



2018 National Order of the Arrow Conference

**Merchandising and Running a Trading Post:  
Promoting your products**

## **Session Length: 45 Minutes**

Through this session, you will:

**Explain** Finance is one of the most overlooked essential skills taught within the Order of the Arrow and can best be taught through a trading post. Merchandising and running a trading post is an important fundraising system for every lodge.

**Demonstrate** We will review a successful merchandising of your stock

**Guide** You will learn how stay within your budget.

**Enable** At the end of this session we will plan, produce and market a sample item.

## **Learning Outcomes: [create a brief list of what participants should take away with them]**

- We will review a Lodge Budget and the Trading Post component.
- We will discuss the various types of merchandise to stock
- Working with vendors on patch bids
- How to close out and report trading Post Sales and Stock to the Lodge at their monthly meeting and at the end of the year.

## **Theme Connection:**

The theme of NOAC 2018 is “Decide Your Destiny,” emphasizing the message that today’s decisions shape tomorrow’s reality. This session will relay this theme in the following ways:

- Merchandising your Trading Post for your lodges success.

This session will help the Lodge with the Journey to Excellence Requirement(s): 12

## **Required Materials:**

- Lodge Finance Manual
- PowerPoint handouts
- PowerPoint presentation
- Flipchart as a backup.
- Computer and extension cord
- Projection access and cords



## TRAINER PREPARATION

As the trading post chairman, a youth should also be expected to deal with merchandise management. This includes ordering new merchandise and disposing or getting rid of old merchandise and conducting an inventory of your trading post.

The next item we are going to discuss is merchandise. One of the things that is baffling at lodge trading posts is the amount of old merchandise and reluctance to get rid of it. To get new merchandise, you must sell, destroy, or donate merchandise that is not moving out of the trading post.

What are some ideas for getting rid of older merchandise?

The point is that merchandise should be moving out the front door as fast as it is moving out the back. If merchandise is not selling after you mark it down for a loss, then please swallow your pride and destroy the merchandise or donate it.

Next, we are going to discuss in dealing with receiving new merchandise. Chances are your councils already have vendors that they use for certain kinds of merchandise. This might include patches, clothing and other apparel, even the national supply group

The most fun to talk about is marketing. Marketing lodge trading posts is not done very often. This idea will allow you to cater to different customers and market the lodge trading post at or before events.

The presenter of this session should be an experience Lodge member with knowledge of Trading Post Management. He should be able to use this syllabus simply as taking points and be able to pick it up and speak extemporaneously about the topics covered in a short amount of time with little or no preparation required.

1. Review the outline
2. Prepare the computer and projector

## Session Narrative

The trainer should ask and solicit responses from trainees about what their lodge trading post looks like. What kind of merchandise is carried? Does it have old merchandise? After sufficient responses, the trainer should then ask trainees what the ideal lodge trading post looks like. What kind of merchandise does it sell? What kind of budget does it have? Who are its customers?

**Trainer Instructions:** If at any time the trainer should perform an action (play a video clip, ask prompting questions, etc.) type the directions into boxes like this. Simply copy this box and paste wherever needed throughout the lesson plan, replacing this text with your own material.

### Introduction

**5 minutes**

1. Speaker Introductions
2. Attendee's Introduction
3. As the trading post chairman, a youth should also be expected to deal with merchandise management. This includes ordering new merchandise and disposing or getting rid of old merchandise and conducting an inventory of your trading post at least annually.

### The Lodge Budget

**10 minutes**

1. Why a Lodge Budget?  
Fiscal responsibility. For most youth, the idea of making a budget or accounting for money is very boring. However, it is crucial that every lodge trading post chairman understand the role of fiscal management to be successful in their position.
2. Why Trading Post Budget  
We are going to discuss how a trading post budget should function as part of the master lodge operating budget and how to market those products for a profit

### Trading Post Stock

**10 minutes**

We will discuss the various types of merchandise to stock.

1. OA National Stock,
2. Special Event Stock,
3. Lodge anniversary items,



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4. Ordeal, Brotherhood and Vigil supplies,
5. Neckerchiefs,
6. NOAC patches: Contingent items, Trader Stock and Fund-Raising sets.

### **Relationships**

1. Working with the Finance Vice-Chair and the Patch Design committee to develop a sound team effort. Working within your budget is a must.
2. Presales on expensive items is one way to avoid a costly investment.
3. Market to you Lodge and Chapter members.
4. Check and see if you can sell your stock through your Section Conclave Trading Post. You must consider a good, fair price as you will have to probably have to pay a sales commission to the Section.

### **Additional topics as needed**

**10 minutes**

#### **Q & A**

Plan a Sample Patch:

- Purpose
- Budget
- Vendors
- Cost
- Shipping Costs
- Mark-Up Profit

Challenges that Lodges have experienced in the past.

### **Takeaway Challenge**

**3 minutes**

Each one of you should go back to your lodges and work with you Trading Post Chairman to incorporate what you have learned here to better manage your Lodges Trading Post Budget and stock.

Please take out your notebook and pen. For the final three minutes, write down three key ideas related to this session that you could help improve the way your Lodge Trading Posts operates

## **Appendix: Resources and Source Material**

[Insert materials as appropriate, for example:]

- 2008 Lodge Finance Manual, available online at <http://www.oa-bsa.org/pages/content/publications#lfm>
- Chapter Journey to Excellence Workbook, available online at <http://www.oa-bsa.org/pages/content/printable-forms>



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- [or whatever materials are relevant for participants in your session]