

LA160 - Characteristics of High Performing Lodges

How do lodges win the OA Super Bowl?

National OA Adviser Training

Session Length: 25 Minutes

Overview:

- Mission
- Organization
- High Performance Lodge
- JTE Gold Lodges

Learning Objectives:

- Understand the mission of the Order of the Arrow and the role of the Lodge
- Understand the basic organization and structure
- Understand the characteristics that can make a lodge function at a high level
- Compare JTE criteria of Gold Performance Lodges

Detailed Outline of the Session:

This session will show Lodge and Lodge leadership what their role is in meeting the intent of the mission of the Lodge and supporting the Council and what it might take to be a high performing lodge.

Slide 1 - Title

Characteristics of High Performing Lodges

Slide 2 – Introduction

The following items are reviewed in this presentation:

- Mission
- Organization
- High Performance Lodge
- JTE Gold Lodges

Slide 3 – Mission

"Well this week's all about Seattle, so we've been doing our best to prepare for the Seahawks. I'm doing that, our team's doing that and we'll be ready to go Sunday. That's our focus." – Bill Belichick

Slide 4 – Mission

Bill Belichick is the head football coach of the NFL football team, the New England Patriots, and he is the most successful coach in NFL history with more than 250 wins. That is like playing almost 16 seasons straight without losing a game. There are many reasons why Bill Belichick is such a successful coach, but one of them is that he is able to unite his team in a common mission. The mission is to win the Super Bowl and the focus is to win each game.

As an OA Lodge how are we successful as an organization? As an OA Lodge, what is our common mission? What is our focus? How do we win the Super Bowl?

The Mission of the Order of the Arrow is

The mission of the Order of the Arrow is to fulfill its purpose as an integral part of the Boy Scouts of America through positive youth leadership under the guidance of selected capable adults.

This session will explore what it might take for your lodge to be successful as you support the Mission and the Purpose of the Order.

Slide 5 – Mission

For a lodge to be successful in this mission it will need to have adult leadership dedicated to the development of the youth of the lodge, a lodge that is well organized, and lodge and chapter programs that are fun and meaningful.

Like Bill Belichick, we must fully understand and embrace our mission in order to fully understand and embrace our focus.

So our mission is to support Scouting. Our focus which helps us to achieve our mission is to develop youth leaders, through an organized lodge while utilizing fun and meaningful programs.

Why would a teenager invest in an organization if there were no enjoyment or fulfillment for him? A successful Lodge, like a successful football team, needs to have fun while pursuing a common mission in an organized manner. If you watch any football, then you know they are organized and the players enjoy the game even if they don't win.

Our mission is to support Scouting by using capable adults to develop youth leaders. If we can do that, then we have won. When Scouting is flourishing and we are developing leaders, then we are successful, which is like Bill Belichick putting on Super Bowl rings.

Slide 6 – Organization

A football team needs leaders and organization in order for the team to be successful. In order to create the fun programs, Lodges also need to have an organization to get things done. The lodge itself can be organized a number of ways, depending on its size. But most lodges will have a leadership team, working committees, and great advisers to guide the youth in the business of the lodge. Below is an analogy of how an OA Lodge compares to a football team. Please take note that it is essential that all of these positions and leadership rolls be filled with the right people in order for the football team to win the Super Bowl.

Order of the Arrow	NFL Football Team
Council Camping Committee	Owner
Council Scout Executive	Team Manager
Lodge Adviser	Head Coach
Associate Lodge Adviser	Coordinators
Lodge Chief (elected)	Quarterback
Lodge Vice Chief / Secretary (elected)	Defense Captain / Special Teams Captain
Executive Committee (appointed) Communications, Inductions, Training, etc.	Positional Leaders (offensive line, safeties, etc.)
Ad Hoc Committees Events, Service Projects, Camp Service, Cub Scout Service, etc.	Special Team Players (only play at specific times with a specific purpose)
OA Members	Football Players

Notice how everyone in the OA Lodge is a player on the football team. We are all on the same team, we all play, we all have a role and obligation, and we all win and celebrate together as a team. Also, notice that in order to get on the OA team, people outside of our organization vote us in which does not hold true in the football analogy.

Slide 7 – High Performance Lodges

“There is an old saying about the strength of the wolf is the pack, and I think there is a lot of truth to that. On a football team, it’s not the strength of the individual players, but it is strength of the unit and how they all function together.” – Bill Belichick, New England Patriots Coach

In an OA Lodge, it’s not the strength of one talented youth or one strong adult, but it is the strength of the lodge and how they (Lodge Chief, Lodge Vice Chief, Secretary, Lodge Executive Committee, Ad Hoc Committees, Lodge Members, Lodge Adviser, Associate Advisers, Positional Advisers) all function together that enables the lodge to be successful. A lodge is a team and the team must work together.

