case of his death, inability to serve, or absence, while such inability or absence continues
- Represent the Lodge with the Worshipful Master and the Junior Warden at all communications of the Grand Lodge
- Act on the standing committee of Charity
- The superintendence of the Craft in the Lodge during the hours of labor
- Appoint the Junior Deacon
- Attend the Grand Master's and Grand Lecturer's official visit
- Assist the Worshipful Master in all things appertaining to his office, according to the Laws, Regulations and Ritual approved by this Jurisdiction

Duties – Implied:

- Memorize and perform all Ritual work required of the office
- Be proficient and perform the 2nd Degree as the Worshipful Master (To take charge of the 2nd Degree)
- Attend all Degree practices
- Sit on the Trestle Board Committee
- Sit on the Budget Committee
- Vote the Lodge's recommendations on resolutions at the Annual Communication

Responsibilities:

- You shall be held personally responsible to the Worshipful Master and through him to the Lodge and Grand Lodge, that his office be filled with dignity, honor and correctness, and that the various duties be performed without haughtiness or tyranny, but according to love and diligent desire to exemplify the virtues and sublime morality of Masonry.

Qualifications for Advancement to Worshipful Master:

- Perform the opening of the Lodge as Worshipful Master
- Perform the closing of the Lodge as Worshipful Master
- Perform one (1) of the Burial ceremonies
 - ❖ All of the preceding must be done in open Lodge, voted on by the members of the Lodge present and recorded by the Secretary in the minutes of the Lodge.

- Complete one (1) year as Senior Warden or Junior Warden

Eligibility of Worshipful Master

Part IV of the Masonic Code, Chapter 1, Section 47 states, No brother shall be installed to the office of Worshipful Master unless he has served as Worshipful Master or Warden of some legal Lodge and is qualified to confer the three symbolic degrees and give the lectures pertaining thereto. No Warden shall be eligible for advancement to the station of Worshipful Master until he has made proficiency in one of the burial ceremonies and in the opening and closing of the Lodge. The Proficiencies shall be made in open Lodge and voted on by the members present.

Worshipful Master

Powers:

- To congregate his Lodge whenever he shall deem it proper
- To issue, or cause to be issued, all summonses or notices which may be required
- To perform all such acts which are by ancient usage proper to his office, and shall not be in contravention to any of the provisions of the Constitution and Regulations of the Grand Lodge

Duties:

- First constitutional officer of the Lodge
- To preside at all meetings of his Lodge
- To confer all degrees in accordance with the Ritual
- To give the Lectures belonging to each degree
- To carefully guard the provisions of the bylaws of his own Lodge and that of the Constitution and Code of the Grand Lodge
- To supervise at each Stated and Intermediate meeting of the Lodge a monetary collection for the widows and orphans
- To insure that an affirmation form is completed immediately following the installation of officers in December. A copy of the same shall be presented to the installing officer prior to installation and the original mailed to the Grand Secretary's office
- In all votes, except by Ballot, he may, in addition to his proper vote, have the casting vote to break a tie.
- To appoint an Audit Committee
- It is the duty of the retiring Worshipful Master and Secretary to forward to the office of the Grand Master and the Grand Secretary, on or before December 30th of each year, a complete list of all officers elected and installed for the Masonic year, together with their addresses
- To **properly** preside, or to appoint someone, to **properly** preside over the funeral of worthy deceased Brother at that Brothers request or at the request of a family member
- To sign all warrants for the payment of Lodge disbursements, by consent of the Lodge – The Treasurer may not lawfully pay out the funds without such order
- To appoint such appointive officers as provided by the by-laws of the Lodge
- To ensure his successor is duly installed
- To represent his Lodge at the Grand Master's and Grand Lecturer Workshop and Official Visit, and provide all information from these visits in a written report to his Lodge

Duties – Suggested:

