

10 Steps to Lodge Renewal

1. Plan, Program, Prepare

Set lodge set goals and agenda for the year.

- Hold a planning a goal-setting meeting with your officers. Give strong consideration to inviting the ladies to participate.
- Refer to the Lodge of the Year (LOY) guidelines on the reverse side of the calendar template. Simply following these will ensure that the lodge has at least some positive activity.
- Document specific activities and goals each month that your lodge wants to accomplish. Use a calendar and write down these specific items. Review and stick with it.

Make Sure Your Lodge Is Represented At Grand Lodge!!!

2. Attract New Members

Identify men in your community who would meet the qualifications of membership. Have trouble coming up with names? Try the following tools...

- Prospect Prompter
- Telephone Book
- Look for relatives of present or past members
- Look through the local newspaper for people who recently or will celebrate 25-year wedding anniversaries or even wedding announcements. Both of these events help identify potential "Baby-Boomers" who may find themselves with more time on their hands. These are men who now are looking for exactly what Masonry has to offer - a chance to "give back" to their communities, a sense of belonging, fraternal relations, etc.
- Don't overlook men who have expressed an interest in the past, even those who may have taken their 1st or 2nd Degree(s). Maybe it simply wasn't the right time or perhaps there were other circumstances that interfered with their membership.

Talk to these men about their potential interest in the Fraternity, using your personal experiences and describe what Masonry has meant to you.

Send a letter to your non-Masonic friends.

Hold a "Friendship Night" or "Brother Bring a Friend Night".

Take advantage of the Awards Programs, divided into 5 brackets, depending on the size of your lodge.

Utilize the resources of the Lodge Service Committee of the Grand Lodge of Iowa.

Refer to...

- [Grand Lodge of Iowa Home Page at www.gl-iowa.org](http://www.gl-iowa.org)
- [Iowa Masons at www.iowamasons.org](http://www.iowamasons.org)
- [Cornerstone Initiative at www.cornerstoneinitiative.com](http://www.cornerstoneinitiative.com)
- [Siouxland Masons at www.freemasonry-siouxland.org](http://www.freemasonry-siouxland.org)

3. Spice up Lodge Meetings

Streamline the necessary business portion of the meeting. Suggestions...

- Summarize - don't read communications verbatim.
- Refer to: Wardens Handbooks and Tips for Running a Successful Meeting

Add informational and Educational Programs to every stated communication.

Experiment with meals/refreshments before and/or after meetings.

- Experiment with timing of programs; i.e. have your program before dinner, followed by lodge meeting or have the program during the meeting, or afterwards over coffee/refreshments.

Don't always rely on the same brother to provide the program - pass the responsibility around.

- Encourage brothers to prepare and present programs that are interesting.
- Remember, a large part of Masonry revolves around self-improvement. However, don't force a brother to speak if he does not want to.

- The program does not have to be Masonic. Have a member come and talk about his profession. You would be surprised how many brothers would find that sort of thing interesting.
- Consider using non-members to provide the program.
- Don't forget to include wives/families in some of the programs/activities.
- Contact the Grand Lodge Office to request a speaker from the Speaker's Bureau from time to time.

Announce the agenda of your meeting in advance through postcards, local newspaper or newsletter.

- Create curiosity and interest in the meeting in the announcement.
- For instance, instead of writing "Brother Joe will discuss Masonic opinions of Revolutionary leaders," write this: "Did you ever wonder why Thomas Jefferson was never made a Mason? Was he Anti-Masonic?"

Take advantage of the Mentoring Program to educate current, even long-term members.

Have your officers and members visit another lodge for their regular or special meeting.

4. Family Involvement

Involve the ladies in your planning process.

Find ways to involve the entire family in your events.

Use resources provided by Lodge Service Committee, Masonic Renewal Association, Masonic Service Association.

- e.g. "150+ Ways to Involve Your Lodge With the Family and in the Community."

5. Community Involvement/Visibility

Take part in parades, community festivals, celebrations, etc.

- A lodge Open House could be held in conjunction with a community celebration.

Organize a service function such as lining up snow removal for elderly citizens.

- Think what good could come from a photo in the local newspaper of a group of Masons with snow blowers and shovels, scooping out a path for some elderly residents.

The possibilities are limited only by your imagination. Adopt another Community/Service Organization to partner with in a worthwhile project.

- Some examples include the Kiwanis, Lions, Rotary, or the Jaycees. With their retirement age of 35, the Jaycees might be very beneficial to lodge membership.

6. Initiate a major fundraiser, either for your lodge or a worthy cause in your community.

An example might be to raise money for a new Fire Truck or Ambulance for the local department.

