

LA340 – Issues: Program Content

National OA Adviser Training

Session Length: 25 Minutes

Session Objectives:

- To share ideas on activities for planning an annual program
- Identifying the resources available
- Exploring different program opportunities

Detailed Outline of the Session:

This session explains how the lodge adviser may coach and assist the lodge chief, his officers to plan for a year around lodge program by determining the activities that will allow the lodge to support the purpose of the Order.

Slide 1 - Overview:

A strong lodge program aims at achieving the purpose of the Order, to do so leaders must determine in advance the goals and objectives for the coming year. The program plan aims at supporting leadership development and continued cheerful service to community. *Does your lodge's plan support the local council and its units by effectively promoting the outdoors and service to others? Do all lodge members know about the plan?* By laying out in advance the activities for the year the lodge program serves as a guide or plan.

Slide 2 - Purpose of Session:

- Understanding the importance of lodge programs through:
 - Support of the Purposes of the Order of the Arrow
 - Encouraging active participation in planning and executing year around activity objectives
 - Coaching lodge leaders in achieving the purpose of the Order, local council, and its units through outdoor program and service
- Understanding typical activities and resources for: training, elections, camping promotion, inductions and service projects.

Slide 3 – Lodge Program Overview

Everything we do in the Boy Scouts of America is done for a purpose. Order of the Arrow program events are no different. The purpose of an event may include:

- Recognition/Induction
- Fellowship/Fun
- Training/LLD
- Business/LEC
- Service

An event's purpose will be rooted in the view of the Order of the Arrow (*Why*). Remember, the first part of the Purpose of the Order of the Arrow is:

"To recognize those campers – Scouts and Scouters – who best exemplify the Scout Oath and Law in their daily lives and by such recognition cause other campers to conduct themselves in such manner as to warrant recognition."

Order of the Arrow members, by definition, are seen by many others and are noticed. Therefore, we must think of how people outside of the Order of the Arrow may perceive what we do. We also must be tuned into how our members perceive our actions and events. Finally, we must be aware of how the Council Executive and Council Board may perceive what we do in terms of the BSA. Remember, the Mission of the OA includes

"...to fulfill its purpose as an integral part of the Boy Scouts of America ..."

Good lodge programs start with planning in advance and letting everyone know about it. The program event plan answers the fundamental questions: *Who, What, Where, When, How*.

Event Process

Slide 4 – Event Calendar

Let's see how a planning process answers these questions. The lodge executive committee (LEC) will need to establish an overall calendar that will include meetings, events, and other important administrative functions. The LEC works to develop a calendar policy, scheduling meetings to fall at regular intervals and at a routine time and place that help to improve attendance. The activities planned should fall on set weekends each year. The LEC must try to eliminate conflicts to the schedule by considering district and council activities, and avoid significant national, state, local or religious holidays as well as important community or school events. All of this requires a great level of detailed planning and balancing lodge functions to ensure the plan is well understood and doesn't distract from quality unit programs.

Slide 5 – Event Planning Process

One piece of this calendar planning process that seems obvious, but may be difficult to decide, is when and where events will be held. The time and place of an event has a large impact on the success of the event. It needs to be held at a location that is accessible and inviting for members but that is also adequate for achieving the purpose of the event.

When possible, it is important to have alternative times and locations in case conflicts arise during the planning process. Nothing hurts an event more than having to cancel or reschedule after people have planned to attend.

We also need to have a clear idea of who will be attending the event before we do any in-depth planning. It is not enough to know that the event is for Arrowmen. We need to know if the event will be for all members or for chapter and lodge leaders only. In addition, the purpose of the event may require that Ordeal and/or Brotherhood members may not be able to participate in some of the activities. If so, we need to make sure we plan activities for those members as well.

Now that we have a clear idea of the job we have ahead of us, we need to make sure we are ready to do the job. After all, an electrician would not start a wiring job with only a plumbers' wrench in his toolbox!

So, first we need a plan of action. We need to assemble a crew of capable individuals to help us out. First in the crew or committee is the Chairman. A good Adviser should be then appointed. General roles and responsibilities need to be discussed between the two and goals should be written by the Chair. Between the two, a budget should be drafted. Next a team needs to be recruited. Then, we need to delegate tasks to members of our crew. Make sure to utilize the full potential of the team and not have all the big issues handled by the leadership.

Once we have the crew assembled, it is important that the planning process keeps moving. Communication is a key component to keeping the plan in motion. You must be able to effectively communicate with your team so they know what they are expected to accomplish. However, the communication process must be two-way. Your team must also keep you up-to-date on their progress towards the goal.

