



## Membership Day: Link Introduction

**Session Length: 60 minutes**

### NEXT Conference Objectives:

1. Delegates should gain an understanding for how to recognize problems; determine innovative, alternative solutions; and implement those solutions in an effective manner.
2. Delegates will leave with tools and resources that will assist them in moving their respective lodges forward.
3. NEXT Staff members will solicit feedback on best practices that can be shared across the country.
4. NEXT Staff will identify areas within our organization that are/or could be potential threats and weaknesses.

### Training Information:

Delegates will be organized into crews of 15 – 20 and assigned a Crew Guide. The Guide will stay with their crew all day and may be used to assist with and/or lead sessions. Guides will take time to review key concepts during the day with their delegates. Delegates will be introduced to the LeaderX concept on Innovation Day. All sessions should demonstrate/include the LeaderX model of *Explore, Dream, and Discover*.

### Session Objectives:

At the end of this session, the delegate will be able to:

1. Identify the purpose of an Order of the Arrow section.
2. Understand JTE as a barometer of lodge performance, and identify key JTE metrics of importance for the Order of the Arrow nationally.
3. Understand the importance of the lodge, section and national levels of the Order of the Arrow working together to reverse our national negative JTE trends.
4. Identify the Link program as a new strategic initiative to provide lodges with the tools and training necessary to reverse the aforementioned trends.

### Session Needs:

1. Handout Materials
2. Resources for Reference
  - a. Printed puzzle
  - b. Flipchart and markers
3. Technology
  - a. screen and projector for the virtual puzzle and slides

## SESSION NARRATIVE

- I. Introduction ..... 5 minutes

**Trainer Instructions:** Begin cell by dimming lights and revealing first slide: Bill Gates counts to ten

Apple. Microsoft. Tesla. These corporations are well known to all for their technological innovation. As readily as Apple's sleek bitten-Apple logo is recognized, so too do customers know that the technology company is about to release the seventh in its line of popular cellular devices: the iPhone 7. Similarly, our friend up on the screen, Bill Gates, founded and led one of the most recognizable software companies in the world in producing ten versions of its classic Windows program.

What do each of these organizations have in common? As each of these organizations progressed, their methods changed. They delivered the same quality product, but with an updated look and feel, faster processing methods, and more user-friendly interfaces.

**Trainer Instructions:** Second slide: LeaderX persona



The Order of the Arrow’s centennial celebration was a great time to ask many of these same questions of ourselves. This time last year, during a nation-wide examination of the methods our lodges use to deliver the Order of the Arrow program within a council, NEXT was born and revealed to each of you. Innovation Day yesterday gave us a new prism through which to explore our pain-points: the LeaderX metapersona. Today and tomorrow, we will use this thinking to discover new, innovative methods of program delivery.

Out of much the same assessment of Order of the Arrow section programs—meant to serve you, the lodge leaders—we bring to you today another new program built out of the need to equip sections with the tools they need to understand their lodges’ pain points and empower them to grow. It is our pleasure to introduce you to Link.

II. Explore..... 10 minutes

Link is an entirely new program meant to equip Order of the Arrow sections with tools and training material to coach lodges on nationally selected JTE key performance indicators. Sounds like a lot of jargon, right? Well, the idea is actually pretty simple. It all begins with an **exploration** of the purpose of an Order of the Arrow section—or an assessment, if you will, of a section metapersona.

**Trainer Instructions:** Third slide: section illustration. Ask participants what a section is and what it does. Use the flipchart to record answers. Most answers will likely revolve around “plan a conclave,” “hold COC meetings,” “send a chief to Dallas,” etc. The next paragraph plays up to that simplistic view of the purpose of a section, which should then be broken down in the subsequent discussion of a section as the key mentor to lodge leadership.

As many of you may know and have answered, an OA section is a grouping of lodges in a geographic area. The section facilitates a Council of Chiefs, comprised of you, the lodge leaders, to plan and run the yearly program. This yearly program culminates in the annual section conclave, at which you elect section officers. Sounds pretty simple, right?

Well, as was mentioned earlier, when a few national OA leaders used our centennial year to assess the purpose of an OA section, many of these explanations didn’t seem to fit the bill. Why? In our view, when we tried to explore the purpose of a section, we envisioned a year-round lodge-focused support team—one with the tools, coaching/listening skills, and information necessary to lift up lodges in areas of low performance, and make an example out of lodges for their areas of high performance. This is so much more than an entity that merely runs a conclave and holds meetings.

**Trainer Instructions:** Fourth slide: JTE. This slide will list each of the JTE Key Performance Indicators for the sake of being thorough in explaining JTE.

So we went to the drawing board. We fixated on this word “performance,” and knew we could help sections identify their lodges’ areas of low and high performance via the years of Journey to Excellence data we have compiled. JTE is a yearly assessment filled out by your key lodge leadership that measures the success of the lodge across some key measures: how many Arrowmen in your lodge have their dues paid? How many troops in your council held OA elections? How many youth members of your lodge attended a lodge event? And many more. JTE determines what the good and bad percentages are in these areas by giving them a rating: bronze, silver, or gold. A lodges’ overall JTE score, in turn, ranks that lodge as a bronze, silver, or gold lodge. Think of JTE as a barometer measuring lodge performance.

