

THE COMMUNIQUE

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From the Grand Master ...

My Brethren:

Welcome back to my running review of leadership and the five crucial ingredients of effective leadership - challenging, inspiring, enabling, modelling and encouraging.

Not only must we challenge, but we must inspire. We must inspire what is called the shared vision - the Strategic Plan - in our case, The Next Regular Step. But before we can inspire that shared vision, we must have a vision. We must have a plan of action, a long-term plan. Organizations don't succeed because they plan to fail, they don't succeed because they fail to plan. Every organization needs a long-term plan. Plans and visions are so necessary for the success of any organization. Not one of us would build a house without having some idea in mind what it would look like when it is finished, nor would we go on a trip unless we knew where we were going. The same thing must apply to Freemasonry - at every level.

That plan must be a shared plan. It can't be one man's idea. It can't last for one year; the theme or mission of one Worshipful Master or Grand Master. All members must work together on that plan or that vision. Every Freemason must participate in the establishment and support of that shared vision.

We must ask questions - What is the membership really looking for? What are they looking for in Freemasonry? I think there are about five things. Friendship, fellowship, enjoyable activities, community involvement, leadership opportunities and perhaps the ability to network with their peers in a prestigious organization. If we don't meet those needs; that 'me first philosophy'; 'what's in it for me?' 'what do I get out of it?' If we don't meet these needs, I'm not sure how long we will survive. Keeping in mind of course brotherly love, relief and truth and those other virtues that we aspire; the strengths of our institution.

Once we have, that shared vision, one that reflects the entire organization, and people feel part of it, I believe we can do it. Once we have the shared vision; leaders, it is then up to you. You've got to go out there and share it. Gandhi was a great man of inspiration. He took people beyond their limit, he took them to a point that they would be where they wished to be and that my Brethren, is your task - to inspire, get to the heart of our members. Reach inside of them. Help them to realize that this is their vision; that they are part of that vision; that we are one great group with a joint vision. That, my Brethren is your responsibility; to go out there and inspire the Craft; that is why your leadership is so necessary. We will not succeed without your leadership, inspiring that shared vision.

The next ingredient is enabling. Enabling others to act; to give them the tools and the power and the authority to work up the action plan for the vision. Some organizations develop such a sterile environment that the people never have a chance for failure; it always must be based upon success. People must learn to feel failure before they can feel success. When people accept things, they are better prepared to act upon them.

A research experiment was done a few years ago that involved two groups of people. They were each given the same task. One group used the tool of brainstorming. A chart was put on the wall and people came up with ideas, one after the other for the implementation of the plan of action. There was no judging, there was no evaluation of any of the ideas that came up. This brought out the meek and the mild and the timid. Each person had the opportunity to offer something because it was not to be judged or evaluated. At the end of the session all the ideas were prioritized; they had an action plan because the leader enabled the group to act; by getting everyone involved in the process.

The second group only had the task in front of them. It was just wide-open discussion. with evaluation and judgement, etc. There were several negatives put forward - we can't do that; we can't change the rules; we've never done that before; it will never work; and so on. In the final analysis, the second group never reached a consensus, and they never came up with a plan of action because the group was not enabled effectively to act upon the vision.

Lee Iacocca was the man who brought Chrysler back from near financial ruin. He used to go into the trenches. He would talk to the men in the factory. He would give them the authority, he would give them power, he would give them the tools. They would come up with plans of action; and see what happened. Chrysler came back to be a success again. Brethren, as Grand Lodge Officers and leaders, we must get into those trenches and give the members of our Gentle Craft who want to be part of that vision, the tools and the authority to act.

Please come back next month for the rest of the story on 'modelling and encouraging' for success.