Once the plan is in motion, it is important to keep the team motivated and moving ahead. For some people, this means you should check in with them at regular intervals to keep them on task. For others, you may be able to rely on them to have the job done well in advance of the time it is due. You may only have to check in with these individuals once or twice during the planning process. How tight to keep "the grip" on your team is important to evaluate early to keep your plan moving forward.

During the final part of your planning process, the use of a "dry run" will allow you to identify the weaknesses in your plan. Walk through the planned event with your team members leaving out no detail. It is best if this dry run can be done at the site of the event.

The most important part of the dry run is preparing for the unforeseen. While walking through your plans, think about how you will put contingency plans into action. How will you deal with parts of the event that don't happen exactly as planned? Will you be able to deal with the unforeseen while keeping the focus on the event's purpose?

Backdate the event:

The most important parts of the planning process are:

- Knowing when the event will take place
- Knowing how long each step in the planning process will take
- Knowing who will be involved in each planning step
- Knowing your limitations

All the points in time in your back dater will connect to give you a fluid plan for reaching each goal in your planning process. Perhaps the most important point in the above list is the last one – knowing your limitations. We always talk about setting goals just a little higher than you think you can reach. That is great – except when you have reached the planning stage of your event. The back dater you establish needs to be realistic. If not, it's of little value because you won't be able to stick to it. However, once established, your back dater needs to stay reasonably rigid to succeed.

Details have now been established which may influence the budget which now should be refined. Now some buzz needs to be created about the event.

Slide 6 – Event Promotion

The best ways to promote lodge activities is by earning a reputation for quality programming – make every event a success. Other effective ways to promote active participation are through:

- Lodge newsletter and website
- Social Media (Facebook, Snap Chat, Twitter, etc.)
- General distribution of the lodge calendar
- Special fliers or postcards
- OA Troop/Team Representatives
- Phone call reminders shortly before the activity
- One-on-one

Promoting activities takes everyone's effort, take time to encourage members to attend the next scheduled activity and to bring a fellow Arrowman. In today's busy world, last minute or late promotion is about as good as no promotion at all. Continue to have the team communicate and follow up both ways: Chair to Team and Team to Chair.

The time approaches and the event happens! Most events entail some service but make sure the event always has plenty of fun. At the end of the event recognize ALL involved,

the team members, the Chair and any support (e.g. Cooks) and any others who contributed to the success of the event. Recognition can take many forms so use all available (announcement, memorabilia, patches, hats, t-shirts, special necklace, publishing in newsletter, etc.).

Immediately after the event, best at the end of the event before all leave, assemble the team and have an evaluation of the event. Evaluation of the event's "best/needs improvement" and the planning process will lead to better events and planning in the future. Remember to evaluate how well the planning process worked, not just the event that you planned.

Slide 7 – Activities vs. "Meetings"

Remember, what we plan must be FUN! Some lodges find more success with lodge activities than meetings. The idea of a lodge/chapter activity is that the gathering becomes a much larger, fun activity. There are many activities that can bring that fun to your members, and positively impact Scouting. In principle, if it will take more than an hour to complete on a weekend, then it would be considered an activity. The lodge meeting is not the only activity that the lodge can do during the year. Make it meaningful and worth attending for members. *Would you consider attending a business-filled meeting or fun-filled activity?* You can certainly have a mix of both business meetings and activities but call them activities or gatherings rather than a "meeting".

Some examples of fun Activities:

- Ceremony and drumming practices
- Costume building and ceremony props workshops
- Conduct ceremonies: Arrow of light, Webelos crossovers, troop court of honor, Eagle Scout courts of honor (exposing the OA to packs and troops)
- Arrow of Light recognition at the district or council level
- Conducting a council or district training event (e.g., camping promotions, winter camping skills) conducted by the OA scouts
- Hold banquets, fellowships, and callouts
- Provide staff and/or run council or district events such as camporees
- See more examples at the National OA Web site: www.oa-bsa.org

Caution should be exercised to not over-program the lodge activities to distract from quality unit programs. Remember, the Arrowman's first responsibility is to his Scouting unit.

Slide 8 – Major Program Activities

- Training
- Elections
- Camp Promotion
- Ceremonies
- Service Projects

Slide 9 – Training

Scouting and the OA requires leaders to be trained. The OA offers Arrowman this opportunity through year around opportunities. Training is most effective when it coincides with normal events and functions already put on by the lodge. Integrating all training events as part of the annual program is the best way to maximize participation while meeting member expectations to achieve some form of leadership development and or knowledge based training when attending lodge functions. *This practice allows for training as a normal occurrence. Is training planned and coordinated by an established Lodge Leadership Development Committee in your Lodge?* By creating a year-round training plan lodge leaders ensure that training needs can be met through multiple, fresh, and innovative training opportunities.

