



Changing Traditions

Session Length: 45 Minutes

Through this session, you will:

Explain **The importance of tradition and identity and how innovation, and altering events can be beneficial**

Demonstrate **How re-infusing life into events will help with growth over time**

Guide **Learners in the steps to ensure their “new” events run smoothly, and that they have the resources they need **

Enable **Learners to take what they have learned back to their local lodge/chapter/section**

Learning Outcomes: [create a brief list of what participants should take away with them]

- Understand how tradition can create identity
- Explore how to change tradition and read your audience
- Realize how to effectively implement new traditions or altering old traditions
- Provide ideas on how to publicize and market your “new” events
- Learn how to create an environment where change is valued

Theme Connection:

The theme of NOAC 2018 is “Decide Your Destiny,” emphasizing the message that today’s decisions shape tomorrow’s reality. This session will relay this theme in the following ways:

- **show that good events lead to growth**
- **prove how innovation and change is important**
- **explain that not all traditions are “good” traditions **

This session will help the **Lodge/Chapter/Section** with the Journey to Excellence Requirement(s): **INSERT REQUIREMENT #**

Lodge: 3, 4, 7, 8

Chapter: 1, 3

Section:



Required Materials: [tailor specifically for this session after the syllabus is done, e.g. handouts, flipcharts, projector, screen]

- ****Handouts ****
- ****Flipchart ****
- ****PowerPoint Slide-deck ****
- ****Projector/ Screen ****



TRAINER PREPARATION

The trainer of this course should be a respected member of the order, with a great deal of experience and understanding in planning events. He should be a positive influence as well as an individual who holds a consensus of leadership.

1. Download and review supporting PowerPoint presentation
2. Review supplementary materials and determine if they wish to use them
3. Understand the material and ask questions if necessary

Session Narrative

[The body of your session should be here. Be sure to use headings that break up the different topics or part of the session, and adjust the recommended time for each part after you've written it]

Trainer Instructions: If at any time the trainer should perform an action (play a video clip, ask prompting questions, etc) type the directions into boxes like this. Simply copy this box and paste wherever needed throughout the lesson plan, replacing this text with your own material.

Introduction

5 minutes

Traditions exist for a variety of reasons, but before we can dive headfirst into changing traditions, we need to determine what a tradition is.

Trainer Instructions: Solicit input and write ideas on the flip chart

Trainer Instructions: Advance PP Slide -- "What is a Tradition?"

Webster defines tradition as: "an inherited, established, or customary pattern of thought, action, or behavior (as a religious practice or a social custom)." Explain to participants that traditions are often done without any thought as to "why" we are doing it.



Encourage participants to think back to when they were young and each day they recited the pledge of allegiance, but did not know what all of the words meant; however, they continued to do it, because it was the tradition at their school.

Ask participants: “What are some traditions in your family?” (Write these on the flip chart), Ask participants: “What are some traditions in this lodge?” (Write these on the flip chart)

Examples of Lodge Traditions might include:

- A Vigil Weekend/breakfast/call out
- Still doing tap outs
- “Passing of the Bonnet”
- LLD always being held in [month]

Where Do Transitions Come From?

10 minutes

Trainer Instructions: Advance PP Slide -- “Where do transitions come from?”

Ask participants “Where do traditions come from?”

If no one offered the response: “someone started doing it a long time ago and we just kept doing it” ask the participants if they can think of any other ways traditions can get started.

Explain to participants that some traditions arise out of a need. Solicit an example of a tradition that began because there was a situation that required action, and it has continued for years as a tradition. One example might include why certain countries drive on different sides of the road. The simple answer to why this is done is based on a historical need being filled: as individuals would travel in medieval society they would be required to pass one another. Because their “driving” tradition developed when swords were still in use it made more sense to pass on the left so swords would be on the inside of travel should the need to do battle arise. This tradition has carried forward in some parts of the world.