If you would like to join the Grand Master in celebrating Masonry in Ontario in April, he will be in:

Harrowsmith - Prince of Wales Lodge for a 50-year pin presentation to an old family friend on the 5th

Hamilton - The Amalgamation of Barton and The Lodge of Strict Observance Lodges on the 12th

Napanee - The 150th Anniversary of Victoria Lodge

Sutton - Dedication of new Mosaic Pavement and a Master Mason Degree at Malone Lodge on the 19th

Frankford - The Amalgamation of Quinte and Trent Lodges on the 20th

Kingston - A Day of Masonry in Frontenac, St. Lawrence and Prince Edward Districts on the 22nd

Mississauga - The 100th Anniversary of Trillium Lodge with the Silver to Gold Ceremony on the 24th

Hamilton - A Day of Masonry in the Hamilton Districts on the 29th

Thomas W. Hogeboom
Grand Master

From the Deputy ...

Brethren,

April is upon us and the signs of spring are here... at least for the southern part of the Jurisdiction. The Chairman of Masonic Education, R.W. Bro. Broomhead, keeps notifying me when yet another winter storm blows through the north. Hopefully soon spring will be in the air for everyone.

My spring tour of the Northeastern part of the Jurisdiction will be here soon as well, let's hope for warmer weather. Brethren, if you would like to accompany me on this tour, it will be starting on May 1st and concluding on May 6th. You can participate in the whole tour or just part of it, whatever suits you best. We will be starting in Sudbury and making our way over to the Sault by way of Elliot Lake, Blind River and Thessalon. Then we head up to Wawa, Chapleau, Timmins, Englehart, Elk Lake and finishing our journey in Powassan. Please Brethren if you're able, plan on joining us, it's going to be a great trip. The tour of the Northwestern part of the Jurisdiction is already in the planning stages and I'm excited to be heading up that excursion as well.

On the Grand Lodge Committee side of business, the Lodge Building Compliance Committee, Chaired by R.W. Bro. Peter Sialtsis, is making progress. There are approximately 70 % of our Lodges in compliance. That also means that there are roughly 30 % of our Lodges that are not in compliance. Brethren, this Committee is striving towards it's goal of keeping every member of our vast Jurisdiction as safe as possible. We want you to be able to go home to your families after every meeting. This mandate isn't designed to punish anyone, it is simply to keep you, the member, as safe as possible. The Lodge Building Compliance Committee has a three part mandate to follow. Step one is the Building Fire Inspection carried out by your local municipal officials. Every building where a Lodge meets needs an inspection. If one has been scheduled or is in the completion stages then that would be taken into consideration. If the building is owned by a Temple Corporation then every Lodge that meets there would use that building's fire inspection as their own. Every Lodge in this

Province that meets in a building needs an inspection in order to be step one compliant. Step two is simply a checklist that needs to be completed. The Worshipful Master, Lodge Secretary, or a designated Lodge member would do a walk around, check off the items on the list and complete step 2. We have had some push back on step 2 and that is not being accepted as a reasonable argument against compliance. It is a simple, easy to complete checklist that can easily and quickly be done. Step 3 is a review and update of the fire plan for everyone in that building. Many Lodges go over the fire plan at the start of every meeting and our Grand Lodge is pretty happy about that. We should all know that if a fire or any other disaster happens, we should leave the building through the proper exits, bring the required books and we'll all meet at that one spot in the parking lot just down the street, across the road or wherever the safest place may be. Please remember that this is all for your safety, nothing more and nothing less. Grand Lodge is requiring every Lodge to be compliant before the first of July which is closing in on us fast. You can ask for a 45 day extension but don't count on getting it, you would have to prove that you have an appointment scheduled, are waiting for the paperwork to show up or that some other circumstance would enable your Lodge to be compliant in the near future. Failure to satisfy these 3 requirements will put the Warrant of the Lodge in jeopardy of being removed from the building and no Warrant means no meetings. This mandate is laid out in the Book of Constitution and our Grand Master will be following our Constitution. Don't let this happen to your Lodge, once the Warrant has been removed it's not an easy procedure to recover it. Please Brethren, take the time necessary to complete these three requirements for your own safety and wellbeing.

In conclusion, as always my Brethren, let us rub and cherish our shiny penny, plan for a bright, safe future, keep our Lodges vibrant and make someone smile today and tomorrow. Let us all inspire someone to do better !!!

Jamie R. Ireland
Deputy Grand Master