

Community Leadership

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Let us talk about Community, but more especially about our Masonic Community. First, what is a Community? A community starts as a group of people. It is the most fundamental or essential characteristic or element of a collective. This group may be small or large, but a community always refers to a group of people. A group of people alone cannot form a community. This group of people that forms a community also needs territory to reside. Now is the need for a community feeling. This feeling is a strong sense of awe among the members to the principles that make each person feel of belonging, which causes a similarity. To live and share a common life and share some common ends. Similarities in these respects are responsible for the development of community sentiment. Because of these common bonds, the Community organizes social life. This social life forms interpersonal relationships that become strong, deep, or close in association or acquaintance between two or more people that may range in duration from a brief to an enduring timeframe. These bonds are an example of a community. It sounds a lot like the fraternal relations of our Masonic Community (Hint: Beehive).

According to this example, we need people, territory, feelings, similarities, and social life. Our structure is the same: we have Lodges made up of men that come together on a piece of property. Our Fraternal social lives are at our stated meetings, when we come together for dinner, ladies' nights, work nights, even clean the Lodge day. Our main principles of Freemasonry or feelings insist that each member show tolerance, respect, and kindness in his actions toward others, practice charity and care for their brethren as a whole, but Freemasonry goes a step further. Our obligation requires the same to be applied to the Community we live. We strive to achieve high moral standards in our personal life. Members are obligated to practice self-control and treat the people around them with respect, regardless of their personal opinion of that person. These feelings or ideas create the similarity of our honor and integrity at the core of our Masonic belief system. We have everything that a community has.

However, we do significantly differ in one area, our leaders. Communities all have leaders, and here lately, we see on television our finest. So, what is a Community Leader? Leaders provide a common cause or focus for the Community. These leaders develop a sense of pride and purpose in being a part of the Community that bonds and strengthens the Community. These people are valued in that they bring something to the wider Community that it is a part of, as well as the members of the Community. These valued roles are also about community leadership that is in touch with the Community and can create a feeling of importance among the members. Furthermore, Leadership; is the relationship between an individual and a group sharing a

common interest or goal and behaving in a manner influenced or directed by him or them. However, we want all our Brethren to be leaders in our Masonic Community and neighborhood communities.

We expect all our Brethren to accept responsibility, be creative, solve problems, and initiate action. Above all, be gracious, accept criticism, and accept blame when appropriate. Do not be afraid to seek counsel and advice. Request assistance and involve the Brethren by encouraging their creativity. More importantly give recognition and credit; it is the most extraordinary form of encouragement! When necessary to correct a Brother, by doing it in a complimentary way. Tell him how much you appreciate his efforts and suggest means by which he could improve. Involve, inspire, and encourage. Each Mason is a leader among men. Each has a unique talent, a particular love of Freemasonry, and a remarkable ability to do his job well. They meet challenges beyond simply serving as officers at Stated Meetings. They give guidance and inspiration. They make the wheels turn. They accomplish real benefits to all.

Here in the Craft, we build character in Brethren. Out of this Masonic Leadership service comes a sense of personal fulfillment, fine fellowship, and mutual endeavor that improves and strengthens leaders and workers. We make Masons better and thus build a better world. It is a goal and a challenge for all to share - family, friends, members, and officers. Let each of us express gratitude daily for our Brethren's accomplishments, accept new

Brethren's Leadership, and assume full responsibility for our essential role in our Masonic Community.

Remember, Masonic Leadership is not defined by power over the brethren; it is the shared power between the Masonic Leader and his brethren. Brethren who seek consent and strive to act in the best interest of the Brethren and the Lodge are effective Masonic Leaders. It is generally accepted that Masonic Leaders are not born but that they are made. With that thought, our Lodges are or should be instrumental in making good men leaders.

So, just being Brethren of our Masonic Community, you are in a position of leadership in your Lodge and personal Community, and as you progress in your years in Masonry, lead by example! You represent Masonry at its finest!