We knew that we could provide clearer information about lodge performance to sections by picking just a few metrics to focus on year by year, instead of all of them. Then, we figured we could provide training



material to sections that help them teach lodges new and innovative methods to improve upon the metrics in focus for that year.

Out of this thinking, which links the national organization, the section, and the lodges together in the common endeavor of improving the Order of the Arrow program across the country, Link was born.

III. Dream..... 5 minutes

**Trainer Instructions:** Fifth slide: Link workflow

With new insight gained, we **dreamed** up a plan. To be very specific, we'd like to now present to you how Link will work. Essentially, Link is a year-round training program whose content is devised nationally and delivered by the section, and whose tools are implemented by the lodge. The exact steps are as follows:

- Link begins at the national level, where **the national Order of the Arrow committee** collects annual JTE data and identifies two or three metrics indicating poor national performance on which Link will focus in the coming year.
- From there, the **Training subcommittee** will write a training curriculum that contains tools and best practices sourced from outlying lodges around the country that perform exceptionally in the identified metrics.
- Then, the **region leadership** will teach the section leadership how to deliver these tools to lodges by instilling section leadership with skills in coaching and consultation. This will take place at the four region meetings held each year, known as the Section Officers Seminar.
- **Section leadership** will then deliver these tools to the lodges via training as part of a webinar, COC meeting, supplemental section training event, etc.—the exact format is decided by the section. The sections will endeavor to coach and provide consultation to lodges as the lodges endeavor to implement these tools.
- **Lodge leadership** will then put these tools into practice by empowering their youth leaders to use them in their work during the year, beginning with the annual Lodge Leadership Development.

IV. Discover..... 20 minutes

Link is meant to be more than a training program. It's a year-round directed conversation between lodges and their section, discussing pain points, celebrating successes, and supporting each other. With that same conversational focus in mind, we'd like you to discuss your thoughts about Link via a role play.

**Trainer Instructions:** This is much like an NLS role play. Utilize crew guides to separate the session into two groups. Have two appointed meeting places at which each side receives their prompt. One group will be lodge chiefs, and the other will be section vice chiefs. Prompts for the conversation are below. These should be read to each group at the private meeting place, then each person from the lodge chief group should pair up with a person from the vice chief group.

**Lodge Chiefs:** You are the chief of the most successful lodge in your section. During your first term, you led your lodge to JTE Silver. When you first took over as lodge chief, the lodge was consistently earning JTE Bronze. It's been a struggle but you have been able to help the lodge improve. Now, in your second term you see that your lodge is still struggling in several areas and are worried that you might not be able to make it to Silver again. Recently, the section vice chief called you to set up a meeting about a new program called Link and he seems to think that it can really help you in the areas the lodge is struggling in. You don't know a whole lot about Link coming into the meeting, and you're weary of the section stepping into your business, but you are excited to get more tools to be able to help your lodge.



**Section Vice Chiefs:** As section vice chief and nearing the end of your term, you have always been excited about helping your lodges as much as possible. Recently your section chief reached out to you and asked that you have a meeting with one of the lodge chiefs about the new Link program. Link is designed to make the section a resource to the lodges and to give them the tools to improve in areas on their JTE scorecards. After hearing the details about Link, you really think this is a fantastic set of tools the lodges can use to perform even better than they have been. You have resources to show him and are convinced this program will benefit the lodge. Excited about your meeting with one of the lodge chiefs, you are ready to share this amazing new program with him.

**Trainer Instructions:** Allow lodge chiefs and section chiefs to discuss for 5-7 minutes. At the end of the conversation, facilitate a discussion and gather feedback using the questions in the wrap-up session of the syllabus.

V. Wrap-up/Feedback..... 20 minutes

Discussion questions:

1. Lodge chiefs, you were given direction saying that you were weary of the section stepping into your business. As lodge leaders, do you actually feel this way? Did the section vice chief come across as encroaching on your business?
2. Section vice chiefs, how can you approach lodge chiefs in a way that is inviting and fosters mutual cooperation through Link?
3. Do you think there is a need for increased communication between the section and its lodges? Do you feel like Link has the potential to foster this communication?
4. Do you feel that Link, as presented to you today, will meet your needs as lodge leaders? Why or why not?

Following the same mindset exuded by Apple, Microsoft, and Tesla, Link seeks to innovate the ways in which we examine our program, and seek to improve it. This innovation involves linking the national, sectional, and lodge level of the Order of the Arrow in this common endeavor. Directed by data and dependent on conversation, Link promises success in the Order's second century.

**Trainer Instructions:** This presentation is accompanied by a virtual and printed "puzzle." Essentially, there are four corners of a picture, with a fifth piece being the Link logo in the center. This puzzle should be constructed as Link is discussed along the LeaderX model. After the introduction, post one piece of the puzzle. After Explore, post the second. The third and fourth should follow Dream and Discover. Finally, the fifth piece, revealing the Link logo, should be posted as the session is wrapping up. The conclusion can include some explanation of the puzzle as a symbolic representation of the joint effort that Link promises.