- To prepare a Trestle Board or Annual Plan
- To be responsible for all Lodge Committees
- To attend Grand Lodge and vote the Lodge's recommendations on resolutions
- To prepare an agenda for each Stated Meeting
- To appoint all committees for the Lodge
- To follow up on all committee assignments to ensure that the committees are working on the assigned tasks and are performing them in a manner that meets your satisfaction
- To appoint the Investigating Committee for an applicant
- To prepare the Lodge's Annual Budget
- To appoint the Visitor's Investigating Committee as required and necessary
- To superintend the official acts of all the officers of his Lodge and to see that their respective duties are properly discharged
- The instruction and teaching of the members and Officers in the Ritual, the principles and philosophies of Masonry
- Representing his Lodge to the public, other Masonic bodies and Grand Lodge
- The proper conduct of his Officers and members
- To appoint an Audit Committee

Prerogatives:

1. It is the prerogative of the Worshipful Master to congregate (that is, call together) his Lodge at his discretion.
2. It is the prerogative of the Worshipful Master to preside at all communications of his Lodge, whether regular or called, when present.
3. It is the prerogative of the Worshipful Master to fill all vacancies that may occur in the roster of his Lodge.
4. It is the prerogative of the Worshipful Master to regulate the admission of visitors.
5. It is the prerogative of the Worshipful Master to control and terminate discussions.
6. It is the prerogative of the Worshipful Master to determine all questions of order and the Order of Business without appeal, save to the Grand Master of the Grand Lodge.
7. It is the prerogative of the Worshipful Master to appoint all Committees.
8. It is the prerogative of the Worshipful Master to be the custodian of the Charter (warrant).
9. It is the prerogative of the Worshipful Master to order the issuance of notifications requiring the attendance of members.
10. It is the prerogative of the Worshipful Master to give the casting vote in case of a tie, in addition to his own vote.
11. It is the prerogative of the Worshipful Master to sign all drafts upon the Treasurer, for the payment of Lodge disbursements, by consent of the Lodge.
12. It is the prerogative of the Worshipful Master to represent the Lodge in Grand Lodge, in conjunction with the two Wardens.
13. It is the prerogative of the Worshipful Master to appoint the Senior Deacon and such other officers as may be prescribed in the by-laws of the Lodge.
14. It is the prerogative of the Worshipful Master to install his successor.
15. It is the prerogative of the Worshipful Master to use the optional Burial Ceremony wherever deemed appropriate.

Responsibilities:

- **To attend regularly the communication of his Lodge** – Few things weaken and demoralize the Lodge as much as the Worshipful Master’s frequent absence. The WM should arrive prior to the opening of his Lodge to ensure its readiness. The WM must be ready to make pro tem appointments to offices whose incumbents are absent. The WM should make these appointments in enough time for the Brother to refresh his memory with the Ritual.
- **To open his Lodge at the time specified in the by-laws and close at a suitable hour** – Precisely at the time specified in the by-laws he should congregate his Lodge “by one knock”. If, after he has done this, there is not a sufficient number present for opening, it is his choice to wait a while for more to arrive or to dismiss those present and go home. The Lodge establishes the moment of opening in its by-laws and the WM at his installation, covenants “to see the by-laws carefully and punctually executed”. If this time is too early or too late the craft may change the time to congregate. Until then the WM must see that it is rigidly enforced.
- **To preserve order in the Lodge** – All Masons must see that this matter is of great importance to the WM. The Wardens are commended to assist him in his trust. The Secretary is informed that “he is to observe the will and pleasure of the WM.” The Deacons learn that their charge is to attend upon him. Finally, the brethren of his Lodge, one and all, are commended to obey him according the Old Charges and Regulations “with all humility, reverence and love.” His very name MASTER suggests authority with which he is invested to keep order, and his implement, the Gavel, is an emblem of indisputable power, recognized the world over by every Brother. The 5th Prerogative is “to control and determine discussions” and the 6th is “to determine all questions of order and the Order of Business without appeal, save to the Grand Master or the Grand Lodge.” This clears up the question of authority.
- **To regulate the admission of visitors** – The XV duty given to the WM at his installation states, “You agree that no visitor shall be received into your Lodge without due examination and producing proper vouchers of their having been initiated in a regular Lodge.” The Senior Warden passing rapidly along the South and trusting a quick glance of the eye or hasty “I vouch for that brother” for identification, and obliged to limit his work to ten minutes or less, comes very short of that “strict trial, due examination or lawful information” which shall make the visitors as lawfully entitled to be present at the communication as the Senior Warden is himself.
- **To preserve the Charter of the Lodge inviolate and transmit it to his successor** – No Masonic Lodge can function without a legitimate charter from the Grand Lodge in its Jurisdiction. It must be present at all times when the Lodge is open.

