



LODGE SUCCESS TEAM

Courting New Members by forming Lodge Affinity Groups

If you've seen one of our seminars or read a membership article, you know that I stress the importance of taking ample time to build relationships with prospective Masons before they even petition. The basic method is with the "Six Steps to Initiation" although many lodges are finding success by spending more time with prospects early on. The benefits of this include increasing trust and comfort level, understanding the prospect's intent and expectations, ensuring they are a good fit for the lodge and Masonry, and developing camaraderie between all active members and the potential new Mason. Laying this groundwork will help ensure your lodge can build a strong Masonic foundation with a man that doesn't just have a passing interest in the Craft. The initiation process will also be a more meaningful experience for both candidate and member when you actually know each other and about each other's background. The prospect will be more confident that Masonry is right for them and members will be more ready and willing to work to invest in, provide value to, and ultimately retain the new member.

How can lodge accomplish this aim? A meeting or dinner can get boring and repetitive and may not offer enough opportunity to get to know each other. The answer lies within the interests of the prospects, candidates, and members themselves. And the Lodge Success Team has tools for gathering this important information, namely the Lodge Success Member Interest Survey. What will this data help you with though? One possible use is forming affinity groups. These are groups of prospects, candidates or Masons in the Lodge that have a particular interest. For instance, say two or three members of your lodge like to play golf. Perhaps your lodge can form a Golf Club to go golfing once a week or four times a month.

Forming "Lodge Affinity Groups" are easy and fun.

- Planning these golf games is low stress, low time investment (your brothers are golfing anyway); you just need to set and publicize the dates and go!
- This is not a fundraiser or big event. The key, especially when starting, is to keep it simple, set a calendar, and publicize the calendar.
- You might make a particular polo shirt, golf ball, or cap or other swag to promote your Lodge Golf Club

- You don't need many members to get going. 2 or 3 members with the same interest can get the "Lodge Affinity Group" off the ground.

Forming "Lodge Affinity Groups" have several benefits

- Additional social fellowship time and relationship building opportunities
- Opportunities (outside of a meeting or a meal) to invite and get to know prospective members and allow them to get to know your Lodge members
- Additional promotion and visibility in your community
- Teach a new skill or form a new hobby.

There are so many options: Golf, Skeet/Target Shooting, Archery, Cigars, Scotch Tasting, Home Brewing, Gardening, Bowling, Jogging/Triathlon, Side by Sides, Book Club, Stained Glass, Fly Fishing, Hunting, Fantasy Sports, Music/Band/Choir, Cooking, Camping, Horseback Riding and so many more!

All you have to do is figure out what your members are into and we have a tool for that! Check with your candidates and prospects as well. Get the group together and set and publicize the schedule. The Michigan Masons have a team that can help you get this process started. Contact the Lodge Success Team to schedule an Inventory and learn about the Lodge Success Member Interest Survey.



Does your lodge have a story to tell on its efforts to stay in contact with members? We'd love to hear more, and share your story through this e-newsletter. Please contact Corey Curtiss at ccurtiss@michiganmasons.org or Fred Kaiser at fkaiser@michiganmasons.org. Or, give Outreach and Member Care a call at **(800) 321-9357**.

