



Welcoming New Officers

Providing Resources to Support Units, Chapters, and Lodges

Every year, lodges hold elections and a group of young men take on new responsibilities. This is an exciting time in the life of the new officer. What happens immediately after the election? What can an adviser do to welcome the new officer into the role? Of course, there are handshakes and congratulatory remarks. But an adviser should not stop there. The recommendations below assume you are a lodge adviser welcoming a new lodge chief, but most of the suggestions work for all adviser-advisee positions.

Briefly meet with the new lodge chief immediately following the election and offer congratulation and support. If possible, include the council Scout executive or his designee in the brief meeting. Establish a day within the next week to meet with the officer to discuss your expectations. A new lodge chief should come prepared to discuss his lodge committee chairs. Hold the meeting at a neutral site, perhaps at a pizza restaurant, the chief's home, or at your home. Food is always good when dealing with teenage boys!

During the meeting, ask the lodge chief if you can have the first few moments of this open forum to discuss your expectations as a lodge adviser. Here are some discussion topic suggestions:

- ◆ Emphasize that the chief represents the lodge, his fellow scouts, his self, and his family. The lodge chief should conduct himself in accordance with the Scout Oath and Law at all times, and especially at all council and lodge events.
- ◆ Remind the chief that he chose to seek office, and that “Those who choose you, need you.” The lodge chief is expected to be at every lodge event, which may mean giving up an evening at homecoming, prom, or some other social event. The chief should lead the lodge and set an example for Arrowmen to follow.
- ◆ Provide the chief with a council executive board package and board patch, and review his role within the board. Explain that the chief should attend the meetings, provide a lodge report, and perform related duties as requested by the council Key 3.
- ◆ Remind the lodge chief that he will wear his Boy Scout field uniform (“Class A”), including Order of the Arrow sash, during lodge events.
- ◆ Explain that he is expected to camp at lodge Ordeals, stay in attendance the entire time, and lead and direct all necessary functions to make the Ordeals a success.
- ◆ Set some basic communication guidelines. For example, you may consider implementing a nighttime phone cut off of 10:00pm, and request no phone calls after that hour. One of the most enjoyable parts of a lodge adviser's job is talking with his chief as often as possible, whether it's daily, weekly, or every two weeks. It's important you talk!

- ♦ Get to know your chief and his officers. Ask questions about school, his grades, and future aspirations. Does he participate in any school sports? If so, try to catch a game or school event to show your support. You will be amazed how far this will go with your officers.

Wrap up your fifteen-minute part of the meeting and sit back and watch your officer go to work creating their LEC, establishing suggested lodge goals for LEC discussion, and begin the process for a successful lodge year. Of course, each lodge and person is different. These suggestions are merely those which have worked for one lodge adviser for more than twenty years. Consider having this meeting to welcome your new chief. Your relationship and the lodge year will be better for it!

The above resource was submitted by O-Shot-Caw Lodge in Miami Lakes, Florida. A former lodge adviser used this method for more than twenty years and found it very successful. Send your lodge's unique, successful ideas to ChapterResources@oa-bsa.org.