- **To Perform the Ritualistic work of the Lodge (the drill and drama), and instruct the brethren therein** – The Masonic drama presents a beauty and sublimity calculated to arouse a desire of excellence in every intelligent mind. Nothing outside Inspired Lids is so grand, solemn, sublime as the dramatic lessons which make up the theory of a Freemason’s life from his announcement at the N.E. corner of the Lodge to the instant when the clouds of the valley, mingled with the evergreen sprigs of the grave, fall upon his coffin. Does it not arouse the mind of the WM to display these mysteries worthily? In dispensing light and knowledge, the WM should early commit to memory everything. There should be no book opened during Ritualistic work, if no other reason than pride of work. The WM should ensure that all of his officers have committed their Ritualistic work to memory prior to the opening or closing of their Lodge or the commencement of ANY degree.
- **To cause an investigation into all un-Masonic conduct committed by persons affiliated with his Lodge; also of non-affiliates and members of other Lodges resident within his Jurisdiction** – The Worshipful Master will select counsel to represent the Lodge in all trials and act as the party to present and prosecute before the Lodge all misconduct that comes under the head of “Un-Masonic Conduct.” But in this part of his official duty, he is but the proxy of the WM, who counsels him from point to point in the proceedings, assuring himself that all things are conducted according to rules of order prepared for such occasions, and that no serious misconduct that has come to light within his Lodge shall pass unnoticed.
- **To visit the sick and preside at the funeral rites of deceased Masons** – In the weary hours of sickness, in the painful confinement extending often through weeks and months, the refreshing voice of a beloved brother or a beloved and respected WM can fall upon the wearied mind as cool water falling on the parched tongue. So general is the custom, so dear to the heart of the true Mason is the burial-privilege. There is no greater ceremony that is performed by Mason than that of the burial ceremony. It is all too imperative that the WM be more than a little familiar with the Ritual work to be performed at the funeral of a worthy deceased Brother. If the WM cannot perform this duty it is very important that he find and appoint a Brother who is more than capable of performing this duty. No greater disservice can occur than to have a WM or someone appointed by the WM stumble through such an honor.
- **To use his utmost endeavors to preserve peace and harmony in his Lodge; and by his own deportment both within and without the Lodge, to be a good example to his brethren** – The Masonic student will find nowhere a finer comment upon this passage

than the well known Charge at the Installation of Worshipful Master. It states, “remind the brethren that Masonry is founded upon great moral principles set forth in the sacred volume, which we receive as the rule and guide of our faith and practice. Exhort them to govern themselves by these principles, as well with the world at large as with each other. Teach them to reverence the three great lights, comprehending the Holy Bible, the perfect square, and the extended compass, the beautiful symbolism of which is familiar to you and the explanations of which include some of the most important duties inculcated in our order.” He will recommend to his brethren that by their amiable, discreet and virtuous conduct, they will convince mankind of the goodness of the Order, so that, when anyone is said to be a Freemason, the world may know that he is one to whom the brotherhood may pour forth its sorrows.

Characteristics of a Worshipful Master

There are certain points essential to the making of a good Worshipful Master a few of these are:

- Upright Character
- Sound Judgment
- Knowledge of Masonry
- Mental Ability

The full performance of the duties of a WM demands these qualities and the degree of excellency in a Master lies in the measure in which he possesses them.