More detail of the lodge organization can be explored in the on-line session “LA100 – Lodge Organization and Structure” or in the [Lodge Adviser’s Handbook](http://www.oa-bsa.org/pages/content/publications#lah) (<http://www.oa-bsa.org/pages/content/publications#lah>)

Slide 8 – High Performance Lodges

There are many characteristics of lodges and strategies that Lodges use to perform at a high level. These involve training, organization, programs and communications.

“There are no shortcuts to building a team each season. You build the foundation brick by brick.” – Bill Belichick

Building a successful lodge is not easy, nor does it happen overnight. Implementing all of these strategies will take time and effort. You *need* to begin developing all of these characteristics immediately (training, organization, programs, and communications). *Do not feel* like you have to implement all of these suggestions (the bulleted items) in one year. It takes time, effort, and consistency.

Slide 9 - Training and Training Strategies:

During the summer months, every NFL football team participates in summer camps and summer training. Football players workout and have personal trainers to condition them during the off-season. Each football team participates in preseason games that do not count against their record prior to the official season kickoff. All of these things are done in order to prepare the players for the season. Why in the world would we not train or prepare our football players? Why would we not train or prepare our youth and adults in how to be the best in their positions and how to make their OA Lodge the best? Here are some key and essential preseason training camps that our youth and adults need to attend in order to be successful.

Adult Leaders / Coaches



TRAINING

ORDER OF THE ARROW

- All adults have attended or have taken Youth Protection Training
- Lodge Adviser has attended NLS and NLATS / DYLC
- All adults in adviser roles have attended NLS and NLATS / DYLC
- All adult advisers have participated in the Lodge's annual officer LLD
- All adult advisers have participated in training sessions at the Section Conference

Youth / Players

- Youth in leadership positions have attended NLS
- The Lodge holds an annual lodge leadership development (LLD) course used to train upcoming officers and advisers as well as set the calendar and plan the upcoming year
- Program of ongoing training for all members of the lodge throughout the year
- Youth leadership have taken or been on staff for training at the annual Section Conference

More detail of the Lodge Leadership Development can be explored by visiting the National OA web site <http://lld.oa-bsa.org/2012/>

Slide 10 - Organization:

- All adults in the Lodge know their role as Advisers and communicate well with the youth they advise
- Youth Positions of leadership are filled by election, committees by appointment, and Advisers are in place for each youth in a leadership role.
- Lodge has active Lodge Executive Committee (LEC) that meets monthly
- The Scout Executive and/or OA Staff Adviser is an integral and active part of the Lodge Operations. This includes appointment of Chapter Advisers and Staff Advisers
- The concept of the "Key 3" is understood and utilized at both the Lodge and the Chapter level
- The Lodge Rules (or By-Laws) are up to date, relevant, current, and are followed by the Lodge (lodge Executive Committee).
- The lodge has an annual budget administered by the Treasurer
- All 17 Journey to Excellence criteria are monitored by the LEC and are on every LEC agenda
- There is a membership Vice Chief well trained in the use of LodgeMaster
- The lodge uses a Plan Book

Slide 11&12 - Program and Program Strategies:

"One thing that could be a problem is breaking old habits. It's not that you don't understand what the new responsibilities or players are, but just the fact that you've been doing something long time and you're kind of used to doing it, it's a habit, and that's not what's required in the other system and that means kind of undoing something before you can even start to do something new." – Bill Belichick

You have to start doing something new. Below is a list of numerous program ideas that are common in successful lodges. If you are not doing these things, then you probably should try to start doing something new.

On a side note, there is a problem in your lodge if you can plan an entire event or year of events in one meeting because you are repeating the same old "traditions". You have to keep your programs fresh and fun in order to keep people coming back. Your lodge cannot be successful without any lodge members. You cannot win the Super Bowl if you do not have any players to put in the game. Below are some suggestions to help keep your programs fresh and your overall lodge program effective in completing the mission.

- The Lodge knows and understands its role in supporting local units and does not compete with them.
- The lodge includes council and community service projects
- OA Troop Rep program is fully up and running in the Lodge
- The lodge performs quality unit visitations and conducts more than just elections; they actively promote National High Adventure opportunities, Council Summer Camp, and a Where to Go Camping guide that educates individual units on short term camping ideas and plans.
- There are active and enthusiastic ceremony teams for all inductions
- The election teams are well trained and report through an election committee
- The Extended Elangomat program is employed
- All activities and events always have an element of fun (especially Ordeal weekends)
- Active chapters (as needed) take the program to the individual at the local level.
- The program is executed according to National Policies and Guidelines to include: Membership standards, elections, call outs, Ordeal, Brotherhood, Vigil, Progressive Revelation, finances, etc.
- Section Conclave participation and leadership participation at the section level.

Slide 13 - Communications:

Get a headset!

You always see Bill Belichick with his headset. Why does he always have a headset? The reason is because Bill is always communicating. He needs to know what is happening. The players need to know what is happening. Both the coach (Lodge Adviser) and the quarterback (Lodge Chief), have to communicate with everyone else constantly in order to score touchdowns or to move the ball in the right direction.



