



# LODGE SUCCESS TEAM

## Bringing Them Back

*“If you build it, he will come.”* -- Kevin Costner, Field of Dreams

One of the most frequently-voiced concerns we have heard from lodges is that newly-made Masons are tough to get back, once they are members. One lodge found its experience to be about a 50/50 chance of the new Masons staying with the lodge after a few months.

That's a problem. When you think of the amount of work to find a new prospect, practice for and take him through the degrees and the amount of work that he has put in to become a Mason, we certainly want to retain him and enroll him in the life of the lodge. He may even have the interest and skills to become an officer, which we know is no small commitment. But we have to keep him first.

Once a man fades away from lodge, it can take at least twice the effort to bring him back – if he'll come back at all. **Are there things we can do to not lose him in the first place?** We think there are.

How about being really curious about our members, knowing their interests, and building a lodge calendar to ensure that events and topics that your members find of interest are embedded in the work of the lodge? Corey Curtiss and I worked up a Member Interest Survey to help do just that, building on the efforts that Most Worshipful Brother Conley and others who preceded us had developed.

We would submit that the process to interest and retain members is essentially: (1) know what members want, (2) deliver it to them, (3) get the members' feedback on the events and activities, and (4) build it better next time, if needed.

The current Member Interest Survey we have in hand is designed to be sent by mail, completed in-person, or electronically completed through an electronic mail message to members. The survey covers:

- The member's satisfaction with various aspects of the lodge

- The types of events that interest him
- The kind of educational experiences he finds of interest
- How he likes to receive information about upcoming events and activities
- Information about his age and area of employment, if he's employed
- Whether he served in the military, and if so, which branch
- His abilities and hobbies
- Any suggestions he has for improvement of his Masonic experience

One lodge decided that it really didn't want to send a long survey to each of its members. However, the lodge has a Brother-to-Brother calling campaign in which members reach out to other members, so the leadership wanted to use just some of the questions in the survey to gather information about members over the course of their phone calls. One lodge with which I recently spoke is thinking of using the questions to gather information up-front, during their Six Steps to Initiation and orientation steps.

As results from the survey are returned, the leadership can look across the range of interests for ideas about events and activities that are most frequently-mentioned, build those events into the lodge's calendar, and ensure that members know that the events and activities are coming up.

Communication to the members is key. We have lots of ideas to help with that, too, if you need some help.

It may sound complicated, but it really isn't. We can help you build and implement your Member Interest Survey to meet your lodge's needs. Use the questions we developed, or we'll help you modify the survey to fit your preferences.

The important point here is to get started on learning the needs and interests of your members. Then build your lodge's schedule to incorporate those needs and interests. We believe that, in doing so, you will be more successful in keeping those precious Masons you are trying to help develop, and they will in turn *teach you* along the way.

As Kevin Costner said in *Field of Dreams*, "If you build it, he will come."



Would you like to discuss ideas for building programs and activities of interest to the members of your lodge? We would love to assist in any way that we can. It is why we are here. Please contact Corey Curtiss at [ccurtiss@michiganmasons.org](mailto:ccurtiss@michiganmasons.org) or Fred Kaiser at [fkaiser@michiganmasons.org](mailto:fkaiser@michiganmasons.org). Or give Outreach and Member Care a call at **(800) 321-9357**.