Upright Character:

This is the most important qualification. Without it, knowledge, ability and even genius are of little value. The Mallet and Chisel are not of much service for the building of the Temple unless governed by the Square. Intellect to morality is as the lever to the hand and as the pulsating engine to the ships' helm. An upright man so directs his life that, although his work may not be great, it will be true, and if his knowledge be limited, he will use what he has for great purposes. Uprightness is a development and forms the beautiful in human character. Beauty is not identified with bulk. The microscope reveals beauty, the telescope greatness. Uprightness is not an appendage to great intellect, and in morals there is no mensuration. It is from the right use of our faculties that we gain real development and power; for the upright in heart build on the eternal rocks, and the infinite power of the Universe works with them. As a man is true to the little he knows, so is his power to know more. If he rules himself rightly he will be able to govern others wisely, and without this quality no one can be a good Worshipful Master. To the young craftsman, who cherishes the laudable desire of becoming a Master, the development of uprightiness, like all human development can only be attained by effort, and the first thing needful is the true desire for it. Upright growth of character is attained by working true to a higher power than our own.

Sound Judgment:

Judgment is that faculty of the mind that can properly estimate the value of things. It gives true perspective to our views and just consistency to our actions. It maintains our balance in life, directs our aspirations, and decides our course. When it is sound, that is, healthy and strong, we have wisdom. Uprightness of character without Sound Judgment may sow seed on stony places. Sound Judgment will suffer present loss for future gain and will boldly sacrifice the lesser for greater life. The Judgment is not sound that listens to desire more than to conscience, that is influenced by gain rather than by honor, and has no faith in the ultimate and eternal triumph of truth and right. The exercise of Sound Judgment by a Worshipful Master has an immense influence on the well-being of his Lodge and on his personal peace of mind and happiness in the

Chair. An unjust or imprudent decision will strip him of that moral authority without which no Master can efficiently rule.

The Master who has Sound Judgment is distinguished by Prudence, Proficiency and Progress. His Prudence is shown in what he does, and more in what he does not do. His desires, even when most laudable, he circumscribes within the compass of his power, and he measures his power by the desires of his Lodge. His Proficiency is manifested by making the heaviest work appear light and pleasant, and the lightest full of weight and meaning. His Progress is rapid, because his steps are slow and sure, because he measures his speed by progression and not by motion. He is not the fluttering chicken full of furious motion, but the soaring eagle, whose almost motionless pinions carry him swiftly upwards and onwards.

Knowledge of Masonry:

There is a kind of knowledge of degrees and ceremonies gained by having gone through them. But this kind is more an exercise of the purse than of the brain, and scarcely deserves the name of knowledge. You may go through all the degrees up to the thirty third, have a load of Diplomas, and more jewels than your coat can carry, and yet be utterly ignorant of real masonry. There is also a kind of knowledge in being able to repeat the rituals and forms of the Order. This ability, however, does not imply any real knowledge of the truths and principles that underlie its symbols and ceremonies. A parrot may repeat the proverbs of Solomon and be none the wiser. True knowledge is the perception of the principles underlying anything; for instance, the craftsman who knows the laws that govern the art of building, the lines that give strength and stability, and those that give beauty to a fabric. This kind of knowledge is power. It enables the Worshipful Master of a Lodge to plan his Lodge work in perfect harmony with its Constitution and Mission, and to work out that plan successfully. The Worshipful Master who has not this knowledge is the blind servant of red tape and mechanical routine. He must stick to every word and letter of what he has learned, for he knows merely the words and letters and not the spirit.

Mental Ability:

Strength and Skill of mind form mental ability. It is distinguished from genius in being more the product of cultivation and development than of nature. Genius, like beauty, is a natural gift more than a development. Ability is different. It is not uncommon and can be acquired. It can be developed just as strength and skill of body. The aspiring Worshipful Master, therefore, should regularly exercise his mind by a serious study of the symbols and history of the Craft and the ceremonies of the several degrees. This exercise, to be beneficial, should be regular. It should also be systematic, beginning at the work of initiation and proceeding on step by step. Each point and symbol should be studied in its relation to the special truth and principle it teaches, also in its connection and harmony generally with the ceremony or proceeding of which it forms a part. By this regular and systematic exercise the mental faculties will be strengthened and developed, and skill in the craft attained.

