

Creating the Cutting Edge Conclave – Developing Your Training Sessions

2015 National Order of the Arrow Conference

Session Length: 50 Minutes

Through this session, you will:

**Explain** the importance of, and how to plan all aspects of a Conclave training program

**Demonstrate** how to tailor the training program based on the chosen structure

**Guide** brothers in thinking through all considerations related to Conclave training

**Enable**  Arrowman to create a cutting edge Conclave that educates and inspires

The theme of NOAC 2015 is “It Starts With Us”. This session will relay this theme in the following ways:

* An essential element of a cutting edge conclave is the central theme which unites the whole event. As each Arrowman leaves their Conclave, they bring home new ideas, inspired to lead and serve. By implementing and communicating these learnings with other brothers in their Chapter or Lodge, a ripple effect takes place. Chapters improve, which enhances the Lodge, and leads to a better Section

**Trainer Tip:** Each Section runs their Conclave differently. It’s important for you to be open to different ideas from around the country. When a discussion occurs, please keep in mind there are no wrong ideas – only lots of right ones. Keep the conversation going forward. You’ll find people are taking notes and capturing new and exciting ideas they can bring back to their chapters and lodges

**SESSION NARRATIVE**

**Introduction 5 Minutes**

A key part of the section conclave is the training program. It’s an opportunities for OA members to receive new knowledge and skills from youth and adult leaders, experts that may not be accessible in their own lodge. It’s also an opportunity for Arrowmen to network with other lodges, share lessons learned and promote the spirit of brotherhood

What do we have to consider when putting together a training program for conclave?

**Trainer Tip:** At this time, flip to a clean flipchart page, and field responses. When pages are full, post them around the training room to remind participants of the considerations.

Some of the considerations of the conclave training program:

* Types of training sessions (e.g., “best practice” demonstrations or skill sessions)
* Number of training sessions to offer
* Logistics (camp/building facilities)
* Keynote or special “guest” presenter sessions
* Awards or special recognition for participation
* Way to promotion training offerings, prior to or during conclave

It is very important to remember that the knowledge imparted to participants will have a significant impact on their own unit/council/lodge program, even if they don’t realize it at the moment, so it’s important to invest the time to put together a quality conclave training program.

**Training Program Structure 25 Minutes**

Training isn’t always the thing participants leave a conclave remembering, but it is the one thing that can help strengthen our lodges and build better leaders. To make sure all the lodge leaders, both youth and adult, young and old, are interested and have new ideas to bring back to their lodges, it is important make sure the training sessions cover a wide variety of topics and knowledge levels.

There are two different ways training program can be run, and though it may be unlikely your section will change from its current approach, it is important to understand both options. The first is simple open sessions; a certain number are offered each hour and participants can select a completely different class each hour. This may be how your lodge runs its own LLD program.

The second used by many sections is ‘university’ style training. In this setting, participants select a path, usually containing set classes on similar subjects and sometimes containing some options, called ‘electives’. At the end of training, depending on the path they selected, participants can earn a ‘degree’ in that subject.

What are some positive points about each of these concepts in training?

Accept 5-10 answers from the participants, some for each type of training, then continue below.

We’re going to focus on the ‘university’ style program. We’re going to break you into groups now, and you’re going to develop your own degree path. I’ll assign each group a topic, like ceremonies or chapters, and you should come up with four classes that fit the degree, plus a short description of each. You should create one or two elective classes for your degree, too.

Depending on the number of groups, assign relevant topics and give the groups time to prepare a simple program. Time permitting have groups present their program to the audience

**Awards and Recognition 5 Minutes**

People like being recognized for investment time in completing training. The BSA recognizes folks in various means (e.g. patches/knots, medals, Wood Badge beads). What are some ways that your section can recognize training completion during a conclave?

Accept 5-10 answers from the participants, some for each type of training, then continue below.

Consider creating a progressive training recognition program, which takes multiple years/conclaves to complete. Aligned with the ‘university’ style training program, there are certain requirements to be completed each year, upon which participants are recognized according to the degree that they earned (e.g. Associates, Bachelors, Masters, or Doctoral)

**Promotion 5 Minutes**

Now, you’ve spent many hours putting together the program and recruiting skilled trainers, but you need to consider how you are going to promote training before and during the conclave. Training isn’t considered the most ‘fun’ aspect of Conclave, but there are ways that you can get participants excited to attend?

Accept 5-10 answers from the participants, some for each type of training, then continue below.

Some strategies to consider:

* Advertise your training program and the opportunities it presents well in advance of conclave (include information on section websites, in section newsletters, etc.)
* Use creative training session names to attract interest (e.g., Free Coffee and Donuts, How to Pick up Chicks in a Scout Uniform, etc.)
* Advertise that free items/products will be given out (patches, etc.) *(but only if true)*
* Leverage external experts to teach appropriate sessions *(they bring credibility to a specific topic)*

**Resources 5 Minutes**

There are an abundance of resource to leverage in developing and facilitating your conclave training program. What are some potential options?

Accept 5-10 answers from the participants, some for each type of training, then continue below.

Some resources to leverage

* Prior Training CVCs (talk to your Section leadership team)
* OA Training website (training.oa-bsa.org)
* Your own lodge’s LLD program materials
* District and Council training committee members
* Other “Experienced” Arrowmen, i.e. ones who have been around the block a few times

**Conclusion and Questions 5 Minutes**

We’ve talked a lot about training. Hopefully everyone has a list of new ideas to bring home to use at your upcoming conclave. We’ve discuss the different types of trainings you can do at a conclave. But, it’s important to remember that when you’re planning this area, you should provide a well-rounded list that is fun and engaging to *everyone* who is in attendance.

**TRAINER PREPARATION**

The trainer selected for this session should have experience as a Section Chief, Section Vice Chief, or

Conclave Vice Chief. The trainer should also be able to relate personal experiences from designing and running a training program, and should have knowledge of the many different types of trainings available.

Create slides of the required presentation materials using the templates included in the appendix.

They can be input into a PowerPoint presentation, typed onto transparencies, or written on flipchart pages.

Review the different sections in the narrative below, and create note cards or pages to use during the session. Do not work directly from the narrative as it will detract from the session.

***Trainer Tip:*** When creating your notes, be sure to include the guiding principles and headlines (noted in bold in the narrative) and specific phrases that should be conveyed (noted in italics in the narrative).

You may wish to have sample training schedules and session lists available, as well as lists of activities and show outlines. These items aren’t required, but will help enhance the participant’s experience and ensure they leave with plenty of ideas.

Appendix Resources:

* Flipchart and markers.
* Laptop and LCD projector with Power Point presentation (or alternately an overhead projector with transparencies)
* Exercise and Exercise Results handouts