



Supporting the Council

The Lodge's Role in Council Support

Session Objectives

- **Explain** the importance of the Lodge becoming an integral part of the Council
- **Demonstrate** the importance of working with the Scout Executive to coordinate Lodge program and Council support under the guidance of the OA Business Plan and Council strategic plan.
- **Guide** participants through a highly energetic presentation to create enthusiasm among the participants to increase their Lodge's efforts for Council support.
- **Enable** participants to meet with the Council Scout Executive and develop a plan for their Lodge to increase support for the Council.

Session Length: 55 Minutes

Appendix Resources:

- The Order of the Arrow Business Plan (2017-2020), available online at <https://oa-bsa.org/resources/publications/business-plan-2017-2020>
- 2019 OA Lodge Journey to Excellence Petition, available online at https://oa-bsa.org/uploads/resources/forms/2019_JTE_points.pdf

Materials Needed:

- Flipchart w/easel
- Markers
- Overhead projector (optional)
- Computer w/projection machine (optional)
- Small prizes for participation (optional)

Trainer Preparation

The trainer for this session should be someone familiar with council programs, ideally, someone who has experience or involvement with their Lodge's efforts for increasing council support. The trainer should also be highly energetic, enthusiastic and leverage his past training experiences in order to create enthusiasm among the participants.

It is anticipated that the audience for this session will consist of your typical conclave participant: youth and adult members who are not necessarily chapter or Lodge officers. The purpose of the session is to educate participants and to spark an interest for them to become more involved in supporting the Council.





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Session Narrative

Introduction

7 Minutes

Trainer Tip: The session trainer should introduce himself and the topic. He should provide information on his Scouting and Order of the Arrow experience (especially his knowledge and background regarding Council support), what Lodge and city he is from and any other relevant items of interest. Please note: although this session narrative is written in the first person, trainers should not read directly from the syllabus and work to develop their own style of delivery while maintaining the integrity of the content.

Today we are going to discuss the importance of supporting our local Scout Council, and the significant roles the Order of the Arrow and your Lodge can play.

As members of the OA, one of our purposes is “to crystallize the Scout habit of helpfulness into a life purpose of leadership in cheerful service to others.” This concept of servant leadership, inspired by the work of our founder E. Urner Goodman, is the legacy of the Order of the Arrow. It is why, as Scouts and Scouters, Arrowmen, and as a Lodge, we dedicate ourselves to serving the needs of those we lead.

The OA's National Business Plan supports the BSA National Council's Strategic Plan in the following objectives that support the Council:

- *Challenge local lodges to take specific, active roles in annual district and council events*
- *Emphasize the involvement of the individual Arrowman within the unit by creating a larger focus on the several programs and initiatives that impact the unit*
- *Explore new and innovative means of BSA membership growth and retention in collaboration with councils during lodges' required annual meetings with Scout Executives*
- *Utilize pilot initiatives as a means of growing and retaining members*
- *Develop an actionable relationship between Cub Scouting and the OA*
- *Continue to promote the OA to underserved populations of the Scouting community through a specific focus on membership diversification*

Order of the Arrow Business Plan

JANUARY 1, 2017 – DECEMBER 31, 2019

The Lodge's role in supporting the Council is also evident in the Mission of the OA. Can I please have a volunteer read the Mission of the Lodge?

“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.”





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The key to achieving the purpose of the OA lies in the Lodge's ability to operate as an integral part of the Council. The Lodge cannot successfully function as a separate entity.

However, working together, the Lodge and Council will be able to identify how the Order can best serve the local Scouting community.

Supporting the Council – Brainstorming Activity

5 Minutes

Now that we have had a chance to emphasize the importance of Council support, let's take a quick moment to brainstorm some possible opportunities for the Lodge to assist and support the Council.

Trainer Tip: The purpose of this activity is to brainstorm and list possible ideas/opportunities Lodges have to support their Council and Council program.

Solicit feedback from participants. As this is a brainstorming activity, your goal will be to develop and encourage as many ideas as possible and withhold any judgment on the merits of an idea until you have a chance to review and recap. For now, just get ideas on paper. Write down, or have your assistant write down, each suggestion on a flip chart or chalkboard to discuss later.

There are really no right or wrong answers for this activity. The key is to encourage folks to express ideas and to document them. Some key ideas might include:

- Boy Scout and Cub Scout summer camp staff
- Council/District event support (staffing, promotion, resources, etc.)
- Camping Promotion (Boy Scout camp, Cub Scout day/resident camp)
- Financial Support
- Gifts-In-Kind (equipment/material donations)
- Support council fundraisers
- Service projects at council facilities
- OA Scoutreach Mentoring

Thank you for sharing your ideas. As you can see, there are a number of things that the Lodge can do in support of the Council.