But the Worshipful Master should not only have the mental ability to understand the craft of Masonry, he should also have the ability of giving expression to his thoughts and ideas in suitable and correct language. Nothing tends more to lower the dignity of the Chair and lessen the Worshipful Master's authority than stumbling uncouth utterances. It often offends the feelings and convictions of the listeners, as well as their sense of good taste, even when kindly meant.

Promises from the Worshipful Master to His Lodge

1. I will perform all my official duties as between myself and my conscience, being guided therein by my installation vows.
2. I will rule my Lodge without fear, favor or reward, save the approbation of my conscience and the favor of God.
3. I will endeavor to win my brethren to attend all the meetings of the Lodge by the allurements of abundance Masonic instruction for their wages.
4. I will at all times, and by all means, seek out the ancient work and lectures of Masonry.
5. I will see that the distressed worthy brother shall never go disappointed from the Lodge door, if in my power to aid him.
6. I will strive in knowledge, charity, truth, courtesy and love, to be a model to my brethren.
7. The evil-doer under my jurisdiction shall have no rest until he reforms, but if he will not reform, he shall be cut off.
8. My fellow officers shall be urged to acquire and perform their respective duties accurately and thoroughly according to their installation vows.
9. My Lodge shall have honor and respect among its fellows.

15 “Musts” of a Worshipful Master

1. The Worshipful Master of the Lodge must be a moral and a good man – He is exemplar to his flock.
2. The Worshipful Master of a Lodge must be a law-abiding man – He should be found in the lead in the preservation of public order.
3. The Worshipful Master of the Lodge must be no conspirator or secret enemy of the government.
4. The Worshipful Master of the Lodge must be of good report before the community.
5. The Worshipful Master of the Lodge must be temperate and meek.
6. The Worshipful Master of the Lodge must be cautious, courteous, faithful and practice self-government.
7. The Worshipful Master of the Lodge must possess an ardent love for genuine Masonry.
8. The Worshipful Master of the Lodge must respect his Masonic superiors.
9. The Worshipful Master of the Lodge must be a zealous Mason.
10. The Worshipful Master of the Lodge must be versed in the Landmarks of Masonry.
11. The Worshipful Master of the Lodge must be a lover of old-time things.
12. The Worshipful Master of the Lodge must be zealous of its honor.
13. The Worshipful Master of the Lodge must communicate honestly with Grand Lodge.
14. The Worshipful Master of the Lodge must recognize no clandestine rivals.
15. The Worshipful Master of the Lodge must maintain regularity of the Masonic System as essential to the very life and usefulness of Masonry itself.

LODGE OFFICER & COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

General Discussion

The single most important decision made by a Master for his year is the selection of the people who are going to help him throughout the year. In many cases, the decision is taken lightly and the resulting performance is poor. Successful Masters only select and appoint those who are willing to sacrifice the time and energy required to achieve the goals established by the Lodge. However, do not write-off a brother who hasn't performed well in one position. It may not have been a good fit, and he may exceed your expectations with a future assignment.

The Master has sole discretion to appoint all committee chairmen and committee members. Use this power wisely and with consideration as to what you wish accomplished during your year. Simply to copy that which has come before you is a disservice to you, your Lodge and its membership. This is your time to infuse your Lodge with fresh ideas and new enthusiasm.

A. Officers

The decision you make when appointing a person to an officer position that will eventually lead to the Oriental Chair is the single most important decision you will make as Master of the Lodge. When making such appointments, you have essentially dictated who will inherit the leadership positions within the Lodge in future years. Discuss fully with those under consideration exactly what their duties will be and the magnitude of the commitment that is expected from them and their families, now and into the future.