"I don't Twitter, I don't MyFace, I don't Yearbook," – Bill Belichick

- **Use Social Media.** Unfortunately, we have to disagree with Bill on this one. He may not communicate on social media, but we have to in order to reach today's youth. In today's culture, if we are dealing with youth then we need to speak their language. We have to use Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, etc. Social media sends your information directly and personally to each member. They join your group and you send the information directly to their personal phone in their pocket that they check the moment it buzzes with your message. Social media is a very effective communication.
- **Use Snail Mail Sparingly.** Don't mail anything via snail mail again to the youth. Save yourself postage and pay someone to monitor your social media accounts. You do not need a website to communicate information. You need a website to be able to store and display items (pictures, graphics, forms, and information). Most of the youth and near-youth members check social media accounts several times a day. Likewise, most will never read a newsletter either in the mail or in an email. You need to communicate effectively to the youth, so get yourself a headset that works! Older adult members and parents of the youth probably can still benefit from snail mail and email communications but you need to gauge this for your lodge.
- **Get an Online Payment System.** In today's society, we purchase almost everything online. We are most likely to purchase sitting on the coach using either our laptop or phone than we are to get our checkbook, complete the paperwork, get a stamp, and return our order in the mail. You will have more people attend your events or purchase your memorabilia if they can do it online.
- **Get an App.** Your lodge needs to have a media App where members can access information, get updates, vote on patch designs, pay for events, and maybe

access an online trading post. Scouting does not need to be outdated, but needs to be relevant, current and effective with today's culture.

- **Transfer Information.** On that note, we strongly encourage and repost the information from our National, Region, and Section social media accounts. You can also follow other sections and lodges to get great ideas.

Slide 14 – JTE Gold:

"If you sit back & spend too much time feeling good about what you did in the past, you're going to come up short next time." – Bill Belichick

All of these characteristics are difficult to employ all at once. Recognize there is NO PERFECT LODGE. There are lodges that are great at some of these, weak at some of these, and should be seeking to improve on everything. The lodges who strive to improve year-to-year are ones that are on the road to success. Using the 17 Journey to Excellence criteria and keeping them in focus with the LEC regularly will go a long way to jump start a lodge.

Slide 15 – 2015 Gold Lodges:

"We're always trying to do a better job on that and that's what we'll continue to do." – Bill Belichick

We want to continue to improve and get better. If we want to do a better job, then we need to know what areas we need to work on. The JTE petition allows us to analyze what areas we need to focus and improve on this next year.

Bill Belichick is the winningest coach in NFL history with over 250 career wins. There can be no doubt other coaches study him and his program in order to improve theirs. Let's now look at successful Gold Lodges to see what they do in hopes of making our Lodge better. Below is a brief summary of Gold performance lodges. Please notice that these Lodges do not perform at the Gold level in every criteria.

When compared to the 2015 JTE Criteria the average of Gold performing lodges show that most of the criteria are at a Silver level. The lodge sizes range from small (66 members) to large (1913 members). One key point is that they all have about the same number of youth as adults. They also have plenty of activities to keep their members involved. Some of the specific criteria (average Gold lodge) follow:

Slide 16 – 2015 Gold Lodges:

Finance Item #2: Average contribution per member = \$17.20 (Silver level)

Membership Item #3: Average Growth = 2.45% (Silver Level)

Membership Item #4: Average Retention Rate = 79% (Silver Level)

Membership Item #5: Average Unit Election Rate = 78% (Silver Level)

Membership Item #6: Average Induction Rate = 78.5% (Silver Level)

Program Item #8: Average Brotherhood Conversion = 36% (Silver Level)

Program Item #9: Average Service Hours/Member = 10.5 (Silver)

Unit Service Item #11: Average Visits = 68.5% (Silver)

Slide 17 – 2015 Gold Lodges:

Council Support Item # 15: Average camp promo contacts = 87% (Gold)

Leadership & Governance Item #16: Average LEC Participation = 96.5% (Silver but most Gold)

As can be seen, the lodges qualifying at the Gold level are not Gold at every criteria but have strengths they capitalize on. Most of the lodges, however, do have the desire to improve in those criteria that need improvement.

Slide 18 – Summary

Becoming a high performing lodge can be done in many ways, but by keeping the Mission in focus, establishing the organizational structure to meet it, selecting and training the leaders, communicating with and providing program and service to the council and following the JTE metrics will help get the lodge on its way – Most of all, include the element of fun and the youth will want to be part of it. You will then have a great opportunity to fulfill your mission as an adviser: developing youth.

Slide 17 – References

Lodge Advisers Handbook: <http://www.oa-bsa.org/pages/content/publications#lah>

Guide for Officers and Advisers: <http://www.oa-bsa.org/pages/content/publications#goa>

Journey to Excellence Guide: <http://www.oa-bsa.org/pages/content/publications#jteg>

Bill Belichick Quotes: <https://www.quotesdaddy.com/author/Bill+Belichick/1>