Opportunities for Council Support

10 Minutes

Now that we had had a minute identify a number of ideas where the Lodge can support the Council, let's take a moment to discuss some of these opportunities in depth. Please remember, these are general ideas and are not applicable in every Council. It is important for your Lodge and Council to work together and identify the opportunities where the Lodge can best support the Council.

Financial Support

Financial contributions is a critical area where each Lodge can increase Council support. Item #8 on the JTE: *Contribution to Council*: Contribute cash, materials, or both to the Council: \$12.50/Lodge member (Bronze Level); \$19.50/Lodge member (Silver Level); \$29.50/Lodge Member (Gold Level)





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There are a number of different methods your Lodge can utilize to make financial contributions to your local Council:

- **Direct Support:** The Lodge can make direct financial contributions to the Council in a number of ways, including:
 - ✓ *Council Endowment Fund:* The Lodge can make contributions to the Council's endowment fund directly or through the James E. West Award. This award is a great way to recognize those Arrowmen who have provided selfless service to the Lodge, chapter, Council or district, while giving money to the Council. Everybody wins.
 - ✓ *Capital Campaign Contributions*
 - ✓ *Friends of Scouting*
- **Gifts in Kind:** Gifts in kind are non-monetary items that will provide benefit and value to the Council. It is a great way to utilize the resources in your Lodge, while giving back to the Council and working towards achievement levels in the Journey to Excellence. Examples of gifts in kind are equipment, materials, tools, program supplies, etc. Gifts in kind also include providing money for the Council to purchase an item, such as a new rowboat for the waterfront.
- **Support Council Fundraisers:** Every Council relies on popcorn sales as a key fundraiser for the year. This provides your Lodge with is a large opportunity to assist the Council, either through the sale of popcorn at Lodge/chapter events or providing support staff for the Council's efforts. Your Lodge should also support the Council's other fundraisers, such as a memorabilia auction, through financial contributions or offering support staff.
- **Lodge Fundraisers:** Your Lodge can also sponsor fundraisers to help raise money for your Council. For example, many Lodges make special flaps to raise funds for certain projects at Council camps or other Council facilities. Lodges have also worked with their Council to make a special patch set to help raise funds for various causes.

Council and District Events Support

Throughout the year, every Council and district will hold a variety of different events. These might include camporees, Scout-O-Rama, Cub Scout Pow Wows, Webelos Overnights, Scouting for Food, and staffing National Youth Leadership Training. No matter what the event, there is always an area where your Lodge or chapter can provide assistance and support. Examples include event, program, and support staff, security, service corp, etc. Requirement #9 of the Journey to Excellence states:

Council Designated Support: Key 3 meets with Scout Executive and lodge completes agreed upon projects.

The key to providing quality support is to work closely with the proper Council committees, personnel and volunteers. If the Lodge becomes a part of the planning process, the event committee will be able to determine the best usage for the Lodge's resources. In addition, presence during the planning process demonstrates the Lodge's commitment to the success of the event. It is important that we commit our Lodges to supporting the Council, but it is even more important that this commitment is easily recognized by everyone in the Council.

Service Projects

In our efforts to continuously support our Scout Councils, the Order's dedication to leadership in cheerful service can play a vital role. Every Council owns and operates many facilities, most of which the Lodge utilizes on a regular basis. Your Lodge should be committed to the upkeep and enhancement of these facilities.





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This can be accomplished by having service projects at every Lodge event, service days, or service weekends. The Lodge should work closely with the Council's properties committee to assess areas where the Lodge can provide the greatest amount of service. Together, you could also determine projects at each facility that the Lodge can fully fund and complete.

Membership

Another key area where the Lodge can support Council is increasing membership in the BSA. There are a number of different ways your Lodge can help increase the number of Scouts in your local Council, including:

- **Webelos-to-Boy Scout Transition:** The OA dedicated itself to furthering Webelos-to-Scout transition and Cub Scout camping opportunities. Your Lodge can assist in this process by promoting the transition into Boy Scouting, assisting the Council's transition programs, and actively providing bridging ceremonies. Your Lodge can also work with your Council's Camping committee to determine other opportunities where the Lodge can help.

Summer Camp

The Lodge should also actively work with the Council's summer camp(s) to determine how the Lodge's resources can help support the Council's outdoor summer camping programs. As you know, the Lodge plays an essential role in the promotion of Council Boy Scout summer camp program. In addition, the Lodge should help promote Cub Scout day camps and overnight resident camps. The Lodge can also provide support to Boy Scout and Cub Scout camps by promoting summer camp staff to OA members. The Lodge can even sponsor a staff position at Summer Camp. This staff person is responsible for leading all OA activities at Summer Camp, including call-outs and Lodge meetings.