Some may believe that it is difficult to find members to fill the required offices and that a warm body is better than nothing. That attitude, my brethren, will certainly lead to such a situation. Successful organizations obtain that status by a diligent attention to their staffing requirements. To build a successful Lodge, you must do likewise. Some helpful hints on officer recruitment are as follows:

1. As a Junior Officer, be continually evaluating the entire membership for those who show leadership potential.
2. Begin discussions early with those selected few who share the vision of the Lodge's future potential, as defined in the Lodge's Long Range Plan.
3. Involve them in the meetings which are developing the Lodge's goals and objectives.
4. Solicit their input on solutions to the various problems that have been identified within the Lodge. They already know what the problems are, so only talk about how they are going to be resolved.

5. Create an air of excitement about the prospects of your year and the future of the Lodge. Instill within them a desire to be a part of your winning team and ultimately become the coach. We, regrettably, only support those who are winners, so it is up to you to develop your team, set your goals and produce a winner for both this season and future years.
6. Maintain a positive attitude about all aspects of Lodge leadership. A "can do - will do" instead of a "can't do - won't do" attitude will attract many interested individuals. Everyone wants to be a part of a winning team and no one loves a loser.
7. Explain, in real terms, what will be accomplished during the next year and what their role will be in achieving success. Additionally, point out that building a successful Lodge is not a one year process and that the planning process will require excellent leadership in future years. There will be many exciting projects remaining for their year in the Oriental Chair.

Concurrent with their agreement to join your team will be a commitment from you to stand closely by during their year to assist them in achieving the goals and objectives of the Lodge.

Recruitment for your team starts with your initial appointment to the line of officers. If you wait until the last moment, you will field a team of substitutes instead of the required 1st string.

B. Committees

Decide which committees are required to implement your program for the year. Talk to the membership about the qualities that are required to accomplish the envisioned tasks. Select a few Brothers who express an interest and then fully brief them on what your requirements for the specific assignments are.

Once you have selected your teams for the differing committees, **FOLLOW-UP** your previous conversations with a written description of their duties and responsibilities together with preliminary time frames which you think reasonable to accomplish their tasks.

C. The Masonic Family

A huge untapped resource of manpower available within many Lodges is the Masonic family; i.e., the wives and children of members in addition to the membership within the concordant bodies of your Lodge. Develop positive relations with your total Masonic family and utilize their resources to develop not only your Lodge, but the family as a whole. You need them and, more importantly, they need a successful Lodge from which to expand their membership and achieve their goals. It's a "no lose" situation. The more people who are involved in your activities, the more successful you Lodge will be.

SUGGESTED COMMITTEES

Do not be caught short using your valuable time performing tasks that could be better handled by another member, while letting those tasks that should be performed by you, as Master of the Lodge, fall by the wayside.

The following are suggested committee assignments and the functional responsibilities of each.

STANDING COMMITTEES

Audit	Masonic Education
Budget	Mentoring
Bylaws	Telephone
Investigating	Trestle Board

Audit Committee:

Duties: To periodically examine and verify the financial accounts, claims and records of the Lodge.

- Audit the books of the Secretary and Treasurer
- Report Audit results by the second Stated Communication following the annual installation of officers

Budget Committee:

Duties: To review the Worshipful Master's proposed annual budget and present the same at the Stated Communication following the annual installation of officers for approval by the Lodge. This Committee should always include the Treasurer, Secretary and Senior Warden.

Bylaws Committee:

Duties: To review the Lodge Bylaws for the purpose of proposing amendments. Present amendments in writing at a Stated Communication. Ensure that written notification is provided to the membership at least ten days prior to the Stated Communication at which the amendment will be voted on. Approval of amendments to Lodge Bylaws requires a two thirds favorable vote of the members present.

Investigating:

Duties: Assure that candidates are thoroughly investigated as to their qualifications for membership, ascertain whether the applicant's family concurs in their desire to become a Freemason, inform them of their obligation to the Lodge with respect to attendance, support, memorization, etc.

- Maintain confidentiality of investigation process
- Interview all candidates for degrees
- Contact Masonic references
- The report of the Committee shall be made to the Worshipful Master. It shall not be signed by the Committee, or read by the Secretary.