Several national training opportunities exist to benefit Arrowman these include:

- National Leadership Seminar (NLS)
- Developing Youth Leadership Conference (DYLC)
- Philmont OA Adviser Conference
- Other Training Opportunities
 - Section Training Opportunities
 - National Order of the Arrow Conference

"It is the role of the lodge to provide opportunity for leaders to grow so that they will be prepared to lead in their own servant roles."

Lodge Adviser's Handbook

The [Lodge Leadership Development](http://lld.oa-bsa.org/2012/) Conference resource is: <http://lld.oa-bsa.org/2012/>

Slide 10 - Elections

Conducting successful unit elections are important for several reasons. First, they help accomplish the Order's purpose by providing new candidates for membership in the OA. The purpose of the unit election is to recognize those campers–Scouts and Scouters–who best exemplify the Scout Oath and Law in their daily lives. This is the cornerstone of the OA and it relies on the unit election to accomplish it.

The unit election is also the first step in the induction process. The Order is a unique organization because candidates are elected by members and non-members. Since the non-members are not familiar with the Order, the unit election must convey the principles and ideals of our organization so they can evaluate those who are eligible.

The lodge is responsible for conducting unit elections in every troop and team in the council. The unit elections committee sends out information to all Scoutmasters and Varsity Scout Coaches regarding membership in the OA and the election procedures. It trains unit elections teams, schedules visits of elections teams to units, ensures that the teams conducting the elections are well-trained and in proper uniform when conducting the elections, and records the results of the elections.

The lodge chief appoints a youth Arrowman to be the unit elections committee chairman. The unit elections chairman must have an adviser who is appointed by the lodge adviser. If the lodge uses chapters, the lodge chief, vice chief, or unit elections chairman works with the chapters to ensure that each chapter also elects or appoints a youth Arrowman to manage unit elections at the chapter level. The chapter unit elections chairman must have an adult adviser who is appointed by the chapter adviser. Chapter unit elections chairmen form the core of the lodge unit elections committee.

The Unit Elections Committee (especially the unit election team) is very important to the troop because in most cases it is one of the few OA committees that the youth of the troop get to see and meet. Most importantly, the team also gives the troop a full explanation of what the Order of the Arrow is about. The team is important to the lodge by displaying a great example that can be used as a sort of promotion for the local OA lodge. The Unit Elections Committee is also the link between the lodge and electing new members as well as making sure that Scoutmasters and adult District personnel are given the chance to be nominated for support roles in into the OA.

The National Order of the Arrow Committee has provided a [Guide to Unit Elections](#) resource to assist lodges in conducting successful elections.

A [handy tool](#) for the election team is provided in the Best Practice section of the National OA Web site.

Slide 11 - Camping Promotions

One of the Purposes of the Order of the Arrow is "to promote Scout Camping...". The Order of the Arrow serves in promoting the outdoors by giving full support to the entire council and district camping program. This support may include the monthly unit camping as well as resident camping. All Arrowman should be committed to camping promotion and should remain one of the Order's most important commitment to Scouting. The lodge adviser and lodge chief are members of the council's camping committee, and chapter advisers and their chiefs become members of their respective district committees. Many lodges are committed to supporting camping committees by providing literature and visual aids (slides or videos) about camping. In coordination with

the council and district camping committees the lodge may develop a sample camping promotion timetable that may provide an effective method of recruiting, training and scheduling unit visitation teams. A "Where to Go Camping" Booklet is an ongoing service project that provides where to go camping and hiking information for packs, troops, teams, and Venturing crews with a tool that enables them to do more year-round camping on a variety of sites and conditions. A guide for producing a [Where to Go Camping](#) resource is found on the National OA web site.

Slide 12 - Inductions Ceremonies

A very important part to the lodge annual program is to have well planned and coordinated induction ceremonies which are a critical aspect of the induction process. In large lodges, chapters may organize all unit elections and host their own ceremonies. The difference between the success or failure of your lodge starts with the ceremonies of the Order.

Here are some ways to strengthen their teams:

- Maximizing the number of Scouts involved in ceremonies, many lodges cover the cost of customs. This removes the burden from the individual.
- Providing recognition for good performances. Arrowman can graduate from public ceremonies (crossover, callout, etc.) to pre-Ordeal, then to Brotherhood.
- Hold a ceremony camp: a fun, informative training weekend for aspiring and experienced ceremonialists.
- Exchanging teams. Have your team visit another chapter's Ordeal to study their ceremony team.
- Assigning effective advisers.
- Using awards or competitions.

