Beyond the Lodge: Section Operations

Session Length: 45 Minutes

Through this session, you will:

Explain: The operations of the section, use of the OA Field Operations Guide (FOG), ideal Section committees, and the importance of a good Section Leadership Retreat (SLR).

Demonstrate: The use of planning templates that may be useful for Section operations, such as a backdater, What-How-When-Who planning tool, etc.

Guide: The brainstorming of Section responsibilities and committees, as well as a discussion of the importance of these items.

Enable: Future section officers and support Arrowmen to better understand the scale of Section operations, proper utilization of the FOG, and the significance of training and developing Section leadership.

Learning Outcomes:

- Participants will learn the content available in the FOG
- Participants will learn and practicing using planning tools to prioritize tasks and assign committee responsibilities.
- Participants will understand the importance of a Section Leadership Retreat and learn how to develop effective content for it.

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:

- The importance of planning that will be relayed in this session emphasizes the NOAC 2018 message of taking action today to affect the future outcomes.
- The importance of leadership training and development connects to the theme in that guests will understand that practices like an SLR are an investment today into the future leadership of a Section.

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

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

- Flipchart with detachable sheets
- Whiteboard or stationary flipchart to collect participant input
- Printed copies of: a sample Conclave backdater, the What-How-When-Who planning tool, and a sample SLR agenda.
- A web-enabled computer, preferably connected to a projector and screen.

TRAINER PREPARATION

1. Prepare sample handouts of a completed backdater, WHWW planning tool, and budget sheet for your own reference.
2. Develop any pertinent examples to share with participants regarding the importance of planning
3. Create a sample agenda for a Section Leadership Retreat

Session Narrative

Introduction   **5 minutes**
Welcome guests and introduce yourself. Have guests introduce themselves with their name and current involvement in the OA. Inform them that this session will focus on the operations of the Section. If they are unfamiliar with what a Section is, mention that it is a geographical grouping of local Lodges, and that the operations of the Section will be covered in this session.

First Topic: Field Operations Guide   **5 minutes**
Begin a run through of the OA Field Operations Guide (FOG). Include the table of contents and focus on the inclusion of elements that guests may be unaware of.

> **Trainer Instructions:** If possible, utilize a computer and projector to show guests where they can find the downloadable FOG on the oa-bsa.org website, and show key pages throughout this portion of the session.

Second Topic: Conclave Planning   **25 minutes**
Ask guests for some input about Conclaves they have attended in the past. Highlights, problems they have seen, and suggestions are all welcome. Begin a conversation of the importance of planning. You may choose to use either a video clip, a personal story, or solicit responses from the audience to illustrate that planning is essential to executing a successful event (or, the contrary, how failing to plan can lead to negative outcomes).

Let guests know that they will be practicing using two different types of planning tools in this session – the What-How-When-Who planning tool, and an event backdater.

> **Trainer Instructions:** Pass out a printed copy of each of the above resources to either each guest, or one per group of 3-5.

Order of

Begin an illustration of the WHWW planning tool. Participants may be familiar with this tool from and ILST or NYLT course. Discuss how this planning tool emphasizes the actual task and the person or group responsible for it. Describe how the process of using the tool is to complete the first three columns (What, How and When) for all items before filling in the last column (Who is responsible for each task listed). Discuss some items that might go on the WHWW planning tool for a smaller event, such as a unit campout or Ordeal. Then, have guests work in buzz groups to brainstorm items that might be included when planning a conclave.

Trainer Instructions: Allow guests 2-3 minutes to fill in the What, How, and When columns on the planning tool with as many items they can that are necessary for the execution of a Section Conclave. At the end of their time, ask a spokesperson from each buzz group to share their ideas.

Tell guests that the next step is to fill out the "Who" column for all items. Discuss how this could be one person (an Officer or an Adviser) or a group of people (a committee that works together to complete a task). Lead a discussion about the roles of the Section officers, advisers, and committees, and the importance behind delegation and the assignment of like tasks to a group of people. Ask participants to think about some of the action items they wrote down, and who might be responsible for each one. Then, ask them to consider what kind of committees might be formed in order to accomplish all tasks.

Trainer Instructions: Provide each buzz group with a flipchart sheet and give them 2-3 minutes to make a list of possible Section committees that could be used to plan and execute a Conclave. Then, ask a spokesperson from each group to share their committee ideas and which tasks they might be responsible for.

Next, move onto the Conclave backdater tool. Show participants how this tool is sort of like a backwards timeline, and thus emphasizes when certain items need to be completed, relative to the event itself, and places less emphasis on how to do it or who will do it. Thus, it should be used in addition to, rather than instead of, the WHWW planning tool.

Trainer Instructions: Show participants a sample backdater, complete with items placed in a range from 10 days to 90 days before the event. Then, give them 2-3 minutes in buzz groups to place their own items on their backdater template. Again, ask them to share when the time is up.

Third Topic: Section Leadership Retreat   **10 minutes**

Discuss the significance of leadership development. Emphasize the role that leadership plays as a part of the BSA and OA mission. Ask guests to share of any experience they have had attending a Section Leadership Retreat. Show photos and share stories, if possible, of how your Section conducts an SLR. Show participants a template for an agenda planner for an SLR, and have them contribute as a group to a list of possible content that should be shared and discussed during an SLR. In addition, suggest how the SLR could also be conducted at or include a trip to the planned Conclave site, so that those who attend can gain a mental image of the location and start to envision how to implement the program at that site.

Takeaway Challenge   **3 minutes**

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 related to this session that you could help improve the way your Section plans programs [something appropriate for your session]. 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