Masonic Education Committee:

Duties: To provide Masonic Education programs to the Lodge members. The goal is to develop a greater degree of understanding and dedication to our Masonic Principles and purposes.

- Provide short programs on Masonic subjects, including philosophy, history, and etiquette
- Arrange for outside speakers to provide short talks on topics of Masonic interest at Stated Communications

Mentoring Committee:

Duties: To ensure that every Candidate is properly instructed in the fundamentals of the Craft by implementing the Lodge System of Instruction for all new candidates.

- Should consist of learned Brothers or Past Masters, who have the time and dedication to do this assignment justice

Telephone Committee:

Duties: To ensure that the membership is aware of any changes to the Trestle Board or issues and events that may occur outside of Stated and Intermediate meetings, i.e. funerals, sickness and distress.

- This can be accomplished in many ways. A call tree could be set up, an e-mail group or Lodge website could be established.
- Should a website or e-mail group be set up, consideration should be given in having dual administrators of the site

Trestle Board Committee:

Duties: To assist the Worshipful Master with advice and suggestions in setting the activities for the Lodge during his year in the East.

- Should consist of the Wardens, Treasurer and others who would like to contribute to setting the calendar

SUBCOMMITTEES – SUGGESTED

Funeral
Fundraising
Long Range Planning
Public Information

Sickness and Distress
Transportation
Visitor's Examination
Widows

Funeral:

Duties: To provide a team of ritually competent Masons to officiate and perform various Masonic funeral and memorial services for a departed Master Masons families as the necessity and circumstances require.

- Should consist of Officers of the Lodge, but if they are unwilling or unable, Brothers who are proficient in the Burial should be chosen; it is of the utmost of importance that this be carried out with respect to the family and according to the Ritual.

Fundraising:

Duties: To develop a set of guidelines for fundraising, this will identify various fundraising strategies and develop a plan establishing a successful fundraising campaign.

- Implement one or more fund raising programs annually
- Fundraising may be pursued to support your Lodge, Grand Lodge, or a worthy cause in your community.
- Do not feel like you have to reinvent the wheel here - keep your eyes open to something that might already be going on in the community and jump on that bandwagon. This would be good, especially if your Lodge is a bit short on active members right now.
- Some Lodges hold a pancake breakfast, e.g. every Saturday morning, or a couple of Saturday mornings per month.
- Other Lodges have a large repository for redeemable cans.

Long Range Planning:

Duties: To develop a Long Range Plan for the next five to ten years to address the major issues and concerns facing the Lodge today.

Public Information:

Duties: To plan meaningful activities that put Masonic values into action and to consider how you and your Lodge can make these activities known to the public.

- Developing relationships with local newspapers is important. The use of the internet can be helpful as well.

Sickness and Distress:

Duties: To offer encouragement to ill and shut-in brothers and their widows by way of personal visits and/or telephone calls and letters.

- Keep track of any illness or hospitalization among the membership
- Arrange for flowers and get well cards, if appropriate
- Inform the Master, Secretary and Lodge who among the membership is ill

Transportation:

Duties: Work with the Telephone and Public Information Committees to identify Brothers who, because of transportation issues, have difficulty attending Lodge meetings and functions. Provide these Brothers with transportation assistance, so that they may participate.

Visitor's Examination (Greeters):

Duties: To treat all first time visitors hospitably, examine their identification and credentials (dues card) in a courteous and efficient manner, assuring that no cowan gains entrance and that no brother is embarrassed in proving their membership.

- Should consist of Past Masters who regularly attend meetings, this may save time; your more seasoned Past Masters will have knowledge of many more Brothers Masonic standing than a younger Master Mason.

Widows:

Duties: To maintain contact with the Widows of the Lodge. To provide an annual widows program, and to preserve their Masonic relationship.

- Invite all known widows of Lodge members and the local OES chapter to the dinner
- Arrange for a speaker to give about a 20 minute presentation.
- Keep the Master, Secretary, and the Lodge informed about the health and welfare of the Lodge's Masonic Widows.