There are many important components (Ceremony team, The Calling-out (not mandatory), Extended Elangomat Program, Brotherhood Completion etc.) to consider in planning and coordinating the induction ceremonies. Your efforts and those of other leaders to maximize these opportunities will allow for long lasting impressions in the audiences.

The [Guide to Inductions](http://www.oa-bsa.org/pages/content/guide-to-inductions) is provided on the National OA Web Site: <http://www.oa-bsa.org/pages/content/guide-to-inductions>

A helpful [back dating calendar](http://www.oa-bsa.org/uploads/resources/bestpractices/OrdealPlanningBackdater.pdf) for Inductions can be found at: <http://www.oa-bsa.org/uploads/resources/bestpractices/OrdealPlanningBackdater.pdf>

Further best practice tips and guides for great [Inductions](#) can be found on the National OA web site: <http://www.oa-bsa.org/pages/content/best-practices#IND>

Slide 13 - Service Projects

Lodges across the country provide outstanding leadership in service to their communities, camps, and councils. The service that lodges provide sometimes take unusual forms or develop from unique situations. Here are some examples from across the country:

- Help build a Habitat for Humanity House
- Local Park Repair/Maintenance
- Collect canned goods/clothing/household items for needy
- Local ArrowCorps – Work with local/State/National forestry/parks to build/repair trail, repair infrastructure, remove invasive species, etc.
- Provide logistic services to community/state events.
- Adopt a campsite at Resident Camp
- The list is endless

A guide to help lodges plan and execute a [community service project](#) is found on the National OA web site.

Slide 14 – Summary

A strong lodge program is directed at achieving the purpose of the Order, and to do so lodges must determine in advance their goals and objectives for the coming year. The program and FUN activities support the purpose of the Order, the local council, and its units through outdoor program promotion and service. This includes the council resident camps, camp facilities, unit camping, Cub Scout outdoor experiences, and Webelos-to-Scout plan, council and community service projects and many other activities. This list is only limited by the youth's imagination.

There are many events that are organized by the Order of the Arrow. We must always keep in mind that the Order of the Arrow is an integral part of the Boy Scouts of America. Therefore, every event that the Order supports or plans should have a defined purpose that complements the Boy Scout program. However, since all members of the Order of the Arrow are full members with all the rights and privileges of membership, we need to do our best to make sure our events offer something for everyone.



Online Resources:

NATIONAL PROGRAMS

<http://oa-bsa.org/pages/category/category/programs>

LODGE PROGRAM VIDEOS

<http://www.oa-bsa.org/pages/content/lodge-program-resource-videos>

PUBLICATIONS

<http://www.oa-bsa.org/pages/content/publications>

GUIDE TO INDUCTIONS

<http://www.oa-bsa.org/pages/content/guide-to-inductions>



Attachment 1

SAMPLE BACKDATING CALENDAR

NAME OF EVENT: _____

DATE: _____

PLACE: _____

CHAIRMAN: _____

CHAIRMAN'S ADVISER: _____

ACTION TO BE TAKEN	DAYS PRIOR TO EVENT	DATE	ASSIGNED TO	CHECKED
Set time and place	90	_____	_____	_____
Determine who is to come (Outline your "target market")	90	_____	_____	_____
Publish dates and story in bulletin	90	_____	_____	_____
Order special supplies (event patches, memorabilia, etc.)	70	_____	_____	_____
Determine event schedule	60	_____	_____	_____
Complete delegation of responsibilities	45	_____	_____	_____
In-person visit of location	45	_____	_____	_____
File activity budget estimate	45	_____	_____	_____
Order "regular" supplies (trading post gear, etc.)	45	_____	_____	_____
Send promotional e-mail to members or participants	30	_____	_____	_____
Print all material needed (guides, worksheets, rosters, manuals, handbooks, forms, etc.)	30	_____	_____	_____
Ensure all necessary supplies are available for weekend	30	_____	_____	_____



TRAINING
ORDER OF THE ARROW

Go over final schedule with advisers	25	-----	-----	-----
Follow up with all officers and major staffers	21	-----	-----	-----
Put together info packets and giveaway material	14	-----	-----	-----
Final check on supplies, staffers, performers, etc.	10	-----	-----	-----
Get final registration numbers for food orders	7	-----	-----	-----