



Planning for the Future (Using Story Telling)

Undertaking a strategic planning process is an important activity that all Lodges should do in order to determine the future direction of the Lodge over the next 3 to 5 years; and put in place plans to arrive there as well as ways to measure progress. There are several techniques that can be used for this process and using story telling is an interesting and easy method which involves the brethren. It should be originated by the Worshipful Master and the Lodge's management team.

How To:

1. With this method all participants in a strategic planning session ought to create a story – a happy story about the future of their Lodge.
2. The story doesn't have to be right or sensible – it just has to result in the Lodge being a happy place in the future.
3. In the process of telling each other their stories, participants in the group instantly have a range of options they can explore more deeply.
4. The process should not be a difficult one and it doesn't require analytical, reasoned thinking – which frees up creativity and adds to the potential value.

Tips:

- Avoid the traditional approach to strategic planning (SWOT analysis etc) as this tradition method fails to capitalise on the potential creativity of the group. In the normal method people hold back ideas for fear of non-acceptance.
- The systematic and slow analysis of the Lodge from all angles delays and stymies the identification of options and is not always helpful.
- This process is about what the members want from their Lodge therefore full participation of the membership including newer members should be encouraged.
- Traditional management practices and corporate speak should be avoided.
- Try and make the process fun and enjoyable.

