



## LODGE RESOURCE TEAM

### Living Up to Expectations

**“You live up – or down – to your expectations.”**

- Lou Holtz

If you're a lodge line officer, you likely are approaching Fall with a mixed set of feelings: excitement about the upcoming elections and some trepidation about the new set of duties you are about to undertake. You may be asking, “Will I be up to it?” Or, “Will I be ready?”

Those feelings are understandable and normal. But there are ways to understand what is required and ways to get ready. And you're not alone, because resources from experienced Past Masters in your lodge, your District Deputy Instructor (DDI), your Board of General Purposes (BGP) Representative and the Grand Lodge are many.

In Section I, on Page 1 of the Michigan Masonic Manual you will find the following admonition to lodge officers, but with particular expectations of the Worshipful Master:

“If the Officers of a Lodge are a team, then the Master must be coach, manager, trainer, cheerleader, bat boy and sweepers helper. First and foremost he must inspire by precept and example. No Master can expect of any Steward, Deacon or Warden, better workmanship than he himself did while in that chair. Remember this as you move through the chairs; only if you were a true and faithful workman as a Deacon can you expect your Deacon to be a true and faithful workman. Establish a code of proprieties and ethics for the officers and demand faithful and strict adherence. Slouching in planning or administration; sloppy dress suggests sloppy execution. ***‘Look sharp, feel sharp, be sharp.’***” (Emphasis added)

Section I, Pages 2-6 sets a particular set of standards for the Worshipful Master. It's great reading. In the end, the expectations can be intimidating at worst, exciting at best.

The expectations of lodge officers are many. Everyone looks to the leadership for answers and to be the best of the best. But, as members, we also realize that the officers are in training, too.

My daughter has now been a teacher for over 14 years. She once told us a story about a lesson on expectations she learned as a young teacher. It stuck with me.

Teachers who had previously taught the students she was inheriting in her AP Economics class formed opinions and shared them with her as a less-experienced teacher, hoping to help. She found, however, that listening to the gossip about students tended to lower her expectations about their possible growth and achievement. That bothered her.

So, she began starting her classes by telling the students, "It's up to us to work together and trust each other. A caring and trusting relationship is what it's all about. Everyone has a chance to prove themselves, and to excel. I believe this: A student generally lives up to those expectations." And, as a result of her expectations and the students' hard work, she was most often blown away by their achievements.

We can say the same thing about assuming the responsibilities in the East. As a Worshipful Master or training to be one, he must have high expectations of advanced knowledge and performance for both himself and the team members behind him in line. His officers and he need to hold themselves to standards yet allow and forgive mistakes along the way. They must reward each other with faith and trust that even if a failure occurs, they all want each other to succeed and are there to help. If a Worshipful Master must be "...coach, manager, trainer, cheerleader, bat boy and sweepers helper..." he must also have faith that his team is working just as hard to be successful in their respective roles. The trust relationship between officers must be such that candor, vision, attentiveness, and mutual respect have a home there.

Officer meetings. Review of the Blue Book of Michigan Masonic Law. Studying many key sections in the Michigan Masonic Manual. Attending Grand Lodge leadership, Secretary and Treasurer training. Subscribing to Hiram's Herald. Watching Trowel Time. Chatting with your DDI, BGP and Regional Grand Lecturer. Visiting the Michigan Masonic Museum & Library. Attending the Grand Master's Town Hall meetings. Meeting with members of the Lodge Success Team. All of these are steps you can take to be ready and to help meet yours and others' expectations as a lodge officer.

*Knowledgeable* and *dedicated* are two of many expectations of a lodge officer. We can help with the knowledge. You need to supply the dedication, to your lodge and to excellence. Let's work together to fulfill expectations on all fronts.



Would you like to discuss how your lodge can be even better? Would you like to learn about best practices and successful ideas from other lodges? We have lots of ideas and would love to help. Please contact me at [fkaiser@michiganmasons.org](mailto:fkaiser@michiganmasons.org). Or give me a call at (248) 544-2222.