As you can see, there are countless opportunities for your Lodge to better serve and support the Council. It is important to remember that the items we discussed today are simply a starting point. The key to providing value-added support lies within your Lodge's ability to play an integral role within the Council. We will discuss this next.

Integrating Your Lodge into the Council

10 Minutes

In order to provide quality assistance and support to the Council, it is essential that you intergrate your Lodge within the Council's operations. The level of success your Lodge's efforts will be able to reach largely depends on how well your Lodge can integrate within your Council. It is very important for every Lodge to become an active and integral part of their Council.

There are a number of steps that every Lodge can take to position itself as an integral part of their Council:

Annual Meeting with Scout Executive

One of the first steps your Lodge can take towards playing a more intergral role in the Council is holding an annual meeting with the Scout executive. The purpose of this meeting is to help synergize the leadership of Council and Lodge. Holding an annual meeting with the Scout executive allows the Lodge to take an proactive approach to assiting and supporting the Council. It will also help coordinate the efforts of the Lodge and Council.





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Prior to the meeting, it is important that both parties review the OA business plan and Council's strategic plan. The OA developed their business plan under the consideration and guidance of the BSA's strategic plan. Your Lodge must follow in the same footsteps. Work closely with the Scout Executive to develop the goals and annual program of the Lodge. This will ensure that the Lodge's future efforts will be responsive and flexible in meeting the needs of the Council.

Support of Unit Service

Visits to Units are important in support of service to our scouting Units. They are a means of communicating to unit members the activities of the Council and the Lodge. One effective means to conduct these visits is to schedule the visit concurrently with a visit from a Unit Commissioner.

Lodge Leadership Annual Report

This is a great tool for every Lodge. Your Lodge annual report should include the Lodge's accomplishments throughout the previous year and the steps the Lodge is taking to further assist the Council in the future. In addition, to help play a more integral part within the Council, it is important that your Lodge focus its efforts within the guidelines of the OA business plan and your Council's strategic plan.

The annual report template is available at the national OA website, www.aa-bsa.org. It includes a PowerPoint presentation and a guide to assist with the presentation.

Become a Member of the Executive Board

Another step your Lodge can take is actively pursuing roles on the appropriate Council and district committees. In order for this task to be successful, the Lodge must seek guidance from Council leadership and determine where the Lodge will be able to provide quality, value-added services.

The Lodge Chief should work with the Scout Executive to secure a position as a youth representative on the Council's Executive Board. The Lodge adviser should also pursue an active role on the Council's Executive Board. Other Lodge leaders and advisers can play important roles on the Council's camping committee, properties committee, Cub Scout camping committee, etc. These roles should be emulated throughout the district level as well.

Encourage Everyone to Join the Team

Every professional staff member in the Council should be a member of the OA. Every Scoutmaster should also be a member of the OA. If these individuals understand the purpose of the OA and mission of the Lodge, they will be more receptive to embracing the ideals the OA represents and utilizing the resources the Lodge provides for the Council and every Scout unit.

Remember: *we are all playing on the same team.* The quicker we can get every Scout in the Council and every Lodge member to understand and embrace this concept, the faster the Lodge will be able to achieve its mission as *"an integral part of the BSA in the Council."*

Marketing the Lodge

6 Minutes

Now that we have had a chance to discuss the Lodge's role in supporting the Council, it is important that we do not let the Lodge's achievements be overlooked. Without the proper marketing techniques, it will be difficult for your Lodge to build a reputation as a supportive and integral part of the Council. To be successful in this marketing campaign, your Lodge must make its accomplishments crystal clear and





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tactfully brag about what it has done. Let's take a moment to discuss the steps your Lodge can take to improve its marketing strategy.

Re-Brand the Lodge

The first step is to re-brand the message your Lodge portrays and change the mindset of the OA in your Council. A "brand" is a collection of images and ideas that create certain associations and expectations connected to a product or service. For example, when you think of Coca-Cola, you think about a cold, refreshing soft-drink.

The Lodge must brand itself as an organization focused on cheerfully serving and supporting the Scouting movement in every Council. The goal is for every member of the Council, when they think about the OA, to think about leadership and service. Every Scout should associate the Lodge's actions with an active commitment to meeting the needs of the Council.

The Next Step: Back to Basics

The Lodge can begin re-branding itself by utilizing a few, simple resources. The next step in the Lodge's marketing campaign is going back to the basics and rearranging some of our principle communication techniques.

