

SESSION 3: Why Are YOU here?

Duration: 45 minutes

Facilitator: Section Staff

Learning Outcomes:

- Describe the metrics that drive lodge performance.
- Discern the urgency required to drive high performance.
- Understand my part in helping promote growth in our Order.

Supplies: Lodge Metric Sheets

This session will help delegates to become exposed to the Order of the Arrow's most significant challenges. It will provide them with context for the High Performing Lodge/Thrive initiative and a roadmap for how the actions they take as lodge leaders can help to get the entire organization back on track.

I. Introduction & opening 3 minutes

Introduce the session by first introducing yourself and outlining your experiences in the Order of the Arrow; particularly, your experience managing strategic performance or the three key performance indicators (elections, inductions, activation).

Read the learning outcomes to the delegates.

Ask the audience what they already know about the High Performing Lodge/Thrive initiative to gauge the pre-existing knowledge in the audience.

Trainer tip: Even if some delegates appear to be quite familiar with the Thrive initiative, it is likely that there are other delegates who will not. Make sure to cover all of the content to make sure everyone understands Thrive.

II. Why is the OA important to you? 7 minutes

Every single one of us made the conscious choice to come to this event. That reason may be slightly different for each of us, so let's share out: Why did you decide to come to this weekend's ACT Conference, and why do you continue to stay involved? Take two minutes to think about this



silently and write down your reason on a piece of paper. We'll have a chance to share in just a moment, so just focus on your personal reason for now.

[wait two minutes for delegates to write down their reason]

Now that you've defined your reason for staying involved, I want you to share your reason with the people at your table.

[wait two minutes for people to share with their table]

Let's talk about this as a group for a moment. Who wants to share what they came up with?

[solicit responses from delegates]

In our last session, we talked about the importance of fostering relationships, and many of you touched on that in your personal reasons for staying involved in the OA. Regardless of why you chose to be an Arrowman, everyone has a reason. If we are going to grow our membership, we need to give each individual a reason to come back.

I'm here today because of many of the reasons that you shared, but also because I believe in the power of this program. I'm committed to bringing the OA to as many youth as possible; and I hope you are, too; but we have some serious work to do to make that happen. Keep the reason that you wrote down in the back of your mind during this weekend. We will come back to it later.

III. Introduce HPL Initiative 5 minutes

The OA has lost 33,403 people since 2013. That means we've lost about 18% of our membership in 5 years. Why is this? Something I often hear is that this is just a result of the membership decline of the Boy Scouts of America. While that surely doesn't help, we actually lose members at 3 times the rate of the BSA.

The OA's leadership has been examining this membership loss for a few years. The youth in this room probably remember the Journey to Excellence program ever since they joined the Order of the Arrow; but as some of the advisers in the room might know, we only started that program in 2012. It was the first time we were finally able to track lodges' performance in a variety of membership metrics.

After 7 years of data analysis and looking at every single lodge's metrics, it's clear that three key performance indicators drive membership growth and lodge success:

- Unit election Rate – the percentage of troops, crews, and ships that host an OA visit in a given year.
- Induction Rate – the percentage of candidates that attend an Ordeal.
- Activation Rate – the percentage of members that attend an OA event within their first six months (but preferably within 90 days) as an Arrowman.

We refer to these three areas as “key performance indicators” because they are the metrics that are the most accurate in predicting success. This makes intuitive sense as well. To become an engaged member, you have to be elected, then attend your Ordeal, and then come back to more events. It’s the basis of what we call an Arrowman’s membership journey.

We know that as lodge leaders, you are tasked with a lot. This initiative gives us three specific focus areas. All of the work you do for you lodge is important, but if we can’t get Scouts elected, inducted, and activated, we can’t hope to succeed.

IV. Current trends 5 minutes

In each of these areas, we have some room for improvement. We’re going to spend the next few minutes talking about the current status of each of these metrics, both nationwide and in your own lodge. You all should have received a metric sheet with your lodge’s performance in 2019 for each key performance indicator. I invite you to compare those numbers with the national averages as we go through them.

Let’s start with unit elections. Ideally, we want to elect candidates from every troop, crew, and ship; but we realize that some units might not have any eligible Scouts in a given year. For the purposes of our data collection, completing an OA visit to a unit with no eligible Scouts counts as holding an election. We’ll talk more about this in the unit election session later. Currently, we hold elections in roughly half of units. That means that right from the start, we are missing out on half of our potential membership. In fact, more than 19,000 troops, crews, and ships did not hold an OA visit last year.

Of the Scouts who are elected as candidates, more than 30% don’t attend an induction weekend. Our organization’s purpose is to recognize outstanding Scouts and Scouters. But in 2018 alone, 10,811 Scouts were selected by their units; but we never recognized them because they didn’t come to the Ordeal.

Finally, we never see 70 percent of Arrowmen after the Ordeal. We spend too much of your time planning great events for only 30 percent of our members to ever show up.

V. Lodge breakouts 10 minutes

Now that we’ve established our current national trends, let’s apply this to your own lodges. In the last session, we talked about the importance of being in sync with each other. Let’s apply that to our current situation by making sure that we are all on the same page. We are going to breakout for five minutes for you to talk with your fellow leaders of your lodge to talk about your own metrics. I want you to consider a few key questions: (1) Do the data surprise you? Why or why not? (2) What areas are you doing well in already? (3) What areas need the most improvement?

[5 minute breakout]

Let's share. If I could have each lodge chief or designee briefly summarize your discussion for us: what did you talk about, and what area(s) do you need to focus on this year?

[allow each chief to share briefly]

As you can see, we are all facing similar issues in our lodges. We mentioned in the welcome session, to get the most out of this conference, our best resource is you. We'll have many opportunities to share best practices and ideas across lodges throughout the event, and I encourage you to ask for help and advice from other lodges. You may find that they have worked through the same issue that you are facing right now.

VI. Moving forward 5 minutes

Now that we have introduced the High Performing Lodge initiative and have discussed the current membership trends, we are going to spend the rest of the event talking about where we go from here and how we solve these issues and become high performing.

So, how do we define a high performing lodge? Let's look back at each of our key performance indicators. We defined benchmarks when we identified each of these focus areas based on lodges who have seen consistent success. These benchmarks are:

- 90% unit election rate
- 90% induction rate
- 50% activation rate

If we hit each of these three benchmarks, the data show that we would reach our target density. Density looks at the percentage of Scouts, Venturers, and Sea Scouts who are members of the Order of the Arrow. To maintain our membership, we need to achieve a 14.5% density rate. That means we need 14.5% of the members registered in Venturing Crews, Sea Scout Ships, and Scouts BSA units wearing sashes.

To become high performing, each lodge leadership team signed a "Declaration to Thrive" during last year's Thrive webinar in October. The declaration outlines a three-year plan to hit each benchmark. During each of the three years, starting in 2020, we are seeking to close 1/3 of the gap between our current status and the benchmark.

On the metric sheet that we looked at earlier, you will notice that it also applies the three-year plan to your lodge. Jumping to High Performing status overnight is not realistic, but we need to work diligently to make this plan happen if we want to maintain our membership.

VII. Closing 5 minutes





SECTION ACT CONFERENCE

ORDER OF THE ARROW



At the beginning of the session, you shared why the OA was important to you. Becoming high performing isn't easy, but I hope you can agree that saving our organization is critical.

The Order of the Arrow means so much to so many. We're impacting fewer lives than ever before. Our mission and purpose are reaching fewer people than ever.

Where we are is not our fault, but it is absolutely our responsibility to be leaders that take decisive action to remedy it.



ACT
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