



GAINING RECOGNITION FOR YOUR LODGE



SECURING MEMBERS

THE SOVEREIGN GRAND LODGE
INDEPENDENT ORDER OF ODD FELLOWS

Gaining Influence For Your Lodge

Securing Members

“Success attracts success, and likewise members attract members.” Those few words can well describe what one lodge accomplished in rebuilding its membership to new heights never before achieved. The initial efforts were directed to improving the operation of the lodge, gaining publicity on the local level, and attracting a few dedicated members to form the basis for a strong and influential lodge.

Utilize the material contained in this binder to accomplish the initial steps of achieving success.

Thoroughly study and utilize the material contained herein to better prepare you for “Building Odd Fellowship” and most importantly your Lodge.

Once you have put into practice the ideas and goals presented in the above materials, you are now ready to gain influence for your Lodge and Odd Fellowship in general.

You should realize that your mayor, city councilman, alderman, sheriff, chief of police, chamber of commerce officers, other civic leaders and public officials are not, in most cases, in a position to become active members and regular attendees of your lodge. The important factor to consider is that these individuals give credibility, stability, and stature to your lodge. Well-known and prominent individuals as members of your lodge create interest for others who want to be a part of a thriving organization. A drive for new members is easier if you have well-known and prominent members in your lodge.

LAUNCH A CAMPAIGN

Success for any undertaking is usually preceded by a plan or campaign. A drive to secure well-known public officials and civic leaders as members of your lodge should also begin with a plan or campaign. Before undertaking such a project, confer with the active members in your lodge to consider the implications and the necessity of properly welcoming such members. You must realize that you cannot expect busy people to be satisfied with their fraternal associations unless they are aware that other prominent individuals are members, they are impressed with the work and teachings of Odd Fellowship, or they observe a thriving membership in the lodge.

YOUR FIRST STEP

Enlist the support of one or two prominent, well-known individuals in your campaign to attract civic

leaders and public officials as members of the Order. A good starting point is to search your present membership list for such individuals. They can be older members who were civic leaders or public officials in the past; you might have someone on your lodge roster that currently serves as your local fire chief, postmaster, congressman, senator, assemblyman, newspaper editor or publisher, radio or TV news broadcaster, plant manager, businessman or businesswoman, or someone serving on a local board or commission. Include these individuals in your plans for increasing the membership and the influence of your lodge.

Consider religious leaders as the key for growth in your lodge because these individuals are traditionally leaders in their own right. One lodge was successful in obtaining the application of a local Catholic Priest as a member. His membership opened an entirely new field of prospective members for the lodge. A Protestant Minister or Jewish Rabbi can have a similar effect on the membership of your lodge.

COMPILE A LIST OF PROSPECTS

(See Section with Prospective Member Cards)

With pencil and paper in hand compile a list of potential members for your lodge, starting with the highest public official or civic leader you might be successful in obtaining for membership. Once you are successful in securing your first applicant, the next one on your list will be easier to obtain. Make an extensive list of ten to twenty prospects, keeping in mind that you might need help in calling on each person. We cannot stress strongly enough that the top name on your list should be one that you are reasonably sure of obtaining for membership. If at first you do not succeed, try again.

In selecting the top name for your list, take into consideration one or more of the following PLUS FACTORS. These are conditions or situations that may be helpful in having your prospect sign an application.

PLUS FACTORS

1. Prospect's father, mother, grandfather, grandmother, or other close relative who was or is a member of the Order, is a good starting point.
2. Those having close friends or associates who are members of the Order is also a PLUS factor.
3. A member of the Order that worked in a public official's campaign for elective office would be a good contact person.
4. A prospect who has a member of the Order as a customer or client is advantageous.
5. Those lodges having excellent reputations in the field of community service create a desire for individuals' wanting to become members.
6. A member of the Order active in a church or other organization provides a common ground for a starting point in discussing the Independent Order of Odd Fellows.

LODGES WITHOUT PLUS FACTORS

You might feel that your Lodge and present members do not possess any PLUS FACTORS. In this case your next step is to create your PLUS FACTORS in the following manner.

