



Independent Order of Odd Fellows
Dedicated Members for Change

April 11, 2012

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

One of our sisters forwarded the thoughts, below, from a Lodge in the Philippines. We all know that Lodges in the Philippines have shown considerable growth in recent years - they are willing to be active and innovative. I forward it to you for your viewing pleasure.

Also, I remind you that the Grand Lodge office has a video that you can purchase for \$5 (and if you want it shipped to your Lodge, there is an extra \$1.10 parcel rate charge). It's an excellent Membership Development video that was created last year by members of my own Lodge, under the auspices of the Grand Lodge Membership Committee. I commend it to you. Just contact Daniel, the clerk at the Grand Lodge at gl-desk1@sbcglobal.net to order your video for your Lodge.

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Dave Rosenberg

10 TIPS FOR A STRONG LODGE

NUMBER ONE: Strong Recruitment: You are either growing or you are shrinking. If your recruitment is strong, that means that outsiders believe in what you are doing. Put importance of the mentoring process - educate new members about the history, purpose and what makes the fraternity important and relevant in their lives and their communities. Make them feel welcome and comfortable and make sure that the majority of the new members will stay as members. This is one of the strongest signs that you have a strong lodge.

NUMBER TWO: Strong Finances: This is probably the truest internal reflection on the strength of your lodge. The brothers and sisters in a strong lodge will want to pay their dues, because they realize that the fraternity provides great value to them. With good finances, come good activities and events that all members could enjoy and find fulfillment.

NUMBER THREE: Lively Social Life: Nobody wants to continue their membership in a lodge that is always serious and rigid – your lodge needs to know how to have fun and enjoy! Is your lodge providing the social outlet that the brothers and sisters expect? This is much more than dinners, lodge meetings and initiation ceremonies. This should go beyond inside the lodge room.



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Organize social activities that invite people from the community – both members and non-members alike. Strong lodges have countless events that ensure the morale stays high.

NUMBER FOUR: Create Leaders: Does your lodge develop new leaders or you just allow younger and newer members to just sit beside and feel useless? Every new member should be trained to be a leader from the very start they have become members - give them responsibility, elect and appoint them in lodge positions and do not be afraid to step back while supporting them behind the scenes. Seniority is not good, mentoring is better. The easiest way to see if your lodge is producing leaders is by seeing that younger and newer members take on roles and leadership positions not just in the lodge but in the community. Strong Lodges have leaders all over the city or town, not just in the lodge room.

NUMBER FIVE: Active Community Service: Strong lodges are active in community service because they want to make a difference, not because they are forced to participate. Make the community service events fun, and the brothers and sisters, as well as community members who can be potential members, will want to show up to do their part.

NUMBER SIX: Clean and Well-maintained Lodge Hall: The Lodge Hall is a reflection of how strong the fraternity is. This is a lodge's most prized possession. Strong Lodges take great pride in their Lodge Hall or Building's appearance. Let your lodge be of service to its members and community. Make your lodge a place where community people and members will feel welcome and comfortable - a place where people could spend their spare time and enjoy the camaraderie.

NUMBER SEVEN: Active Senior and New Members' Involvement: When older brothers or sisters disappear, the lodge will lose its wisdom and knowledge. When younger brothers and sisters disappear, the lodge will lose its hope for the future and the possibility of innovation. Oftentimes, the lodge blames members who leave for being the problem but it is actually the lodge that is the problem. The fraternity must cater to all its members, not just the younger or older ones. After holding the top position in the lodge, encourage senior or older members to still stay involved and supportive to the younger ones. Have programs in place that the older and younger brothers want to be a part of, and as a result, the most experienced brothers remain active in the fraternity while the younger ones will also stay. Strong Lodges should put importance in listening to the ideas of both new and senior members.

NUMBER EIGHT: Positive Reward System : Strong lodges should show appreciation and recognition to their members. It could be better to organize an awarding ceremony every year - give away awards of recognition or prizes to the most active member every year, the member who arrives the earliest in every meeting and so on. These may just be small certificates or



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tokens but this shows that you give importance to brothers and sisters who make good contributions to your lodge. It increases the morale of the lodge.

NUMBER NINE: Educate the Public : One big problem with a lot of lodges is they do a lot of good things but no one knows about it. This may be good because it shows that the lodge is not after recognition for the good things they do. However, this is also bad because no one will really know what we really do and people can misinterpret our purpose as a fraternity. Also, several lodges existed for over hundreds of years in their community but no one knows that they still exist. Do not be too secretive. Do not hide what good things you do. Educate the public of the existence of our fraternity. Let your lodge participate in public parades, community events and conduct seminars about the fraternity. Create a descent and attractive website for your lodge, have someone write an article about your lodge in the local or national newspaper, post photos and videos in the internet of your lodge activities and projects. Take advantage of technology, mass media and the internet world. When you post something good about your lodge in the internet, you are not just helping your lodge - you are actually also helping lodges across the world. Whatever good photos, articles or videos about the fraternity that you post in the internet can actually reach thousands of miles and millions of people. The best thing about it is it is for free.

NUMBER TEN: Strong Risk Management : The biggest problem of most lodges is when internal issues and problems occur such as conflicts and misunderstandings between members. Depending on how effective the risk management is, conflicts and misunderstandings can either make up or break up a lodge leading to its demise. So, this is something that strong lodges should realize - put a solid risk management plan in place to prevent this from happening. Strong lodges should put more importance on relationships than finances and individual pride.

[Non-text portions of this message have been removed]