

Building Together – How can it help my Lodge or Chapter to Thrive?

Introduction

You may well have heard of Building Together. Whether you have or not, it could be just what your Lodge or Chapter needs to help it thrive.

Building Together has been created to harmonise the excellent material in the Craft's Members' Pathway and the Royal Arch's Archway, into one coherent set of materials that can help both Lodges and Chapters to grow their membership.

It contains a wealth of material that Lodge and Chapter members can use to get practical ideas, drawn from the experience and successes of Lodges and Chapters over recent years in engaging members, ensuring meetings are well planned and enjoyed by all, stemming losses and growing memberships.

Finding what you need in Building Together

Building Together is made up of five hubs. These hubs each contain copious examples of good practice that other Lodges and Chapters have found help them to grow and maintain their memberships.



Shape

The Shape Hub contains material covering two main themes, short (mostly two sides of A4 maximum) documents that give tried and tested ways that Lodges and Chapters can:

- **Review** their Lodge/Chapter, including developing a Lodge/Chapter Profile that will help them understand what a good target audience for potential Initiates/Exaltees or Joining Members might be.
- Develop a **Membership Action Plan** to galvanize the Lodge/Chapter into action in growing the membership.

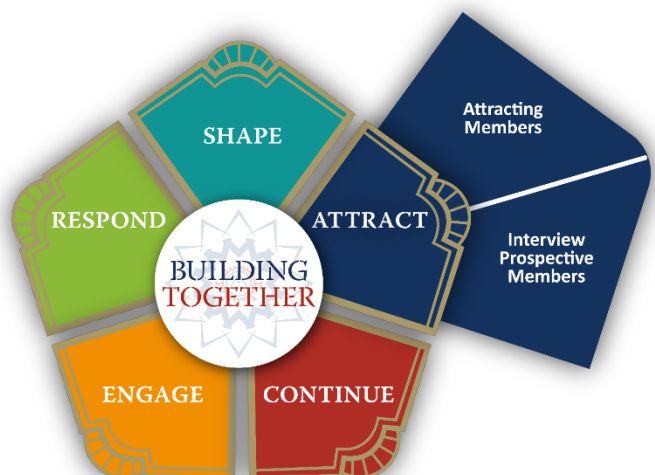
Full guidance is given throughout Building Together, and if you feel that your Lodge/Chapter's biggest challenge is attracting new members then this is the area of Building Together at which you might like to start. *There is no sense trying to do everything at once!*

Shape is likely to be of most interest to the Lodge's Membership Officer and whoever fills that function in a Chapter - perhaps the ScribeE - but all members can participate in its implementation.

Attract

The Attract Hub is for Lodges only and contains useful materials that Lodges can use to attract non-Masons to consider becoming Freemasons. It then includes guidance on how to make the interview useful for both parties and a positive experience for the potential candidate.

The Attract Hub is of most interest to the Lodge Membership Officer and Secretary, but other members may be able to support.



Continue

The Continue Hub, which is for Chapters to use, fulfils a similar function to Attract, but notes that the pool for potential Exaltees are already members of the Craft.

This Hub supports Chapters to work with Lodges to attract potential Exaltees, gives advice on managing the interview process, and guidance on managing a Craft Mason's expectations to ensure the Exaltation and membership of a Chapter is a positive one.

All Companions should bear in mind that success means bringing a new Exalte into the *right Chapter for them*, not necessarily the Chapter of which a Companion happens to be a member, or the Chapter to which the Lodge normally feeds into.

The Continue Hub is of most interest to the person fulfilling the role of Membership Officer in the Chapter, as well as the ScribeE, and all other members.

All Royal Arch Companions are expected to be ambassador for the Royal Arch in their Craft Lodges, not just the Royal Arch Representative.



Engage

Once one has attracted a new member into a Lodge or Chapter, it is necessary to support them. The Engage Hub contains lots of useful information that Lodges and Chapters can use to ensure that the new member has an interesting and fulfilling experience. The Hub also contains material to support Masons throughout their time in the Lodge or Chapter, including:

- Excellent advice on Mentoring.
- Opportunities to find out more about playing your part in the Lodge or Chapter.
- Resources to learn more about the history and traditions of Freemasonry.
- Guidance for Lodges on supporting candidates towards Exaltation.
- Supporting a candidate to leave the Lodge or Chapter and help them find one that suits them better, perhaps due to a house move to another locality.

The Lodge or Chapter Mentor take the lead on Engage matters, but every personal mentor, the Secretary/ScribeE, DC, and other members should play their part in making the Lodge or Chapter engaging to their members.

Respond

The final part of the Hub looks at how signs of dissatisfaction can be spotted early, and how Lodges and Chapters can support the Mason, hopefully averting a potential resignation or exclusion.

The Respond Hub supports Lodges and Chapters to handle a resignation and ideally resolve the issue, guiding a resigning member to cancel their resignation or assist them to join a Lodge or Chapter at which they would be a better fit. The Respond Hub also contains guidance to a Lodge or Chapter which might want to change its ways of working radically, to make it more attractive and engaging to potential and current members.

The Lodge and Chapter Almoner and Secretary/ScribeE would take the lead here, with input from the DC and all members on the Alternative Futures element.



Finding & Using Building Together

There is no golden rule for making a Lodge or Chapter thrive, but the material in Building Together will be a good starting point for any Lodge or Chapter that wishes to maintain and grow its membership.

Building Together is hosted on Solomon and can be accessed by using either the AI Chatbot called BuildingTogetherGPT where you can ask it a question, by using the course menu on the left-hand side or by using the Digital Quick Start Guide.

If you know that your interest is in one of the above topics, such as Engage, then you might well jump to that part of the Digital Quick Start Guide or menu. The Digital Quick Start Guide contains links to hundreds of PDFs, mostly short, which contain the specific advice to Lodges and Chapters on the topic of interest.

Use the QR code to go to Building Together on Solomon and explore what it has to offer