Trainer Instructions: Advance PP Slide -- “Where do transitions come from?”

Why do we avoid changing traditions?

10 minutes

Ask participants: What are some reasons why people sometimes choose not to question “traditions” in Scouting.

- The person who started the “tradition” is still around
- It’s a popular part of the lodge’s calendar
- We never thought of it as malleable.
- It’s in the ceremony book



- My adviser says it is National Policy

Discuss each of these situations. Explain that if a tradition no longer serves its intended purpose it may be time for a change.

Identify Traditions in need of changing

10 minutes

Explain to participants that traditions should serve a purpose; all of the traditions found in the OA's ceremonies serve a purpose. They serve to reinforce the values of the Order of the Arrow, and should be followed. However, if a tradition does not best exemplify the values of the Scout Oath and Law it should be changed. Also, if the lodge has a traditional event that is no longer serving its purpose, or can be done in a better way, it should be looked at and considered as a tradition in possible need of changing.

Take the list of lodge traditions made earlier and go through the list of traditions and ask "why do we do this..." for each. Be sure, if the answer is, "we've always done it this way," to point out that there may be a better way of doing it, and it should be looked at to make sure it is still accomplishing its purpose.

Identifying and navigating road blocks

10 minutes

Ask participants "What are some potential road blocks you may hit in changing a tradition?"

Answers might include:

- The originator of the tradition
- Older lodge members
- Past lodge officers

Trainer Instructions: Advance PP Slide -- "Roadblocks to Change"

Ask participants: "How do we get them in our court?"

- Talk to them about WHY things have "always" been this way
- Help them feel like a part of the new tradition, give them a stake in it. Build a consensus.
- Make them feel like it is building on what they did
- Discuss the idea with all stakeholders before the change is implemented

Role Play

10 minutes

Trainer Instructions: Advance PP Slide -- "Role-play"

Count off participants by twos. Assign all of the 1s to act as the newly elected Lodge Chief who wants to move the Ordeal from June (at Summer Camp) to September. The Lodge has a long-standing "tradition" of holding the Ordeal in the Summer but you have a lot of good reasons to think the Summer is not the best time.



All of the 2s will play the role of having been the Lodge Chief in the year 2000. You feel as though the Summer Ordeal is the best way to do this. You have your own reasons, including the fact that you developed the plan which the lodge is still using today to balance Summer Camp and Lodge resources during the Ordeal. The role play should last about 5 minutes

Trainer Instructions: Advance PP Slide -- "Role-play debrief"

Ask participants to share:

- What issues did you come across?
 - What road blocks did the past lodge chief throw up?
 - What were his experiences?
- How did you solve the issues?
 - What techniques did you use to persuade?
 - Were they effective?

Summary

3 minutes

Trainer Instructions: Advance PP Slide -- "Summary"

It is important to find out why something is a tradition.

- It is important to seek counsel of those who have been around the lodge for a long time.
- Build a consensus BEFORE you make a change
- Don't make change for the sake of change; make change to keep the organization fresh, fun, enjoyable, and meaningful

Takeaway Challenge

3 minutes

Trainer Instructions: Advance PP Slide -- "Takeaway"

Please take out your notebook and pen. For the final three minutes, think about the role that you will be playing next year in the OA, or the role you hope to play. Write down three key ideas on how changing traditions could help improve the way your chapter or lodge works. During your break time later today, share these with others in your chapter or lodge.

Appendix: Resources and Source Material

- 2016 Guide to Unit Elections, available online at <http://www.oa-bsa.org/pages/content/guide-to-unit-elections>
- 2012 Guide for Officers and Advisers, available online at <http://www.oa-bsa.org/pages/content/publications#goa>



- 2008 Lodge Finance Manual, available online at <http://www.oa-bsa.org/pages/content/publications#lfm>
- Chapter Journey to Excellence Workbook, available online at <http://www.oa-bsa.org/pages/content/printable-forms>