- Don't feel like you have to reinvent the wheel here - keep your eyes open to something that might already be going on in the community and jump on that bandwagon. This would be good, especially if your lodge is a bit short on active members right now.

Other fundraisers

- Some lodges hold a pancake breakfast, e.g. every Saturday morning, or a couple of Saturday mornings per month. The townspeople know that it is going to be held and look forward to it.
- Other lodges have a large repository for redeemable cans. It is surprising how much money can be raised from simply putting up a large container and publicizing it.

7. Membership Retention/Utilization

Get new members involved right away.

- Refer to [Masonic Mentoring](#) System from Lodge Service Committee.

Contact Brethren who haven't attended lodge lately.

- Let them know they have been missed. Assign them a duty for the next meeting and offer to pick them up and bring them there.

Organize a "Telephone Tree" to make contacting all brothers easier.

- If each brother has to contact only 2 or 3 other members (who in turn contact 2 or 3 more, etc) the entire membership can be contacted in a very short period of time. This can be very useful, too, for special meetings, such as funerals.

Organize a "Pick-up Service" for those brothers within a specified radius who may be uncomfortable driving.

- This is especially useful for night driving or poor weather conditions.

Survey your members, particularly the younger members; what type of activities they would be interested in.

- Think outside the box - it doesn't have to be Masonically related. How about a "cards night", watching sports on a big-screen TV, etc. Let them give you their ideas and listen to them - make them feel they are a real part of the process and the lodge.

Hold a "Rusty Nail" Degree or a "Re-Obligation Night".

- Publicize the event. Invite members of near-by lodges. In case of a major Rededication Ceremony, the Grand Lodge may like to participate. This can't help but remind your members why they became Masons in the first place and why they have maintained their membership.

8. Publicize Your Lodge (Internally and Externally)

Appoint a member to be in charge of Public Relations.

Internal Publicity

- Obtain email addresses of lodge members.
 - This will provide one more way to communicate with the membership.
- Initiate or improve your lodge newsletter.
 - If your lodge already has a newsletter, consider spicing it up somehow. Do something radically different in the next issue to generate interest.
 - This could be something as easy as rearranging the contents to adding a new feature to putting something controversial in the

newsletter. Use a sensational headline e.g. "Elvis sighted last week at Fremont Lodge." Create a satirical article to follow it. Have FUN with it. One of the negative opinions that the uninitiated have of masonry is that we are a bunch of stuffed shirts. Appoint a member to be in charge of public relations.

External Publicity

- Submit press releases to local newspapers.
 - Local newspapers are always looking for things to fill space. (Important: make certain the articles are well written and complete. Don't expect the newspapers to edit and/or correct mistakes. Assistance on what to submit and how to write the articles is available from the Lodge Service or Public Relations Committee.
- Refer to the "Public Relations Handbook".

9. Lodge Appearance

Don't forget that one of a lodge's best sources of publicity and community involvement is the lodge building itself. The appearance of your lodge says a lot to the uninitiated. Are you sending the right message?

- Hold a clean-up, painting party. Make a fun day or night out of it.
- Make sure the sign on your building is clean and in good shape.
- Place highway signs at each entrance to your community, along with one stating the day and time of your regularly scheduled meeting.
- This could be designed around a major addition or capital improvement to your lodge.

10. Last But Certainly Not Least -- RITUAL

Make sure your lodge can and does provide top-notch ritual in your degrees and meetings.

Hold a Ritual School of Instruction.

- Contact local MI's or DL's to assist. If in doubt, refer to the circular published by the Grand Lodge.

Identify members who are potential candidates to become a Masonic Instructor (MI) and then on to a District Lecturer (DL).

Finally, Brethren, please understand that you and your lodge are not in this thing alone. It is a TEAM effort! If you have any questions, or would like guidance and/or assistance in any of the steps along the way to Lodge Renewal, contact the Lodge Service Committee. The names and addresses of the current members are listed in the Warden's Handbooks. If in doubt, contact the Grand Lodge office who can refer you to a Lodge Service Representative in your area. Call (319) 365-1438 or email DGS@gl-iowa.org.

Additional Reference Material:

- [Grand Lodge of Iowa Home Page at www.gl-iowa.org](http://www.gl-iowa.org)
- [Iowa Masons at www.iowamasons.org](http://www.iowamasons.org)
- [Siouxland Masons at www.freemasonry-siouxland.org](http://www.freemasonry-siouxland.org)
- [Cornerstone Initiative at www.cornerstoneinitiative.com](http://www.cornerstoneinitiative.com)
- [Masonic Renewal Committee at www.masonic-renewal.org](http://www.masonic-renewal.org)
- [Masonic Service Association at www.msana.com](http://www.msana.com)