- **Integrate Council and Lodge Newsletters:** The Lodge communications or publications committee should work closely with the Council to integrate the news published in both mailings. The Lodge should publish Council news in its newsletter. More importantly, the Lodge should also provide quality articles for the Council's newsletter, promoting the accomplishments which have benefited the Council.
- **Integrate Council and Lodge Websites:** Like a newsletter, this is another great opportunity for information sharing and promotion. The Lodge and Council's web staff can work towards combining the websites or simply provide information and links to the each others' site.

The Internet is a great resource the OA can utilize to quickly and effectively promote their accomplishments. Also, the Lodge and Council websites can provide information about the purpose of the OA, mission of the OA, the coordinated Council strategic plan and Lodge strategic plan, and what the Lodge has done to accomplish these goals.

- **Communication Booths/Displays:** At Council and district events, the Lodge should also set up booths or displays to help communicate the Lodge's goals and accomplishments to Scouts in the Council. With the Council's permission, this is also something the Lodge can display in Council service centers.

Annual Council Executive Board Presentation

As discussed earlier, the Lodge is recommended to submit an annual report to the Council Executive Board. Utilize this presentation to promote your Lodge's accomplishments and market the goals of the continued relationship between the Council and Lodge. It is recommended that the Lodge Chief make this presentation to the Executive Board, as Board members are always impressed when a young person makes a presentation.





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Remember, the tone is set at the top. Show these individuals the great things the Lodge has achieved as an integral part of the Council, and this feeling will be passed down throughout the Council leadership and every Scout in the area.

Annual Report Presentation Activity

15 Minutes

To help us understand the importance of each Lodge building and maintaining an effective “brand” as an integral part of the Council, we have a fun activity planned next.

For this activity, we will need to form ourselves into four (4) breakout groups. I would like everyone to take a second to get up, move somewhere else in the room, and if possible, meet some Arrowmen from a different Lodge. This is crucial to the idea sharing process.

Trainer Tip: If Arrowmen do not naturally form into four discussion groups, help facilitate the process. Try to build groups of Arrowmen from different Lodges, with a good mix of youth and adults to encourage the sharing of information. If your class size is not large enough to form four groups, use your discretion as to how many groups to form. Group sizes should be approximately 4-5 Arrowmen.

Each group is now the key leadership and advisers of Lodges #1, 2, 3, and 4. It is the beginning of the year and almost time to meet with the Council Executive Board to present the Lodge's annual report. The annual report consists of the Lodge's achievements of the previous year and the plan for continued Council assistance and support in the upcoming year. Your task is to reflect on our discussions earlier in the class and:

- Select a few key items the Lodge accomplished during the year,
- Focus on how these items increased support to the Council
- Develop strategies for the Lodge to become a more integral part in the Council.

During your presentations, it is important to note how the Lodge's actions and achievements were a reflection of the Council's strategic plan and goals outlined at the beginning of the previous year.

Remember, the Council is most likely aware of the Lodges actions during the past year. The key an effective presentation is to place a clear focus on the how these accomplishments impacted and benefited the Council *and* enhanced the local Scouting community.

Now, breakout into your Lodges and take a few minutes to plan your annual report.

Trainer Tip: The time allotted for this activity is fairly limited. Provide approximately 5 minutes for these proceedings. It is important that as the activity proceeds, you encourage the groups to work quickly and you offer your assistance as it is needed. You may want to provide each group with a large flip chart page to write down points for their group presentations.

Now that we have had a chance to prepare our Lodge's annual report, we are going to split the class in two, and take turns presenting to each other. For example, Lodge #1 will present to Lodge #2, with Lodge #2 playing the role of the Council board, and then they will switch. While Lodge #3 will present to Lodge #4, and then they will switch. Any questions?





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Trainer Tip: Give each group a few minutes to present their findings. Encourage questions and discussion while monitoring your remaining time. If possible, try and coordinate a separated location for presentations to reduce background noise. Utilize your training assistant to help facilitate the other presentations.

Thank you for your hard work and great presentations. The purpose of this activity was to help you realize the importance of building an effective “brand” and delivering the right message throughout the Council.

Even though most of you will probably not participate in a real-life Lodge annual report presentation, this activity should have helped you understand the importance behind effectively marketing the Lodge's message. Without the Scout Executive and every Scout in the Council understanding the brand image and purpose of the OA, the Lodge's good-faith efforts will remain unnoticed and the mission of the Lodge will be lost.

Conclusion

2 Minutes

First, I want to thank you again for your hard work today. We all came up with some great ideas of:

- How the Lodge can better support the Council,
- Play a more integral part within the Council, and
- Effectively market the Lodge's message throughout the Council.

Before we leave today, I want everyone to understand that as members of the OA, we are all committed to supporting the Scouting community and becoming a more integral part of the Council. No matter how big or little of a role you play in the Lodge, everyone has a key part in enhancing the support and assistance the Lodge can provide to the Council.

