



Tips for the DC in the Lodge Room

The Lodge Director of Ceremonies is the man who makes the Lodge Ceremonies and Refectory proceedings efficient and well run. The D.C. is charged to see that:

- The ceremonies of the Lodge are carried out with propriety and decorum.
- Brethren and visitors are placed according to rank.
- Officers are at their respective stations

Here are some tips and guidance to assist with the role in the Lodge Room:

A good D.C. is invisible i.e. he moves quietly and smoothly from place to place so as not to be noticed or draw attention to himself. If the ceremony goes well the Master takes all the credit; if it goes badly the D.C. is blamed.

The D.C. should become familiar with the General Instructions in the front of "The Book of Ritual" (but also to follow Lodge custom if the Lodge number is lower than No195 i.e. Lodges formed prior to May 1913). This knowledge covers 90% of the job specifications. It is a good idea that ***the Lodge read these instructions at the beginning of the first practice each year to arrest any questioning later on.***

Allocation of charges will vary in different Lodges. In some the Master will allocate and in that case the D.C. should contact the Master to assist with this role. His advice to a new Master is invaluable. In other Lodges the D.C. will have the responsibility delegated from the Master. If allocating the Charges ensure that all brethren who wish, get a chance to contribute across a year. Plan ahead and encourage newer brethren to learn a charge. To that end it is essential to keep good records on which brother has done what. Take a look to at the Freemasons Charge List Software Programme at <http://bit.ly/1U8OAa1>

The D.C. is in charge of all practices. He should appoint a Practice / Rehearsal Prompt who, at practice, should sit where the "ceremonial prompt" sits. Charge givers should be encouraged to look at the prompt when in need of a word or phrase. Discourage others from prompting. **Ideally the only ritual books visible on practice nights should be the prompt's copy** (and the Preceptor's) **and the D.C.'s** (if required).



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Read the ritual book or the ceremony you are going to practise, before you go to the practice. This prepares your mind for the evening's work - you may want to make notes or reminders of how you want the practice to go.

The D.C. should concentrate on "movement" and "speech delivery." Natural movements in conducting Candidates should be encouraged – e.g. no military turns at corners when "squaring the Lodge." Clarity of speech and diction is essential - if you can't hear the words neither can the assembly. Charge givers should pause at the end of each sentence to let the meaning sink in before moving to the next one. If you feel unskilled in this area find someone to assist you in this field (a Preceptor or a good charge giver). Use praise and constructive criticism – "You may find it better if you tried it this way" or "Try it this way and let me know which you prefer." **Delegate, if necessary.**

Before rehearsals phone (or at least email) the Officers and charge givers to confirm their attendance at Practice. Keeps you in touch with the Brethren – they feel obliged to attend. Lodges using this method find increased attendance at practices and the added advantage of members becoming more friendly with one another. Numbers at regular meetings are improving.

At the first practice of a ceremony ask the Tyler how he will prepare the Candidate for the ceremony of the evening. Train the Inner Guard and others to observe whether the Candidate is properly prepared on entrance into the Lodge. **Make the practice Candidate wear the appropriate apron.**

Prepare a degree movement plan to hand out to Deacons. This helps new Deacons to learn the order of proceedings.

Words used by Deacons not in the Ritual Book – your Lodge should have a permanent copy somewhere. If not write one up with senior members of the Lodge who should remember your traditions.

- e.g.** The method of advancing to the E is by ...
Words for explaining the secrets – initials where necessary.

Preparation of the Lodge Room is generally part of the job description of the Tyler and Inner Guard. The D.C.'s job is to see that they have carried out their duty in



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preparing for the evening's ceremony. You may also have to remind them that they are responsible for the cleanliness of the Lodge Room.

Praise works better than criticism. In all things find something to give praise. Congratulate them on the things they do right. If a Charge Giver is speaking fluently and makes a minor mistake wait until the Charge is finished. Go up to him and quietly whisper to him that he missed such and such a word or put in one of his own or used a synonym for the proper word. Train the Prompt to do this too

Disciplining members: Be diplomatic when disciplining members or correcting members on any matter. Quite often it is better to take a member aside and speak quietly to him rather than correct him in front of others.

Salutes: See that the Lodge members salute correctly (parallels & perpendiculars). Train members in saluting at practices (especially the Inner Guard).

Honours: The D.C. may have to instruct the members to give "Honours" to special visitors or guests in the Lodge room ***See Rule 53, General Instructions, Ritual Book. "Brethren, we will greet the Grand Lecturer with the honours due to his high and exalted rank, Grand Honours, five times taking your time from me."***

On the regular night it is the D.C's job to see that all the Officers and Charge Givers are present. Inform the Master of any absentee Brethren who have been allocated work.

On the regular night see that all the necessary equipment is available. Check that the Tyler and Inner Guard have done their preparations.

Visiting Lodges – Order of entry. Lodge with the lowest number (Senior Lodge by age) comes in last. Ensure the Tyler understands this tradition.

After practice encourage the brethren to comment or ask questions. If a question comes up that you cannot answer or are unsure of say you will find out and give your answer next practice. This gives you time for your own research. It is also a good time for educating new masons in degrees they have completed. Others in the group may be able to assist. If there are several opinions this is good because then all will have to do some research to find a suitable answer.