1. Seek out the friendship of key people in your community. This can be accomplished by individual members of your lodge joining other organizations that are thriving in your community. e.g.: Lions Club, Rotary, Chamber of Commerce, BPW, Garden Club, Soroptimist, or other active organizations.
2. Schedule a joint meeting with an active local organization. Keep in mind that you must impress the members of the other organization if you choose such a course to follow. Enlist the support of your entire membership to make a good showing during any joint meeting.
3. Honor another group or organization for its contributions to your community. Treat the members of this other organization to dinner or social evening. Be sure you have a well-organized and planned program. A suggested list of such organizations or groups might be: 1. Chamber of Commerce, 2. Volunteer Firemen, 3. Police Department, 4. Garden Club, 5. Business and Professional Woman's Club.
4. Become involved in the campaign of a public official for election to office. Individual members should offer their assistance to address envelopes, seek campaign contributions, circulate petitions, work on fund raising dinners, or volunteer for other services. Such activities are not done in the name of Odd Fellowship, but rather as an individual fraternal leader who happens to be a member of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows.
5. Concentrate in patronizing professional or service individuals who may be prospective members. Be sure to mention at every opportunity that you are a member of the Odd Fellows or Rebekahs: always strive to make mention of the many accomplishments of the Order. Do not push too hard: always keep in mind that this might be a long-range program of indoctrination.
6. Infiltrate the Board of Directors of your local Chamber of Commerce, Water District, Planning Commission or other governmental agency. First, select one or two members of your Lodge to be candidates for such boards and concentrate upon getting them elected. Once this has been achieved, seek out other members to increase the influence of your lodge. Encourage your members to volunteer to serve on nominating committees for other groups, organizations, and agencies. In this manner they will be in a position to gain recognition on such boards for other members of your lodge.
7. Encourage members to become involved in Community Service, which is an excellent means of gaining respect for your lodge. Through such activity you may have many doors opened and prospective members eager to become affiliated with the Order. EXAMPLES:

Launching a drive or campaign to purchase a "Jaws of Life" or other equipment for a local fire department will make a Fire Chief a prime prospect for membership in your lodge. A campaign to purchase books for a library or other equipment makes the Librarian an excellent prospect for membership. Equipment for a school, as a local scholarship or sponsoring a Pilgrimage Delegate locally, may be the key in obtaining the application from a school principal and teachers. Purchasing bulletproof vests for local policemen may enable you to obtain the application of your Chief or Police or other key person in your Police Department for your lodge. You should always keep in mind that once you obtain the top official of an agency or organization, those under that person are much more receptive to becoming members of the Order.

WHEN CONTACTING A PROSPECT

Be prepared when contacting a prospective member by "arming" yourself with the brochure on 'Presenting Odd Fellowship'. The brochure will answer most of the questions asked by the general public. Compile a list of accomplishments of your local lodge in addition to the accomplishments on the Jurisdictional and International levels. Be sure to carry an application in your pocket.

Know the Initiation Fee and the Annual Dues. In many instances a prospect would just as soon pay both when completing an application.

Have a good knowledge of future activities of your lodge so that you can inform your prospect of the next Degree Night and social events planned for the future.

When approaching civic leaders or public officials to become members of the Order, be sure to mention that you are aware they will be unable to attend lodge on a regular basis but point out that their attendance and participation in lodge activities will always be welcomed. Some organizations require regular attendance of their members. Your prospect should be aware that our Odd Fellow and Rebekah Lodges do not have such a requirement. This fact alone may make the difference in obtaining an application from a busy person.

Do not stop here. Once you have been successful in obtaining your first application from a civic leader or public official, go on to the next name and proceed down the list until you have a nice class of candidates.

It should be pointed out that once you obtain the application of a well-known public official or civic leader, it will be easier to obtain additional applications in your community. With very little effort you should be able to secure a dozen or even two dozen applications for membership.

SCHEDULING YOUR DEGREE NIGHT

Probably one of the most important steps in securing public officials and civic leaders as members of your lodge is the initiation ceremony. Once you have signed

applications, make a special effort to schedule the initiation on a date agreeable to your prospects. You must keep in mind that civic leaders and public officials have many commitments; so you should be prepared to schedule your degree on a night when they can attend.

Make a determined effort to have an excellent Degree so that their induction into the Order will impress the new members with Odd Fellowship. Have several degree practices to be sure your degree is conferred in a dignified and impressive manner. You might consider inviting another lodge to attend or to initiate your members on the meeting night. Such a procedure will "swell" the attendance the first night your new members attend lodge.

It is most important to start your meeting on time, eliminate all business that does not need immediate attention, and commence promptly your Degree at the stated time.

PLANS AND IDEAS FOR THE FUTURE

Once you have been successful in obtaining several new members, including several public officials and civic leaders, do not stop there. Make a concerted effort to continue seeking applications for membership in your lodge.

Your initial success will make it a simple task to continue in building the image of Odd Fellowship and your lodge. Remember the story of the army that won the battle but lost the war. Do not put your lodge in that same position. Do not be too concerned about losing a battle or two, but concentrate upon winning the war of increasing the membership and the influence of your lodge.